CHAPTER 1

THE IMPACT OF CHANGE ON 21ST CENTURY RETIREMENT: DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE AND GENERATIONAL CHANGE

The national population is about to be boosted to a minimal extent by natural increase and immigration; and to a major extent by baby boomer longevity. For the purposes of the study and consistent with the general use of the term in the literature, the "baby boomer" generation is defined as "those who were born in Australia or overseas during the years 1946 to 1964" (McCrindle, 2009, p.10). Baby boomers are the largest generational group in modern Australia; are fast approaching their traditional retirement age; and are simultaneously demonstrating an increasing longevity. The result is that the over 65 age cohort is an increasing proportion of the total national population. This phenomenon is known as *population ageing*. The challenge for the national economy will be to meet the rising costs (i.e. predominantly health and welfare costs) associated with an ageing population. The increasing and ageing population is predicted to have a significant economic and life-style impact upon all Australians. Currently these issues are at the centre of a national debate about the extent to which the infrastructure capabilities and the environmental sustainability of the nation can meet these projected increasing population demands.

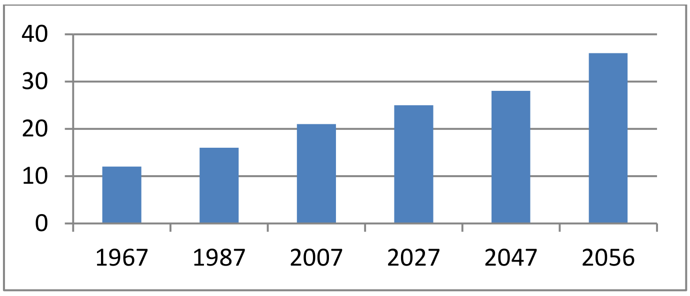
This chapter broadly examines the impact of the demographic, economic, workforce, retirement and generational changes on the Australian society. The variation evident in baby boomer retirement patterns is one such change. A *"*new retirement*"* model is emerging in which older workers are choosing to stay connected to the workforce for longer. The impact which such a significant shift in retirement patterns might have on the nation's capacity to cope with the inter-related challenges of population increase and population ageing would seem worthy of deeper exploration. Literature relevant to this discussion is presented in this chapter as the background context to this study.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Population growth

The Australian Federal Government's first *Intergenerational Report* (Costello, 2002) drew early attention to the looming difficulties associated with the nation's growing population. Subsequent *Intergenerational Reports* (Costello, 2007; Swan, 2010) confirmed those initial concerns. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Australian Social Trends Report* (ABS, 2009 b), provided a clearer picture when it acknowledged that "…Australia's population is projected to grow from 21 million in 2006 to between 31 and 43 million in 2056" (p.1). To give some relativity to the increase, a 2056 population of 36 million (a conservative projection) represents a 200% increase on the 1967 population of 12 million (Figure 1.1):

Figure 1.1: Historic and projected Australian population (in millions)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics data and Treasury projections (Costello, *Intergenerational Report, 2007,* p.x).

Whilst there is governmental and community anxiety about the growth in Australia's population over the next 40 years, it is worth remembering that Australia has previously experienced high periods of population growth. Following World War II there was an unparalleled baby boom (which saw fertility rates rise to 3.5 child births per woman by the early 1960s) in addition to substantial immigration programs. In just 18 years (from 1946 - 1964) these new arrivals (i.e. both births and migrants) almost doubled Australia's population from 7 million to 12 million (McCrindle, 2009).

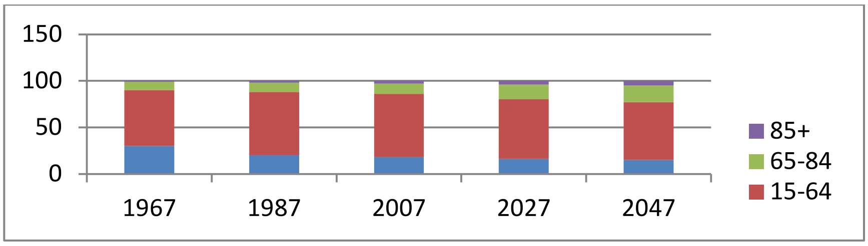
However the projected significant increase in the nation's population across the 21st century has some interesting variations on those previous examples. For the current (and future) situation both the fertility and the net migration rates are projected to be stable. The third *Intergenerational Report* has based its projected figures for population growth on a broadly consistent 1.9 fertility rate figure (Swan, 2010), whilst net migration is seen to continue as only 0.6 % of the total population per annum. Given the stable nature of the fertility and migration rates, the nation's population is still projected to be 35.9 million by 2050 (Swan, Intergenerational Report 2010). The primary cause then of such a dramatic population increase is the change in life expectancy of the baby boomers (and subsequent generations). Someone born in Australia at the beginning of the 20th century would have expected to live less than 60 years. However, someone born in the 21st century can now expect to live to approximately 84 years (for a female) and 79 (for a male). This upward shift in life expectancy is causing the nation's projected population growth by impacting on Australia's largest living cohort: the baby boomers (Salt, 2001; McCrindle, 2009).

However the major demographic concern for the nation is not simply the doubling of the population but rather the percentage of the larger population who will be older Australians because they are living longer. The core issue which looms as the critical concern is *ageing*. How the nation manages the ageing of the national population would appear to be the vital challenge.

Population ageing

Population ageing is characterized by an upward shifting in the age structure. As the proportion of younger people declines, the proportion of older people increases. The problem is international. In the United States (U.S.A.) and England from 2005 to 2025 the percentage of people over 65 will rise from 13% to 20%; whilst in Japan, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark and Germany the percentage will rise from 18% to 25% (Gibbs, 2008). The situation is similar for Australia where the extended life expectancy of the ageing baby boomer generation means that about 25% of the population is projected to be aged 65 years and over by 2047 which is double the 2007 figure (Figure 1.2):

Figure 1.2: Australia's population by age groupings



Source: ABS Historic Australian Population Statistics 3105.0.65.001 Table 19 and Treasury projections, (Costello, *Intergenerational Report*, 2007).

Significantly the rise in the ageing population will be accompanied by a corresponding decline in the so-called *working-age population* (15-64 years) from 67% in 2007 to 58% in 2056. As a consequence the *old age dependency ratio* (i.e.the ratio of people aged 65 years and over compared to the working-age population), will approximately double to 42% in the same period. In 1970 there were 7.5 working aged people to each one aged person. But as the ABS (2009b) notes the situation is continuing to deteriorate and "for each older person in 2007, there were five working-age people, while in 2056 there will be less than three working-age people for every older person" (p.2). In the 40 years from 1970-2010 the old-age dependency ratio rose by a worrying 33.3%; whilst in the forty years from 2010-2050 it is predicted to rise by almost another 50% (ABS, 2009b, p.2). These figures, which are the direct result of the ageing of the national population, are part of the government's concern (Costello, 2007; Swan, 2010).

However the accelerated *pace* of ageing of the national population is expected to add a further dimension of discomfort. As the ABS (2009b) figures indicate in 2007 there were 2.4 million people aged 65-84 years but by 2022 this figure will have increased by 80% (to 4.0 million) whilst the working-age group (15 years -64 years) will increase by only 20%. Interestingly as a bold indicator of the effect of a continuously ageing population, the oldest bracket (85 years +) which numbered 344,000 in 2007 will have increased by 500% to 1.7 million by 2056. This accelerating pace of ageing is at the crux of the nation's demographic problem.

The projected expenditure pressures on areas such as health, age pensions and aged care due to these demographic changes were the catalyst for the government's first public concern as found in the initial *Intergenerational Report* (Costello, 2002) and confirmed in the second *Intergenerational Report* (Costello,2007).The language was even stronger with the arrival of the third *Intergenerational Report* in which Treasurer Swan (2010) stated that "the rate of improvement in average living standards is projected to fall, placing pressure on Australia's capacity to fund the spending pressures associated with an ageing population, particularly in terms of health spending" (p.vii). So by 2010 we have a clear statement from the Federal Government that the ageing of the population may well have an adverse effect on the living standards for the whole nation. There may simply not be enough working tax-payers to sustain the government's existing level of financial support to an unprecedented number of retirees. This situation has high relevance for the sustainability of the current Australian life-style (Swan, 2010).

By way of preparing the nation for this bad news, the intergenerational reports noted that all developed countries were experiencing population ageing pressure resulting in a variety of national strategies. The most obvious responses have been to increase the official retirement age and/or to increase taxation for the working age cohorts. As Carroll (2007) concludes "in the last decade, ageing has become a topic of great interest and concern, particularly as the first wave of … 'baby-boomers'- is preparing to move into retirement" (p.71). How Australia reacts to this issue may well be driven as much by attitudes towards ageing, as by the economic imperatives.

Attitudes towards ageing

Carroll (2007) argued that traditionally in Australia "old is an amalgam of perceptions, both visual as in the greying hair and wrinkles, and psychological as in being less productive, less active and less flexible. It is a societal construction and is embedded in the discourse of productivity, attractiveness and capability; old is negatively positioned in relation to each of these qualities" (p.76). But *old* has not always been viewed so negatively. In former times, societies valued the accumulation of wisdom and experience leading to a collaborative relationship between old and young in order to survive (McDaniel, 1989). Gradually as knowledge came to be based more on technology than experience, *old* came to be synonymous with *outdated* (de Beauvoir, 1972); and old people became marginalized to a place somewhere outside of the mainstream productive society. That somewhere was *retirement*, where old people seemed to be regarded as being less competent; being less able to contribute; and if fortunate able to be cared for whilst awaiting life's end (Gibbs, 2008).

It is interesting to note that the concept of compulsory retirement is a relatively recent development, arising from the 19th century industrial revolution when employers wanted to find a way of getting rid of workers who were too old or debilitated to be of any use (Gibbs, 2008). In

1916 German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck introduced a retirement scheme at 65 years with a state pension. In 1935 in the U.S.A., President Roosevelt also adopted 65 years as the retirement age, at a time when the life expectancy age for men was 57. Consequently many did not even make it to "retirement age"; and if they did their pension didn't have to last very long. As Gibbs (2008) concludes, "retirement was seen as the end of the road, a time when you were on the outer and no longer of 'real' significance - a view that still has a powerful grip in the consciousness of many today" (p.21). Visco (2001) in his report to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) echoed the thoughts of many that the elderly were increasing in number, becoming more dependent in terms of healthcare and accommodation, and were therefore costing more in economic terms. Commenting on these negative attitudes towards ageing Katz (1992) warned that since the ageing of the baby boomers has become topical, there has arisen the 'alarmist demography', where the ageing population, through its growing demand on public resources, is seen as jeopardizing society's future prosperity and harmony. This notion seems to be based on the apportioning of blame to older people for creating economic hardship for the rest of the society.

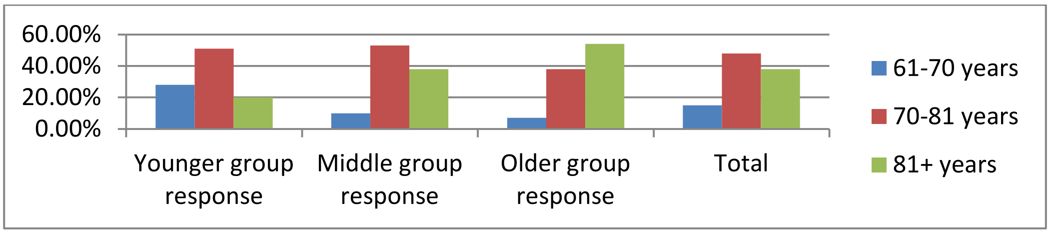
Since the late 1990's social researchers in western nations (Laws, 1995; Ekerdt & Clarke, 2001; McHugh, 2003; Carroll, 2007; Salt, 2007) report that there has been a counter movement to the negative concept which identified the old as being disabled and dysfunctional. This more generous view of ageing is to be found in advertising (both print and electronic media) and popular culture. A study of financial planning advertisements in the U.S.A. (Ekerdt & Clarke, 2001) identified idealized potential retirees as self-reliant, prudent and conscientious. Retirement is portrayed in terms of an active and attractive life style. In this paradigm there is no indication of senility, dependency or dysfunction. Active, affluent and young-looking retirees are pictured engaging with enticing, even eroticized environments that promise happiness and longevity (McHugh, 2003). Images of beautiful, smiling couples invite us to share the luxury, intimacy and security of specialized retirement communities (Laws, 1995). In addition segments of the medical profession add another dimension to the engineered image of youthful ageing with cosmetic surgery and promises of active sexuality. The cornerstone of this movement has been the denial of growing old with *agelessness* being promoted as the epitome of successful ageing (Carroll, 2007).

Attitudes towards ageing in Australia

In Australia we see a similar juxtapositioning taking place. There is the political and economic "doom and gloom" associated with the rising old age dependency ratio and the associated economic challenges, yet on the other hand baby boomers themselves seem to be projecting a very positive view of ageing. Boomers simply do not see themselves as being old: sixty is being seen as the new fifty and senior as being over seventy (MacKay, 2007). Baby boomers believe they dress younger than their parents did; have more energy than their parents had; and think younger than their parents did at a similar age (Carroll, 2007). Although ageing is mandatory, growing old seems optional.

The attitudes of the Australian community towards ageing appear to be quite generous and becoming even more positive. In 2007 the Australian Psychological Society (APS) released the results of a survey (Nielsen, 2006) which explored three areas of ageing: (1) how current attitudes towards ageing varied according to different age groups; (2) what concerns the public may have about how the ageing of the population might impact on them; and (3) what were the plans and expectations of the future aged population (i.e. the baby boomers themselves). Survey respondents were classified into three groups: younger, middle and older. On the first criterion (i.e. current attitudes towards ageing), the respondents were asked to indicate "when is an individual considered aged?" The middle to younger age groups believed *aged* to be reaching 70 years, whilst older groups considered it to be reaching 80 years. Interestingly when asked about the factors which led to making a decision about when someone is *aged*, respondents tended to focus on the physical, psychological and social factors (e.g. health, fitness, appearance and attitude) rather than on work factors such as work status, retirement or pension eligibility. These responses presented quite generous attitudes towards ageing (Figure 1.3):

Figure 1.3: Perceptions of when an individual is considered to be aged



Source: *Attitudes to Ageing Questionnaire* (Laidlaw, Power & Schmidt, 2007).

Matthews et al., (2007) suggest the survey indicated that in Australia there was "a trend towards positive attitudes about ageing" (p. 23). This would be consistent with Carroll (2007) who also reported finding a more generous attitude towards ageing in Australia in recent years. It should be noted that there was a large number of female participants in the survey with the research showing that females tend to have a more positive perception of ageing than do males (Nielsen, 2006).

Altruistically *boomers* want to make a meaningful contribution to society and this would seem to be based a need to feel valued, wanted and purposeful (Handy, 2007). However until recently little has been made of the contribution which older people might make to Australian society. Matthews et al., (2007) noted that in 2007 the Australian Psychological Society argued the case that older

Australians not only make a positive contribution to the social health of the nation but are capable of making a positive contribution to the nation's economic health also. This could be achieved primarily by valuing and capturing the accumulated wisdom and experience of older workers (Mathews et al., 2007). The latest *Intergenerational Report* (Swan, 2010) further developed this theme by arguing for the recognition and valuing of older workers' experience and expertise.

Governments seem to be simultaneously attempting to represent both sides of the case about the ageing population. On the one hand the Federal Government is warning that the rate of improvement in average living standards may well fall as a result of looking after an ageing population (Swan, 2010). On the other hand that same *Intergenerational Report* (Swan, 2010) develops a theme that the nation would benefit from recognizing, valuing and capturing older workers' experience and expertise. In the case of population growth and population ageing, the core economic aim would seem to be to minimize or alleviate the potential negative impact of ageing on the national wealth and the life-style of Australians.

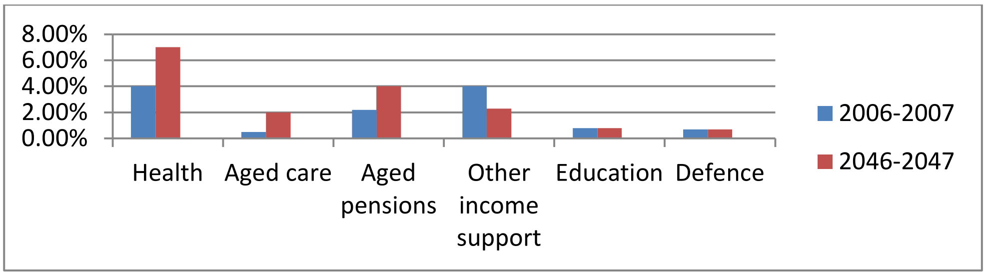
ECONOMIC CHANGE

The economics of ageing

Internationally there is debate about how to fund the retirements of the large cadre of baby boomers as they enter retirement. Beehr and Bennett (2007) note that "depending on the predictions of the particular politician, organization or commentator, the coming decades pose anything from a need for minor adjustment to a national crisis…" (p. 278). Irrespective of their position on this continuum, researchers, commentators and national governments all seem to agree that something needs to be done (Johnson, 2001; Costello, 2002 & 2007; Knox, 2003; Lee & Law, 2004; Luchak et al., 2004; Harding, 2006; Mackay, 2007; Cooper, 2008; Handy, 2007; Schultz & Adams, 2007; Denmark et al., 2007; Beehr & Bennett, 2007; Swan, 2010).

Harding (2006) points out that previously "the problem of funding decades of retirement on the age pension did not really exist as, on average, Australians died before they reached aged pension age" (p.15). The recent *Intergenerational Reports* (2002, 2007 and 2010) plus other independent research (ABS: Multi-Purpose Household Survey 2007; Knox, 2003; Denmark et al., 2007), have all focused attention on the economic pressures which will now be created by the dramatic increase in retirees. The first group of baby boomers reached 65 and started to retire in 2010 resulting in an increasing percentage of the nation's population in the retirement bracket whilst simultaneously living longer. This will be the situation until the peak of the baby boomers have died around 2040. With an ageing population the cost of government-supported health services to the elderly is an issue of real concern. As the ABS (2009b) notes, "these changes are important factors weighing on the future provision of income support, health and age care services" (p.3). Due to the economic effect of ageing, health care costs are projected to double over the next 40 years (Figure 1.4):

Figure 1.4: Projection of Australian Government spending over the next 40 years



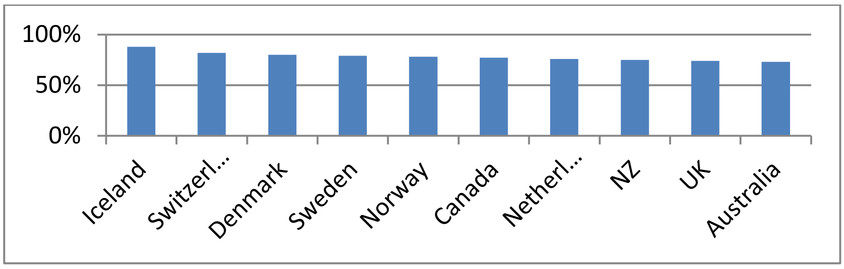
Source: Treasury projections and assumptions (Costello, 2007, p. xiv)

Such projections cannot be ignored by governments. The first intergenerational report (Costello, 2002) contained a grim warning that there would be a shortfall between commonwealth government revenue and outlays of 5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) because of the impact of population growth and ageing. If that news seemed pessimistic, Harding (2006) noted that "those who were hoping that the Treasury Intergenerational Report might have been unnecessarily gloomy had their hopes dashed by the Productivity Commission report (2005), which suggested that the fiscal gap…will reach 6.4% of GDP by 2044-45" (p.16). This type of budget shortfall would require either higher taxes or reductions in spending programs (or some combination of both). In an attempt to avoid or alleviate these economic dilemmas, the government target is to increase the rate of economic growth. One strategy to achieve this outcome is to increase the national workforce participation rate (Costello, 2002 & 2007; Swan, 2010).

Workforce participation rates

The projected doubling of the proportion of 65+ year olds by 2040 will result in a lower proportion of the population being in the working-age group (16 - 64 years old); and a subsequent fall in the *workforce participation rate* (Costello, 2007; Swan, 2010). In 2008 Australia ranked 10th against OECD countries for workforce participation rates for people aged 15 - 64 years (Table 1.5):

Figure 1.5: OECD workforce participation rates



Source: OECD (*Intergenerational Report*, 2010. P. xiv)

This is a ranking which the government is keen to see rise. Australia, like many other advanced nations expects fewer, not more, young people to enter the workforce in coming years (Social Policy Unit, 2004). The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) noted in 2006 that

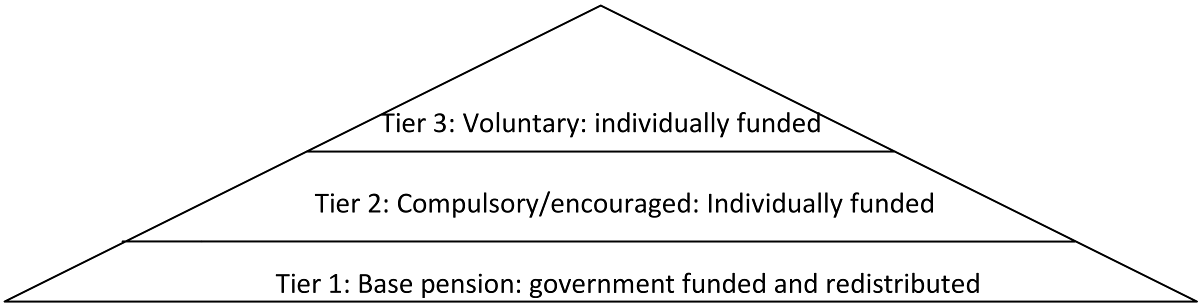
> The workforce participation of Australians drops off more sharply than many other nations after the age of 55. With an ageing population, we can no longer afford to lose to retirement the valuable skills and experiences that older workers offer to business, the economy and the society. Living longer provides opportunity to work longer for those who are willing and able to. Policies need to support and promote ongoing attachments to the labour market. (Auditor General, 2008)

It would appear that the government intervention to encourage older workers to stay-on or return to the workforce is not successful, then the already comparatively low workforce participation rates will continue to deteriorate over the next 40 years; and Australia's OECD ranking may well deteriorate further.

Incentives to keep older workers working longer

Treasurer Swan (2010) recently addressed this issue by acknowledging that although retirees make a valuable contribution to the economy and living standards through non-working activities (such as volunteering or career activities), the government was keen to support those older Australians wishing to continue work with initiatives in "the tax-transfer system… workplace flexibility; and access to retraining" (p. xiv). Such statements indicate direct government encouragement and intervention for older workers to continue in the workforce. However such programs would appear to be hindered by current retirement income schemes (i.e. superannuation; pensions and other retirement income stream systems). Knox (2003) noted that around the world a three pillar system of retirement income was being advocated or was already in place (Figure 1.6):

Figure 1.6: The three tiers or pillars of retirement income



Source: *Ageing Australia* (Knox, 2003).

Knox (2003) argued that there should be a fourth tier. In this tier income earned during retirement would attract significant financial incentives for older workers in the shape of taxation and superannuation benefits. Such a fourth tier would encourage older workers to stay in the workforce and consequently this would impact positively on the age dependency ratio and workforce participation rate. It would seem that under the fourth tier proposal older workers would not only be positively impacting on their own social health and that of the nation, but they would also be raising productivity and addressing the skills shortage. As a result these older members of society would not require social security support in the shape of pensions until much later (if at all). Internationally governments are introducing other strategies which might be termed "harder options" (e.g. the lifting of the official retirement age). The *retirement age* being the age at which citizens qualify to apply for government aged pensions. Currently the Australian retirement age is 65 for males and 63 for females. However, there is already legislation approved for this to be raised progressively to 67 for males and 65 for females by 2013. Another harder option would be to raise taxes for all working Australians. This would not seem to be an electorally popular move with younger working Australians and would seem to invite continuing tax increases to address the continuing ageing problem. On the scale of harder options, this one may well be politically unacceptable.

The Australian Government is warning that if the problem is not resolved through a suite of options, the whole community will pay the price for the ageing of the population through reduced living standards (Swan, 2010). The crucial issue is: will older people actually be encouraged, cajoled, tempted, convinced or financially required to work longer and retire later? However this is not the whole picture. For older workers to work longer there must also be job opportunities; willing employees; and eager employers. This is a multi-faceted challenge and as Lear (2004) concludes "the concept of retirement is being redefined due to changing demographics and pressures to maintain national productivity" (p. 202).

National skills shortage

The government has warned that the nation will be 195,000 workers short by 2012 (Costello, 2007). Global Access Economics forecasts that between 2020 and 2030 only 12,500 extra people will enter the workforce each year, compared to an annual increase across the last decade of 17,000 (Boyd, 2008). Apart from massive immigration (which seems unlikely) coupled with a dramatic rise in the fertility rates (which seems even more unlikely), the retention of older workers in the workforce would seem the only logical strategy to overcome this projected skills shortage. Lear (2004) observes that over the past two decades older workers were not valued by employers because labour was in plentiful supply. Now the situation is changing dramatically. On the national level, a skills shortage (Swan, 2010) threatens to put a major dent in Australia's economic prosperity by forcing businesses to operate below capacity; or move off-shore.

Employers are now realizing that if they let their more experienced staff retire they will lose much-needed skills (Boyd, 2008). Although retaining older workers would be a good start, the situation would appear to be more complex than that. As Denmark et al., (2007) note "the lamentable skills shortage will not realistically be remedied by retraining older workers unless they are valued, trained and rewarded to the same extent as younger workers. At present this does not seem to be happening" (p. 164).

WORKFORCE CHANGE

Changing nature of work

A significant body of research (Howard, 1995; Kirsh, 2000; Zuboff & Maxmin, 2002; Callus & Russell, 2002; Liker, 2003; Calvo, 2006; Johnson et al., 2008) indicates that since the advent of the baby boomers in the mid-1940s there has been a major workforce evolution in the *nature of work*. In previous eras, work was primarily characterized by a physically demanding culture. Since the 1960s that has been significantly replaced (typically in modernized nations like Australia), by a knowledge-based work model characterized by a cognitively demanding culture (Howard, 1995; Johnson et al., 2008). Since the 1970s in America the share of the workforce engaged in cognitively demanding work rose by 34% and by 2006 only 7% of Americans held highly demanding physical jobs (Johnson et al., 2008). When combined with the trend for work to be seen as intrinsically rewarding, this movement is often referred to as "the changing nature of work" (Howard, 1995). The movement has basically paralleled the baby boomers life from the mid 1960s to the start of baby boomer retirement in 2010. With an ever expanding technological revolution, this movement continues to gather pace.

Knowledge workers

As the baby boomers grow older their physical ageing may no longer be a barrier to continuing in the workforce if their jobs are less physically demanding and more cognitively challenging (Calvo, 2006). Physically demanding work would seem to have been very closely aligned with the traditional retirement model (Howard, 1995). The rise of globalization, information systems and communications technologies have shaped the demand for "knowledge workers" (Zuboff & Maxmin, 2002). These changes would seem to favour those workers with higher levels of education not only when first entering the workforce but in staying-on or refocusing in the late-career and retirement phases (Maurer, 2007). Baby boomers will need to be able to demonstrate the capabilities for a 21st century workforce which the following generations (Generation X and Generation Y) have grown up with. The 21st century worker will increasingly need to be able to demonstrate advanced cognitive, interpersonal and technological skills which may not have been a part of the baby boomers' previous work environment (Charness & Czaja, 2005).

Retraining

Cognitively-demanding jobs require frequent training and re-training (Charness et al., 2007). Historically older workers (late-career workers) have not been considered for training because employers believed that it was more difficult to teach old workers new skills; and that the training costs for these workers could not be recouped (Lear, 2004). Formal employer-sponsored training tends to decline with age (Johnson et al., 2007). This pattern may need to change if older workers are to be an attractive option for employers. Older workers will need to have enjoyed on-job sponsored training during their work-time or have taken the initiative to develop new expertise in the knowledge skills area (Johnson et al., 2007). Governments also may need to accept the wisdom of spending money to support re-training programs if they wish these older workers to be an attractive option for employers (Swan, 2010).

Personal benefits of the changing nature of work

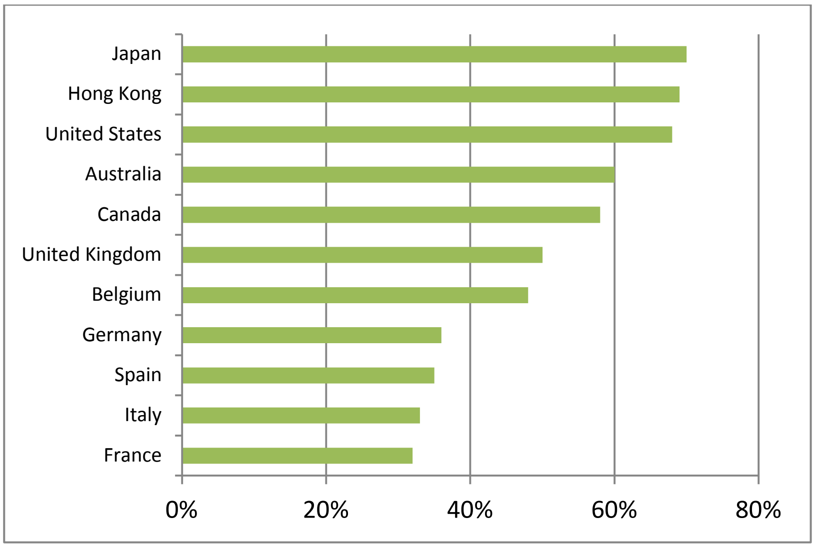
Calvo (2006) suggested that working longer may make people happier and healthier. The list of potential benefits for working longer would now seem to include: community status; personal self-esteem; financial security; personal happiness; and better health outcomes. Work as opposed to full-time leisure is increasingly being seen as an attractive alternative (Johnson, 2001). The changing nature of work would seem to be aligned with the changing nature of retirement.

RETIREMENT CHANGE

Refocusing: re-entering the workforce

In the 21st century retirement is no longer the total mandated withdrawal from the workforce but has evolved to display a more personal, flexible orientation which is more an option rather than a requirement compared to previous generations (Winston & Barnes, 2007). The time for exiting the workforce has become increasingly blurred, rather than clear. Internationally for example, the movement towards re-focusing is very strong. The American insurance company AXA conducted a world-wide survey amongst eleven developed nations in 2006 (as cited in Cooper, 2008). Baby boomers currently in the working-age group (15-64) were asked their intentions regarding work in retirement. For five of the eleven nations, the majority of the baby boomers (58 % - 70 %) indicated that they planned to hold a paid job in retirement (Figure 1.7):

Figure 1.7: Baby boomers planning to refocus



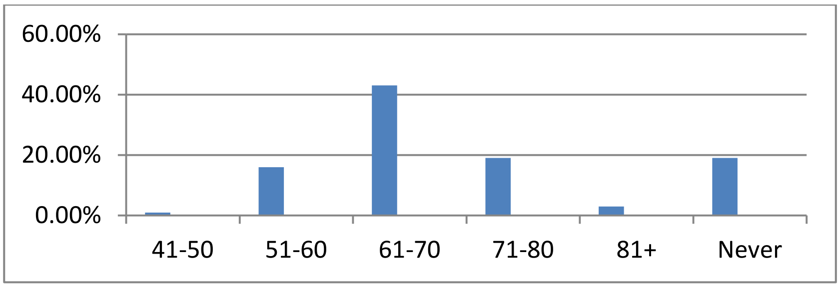
Source: *AXA Retirement Scope*, Wave 2, 2005 (in Cooper, 2008, p.8).

In the U.S.A. the pattern where workers officially retire from a long-term career job, only to then return to paid employment either in a part-time or full-time capacity is known as *bridge employment*. This pattern of refocusing back into the workforce reportedly provides social status, social interaction, daily structure and a sense of productivity (Dendinger et al, 2005). Bridge employment is seen as an important element in the transition from full-time employment to full-time retirement as it fulfills certain psychological needs for older workers (Mor-Barak, 1995). In Australia, social researchers (Salt, 2007; MacKay, 2007) are also reporting that baby boomers are opting not to retire in that traditional model or at the traditional ages. MacKay (2007) notes that "'retirement' is a word they'd rather not use, because it carries connotations for them of elderly folk sitting on the verandah with pipe and slippers, watching the sun sink symbolically in the west" (p.89). *The Retirement Intention Report* (ABS, 2009a) indicated that about 310,000 people who were working in 2007 had previously retired (i.e. they had in fact already refocused). The main reason given by this group (36% of men and 42% of women) was financial need. Another common reason for men to come out of retirement was because they were bored or needed something to do: 32 % of men but only 14% of women gave this as their reason for refocusing. Based on the data provided by these reports, it would appear that retirement has become a much more fluid concept.

Staying-on: working longer without retiring

If baby boomers intend not to retire in the traditional model (and at the traditional age), when exactly do they intend to take that final step to permanently disconnect from the workforce? *The Attitudes to Ageing Questionnaire* (Laidlaw et al., 2006), asked a middle-aged group (working baby boomers aged between 45 years old and 55 years old) exactly that question: "When do you intended to retire?" The findings indicated that the most popular time for the baby boomer working-age group to retire is between 61 and 70 years of age; and that 18% do not intend to retire at all (Figure 1.8):

Figure 1.8: The age at which middle aged baby boomers intend to retire



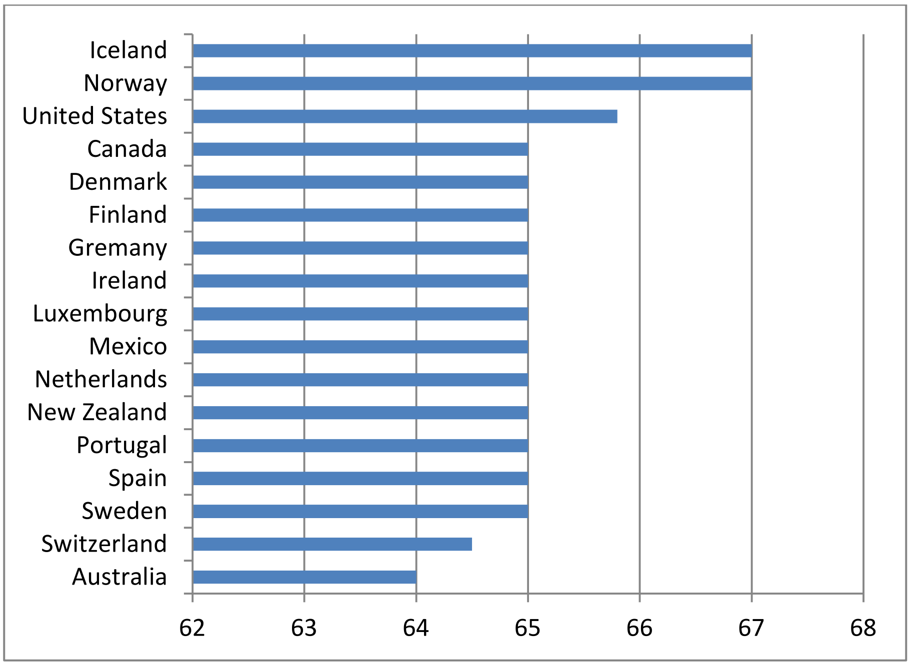
Source: *Attitudes to Ageing Questionnaire* (Laidlaw, Power & Schmidt, 2007).

These findings are consistent with the official Australian figures (ABS, 2009a) which indicate that employed people who were aged 45 and over in 2007, 85% intended to retire at some point; meaning that 15% of the workforce did not intent to retire at all. Both studies would appear to confirm the trend towards later retirement.

Retirement ages

The ABS (2009a) reported that the 2007 average retirement age in OECD countries was 63.15 years of age. Australia was ranked 17th with an average retirement age of 64 years (Figure 1.9):

Figure 1.9: Average retirement age for OECD countries (2007)



Source: ABS Australian Social Trends, 2009.

It is worth re-noting that the official retirement age in Australia has now been legislated to rise progressively to be 67 for men and 65 for women by 2013. The impact of these changes on Australia's OECD ranking will also depend on the decisions taken by the other OECD nations.

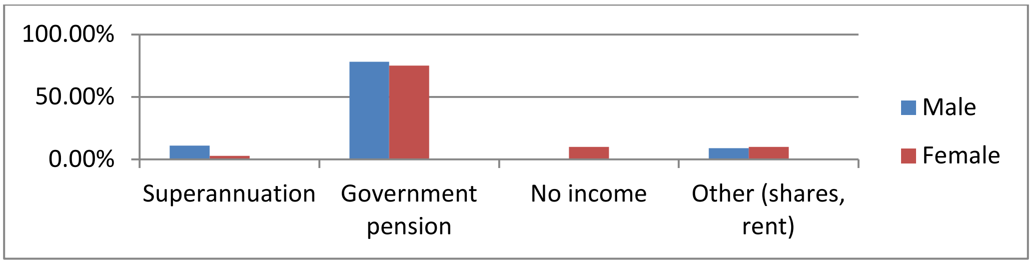
Ramping-off

The *Retirement and Retirement Intentions* Report (ABS, 2009a) indicated that of the 2.8 million people working full-time in 2007, 1.1 million (or 41%) intended to switch to part-time work before full-time retirement. Approximately 64% of these people plan to stay with their current employer and change to part-time work; whilst another 12% plan to change to a completely different type of work. The average age at which they plan to make that change is 60 years of age. These findings would seem to indicate a high interest in "ramping off" (i.e. winding down) as a preferred option rather than the moving from full-time work to full-time retirement. The intention of Australian workers not to retire at the traditional age is good news for governments which have moved to abolish compulsory retirement ages in an effort to reverse the trend towards the early retirement of the previous two decades (Lear, 2004). However retirement intentions are obviously linked to retirement income. Financial security in retirement continues to be a major driver, especially as governments are signaling a potential inability to sustain the real levels of support (aged pensions, health care and other concessions) for the increasing number of retirees (Salt, 2007; Gibbs, 2008).

Retirement income

Historically retired Australians have relied on government-funded aged pensions (Gibbs, 2008). As recently as 2007 the majority of aged retirees (78% of males and 75% of females) still relied on government age pensions as their primary source of income (ABS, 2009a). In this snapshot only 11% of males and 3% of females, nominated superannuation as their primary income source (Figure 1.10):

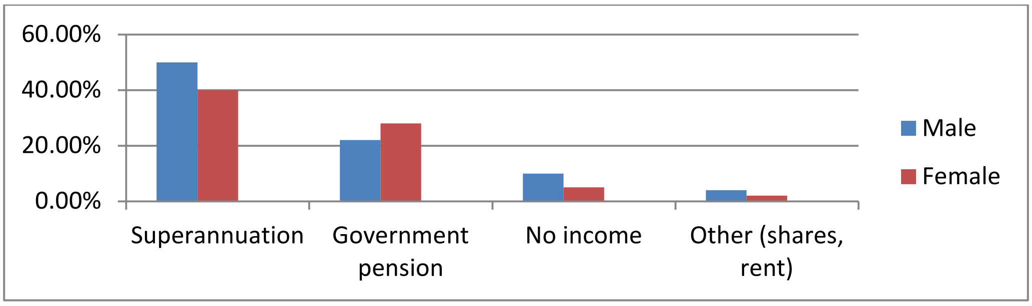
Figure 1.10: Sources of income in retirement (in 2007)



Source: Source: ABS (2009a, p.29).

When the baby boomers who were still working in 2007 were asked to indicate what they *expected* to be their primary source of income in retirement, the responses changed dramatically. Superannuation was now nominated by 50% of males and 40% of females as the primary income source; whilst just 22% of males and 28% of females expected government pensions to be their primary source of income (Figure 1.11). This finding represented a major re-alignment of the expected retirement funding sources.

Figure 1.11: Expected sources of income in retirement



Source: ABS (2009a, p.29)

A comparison of these two charts dramatically illustrates the shift in Australia from an almost total reliance on government pensions by the previous generation to the expectation of baby boomers that superannuation (self-funded or part employer/government-funded) will be the major source of income in retirement. There has been optimistic speculation that because baby boomers are seen as a wealthy cohort they will have less need to rely on the government old-age pension than previous cohorts (Robinson, 2007). This perception may be due to the rise in superannuation schemes and contributions; the property boom which has seen the family home become a major financial asset capable of funding further property investments; the rise in the percentage of the workforce obtaining tertiary qualifications; or simply the "good times" of the 1990s economic boom which resulted in higher productivity, greater job opportunities and higher salaries (Harding, 2006; Denmark et al., 2007; Matthews et al., 2007; Gibbs, 2008). It is worth noting that baby boomers from low socio-economic backgrounds still consider that the responsibility for funding ageing Australians should rest solely (or partially) with the government (Quine et al., 2006). However from the findings of the *Retirement and Retirement Intentions Report* (ABS, 2009a) there would appear to a general shift in attitude towards the acceptance that financial security is an individual responsibility. Lear (2004) warns that whilst the economic reality is that governments will find it increasingly difficult (if not impossible) to totally fund the retirement needs of an ageing population "many working people will have insufficient superannuation savings to support them for many years in the lifestyle to which they aspire" (p.212). The implication would seem to be that older people will need to be more financially self-reliant in retirement. It would appear worth investigating if working longer is seen by baby boomers as a way of ensuring financial security in older age.

GENERATIONAL CHANGE

Baby boomer attitudes and values

For baby boomers the very concept of "retirement" appears to be quite problematic (Mackay, 2007). Originally from the French "retirer" meaning to "withdraw to…for the sake of seclusion or shelter or security", baby boomers seem have developed an aversion to the word, and feel depersonalized and stereotyped by being categorized as retirees (Gibbs, 2008). Anecdotally newer terminology (e.g. "senior citizen", "grey power", "grey nomad", "sea change" or "tree change") appears to be replacing the word "retirement"; giving the sense that baby boomers are actively moving on to a new phase of life. Gibbs (2008) points out that in old age the previous generations used to be "those well-behaved, neatly dressed maiden aunts and bachelor uncles – asexual, passive, kindly looking and ready to disappear quietly like the fluff on a dandelion if you were to blow gently" (p.29). Now the baby boomers are replacing that image with one more aligned to their values: fashionably well-dressed, physically energetic, emotionally adventurous, sexually alive, intellectually engaged and career-wise ambitious (Johnson, 2001). Boomers appear to fear losing their intellectual and physical faculties as they grow older, so they are re-defining retirement to be an active period of life involving a mix of work and leisure activities (Winston & Barnes, 2007).

A more negative interpretation of the attitude and values is offered when because of their apparent self-absorption and pursuit of self-gratification, baby boomers are described as the *me generation* (Fink, 2009). McCrindle (2009) notes that Generation X (i.e. the next generation generally considered to be those born between 1965 and 1979) would agree with this assessment because "as baby boomers are working longer than previous generations and are more likely to stay in positions of power longer than anticipated, …Gen X-ers grow frustrated with stunted advancement up the corporate ladder" (pp.30-31). The negative consequences of baby boomers working longer would seem to be worthy of further investigation.

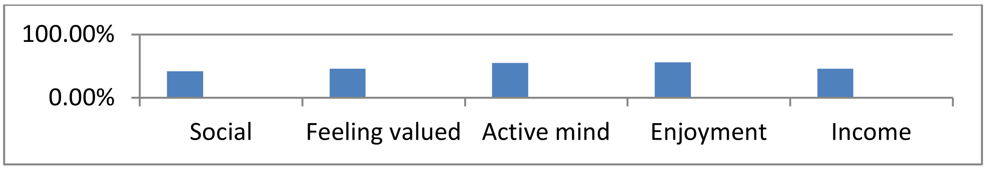
Baby boomer gender issues

Baby boomer women are the first generation of females to have been in the workforce long enough to retire in large numbers. These women differ from their predecessors in a variety of ways: better educated; more independent; more engaged in financial matters; and more likely to be juggling family and career responsibilities. Winston and Barnes (2007) conclude, that "unlike their mothers who feared the empty nest and their husband's retirement, they see the launching of their children and their own retirement as potentially liberating" (p.140). The gender-based issues for baby boomer males are more often described as being associated with a workaholic identity (Salt, 2007). If males have defined themselves narrowly in terms of their work, staying connected to the workforce is common as a means of avoiding a loss of purpose and identity (Mackay, 2008). Staying-on as long as possible in the security of work which nurtures and feeds those generational and gender needs for recognition and self-worth, can be an attractive alternative for some males looking to delay the inevitable (Denmark et al, 2007). Whilst these would appear to be generic findings, gender variations within specific vocations would seem worthy of further investigation.

Baby boomers' reasons to work longer

In 2007 Australian working baby boomers aged 41-60, were asked what factors would entice them to stay in paid employment for longer (Laidlaw, Power & Schmidt, 2007). The responses to five criteria were evenly spread. Financial reward (income) was not the sole (or even highest) ranking reason nominated for working longer (Figure 1.12):

Figure 1.12: Factors which entice working baby boomers to work longer



Source: *Attitudes to Ageing Questionnaire* (Laidlaw, Power & Schmidt, 2007).

For baby boomers approaching retirement the symbolism around remaining in the workforce to demonstrate that you are still young, active, effective, productive, satisfied and stimulated in the *new retirement* would appear to be quite attractive (Johnson, 2001; Winston & Barnes, 2007; Mackay, 2007; Cooper, 2008). However these emotional needs may well be tempered by the economic reality of needing additional finances in retirement just to survive. Gibbs (2008) found that "the main stumbling block people mention as causing them to put off the decision (to retire) included not yet having enough money to live on at the time"(pp37-38). Once retirement is close the financial reality of the delayed pension ages (67 for males and 65 for females by 2013) may mean that many baby boomers will not be able to afford to retire till later and will be working longer *by* default (Denmark et al., 2007). These findings which appear to indicate that working longer may be related to either baby boomer attitudes and values or financial need (or a combination of both) would seem worthy of further investigation.

THE "NEW RETIREMENT"

Self-actualization and regeneration

Cooper (2008) believed that "as a group, boomers will redefine retirement, just as they have been changing societal and cultural norms since they reached pubescence" (p. 11). Rather than being a gradual slide away from the fullness of life, the new retirement is built on a regenerating model of exploration, mastery, mentorship and renewal (Johnson, 2001). The new retirement model seems to promise an expanding sense of self-worth and an exciting return to youth-like passions for discovery and adventure. Johnson (2001) proclaims that, "the new way of thinking about retirement values life meaning over rest; personal fulfillment over relaxation; life balance over lopsided leisure; and realization of long-held dreams over simply time-filling fun" (p. 3). Active minds and active bodies are the hallmarks of the new retirement. This shift towards the "new retirement" (Johnson, 2001; Mackay, 2007; Winston & Barnes, 2007; Cooper, 2008; McCrindle,

2009) is presented as a vehicle for older people to add value to society (rather than being seen as a drain); to utilize their new found energy; to satisfy their passion for work; to share their expertise and wisdom; to build a financial buffer against reduced government support; and to provide governments with a breathing space to deal with the economic challenges of an ageing society.

Who is asking the baby boomers?

According to all the preceding findings and predictions baby boomers would appear to be living longer, more affluent, better educated, more travelled, more often divorced, more exposed to marketing and media, more technologically proficient, more committed to gender equity, more fashion and fitness conscious, more interested in staying young and more interested in working longer than previous generations. Gibbs (2008) predicts that “retirement will continue to morph into something new and different” (p.24). Cooper (2008) believes that this “new retirement” will be more a period of “regeneration than degeneration” (p. 16). However who is asking the baby boomers? Despite there being general agreement about the potential economic significance of the baby boomer ageing issue, little is really known about the expectations and plans of this cohort (Quine & Carter, 2006).

In a major Australian literature review of the intentions and expectations of baby boomers in the areas of health, housing, work and income, Quine and Carter (2006) found that the literature was primarily based on policy makers’ and researchers’ opinions and projections of baby boomer expectations, rather than on the baby boomer’s own opinions, intentions and expectations. This vacuum in the research was also exposed by the then Federal Minister for Ageing who believed that what has been missing from much of the debate about the ageing population was a deeper appreciation of the values, aspirations and attitudes of the baby boomers themselves (Bishop, 2005). What do baby boomers really want? What are baby boomers’ expectations, aspirations and perceptions of late-career and transition to retirement? Is there really a “new retirement”? Quine and Carter (2006) recommend that “research that targets baby boomer expectations and action is urgently needed… if policies in this area are to be effective, empirical research obtaining information directly from baby boomers is required” (p.3). This process was commenced with investigations of baby boomer retirement intentions undertaken by Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009a); Laidlaw et al., (2007); and Matthews et al., (2007).

Towards the end of the first decade of this century (2007-2010) the first of the baby boomers are reaching the traditional retirement ages. It would now seem timely to build on the previous research about baby boomer intentions by exploring to what extent (if at all) baby boomers are actually embracing the *new retirement* philosophy; to what extent (if at all) they are actually opting to/wanting to work longer; and If they are indeed working longer what are the reasons for these decisions. These would seem to be key areas worthy of deeper investigation.

SUMMARY

Compared to their previous generation, boomers are better educated, more travelled, more often divorced, more exposed to marketing and media, more technologically proficient and more committed to gender equity. The challenge for governments and the society is presented as being to formulate and implement policies which will facilitate an alignment between the demographic, economic, workplace challenges facing the nation and the retirement, personal and generational needs of the baby boomers. Flexible work patterns; access to and proficiency with information technology; and positive attitudes towards ageing are all seen as aiding the baby boomers in successfully integrating a “new retirement” life-style and financial security through continued workforce participation. For all this to occur, baby boomers will need to be interested in participating in a “new retirement” (one which would be virtually unrecognizable to their parent’s generation); and interested in working longer.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the nation’s current workforce, economic and societal challenges associated with a rapidly growing and ageing population. In the following chapter the focus shifts to the specific educational context (as a microcosm of that wider community). In particular the educational leadership of schools (as provided by school principals) is examined to see what effect, (if any) the changes outlined in this chapter are having on the educational community in relation to principal shortages; leadership succession planning; the late-career work phase; staying-on, ramping-off or refocusing for late-career principals; and the transition to retirement phase for baby boomer principals in NSW.

CHAPTER 2

RETIREMENT AND THE PRINCIPALSHIP: THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

In examining the extent to which (if at all) the changes in the broader society (as outlined in Chapter 1) are impacting on the educational community this chapter reviews the relevant educational leadership literature against the background of the current school leadership context. This context is currently characterized by: (1) a high number of principal retirements; (2) an anticipated shortage of principals; (3) a potential loss of corporate knowledge; (4) a search for strategies to fill the leadership supply pipeline; (5) a search for effective succession planning programs; (6) questions concerning the continuing effectiveness of late-career principals; (7) a search for new models for school leadership; (8) the impact of educational leadership theory on school effectiveness; and (9) the policies of government and/or employing authorities to address these issues. The relevant educational leadership literature and the current educational leadership context provide the framework for the specific focus of this research: the meaning and nature of the late-career phase and the transition to retirement phase for school principals in NSW.

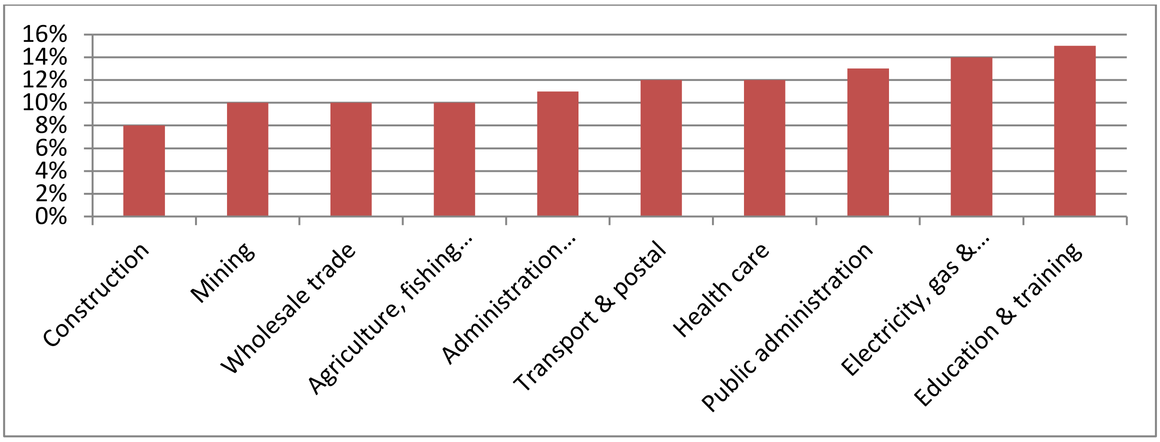
In 2010, the bulk of the baby boomer generation across the nation reached the traditional retirement point in their life-cycle (ABS, 2007). As was seen in Chapter 1, the national landscape is being transformed as baby boomers intend not to follow the traditional retirement model but rather appear to intend to stay-on or refocus back into the workforce. Will these staying-on and refocusing trends happen within the educational community? Will baby boomer principals be interested in, and able to, follow the intentions of baby boomers across the nation? An understanding of the current educational leadership context is needed to establish a framework against which to explore the expectations, aspirations, experiences and reflections of NSW late-career and recently-retired principals.

PRINCIPAL RETIREMENTS

The Australian context

The education sector is facing an imminent and significant loss of experience and corporate knowledge (d'Arbon et al., 2002; Lacey, 2003a; Lacey, 2003b; Barty et al., 2005; Lacey & Gronn, 2006c; Dempster, 2007). A recent national survey (ABS, 2009a) investigated the retirement intention of various workforce sectors. The "education and training" sector, compared to all other sectors, registered the largest proportion of workers who intended to retire within the next 10 years (Figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1: Projected retirements from various industries (2007 to 2008)



Source: *Australian Social Trends* (ABS, 2009a)

This finding indicated that the education sector, above all other sectors, needs to be pro-actively addressing the issues. With principals being the oldest cohort in the teaching service (Lacey & Gronn 2005; Barty et al., 2005), the fact that the education sector registered the highest intention-to-retire figure is particularly relevant for school leadership succession. Principal retirements are a microcosm of the generic baby boomer retirement bulge which is threatening to produce a loss of corporate knowledge across the society (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010). In 2007 a national survey, *The Staff in Australia's Schools* (SiAS, 2007) was commissioned by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training to help fill data gaps for future school leadership planning (McKenzie, 2008). The findings drew attention to the fact that more than 50% of school leaders were aged 50 years and older (Table 2.1). From this finding it was confirmed that "a large number (of principals) will need to be replaced in the next few years as they retire" (McKenzie, 2008; p. 14):

	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Age band (years)	Teachers %	Leaders %	Teachers %	Leaders %
21-30	18	2	16	1
31-40	21	13	21	9
41-50	29	33	30	35
51-55	19	29	19	31
56+	12	25	15	24
Average age	43 years	50 years	44 years	50 years

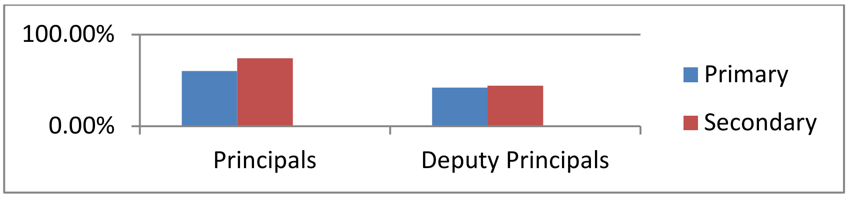
Table 2.1: Age profile of Australian teachers and leaders (2008)

Source: Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, *Staff in Australian Schools* (2007).

The NSW context

In 2002 the NSW Department of Education and Training (NSWDET) conducted a detailed workforce planning review aimed at identifying the looming retirements from baby boomer principals and other senior executives. This review found that by 2013, 74% of current secondary school principals and 59% of current primary school principals will have separated from the system. In addition 40%-50% of the current deputy-principals, (the logical replacements for these principals), also indicated that they would be retired by 2013. (Figure 2.2):

Figure 2.2: Projected retirements by 2013 (NSWDET Principals and Deputy Principals)



Source: Scott (2003).

As the deputy-principal ranks are occupied by the same generational cohort (i.e. baby boomers) as the principals' ranks a large percentage of the whole leadership cohort is intending to retire within the same time-frame. This is projected to result in a significant loss of experience, knowledge and skill (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010).

In 2008 the New South Wales Auditor-General released a report entitled *Ageing Workforce-Teachers* (Achterstraat, 2008) in which it was noted that 47% of teachers (including principals) were aged 45-64. This was the highest proportion of mature age workers of any occupation in NSW. The report also indicated that over the past two decades the workforce in NSW has been ageing at a faster rate than the national population. By 2016, 50% of all current teachers (and principals) in NSWDET schools will have reached retirement age (Achterstaat, 2008). In providing advice for NSWDET to counter the problems associated with these high retirement rates and the loss of corporate knowledge, the Auditor General's report suggested that NSWDET needed to find ways to allow mature age employees to phase their retirement; to progressively take on less responsibility; to work shorter hours; to have access to more flexible working arrangements; and to access more flexible superannuation regulations to allow for phased retirement (Auditor General, 2008).

Superannuation and retirements

It is often difficult to accurately predict the retirement intentions of workers because personal circumstances change (e.g. the Global Financial Crisis in 2009). However in public sector education, government funded superannuation retirement schemes have a financial benefit which maximizes at a pre-determined age. In such circumstances it is usually a little easier to predict retirement ages. The majority of current NSWDET principals are members of the NSW State Superannuation Scheme

(SSS) which is anecdotally referred to as "the old scheme" (Lawley, 2011). This is a defined benefit scheme which has a pre-nominated retirement age (usually 55 for females and 60 for males). Although principals may retire earlier most don't as the financial benefit maximizes at that pre-nominated retirement age. Some may opt to stay-on past their pre-nominated retirement date, but in those cases the member cannot access their superannuation money till they are permanently retired.

A recent retirement survey of NSW public sector employees (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010) found that defined superannuation schemes like SSS "provide fewer options for members to proactively engage in their own decision-making" (p.6). This restriction (i.e. not being able to access the superannuation benefits until the member has permanently retired) has been a major disincentive to stay-on and has been the centre of political and industrial activity aimed at altering the regulation. At the time of writing such attempts had not been successful. The scheme was closed to new members in July, 1985 and was replaced by an accumulation fund (not a defined benefit fund) known as the State Authorities Superannuation Scheme (SASS); and more recently by the First State Superannuation Scheme (FSSS). The last "old super scheme" members are due to retire in 2023. By that date all principals who belong to a public sector superannuation scheme will be members of one of the two newer schemes (Lawley, 2011). The full impact of these superannuation-related issues on principals' decisions appeared worthy of further investigation in this research.

The situation varies internationally as retirement and pension funds vary. It is worth noting that in the United Kingdom (UK), options for phasing or delaying retirement became more popular once there were changes to the pension fund (January, 2007) which allowed principals (i.e. headteachers) greater flexibility to stay-on past their retirement fund age without financial disadvantage. The proportion of headteachers retiring before 60 years of age decreased whilst the proportion staying-on after 60 years of age increased (National College of School Leadership, 2008b). This outcome may well have particular relevance for the NSW situation.

Premature retirements: negative causes

This issue of principal retirement is further complicated by premature retirements (Lacey & Gronn, 2005, 2007; Barty et al., 2005). "Premature" is traditionally the descriptor assigned to principals who opt to retire before their superannuation retirement date. Research which examines the reasons for principals retiring prematurely (Draper, 1996; Williams, 2003; Kruger et al.,2006; Lacey & Gronn, 2005, 2007; Barty et al.,2005) reaches the conclusion that such retirements are predominantly linked to negative personal factors (e.g. stress, personal health, family). Further research (Lacey, 2003a; Lacey, 2003b: Lacey & Gronn, 2005; Lacey & Gronn, 2006c; McKenzie, 2008; Fink, 2010) indicates that another negative factor causing premature retirement may be career dissatisfaction (e.g. the escalating roles and responsibilities of the principalship).

Premature retirements: positive causes

Premature retirement might take on a different meaning with the next generation of principals: Generation X. Flintham (2007) identified a Generation X category of premature retiree which he classified as the *sprinter*: “an emerging post-modernist generation of school leader, whose world view does not necessarily envisage linear career progression” (p. 6). This finding extends the definition to premature retirement as these principals are not exiting early due to some form of professional or personal difficulty but rather these principals build up a flexible and a developing skills set; they move before there can be any plateau effect on their performance ; they preserve work-life balance through other interests beyond the school; and they see their career as a series of emerging opportunities (both within and outside of education) which require different clusters of professional skills and personal strengths (Flintham, 2007).

The cost of premature retirements

Ribbins and Zhang (2005) concluded that “losing headteachers prematurely, especially those that are able and experienced, entails a triple cost to educational systems. First because those that leave have to be replaced... second because when such leaders are replaced, this must normally be with those who lack their experience and expertise… third because it takes time to achieve leadership capability and whilst this is being developed schools and pupils may suffer” (p. 83).

Summary of principal retirements

Workforce systems are under pressure to address the issue of an ageing workforce and retirement in the 21st century. Education is no exemption. Principals who retire prematurely, for negative or positive reasons, will exacerbate the looming principal shortage. Would late-career principals be interested in staying-on or refocusing if offered attractive and flexible transition and retention strategies? May this action alleviate potential shortage, avoid significant loss of corporate knowledge and positively impact on workforce participation rates? These questions would seem worthy of further examination. For educational authorities the projected rate of principal retirements presents a major challenge in sustaining an effective leadership supply pipeline (Fink, 2010).

PRINCIPAL SHORTAGES

The international context

Kruger et al., (2005) reported that “in many states in the USA a leadership crisis exists in educational administration, in the sense of a shortage of qualified candidates for principals positions…[and] the same problem is perceptible in several European countries” (p. 241). Lacey and

Gronn (2006b) report that internationally "a growing body of research evidence suggests that school education systems are experiencing difficulties recruiting principals…candidate 'pools' are diminishing, the supply 'pipeline' is sluggish.., and some employers are unable to replace current vacancies and meet projected demand" (p.34). More recently Hargreaves et al., (2008) confirmed that internationally the situation is much the same as "in many countries, almost half of the current generation of school leaders is due to retire within the next five years, creating significant challenges to leadership recruitment, stability and effective continuity…" (p. 71).

The Local context

Preston's (1998) major research into workforce supply and demand in Australian schools clearly indicated that there was an approaching "graying" of the workforce. This situation has coincided in this decade (2010 - 2020) with a high number of early retirements due to generational, societal and gender factors (Barty et al., 2005). National research suggests that the shortage of principals in Australia is real (d'Arbon et al., 2002; Lacey & Gronn 2005, 2007; Williams, 2005; Barty et al., 2005; and Lacey, 2006). Teasdale (2008) reported that "Australia, like most other industrialized nations, is expecting a school leadership crisis with fewer people showing an interest in leading schools"(p.3). However the concept of *shortage* is not easily quantified.

Due to varying time-frames and location-specific situations, shortages might not always be what they seem. Lacey and Gronn (2007) warned that a principal shortage might be "aberrant because it is experienced only temporarily (say, for a calendar year), whereas if it persists over time there may be an anticipated excess of vacancies" (p.3). In addition to this time dimension, Lacey and Gronn (2007) also drew attention to the geographic dimension where "highly fancied appointment locations may co-exist alongside hard-to-staff areas - a recent feature of employment markets for principals in the USA, which has made allegations about national level shortages in that country difficult to sustain" (p.3). Similarly in Australia the struggle to fill principal vacancies in some of the rural and remote areas can provide a skewed impression of shortage. In any system both the time-frame and geographical variables need to be considered before generic statements about principal shortages can be sustained. This is a timely note of caution as the dire projections of leadership shortages which rebounded around the world in the early part of this century may have been alarmist (Fink, 2010). This would seem worthy of further investigation.

Flexible work options

As a strategy to avoid principal shortages d'Arbon et al., (2002) indicated that in some smaller jurisdictions, the concept of staying-on (especially finishing the career in a part-time or shared role whilst acting as a mentor and/or coach to less experienced principals) was very popular with principals. Interestingly the practice was not encouraged by large jurisdictions (Lacey & Gronn, 2005). The apparent lack of action (or negative reaction) by employing authorities towards principals staying-on (either full-time or part-time) does not seem to align with comments found in the NSW Auditor-General's Report to the NSWDET. This report (*Ageing Workforce-Teachers*, Achterstaat, 2008) drew upon two earlier reports. The *NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan* (2004-2006) recommended that government agencies "find ways to allow mature age employees to phase their retirement to progressively take on less responsibility, work shorter hours and have access to other more flexible working arrangements" (The NSW Premier's Department, 2006a, p.12). The NSW Premier's Department*, Retirement Intention Survey* (June 2006) found that

> 72 % of those intending to retire in the next five years would delay their retirement (if they could reduce their hours without reducing their superannuation) and 97 % of this group would work for two more years…[and]nearly half would continue to pay superannuation at full-time rate if they were working part-time." (The NSW Premier's Department, 2006b, p. 15)

As a result the Auditor General's report (Achterstaat, 2008) recommended that NSWDET "encourage the retention of mature age workers…by facilitating a phased retirement…by increasing its focus on knowledge continuity… [and] by keeping in touch with retired staff and drawing upon their skills, knowledge and expertise" (p.7). In response, NSWDET produced the Phased Retirement Guidelines (NSWDET, 2008) aimed at supporting and facilitating employees to reduce their time and/or their responsibilities so that they might be attracted to stay-on in a part-time/job-share situation. These flexible work practices for teachers would seem to align very closely with the recommendations from the reports outlined above. This policy document, which encourages and facilitates the opportunity for teachers to *ramp off* do not appear to extend to principals. In 2010 NSWDET produced *A Guide for Retiring Principals* (NSWDET, 2010). In this document there is encouragement for principals to retire and return to casual teaching. However there are no encouragements for principals to stay-on longer, to phase their retirement through part-time/job-sharing the principalship, to take on less responsibility, to work shorter hours or to access to more flexible working arrangement whilst still in the principal's role (NSWDET, 2010).

Summary of principal shortages

The issue of principal shortage would seem to be highly complex and extremely contextual. It would appear that potential or real principal shortages may well be a combination of various factors in excess of the obvious baby boomer retirement bulge (e.g. the attrition from the profession of younger teachers who would be potential principals; the reluctance of classroom teachers to seek promotion; the reluctance of middle managers to aspire to or apply for the principalship; and the premature retirements of experienced principals).

There would appear to be two strategies which could be employed to alleviate principal shortages: (1) the generic strategy of attracting aspirant principals through leadership succession programs (which is explored in this chapter); and (2) the specific retaining of existing principals through flexible work options which would be dependent upon the interest which baby boomer principals have in part-time/job-sharing in the principalship. This issue would seem worthy of direct investigation with both the late-career and recently-retired principal cohorts.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Attracting aspirants

Traditionally the target group to succeed principals has been middle management, with the belief that they would be the next natural leaders. In the UK the dilemma seems to be a supply problem caused by the unwillingness of deputy heads, middle leaders and teacher leaders to aspire to the headship (Fink, 2010). Similar research across Australia also showed that middle management was not interested in applying for the principalship (d'Arbon et al., 2002; Lacey, 2003a; Lacey & Gronn, 2005) whilst Victorian research (Lacey & Gronn, 2003) found that only 12% of classroom teachers aspired to be principals. The *Staff in Australian Schools* report (McKenzie, 2008) noted that nationally "only 10% of teachers intend to apply for either a Deputy Principal or Principal position within the next three years" (p.13) and that "only about 50% of principals believe that school leadership positions were attractive to qualified applicants" (p.12). Mulford (2008) believes that, "finding the next generation to succeed those soon to retire is proving a challenge, not only because of the demographics, but because there are some who do not like the look of the leadership pressures" (p.v).

Generation X aspirants

The issue of finding aspirants willing to actually apply for the leadership positions may have a generational imperative. Whilst baby boomers tended to take on a career for life (Fink, 2010), Leach (2007) found that for Generation X "a job for life means a sense of imprisonment" (p. 14). This is very different to the out-going baby boomer view of work and career which was built on compliance, hierarchies, loyalty to the employer, service to the community and a safe job for life (Fink, 2010). For many Generation X members, teaching is a good job with good holidays and reasonable pay; certainly it is not seen as a calling or a mission as it tended to be for baby boomers (Johnson, 2004). Lusting and competing for leadership roles like baby boomers is just not in their makeup (Donaldson, 2007). Generation X would rather work to live, than live to work, like the workaholic baby boomers (Fink, 2010). Compared to previous generations of teachers, Generation X teachers are less accepting of top-down hierarchy; less respectful of conventional organizations; and if systems are not responsive to their needs for variety, responsibility and influence, they are likely to leave their school and profession without a concern, thus negatively affecting the reservoir and pipeline of potential quality leaders (Moore Johnson, 2004; Barty et al., 2005; Mackay, 2007).

Accompanying these generational changes are social changes. Generation X teachers will probably have partners who have their own career, and so relocating to follow the partner's promotion (traditionally the male) is less likely to be an option for these teachers whereas it was the norm for baby boomers (Barty et al., 2005). Changing generational and social values mean that teachers, like others, are examining the additional workload and hours required in promotions positions before deciding to apply; and some are deciding not to go further on the career path (Barty et al., 2005). It would seem doubtful if system-designed succession planning programs will effectively counter these generational and social movements which are impacting on the pipelines, pools and reservoir of future leaders (Fink, 2010).

Quality aspirants

The importance of selecting and appointing quality leaders is never too far from the core business of education: student performance. Quality leadership is directly connected to quality outcomes for students. Leithwood et al.,(2008) found "that leadership has very significant effects on the quality of school organization and on pupil learning…there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership" (p.5). If leadership is such a significant factor in determining school success then leadership succession programs which attract quality candidates are also crucial (Fink, 2010).

Quality and quantity (of aspirants)

McCulla (2007) reported that evaluations of the NSWDET *School Leadership Strategy* indicated that the number of applicants for school leadership positions had increased. Such quantitative evaluations tend to ignore the quality level of aspirants. MacBeath (2006) raised the issue of the quality of candidates as opposed to the quantity of candidates. When there is an abundance of applicants, systems can indulge themselves in choosing the best from the available bunch. When there is a shortage of quality applicants simply selecting the "best of the bunch" may well not produce the quality leadership required (Fink, 2010). It is easy for school systems to find warm bodies to fill leadership positions but as Fink (2010) warns "the challenge of course is to find and assign the right warm body to the right place at the right time for the right reasons" (p.XX1). Mulford (2008) noted that "succession planning is not simply a quantitative issue. It is vital that education systems ensure that there is a supply and flow of high-quality candidates for school leadership positions" (p. 56). Although locating and encouraging potential leaders has traditionally been an unwritten code for most jurisdictions, Dempster (2007), warned that "whilst 'talent spotting' is the life blood of elite sports, in education it has become eschewed" (p.137).

Exploring more deeply the issues of quantity and quality in leadership aspirants, Barty et al., (2005) found there to be no real shortage of qualified candidates in Australia but that the issue may really crystallize into two core questions: (1) does a quantity of candidates automatically equate to quality candidates; and (2) are qualified candidates necessarily quality candidates? Assessments or evaluations of succession programs (e.g. McCulla, 2007), would seem to have primarily focused and reported on the *quantum* of candidates. Educational jurisdictions generically employ quality assessment procedures of their principals. Line supervisors monitor principal performance (e.g. NSWDET term-based Principals Assessment Reviews). But no evidence was found of involvement or commitment by educational jurisdictions to assess their own quality-control selection processes or the quality of their principals through objective research.

Succession programs

As a result of real or imagined shortages of leadership candidates (and projections of massive future retirements) national, state, provincial and district jurisdictions around the world have invested heavily in leadership programs in an attempt to fill their leadership pipeline (Fink, 2010). Such programs have dominated the thinking of educational jurisdictions as they seek to avoid being seen as unprepared (Dempster, 2007). However the proliferation of such leadership succession programs may not really be addressing or solving the shortage of quality candidates. Dempster (2007) believes that we may again be seeing the fallacy of first order problem solving: "namely when a problem is identified, the automatic response is to develop a program using the name of the problem" (p.127). In this instance the problem is leadership succession and the solution is seen as leadership succession programs. Supporting this concern is Gronn's (2007) research which has indicated that such programs do not appear to be solving the problem they are aimed at: the shortage of quality principal aspirants.

Innovative succession programs

If the concerns which Dempster (2007) and Gronn (2007) raise about the effectiveness of leadership succession programs internationally are actually well founded, then successful succession planning may require some new approaches. In the past, leaders have worked their way up the ladder in a linear progression (Fink, 2010). However the needs of organizations under threat of not having a steady stream of quality leaders, and the non-hierarchical values of Generation X candidates, necessitate something more flexible and fast moving (d'Arbon et al., 2002). Internationally individual school systems are now looking more to develop their own succession plans and their own theoretical base to fit their individual needs (Collins, 2008). Part of this process has been the shift from the focus being on the leader, to a focus on leadership. The aim is to have more people in the organization interested and involved in leadership. This approach is referred to as *Distributed leadership* (Harris, 2007). The purpose is to create a deeper sense amongst classroom teachers that they do, and can, assume leadership roles in schools even if these are not the traditional formal leadership roles (West-Burnham, 2004). Harris (2007) noted that research findings “suggest that empowering teachers to take on leadership roles enhances teachers’ self-esteem and work satisfaction, which in turn leads to higher levels of performance due to higher motivation” (p. 168). Gronn (2003) supports this view indicating that “Distributed leadership is an idea whose time has come” (p.333).

A NSW example of this less traditional and more flexible approach has been the Catholic Education Office of Sydney’s highly innovative *Leaders for the Future Program* (LFP). This was a self-nominating program aimed at younger teachers and pre-promotional classroom teachers who did not hold traditional middle management position. The program received enthusiastic evaluations from all stakeholders: participants and employing authorities (d’Arbon, 2007).

Summary of succession planning

To create and implement successful succession, Fink (2010) suggests moving away from total reliance on the tradition middle management *hire and hope* mentality towards a system where educational authorities consciously establish a reservoir and a pipeline of quality aspirants from a less traditional gene pool of teacher leaders. This concept would seem to encapsulate the need to find a new way (not the traditional succession planning programs) to attract a new source of quality aspirants who are not exclusively from the traditional middle management strata. Such a concept would seem worthy of further investigation.

Dempster (2007) indicated that the failure of systems to attract aspirants to the principalship has tended to dominate the debate. Lacey and Gronn (2005) believe that “*retention* is as much an issue in the succession planning mosaic as is *attraction*” (p.44). Flexible retention policies can reduce premature retirement; extend the working-life of late-career principals; and take the pressure off succession programs to be overnight saviours (Lacey & Gronn, 2005; Gronn, 2007). National governments are seeking to encourage older workers to stay connected to the workforce for longer (Costello, 2007; Swan, 2010). The baby boomer generation is intending not to retire at the traditional age but to stay working for longer (ABS 2007; ABS, 2009a). Given this data a dual policy of attraction and retention (of late-career principals) rather than total reliance on the attraction (of new aspirants) would seem worthy of deeper investigation and consideration.

LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALS

Career stages

Erikson’s 1950 exploration of eight different life-crises has been continually developed and adapted into the theory of life-cycles. In relation to work these life-cycles represent various career stages.

Late-career has become one of these career stages. One strand of research has negatively characterized late-career workers as being withdrawn from work and society (Greller & Stroh, 2004); as posing problems in relation to career obsolescence and falling motivation (Rosen & Jerdee, 1990); as displaying a loss of processing speed in relation to declining intellectual performance (Schaie, 1996); as resisting change (Lahn, 2003); and as showing an aversion to taking risks (Oshagbemi, 2004). An alternative and more positive picture emerges from other studies which suggest there is no significant difference between the job performance of older and younger employees. These findings indicate that older workers have a high capacity for accommodating change(Geller & Simpson, 1999); display a deepening expertise and problem-solving capacity (Kabacoff, 2002; Lahn, 2003); and express substantial satisfaction with their job and career (Kakabadse et al., 1998; Wood, 2002; Greller & Stroh, 2004). In USA Greller and Simpson (1999) found that "the overall effect of chronological age on cognition and performance are not nearly so strong and pervasive as widely assumed" (p. 313). Geller and Simpson (1999) reported that when tests were conducted to measure the performance of workers aged from 20 - 75 years these showed that whilst the oldest quantitatively did the least amount of work, when the quality of the work was measured there was "no significant difference in performance" (p.330). This alternative perspective promotes late-career workers as being wiser and more tolerant (Hall & Mirvis, 1995); and in possession of know-how expertise (Hall, 2002). Oplatka (2007) summarized "that there are two contrasting arguments…The first argument suggests that late-career employees tend to be rigid, are less likely to be willing to learn new ways of working, are prone to resist change and innovation, and therefore, tend to be a burden to the organization…On the other hand, because of their years of experience, late-career employees tend to have a maturity and wisdom that enables them to anticipate problems and respond to them calmly and with confidence…" (p. 350).

Late-career principals as late-career workers

Within education, the professional life-cycles of teachers' literature initially established five sequential phases: survival; stabilization; experimentation; self-doubt; and finally serenity (Huberman, 1989). When applying this career theory to principals, several models have emerged to describe the stages that principals may pass through (Earley & Weindling, 2004; Parkay & Hall, 1992; Day & Bakioglu, 1996; Ribbins, 1998; Weindling, 1999; Filder & Atton, 2004). From this research Oplatka (2010) has distilled four key consistent stages of the principalship: the introduction stage; the induction stage*;* the maintenance and renewal stage; and the disenchantment stage. The final disenchantment stage (or "plateau path" stage) which characterized late-career principals as being tired, trapped, autocratic and resistant to change comes from research conducted in the UK (Early & Weindling, 2004); and Canadian research which indicated that late-career principals were "disengaging with the role and inclined to take few or no risks when implementing change" (MacMillan, 1998). These findings aligned with the traditional view about late-career workers as posing problems due to career obsolescence; falling motivation and declining intellectual capacity.

An alternative view (of late-career principals)

In 2007 when late-career UK principals were questioned specifically in relation to the disenchantment (or plateau path) stage over 60% reported that they were working with the same enthusiasm as when they first started as principals; whilst 83% felt they were still able to face the challenges that lay ahead (Early & Weindling, 2007). These findings were indicators that the disenchantment stage might not be the significant problem in terms of loss of morale, enthusiasm, effectiveness and satisfaction that was previously believed. In further UK research late-career principals looking for a professional development challenge were offered involvement in the National College of School Leadership's (NCSL) Consultant Principals Program (2002-2005). Early and Weindling (2007) reported that as a result of this engagement "their enthusiasm was rejuvenated and rekindled and 'plateauing out' avoided" (p.82). In Israel, Oplatka (2007) found that late-career principals "perceived themselves to be… energetic and work-focused…not burnt-out or stagnated…and expressing high work commitment" (p. 362). In fact these late-career principals indicated "a high sense of professional competence and expertise…a high level of efficiency…and a personal savvy subjectively related to their long years of professional experience" (Oplatka 2007, p. 363). In Australia Mulford et al., (2009) noted that "late-career principals… compared to other principals, are more likely to have a strong work ethic, to consult widely and to have a strong social consciousness" (p.1). Such findings challenge the plateau path concept for late-career principals and would invite further investigation.

Summary of late-career principals

Recent findings indicate that late-career principals are enthusiastic; energetic; keen to learn; open to change; collaborative; and possess the accumulated wisdom to effectively function as high-level principals, consultants, coaches and mentors (Earley & Weindling, 2007; Oplatka, 2007, 2010; Mulford, 2009). From these findings three issues invite further investigation: To what extent (if at all) do late-career principals see themselves as being on a plateau path? To what extent (if at all) do late-career principals wish to work longer? To what extent (if at all) have educational jurisdictions developed retention strategies to capture late-career corporate knowledge and capacity?

PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)

Late-career professional development

If retention of late-career principals is to be an effective strategy, then there are implications for professional development. Historically older workers have not been considered for training because employers believed that it was more difficult to teach old workers new skills (Lear, 2004). Formal employer-sponsored training tends to decline with age (Johnson et al., 2007). Charness et al., (2007) found that "a common myth about older workers is that they are unwilling and unable to learn. Generally there is no support from the studies and the literature for this myth" (p.232).

In education as late-career principals were seen as winding down to retirement (i.e. on a plateau path) it was assumed that resources deployed for their professional development would not produce an adequate return for investment (Earley & Weindling, 2006). Consequently professional development for late-career principals which expanded their skills base and tapped into their enthusiasm has traditionally been neglected (Flintham, 2007; Earley & Weindling, 2007). With the prospect of principals staying-on or refocusing (if the baby boomer intention responses prove to be accurate), there may be a greater need for educational jurisdictions to provide relevant quality professional development for late-career principals so as to maintain their capacity to respond to the changing social and educational context (Beatty, 2007). Late-career principals need access to appropriate professional development to remain current; to avoid staleness; to ensure rejuvenation; and to prepare for roles as coaches and mentors (Filtham, 2004).

The international context

In the UK, PD programs were examined to identify if they could support late-career principals to overcome any possible decline in performance. Stroud (2006) reported that late-career principals "felt that coaching and feedback on their professional practice was the key to much of their own professional development" (p.93). A program to address this late-career need was developed by the National College for School Leadership. This Consultant Principals Program drew coaches from late-career and recently retired-principals. When evaluated by Earley and Weindling (2006), the program was found to be highly beneficial for all stakeholders: experienced principals, newly-appointed principals and aspirant principals.

USA research examined how appropriate PD for late-career principals might develop principals as *system leaders.* Elmore (2008) describes this as a process whereby a culture of leadership improvement is implemented through "explicit strategies for developing and deploying knowledge and skills in schools" (p. 37). Experienced principals operate in a setting outside of their present school under the supervision of even more experienced late-career principals. The strategy allows the experienced principals to develop instructional knowledge and managerial skills; and to move on to become system-level administrators (Elmore, 2008). This is a capacity building strategy based on a platform of capturing the capacity of experienced late-career principals. The system leadership model provides PD for both cohorts: the experienced principal operating as a system leader and the system-level administrator operating as a coach and mentor (Elmore, 2008). Pont and Hopkins

(2008) believe that experienced principals being recruited as system leaders need access to professional development in the form of formal qualifications (as in UK); tailored learning (as in Austria); or practice (as in Belgium and Finland).

The Local context

The professional development of school leaders appears to be a significant issue due to the combination of: (1) the need to attract sufficient quality applicants to the principalship (Anderson et al., 2008); (2) the national goal for school and student performance improvement (e.g. NAPLAN: *National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy*); and (3) the increased accountability for the role of the principal (e.g. *MySchool* website: http://www.myschool.edu.au). In attempting to meet these needs the Federal Government, through the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has recently developed and released the *National Professional Standard for Principals* (AITSL, 2011). This is the first national standard for school leadership.

Summary of principal professional development

In NSW it was found that experienced school principals suffered from a lack of on-going professional development for their leadership roles (Belmonte & Cranston, 2007). McCulla (2007) concluded that "what could be held to be missing at present in the Australian context is the encouragement for school leaders to undertake higher order professional learning and research…in a way that transcends the immediacy of the jurisdictional and/or employing authority" (p. 75). Odhiambo (2007) believes that the professional development of experienced school leaders in Australia needs more attention. These findings seem worthy of deeper investigation.

RECENTLY-RETIRED PRINCIPALS

The International context

There is little research into the area of recently-retired principals. An international search for articles centering specifically on retired principals*,* produced fewer than fifteen responses. Pre-2000 articles (e.g. Schulz, 1971; Granger, 1978; Gorman, 1998) all focused on the retirement life-style issues for retired principals. The post-2000 articles start to focus on professional, career and work issues (e.g. Tucker, 2002, Earley & Weindling, 2006; Lacey, 2006; Kindellian, 2007; Schmidt, 2009; Marks, 2009b). In 2001 the UK's National College for School Leadership explored the concept of a 'level 5' leaders program (i.e. recently-retired headteachers who would be actively involved in mentoring and coaching). Early and Weindling (2006) found that "the traditional choices after headship such as …advisory posts, teacher training and university posts have been largely replaced by consultancies…" (p.40). Many of these consultancies provided mentoring and coaching support for aspiring, newly appointed or experienced principals (Fidler & Atton, 2004). A review of the *London Leadership Challenge Program* (Early & Weindling, 2006), noted that "heads in post, or those who have resigned or retired, now have numerous opportunities to undertake paid employment in education-related activities" (p. 37). The UK context would seem to present opportunities for headteachers to refocus. However no research was located to quantifiably indicate if the anecdotal trend towards refocusing (or even staying-on) was actually gaining popularity with UK headteachers.

In USA Schmidt (2009) recently noted that whilst the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) reports that the average age at retirement for elementary principals is 57 years, "sixty-eight percent … who are approaching retirement age report that they intend to work full-time after retirement; mostly because they want to" (p.24). The expectation seemed to be that being recently-retired no longer means not working. No research was found to give a quantifiable indication if the expectation of these late-career USA principals became the reality once the late-career cohort actually retired.

The Local context

In Australia there is also a scarcity of research focusing on recently-retired principals. In NSW there is very little specific research to show what retired school principals actually do in this phase of their life. The one study located (Gorman, 1998) focused on fifteen retired principals in the northern suburbs of Sydney (NSW). In an effort to structure a personally satisfying life in retirement, these recently-retired principals used their school-based leadership skills to engage in voluntary leadership roles in local community organizations with less than 20% of this group actually refocusing back into paid work in the educational community (Gorman, 1998). No research was located to indicate what recently-retired principals in 21st century in NSW (or Australia) are doing or want to do in this phase of their life. The lack of research about recently-retired principals would suggest that this is an area worthy of further investigation.

Summary of recently-retired principals

In the absence of available research about recently-retired principals, comment and anecdotal observations were sought from recognized national and international educational leadership research experts (Appendix 2.1). The reflections and opinions from these experts in the field indicated that although the phenomena of recently-retired principals refocusing back into paid employment (specifically within the educational community) seemed to be happening quite regularly, there was still no known research into this area of educational leadership. Given this dearth of known research it was deemed worthwhile to explore to what extent (if at all) recently-retired principals were operating in a traditional or a new retirement paradigm. Further investigation also seemed appropriate to explore if recently-retired principals were refocusing in retirement; and if such refocusing was specifically in the education sector.

NEW MODELS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The international context

There are new models of school leadership which are currently under international review (Anderson & Lacey, 2009; NCSL, 2009; Brighouse, 2007; Pont et al., 2008). These include managed leadership (where non-teaching staff on the senior leadership team have administrative responsibilities such as business management and public sector agency co-ordination); federated leadership (where principals oversee several schools or functions; or co-ordinate a variety of health and community services); system leadership (which involves principals working beyond their schools as consultant leaders with other local, regional or state jurisdictions); and co-principalship (which involves various job-sharing structures). Internationally these innovative frameworks are being adopted in combination with existing traditional approaches in a variety of models.

Chapman et al., (2008) indicate that the newer models are based on a greater level of collaboration between schools and community partners. Unlike the past where the majority of a principal's time was spent within one school, the emerging models operate across and between schools and other local agencies dramatically altering the traditional role of the principal (Weaver, 2008). Such models are being proposed as new ways to move school leadership from its traditional isolated model to something which is more flexible; more aligned to the increasing demands of the role; and more receptive to the increasing demands of an informed society (Early & Weindling, 2007; Mulford et al., 2009, Lacey, 2006; Anderson & Lacey, 2009; Chapman et al., 2008; Wever, 2008; Pont et al., 2008). Chapman et al., (2008) found that in the UK "leaders are increasingly recognizing the limitations of existing arrangements" (p.13). In 2008 in the UK almost 10% of headteachers were engaged in some form of federated model (NCSL, 2008a), as school systems sought to accommodate community multi-agency expectations; workforce remodeling due to baby boomer retirements; and leadership recruitment difficulties. The initial UK figures suggested that under these changes the proportion of principals retiring pre-60 years of age is reducing and the proportion post-60 is increasing. It is still too early to say that the new models are the prime cause for principals staying-on longer but this will be interested to observe over time (NCSL, 2008a).

System leadership

In the USA Elmore (2008) and in Canada Fullan (2005) proposed the introduction of *system leadership* where experienced principals operated simultaneously within their own school and across the wider district/region. The purpose of system leadership is to share the expertise of experienced principals for the generic benefit and capacity building for all principals. To implement a system leadership model in Finland, Hargreaves et al., (2008) recommended that current principals nearing retirement (i.e. late-career principals) continued to be employed by developing and increasing their coaching and mentoring skills. In this way these late-career principals will not necessarily simply extend their time in the principal's role but will increase their leadership capacity so as to "exercise leadership …beyond their schools" (Hargreaves et al., p.72).

Co-principalship

One of the alternative models for school leadership which continually attracts comment is job-sharing or co-principalship. An international literature review of job-sharing, *Voices of Women* (Anderson & Lacey, 2007) found that co-principalship is not really a new model as it has been operating in international settings since 1980. Any movement towards a generic acceptance of co-principals seems to have been cautious. Recent research (Cannon, 2004; Thomson & Blackmore, 2006; Eckman, 2006; Grubb & Flessa, 2006) indicated that there is a growing interest in co-principalship as being a model which challenges the status quo of solo leaders. Anderson & Lacey (2009) concluded that "all the studies and accounts…identify benefits to the individual co-principal and to the school community-students, teachers and parents" (p.9). The sole leader model is for many leaders, a lonely and demanding role, which leads to premature retirement and burnout at the very time that older workers are being encouraged to remain in the workforce (Anderson & Lacey, 2009). Co-principalship is being explored as a possible solution to the increasing demands of the role which is being seen as too large for any one individual no matter how "heroic" that person may seem (Sinclair, 2004).

Part-time/job-share

Under the generalized banner of "job-sharing or co-principalship" there are a great many variations e.g. full-time role splitting according to expertise; dual full-time sharing of all functions and responsibilities; full-time/part-time job-sharing; shared committee leadership; and Distributed teacher leadership with no formal principal position (Anderson & Lacey, 2009; Court, 2003). When interviewing ex-principals in relation to co-principalship, Lacey (2006) found that "not one ex-principal, male or female, totally rejected the possibility and many stated that they would have found job-sharing or co-principalship attractive…" (p. 22). When interviewing current principals Lacey and Gronn (2007) noted that these principals "saw much benefit in, and were attracted to, finishing their careers on a part-time or shared basis, in acting as mentors and/or coaches to less experienced principals and in benefitting from the option of paid sabbatical leave" (p.13).

Given the data concerning the baby boomer retirement bulge; the reluctance of middle managers to aspire to the principal role; the government's wish for older workers to stay connected to the workforce; the baby boomers apparent interest in working longer; and governmental reports urging knowledge transfer and capacity retention, it would seem worthwhile to undertake further research into principals' interest in the concept of co-principalship.

Summary of new models of school leadership

Anderson and Lacey (2009) believe that "without the inclusion of new models of leadership there is a potential to exclude groups from accessing school leadership positions at a time of growing demand and possible leadership shortages" (p. 18). One of those groups which might otherwise be excluded would be late-career principals who would retire completely unless a new model would encourage them to stay-on. Given the data concerning the baby boomer principal retirement bulge; the reluctance of middle managers to aspire to the principal role; the government's wish for older workers to stay connected to the workforce; the baby boomers apparent interest in working longer; and governmental reports urging knowledge transfer and capacity retention through part-time/job-sharing, it would seem worthy to undertake further research into alternative leadership model. Specifically the extent to which the part-time/job-sharing models of school leadership are of interest to late-career (or recently-retired) principals in NSW is worthy of direct investigation through this research.

NSW GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN ACTION

The federal policy agenda to encourage older workers to continue in the workforce (in some capacity), is finding a home in state government and public sector policy initiatives. For all public sector employees, the NSW government has established the SageCentre which is the NSW Government's online toolkit (www.sagecentre.nsw.gov.au) specifically designed to meet the needs retiring "NSW public sector employees" (SageCo, 2008, p.1). In public education the NSWDET recently released the *Phased Retirement Guidelines* (NSWDET, 2008), for teachers in NSW "who are nearing retirement age and are eligible to access the phased retirement strategies outlined in this document" (p. 1). These guidelines indicate that the key challenge currently facing organizations, including the NSW Department of Education and Training, is the ageing population. One of the Department's strategies to meet this challenge is to further support the attraction and retention of mature aged workers through phased retirement which can support the Department to: "keep talented mature aged workers for longer; reduce critical knowledge loss …and attract talented mature aged workers to the Department" (p. 1).

The NSW Department of Education and Training subsequently released *A Guide for Retiring Principals* (NSWDET, 2010). This document primarily indicates how principals might manage the phased retirement of staff; and mechanism for principals to retire and re-enter the workforce. Transition through part-time principalship is not explored. Therefore it would seem appropriate to explore to what extent (if at all) school principals are interested in a phased retirement model; which particular models are available at present; what alternative models might attract late-career principals; and what flexible human resource retention policies are being developed to meet the twin challenges of knowledge transfer and capacity capturing.

CONCLUSION

The findings in the educational literature explored in this chapter indicated that there is a significant concern about the looming baby boomer retirement bulge in the educational community. Much of the literature cited has focused on: (1) the quantitative loss of principals resulting in potential shortages; (2) the absence of aspirants which exacerbates any shortage; (3) the loss of corporate knowledge; (4) the design and implementation of successful succession programs; (5) the effectiveness level of late-career/recently-retired principals as “older workers”; (6) the potential for new models of leadership to solve the leadership challenges; (7) the role of educational leadership theories; and (8) government action (if any) to retain older workers through flexible transition to retirement policies and practices. This study seeks to add to that existing body of knowledge. Against the background of the current educational context (Chapter 2) and the economic, workforce and societal context (Chapter 1), this research explored what is the meaning and the nature of the late-career phase, the transition to retirement phase and the retirement phase for NSW baby boomer school principals. The investigation was undertaken employing the methodologies described in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research examines the perceptual meaning and nature of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for school principals in NSW. It does this by directly exploring, comparing and contrasting the aspirations, expectations, experiences and reflections of two groups of NSW principals (one cohort being late-career principals and the other being recently-retired principals). As might be anticipated, discussion of retirement and transition to retirement is both personal and potentially sensitive. This required a trusting relationship between the participants and the researcher. The stance of the researcher and the relationship with the participants is discussed in this chapter.

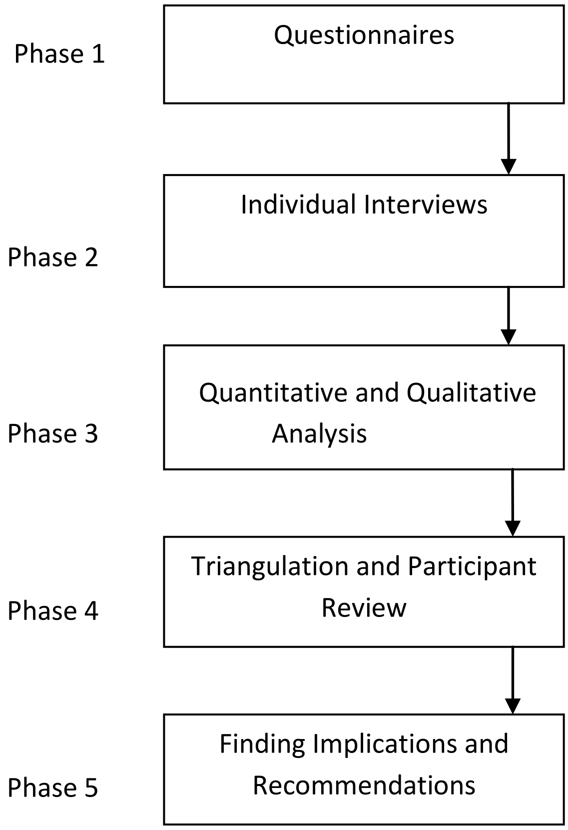
The methods employed to achieve this exploration were both quantitative (a cross-sectional questionnaire) and qualitative (individual interviews). The data from these research methods were validated through triangulation and participant reviews. The fundamental questions guiding the research were drawn from the literature as outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2: (1) what is the perceptual meaning and nature which NSW baby boomer principals ascribe to the late-career and the transition to retirement phases of their life?; and (2) to what extent (if at all) do late-career and recently-retired principals express or demonstrate an interest in staying connected to the workforce for longer?

The study is based on the premise that reality is socially constructed and that human behaviours are a function of how people understand their environment and other human beings. Purkey and Schmidt (1987) note that perceptual meanings "extend far beyond sensory receptors to include such personal experiences as feelings, desires, aspirations and the ways people view themselves, others, and the world" (p. 27). It is the direct exploration of the perceptual meaning and nature of the phenomena of late-career and retirement for these NSW principals which is the core objective of this study.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN OVERVIEW

Evans and Gruba (2007) state that "a hypothesis is a proposition made as a starting point for further investigation from known facts" (p.86). As this study was not based on "known facts" but aimed to explore "the unknown", the method of proposing a hypothesis was not selected. Rather there were phenomena to be investigated. The data collected drove the potential emergence of theory. Maxwell (2005) states that when "the theory is inductively developed during the study…in constant interaction with the data" (p. 42), that is *grounded theory*. In using grounded theory a mixed method design (involving both quantitative and qualitative paradigms) was selected as the most appropriate to collect and interpret the data. The design involved five phases (Figure 3.1):

Figure 3.1: Research design overview



1. Phase 1 was designed as a quantitative cross sectional Questionnaire to describe and measure responses of both cohorts to a series of items relating to the phenomena of late-career and retirement (Chapter 4).
2. Phase 2 was designed as qualitative Individual Interviews which purposefully selected participants from Phase 1. The interviews more deeply explored purposively selected items relating to the phenomena of late-career and retirement (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6).
3. Phase 3 consisted of quantitative and qualitative analyses conducted using the analytical techniques detailed (Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6).
4. Phase 4 consisted of triangulation (through Participant Group and Peer Group Reviews of the initial data findings from Phase 3) and was conducted through focus groups (Chapter 7).
5. Phase 5 was the reporting on the theoretical and practical implications of the findings; and making further recommendations (Chapter 8 and Chapter 9).

THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research paradigms are the commonly held and shared assumptions, concepts, values and practices of research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Usher (1996) describes paradigms as "frameworks that function as maps or guides…defining acceptable theories or explanations, methods and techniques to solve defined problems" (p. 15). Positive (quantitative) and interpretative (qualitative) paradigms are highly relevant to the research methods of this study and are summarized in Table 3.1:

	Positivist Paradigm (Quantitative approach)	Interpretive Paradigm (Qualitative approach)
1.	The world is external and objective and can be measured by objective methods.	The world is socially constructed and is based on the subjective realities of individuals.
2.	Generally laws explain the mature of social reality through empirical research.	Social researchers construe and interpret the meanings of phenomena and experiences.
3.	The researcher is independent of what is being studied and observed.	The researcher is part of what is being studied and observed.
4.	Science is value free and fact finding independent of human bias.	Science is value laden and driven by human interests.
5.	The emphasis is on objective facts and figures derived from calculations.	The emphasis is on subjective and individual perceptions, meanings and interpretations
6.	Searching for interactions, relations and causality between elements.	Searching for what is happening and evolving in human and social context.
7.	Reducing to the simplest elements or components of independent existence.	Focusing on the wholeness and totality of the natural situation.
8.	Formulating theories or concepts from data measured mathematically.	Applying multiple methods and data to secure different views of the phenomena.
9.	Large number of samples to establish principles.	Small number of samples for in-depth case study over long period of time.

Table 3.1: Positivist and Interpretive Paradigms

Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith et al., (1994. P. 80).

QUANTITATIVE v QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The benefits (and limitations) of quantitative methods

Positivist paradigms use quantitative methods to identify and explain the nature of reality through scientific observation, systematic recording and mathematical analysis, which is primarily based on the collection and analysis of numerical data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). One positivist method to achieve this stance is the cross sectional survey (questionnaire), which is scientific, logical and deductive as it collects large amounts of data within a short time for statistical analysis and presentation. Coleman and Lumby (1999) believe that through such quantitative empirical study, social reality and causality can be established when “the observer is independent of what is observed and the research is value free” (p.10). Initially using the narrow-lens focus of quantitative research, this study employed a questionnaire which was designed and intended to be objective, neutral, value free and reliant on numerical analysis. This method was employed to study the phenomena from a distance. However, such quantitative methods can also have inherent weaknesses. Social and human phenomena are implicitly not always well collected by questionnaires as such methods can fail to explain intangible and complex human interactions. Stroh (2000) argues that although a questionnaire has the strength of “exploring a large number of people’s views…it would not allow me to follow up immediately on people’s responses and to explore the contradictions and inconsistencies that are part of everyday life” (p.197). These factors are difficult to quantify or measure. Therefore the sole-reliance (or an over-reliance) on quantitative methods in social research may pose a potential weakness.

The benefit of adding qualitative methods

Qualitative methods (which rely on the collection and analysis of non-numerical data such as words and pictures) are often seen as a constructive solution to this problem for they offer an understanding of human processes and perspectives that evolve in natural settings (Firestone, 1993). When complex phenomena, such as people’s feelings are studied, an interpretive approach that uses qualitative methods is often preferred because it focuses on the subjective reality of people; or as Cohen and Mansion (1994) state, “the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world” (p. 8). Easterby et al., (1994) support the need for the use of an interpretive paradigm (i.e. qualitative methods) because “the world and its reality are not objective and exterior, but they are socially constructed and given meaning by people” (p. 78). Hakim (2000) further supports this position and values the knowledge generated by looking in depth at what lay beneath her subjects’ assumptions, belief and experiences to understand their world.

MIXED METHODS RESEARCH (quantitative + qualitative methods)

Mixed methods paradigm

In order to understand the constructed social reality of the phenomenon under investigation both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. When both a positivist (quantitative) and interpretive (qualitative) paradigm are used, the research design chosen is termed *mixed methods research*. The key differences between the three modes (quantitative, qualitative and mixed) are shown in Appendix 3.1.

The benefits of mixed methods

Johnson and Christensen (2008) note that "the fundamental principal of mixed research …says that it is wise to collect multiple sets of data using different research methods and approaches in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination has complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses"(p. 51). Combining two (or more) research methods limits potential errors and omissions. Denzin (1978) supports the use of the mixed methods approach saying that "each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality" (p. 28). Miles and Huberman (1989) conclude that "the careful measurement, generalizable samples, experimental control, and statistical tools of good quantitative studies are precious assets. When they are combined with the up-close, deep, credible understandings of complex real-world contexts that characterize good qualitative studies, we have a very powerful mix" (P. 42).

Mixed methods for this study

The relative advantage of choosing the mixed methods model can be seen in the complementary roles which the two research methods played in the data collection and analysis. The positivist paradigm (the quantitative questionnaire) facilitated an objective rating perspective delivering significant data in numerical and statistical form. Given that the construct under examination (the perceptual meaning and nature of the late-career and retirement phases) operates in a human and social form, the interpretive paradigm (the qualitative interviews) provided abundant narrative and descriptive data that could not have been adequately explored solely in quantitative terms.

Sequential mixed methods

Although the quantitative and qualitative components of mixed method research might be conducted concurrently, this study employed a sequential mixed method design with the quantitative component (the questionnaire) deliberately conducted first. Greene et al., (1989) reviewed 57 mixed-method studies and concluded that the sequential approach can assist the research process as the results of the first method can inform the sampling process for the second method. The chosen quantitative-to-qualitative design of this study accepted this finding and used nested samples for the qualitative component.

GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH

Investigating a phenomenon

As a counter to "theory confirmation" (testing hypotheses developed from previous theories), Glaser and Strauss (1967) contend that social research needs to "discover theory from data" (p.1). Strauss and Corbin (1998) continue this description suggesting that grounded theory is meant "to build theory rather than test it" (p. 13). Johnson and Christensen (2008) agree and describe grounded theory as "a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed" (P. 410). Grounded theory enables an emerging theory to be analyzed through the process of induction, deduction and validation. According to Strauss (1987) theory evolved in this manner has empirical application as it can predict, explain and interpret phenomena. Strauss and Corbin (1990) believe that in grounded theory, "one does not begin with a theory, and then prove it. Rather one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (p.23). This study is an investigation into phenomena and accordingly grounded theory was purposively selected as the most appropriate process.

The constant comparative (of grounded theory)

The grounded theory of this research saw data continually collected and analyzed; and then additional data emerged which impacted on the findings and the developing theory. This is the *constant comparative* (Paton, 1990) nature of grounded research which involves continuous interplay between the researcher, the data and the developing theory. Grounded theory is a never-ending process which Johnson and Christensen (2008) explain by stating that "during the study the researcher will interact with the data and collect additional data when questions arise and need answering… the key strategy, again, is that the developing theory should be grounded in the data" (p. 412). This is an accurate description of this study.

The four characteristics (of grounded theory)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) list four important characteristics of grounded theory: *fit, understanding, generality* and *control.* The first element "fit" indicates that the theory must correspond closely to the real-world data, and not to one's personal wishes or bias or premeditated categories. The second element *"*understanding", suggests that the theory must be readily understandable to people working in the substantive area. Thirdly the theory should have "generality" which indicates that the conceptual level should not be so specific that the theory only applies to one small set of people or to one situation. The fourth element, "control" indicates that those who use the theory should have enough control in everyday situations to make its application worthwhile. These four characteristics provided a framework, and continual points of reference, for this current research.

RESEARCH STANCE

Objectivity

No piece of social research can be entirely objective, since no researcher is entirely value free (Johnson, 1994). In quantitative methods the researcher can be more objective, distant and neutral. However as Johnson and Christensen (2008) note, “rather than using a standardized instrument or measuring device, the qualitative researcher asks the questions, collects the data, makes the interpretations, and records what is observed” (p.36). Accordingly the researcher can easily develop his/her own viewpoints. These viewpoints are known as *etic* perspectives (Gall et al., 1996) whilst *emic* viewpoints (Stake, 1995) represent the perspectives taken by the participants. In this study the focus is on the emic viewpoints of the participants. Being a recently-retired NSW principal the researcher qualified to be a participant and was therefore extremely conscious of the need to retain distance, objectivity, impartiality and neutrality. The research findings were solely based on the data collected directly from baby boomer principals in NSWDET; and not on the researcher’s personal experiences, opinions or projections.

Trust and credibility

One positive aspect of the researcher’s closeness to the field seems to have been the level of trust and credibility between the researcher and the participants. The researcher had a pre-existing collegial rapport with NSWDET principals across the state; and with both principal professional associations: the New South Wales Primary Principals’ Association (NSWPPA) and the New South Wales Secondary Principals’ Council (NSWSPC). This rapport may well have played a significant role in the extremely high response rate:

1. Phase 1 late-career survey return rate: 90.9%.
2. Phase 1 recently-retired survey return rate: 95.1%.
3. Phase 2 late-career interview completion rate: 100.0%.
4. Phase 2 recently-retired interview completion rate: 92.85%.

At this point it should be noted that although there were 208 NSWDET principals who volunteered to be participants, the response from Catholic Education Office (CEO) principals was very low (the processes followed to invite principals to participate are shown in *Sampling of Initial Populations*). Just eight CEO principals registered to participate: 3 recently-retired principals and five late-career principals. This was probably due to the fact that the researcher was not known to the Catholic Education Office principals. The relationship which appears to have been instrumental in the NSWDET principals’ response was not present in the invitation to CEO principals. This number was considered insufficient for the Catholic Education Office principals to be included in the study. This experience has led the researcher to consider that the influence of personal credibility and trust on the process of research in topics of this nature may well be an area worthy of deeper consideration.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All data gathering methods in this study involved interactions with other human beings. Therefore it was critically important to give due consideration to all the ethical issues involved. In keeping with the ethical issues as posed by Deyhle et al., (1992), two considerations were judged to be highly relevant to this study: (1) a demonstrated commitment to working towards the discovery and transmission of worthy knowledge that could be gained through quantitative and qualitative methods; and (2) the obligation of the researcher to build meaningful, trustful, responsible and objective relationships with the participants. Before this study could be commenced, prior written approval was sought from the Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) of Macquarie University. Applicants were required to read and conform to the *Guidelines for Ethical Approval for Human Research*: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms

The submission for Ethical Approval was lodged at ethics.submissions@vc.mq.edu.au on August 10, 2008. Two items for further consideration were raised by the committee on September 19, 2008: (1) for the supervisor to have access to all the research data; and (2) for a copy of the interview (Phase 2) and focus group (Phase 3) schedules and questions to be lodged with the committee prior to implementation of those phases. These two items were responded to by the researcher on September 19, 2008. Final Approval (HE26SEP2008-D06091) was received on September 26, 2008 (Appendix 3.2).

EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES

Approval to conduct research involving NSWDET principals and Catholic Education Office principals was sought before the study could commence. Approval was gained from the Sydney Catholic Education Office on April 11, 2008 (Appendix 3.3) and the Parramatta Catholic Education Office on October 4, 2008 (Appendix 3.4). NSWDET requires approval to be sought to conduct research in NSWDET schools and with NSWDET school personnel through the State Educational Research Approval Process (SERAP). The SERAP application was lodged on September 29, 2008. Items for further clarification were raised by NSWDET (e.g. individual survey item design and wording; focus group composition; the use of demographic trends; the use of generational trends; and the use of data analysis techniques). These items were responded to by the researcher on October 16, 2008. Four further issues which required more detailed clarification were raised by NSWDET on November 3, 2008 (i.e. the value of the research; sampling construction; focus group comparisons; and whether a need really exists to conduct focus groups). The researcher responded to these issues on November 5, 2008. Final NSWDET Approval (SERAP Number 2008136) was received on November 7, 2008 (Appendix 3.5).

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Discussions were conducted with the two principals' professional associations which represent NSWDET principals: the New South Wales Primary Principals' Association (NSWPPA) and the New South Wales Secondary Principals' Council (NSWSPC). Through the presidents (Mr. Geoff Scott of NSWPPA on July 6, 2008; and Mr. Jim McAlpine of NSWSPC on July 22, 2008) both professional associations strongly supported the conducting of this research (NSWPPA: Appendix 3.6; NSWSPC: Appendix 3.7). The support of the professional associations was critical in developing credibility and trust with both late-career and recently-retired principals across NSW.

SAMPLING OF INITIAL POPULATIONS

Gathering participants

From August to December 2008, late-career and recently-retired principals were invited to register to be participants in the study. The method of advertising was through the following networks: (1) the monthly emailed bulletins of the NSW Primary Principals' Association ("What's Hot") and NSW Secondary Principals' Council ("SPC Bulletin"); (2) the state-wide representative meetings of the NSW Primary Principals' Association and the NSW Secondary Principals' Council held between September and December, 2008; (3) the emailed bulletin of the NSW Association of Retired Primary Principals; (4) the December 2008 meeting of the NSW Association of Retired Primary Principals; and (5) the direct mail-out to principals identified by the Catholic Education Offices in the Parramatta and Broken Bay Dioceses.

Invitation to participate

An Invitation to Participate (Appendix 3.8) was distributed from August 2008 - December 2008. The invitation welcomed an Expression of Interest (Appendix 3.9) to register for Phase 1 (the questionnaire). Participants who registered were subsequently sent a Consent Form (Appendix 3.10) which outlined the anonymity and confidentiality protocols for the study.

Sample population

At the conclusion of the four month period (August - November, 2008) 115 late-career and 125 recently-retired principals had lodged the Expression of Interest and Consent Forms for inclusion in Phase 1. However as indicated the low return from the Catholic system principals (five late-career and three recently-retired) resulted in those respondents not being included in the final response count. This meant that there were 110 NSWDET late-career and 122 NSWDET recently-retired principals received the Phase 1 questionnaire.

SAMPLING OF FINAL POPULATIONS

Late-career (Sample Group A)

On 30th November, 2008 the final “Late-career principal questionnaire” was distributed on-line to 110 late-career principals. At the conclusion of the one month return period (the closing date being 31st December, 2008) there were 100 late-career surveys returned (representing a 90.9 % response rate). These 100 NSWDET principal survey returns met the research definition of “late-career” (i.e. intended to retire between 1st January, 2009 and 31st December, 2012).

Recently-retired (Sample Group B)

On 30th November, 2008 the final “Recently-retired principal questionnaire” was distributed on-line to 122 recently-retired principals. After the one month return period (the closing date being 31st December, 2008) there were 116 recently-retired surveys returned (representing a 95.1% response rate). Excluded from the final sample groups were eight principals who had actually retired before 2005 and therefore did not qualify. The remaining 108 NSWDET principal survey returns met the research definition of “recently-retired” (retired between 1st January, 2005 and 31st January, 2008).

Final sample populations compared with total NSWDET populations

Sample Group A (N=100) and Sample Group B (N=108) represented approximately 5 % of the total state-wide NSWDET principal population (2106 principals) as at December, 2008 (see Appendix 8.1). There were three variables established for this study: gender (i.e. male or female); location (i.e. metropolitan or rural); and school level (i.e. primary or secondary). The percentage distribution of the variables for the sample principal populations compared to the percentage distribution of the variable for the total NSWDET school principal population showed closely mirrored the total state principal population.

	Total NSWDET principals	Sample Group A Late-career	Sample Group B Recently-retired
Males	54.0%	61.0%	56.5%
Females	46.0%	39.0%	43.5%

Table 3.2: Principal gender distribution

	Total NSWDET principals	Sample Group A Late-career	Sample Group B Recently-retired
Metropolitan	53.2%	55.0%	54.6%
Rural	46.8%	45.0%	45.4%

Table 3.3: Principal geographic distribution

	Total NSWDET principals	Sample Group A Late-career	Sample Group B Recently-retired
Primary	79.0%	72.4%	75.0%
Secondary	21.0%	27.6%	25.0%

Table 3.4: Principal school level distribution

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire design

The base-line content scaffolding for both questionnaires (late-career and recently-retired principals) were the issues located in the review of the demographic, economic, workforce, retirement and generational challenges facing the nation in the 21st century (Chapter 1) and the review relating to the impact of the baby boomer retirement bulge on the current educational leadership context (Chapter 2). The questionnaires sought direct responses from the participants to the phenomena of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases. The questionnaire instrument was constructed using the principles provided by Verma and Mallick (1999) which emphasize the advantages of a combination of closed, scaled and open responses.

Questionnaire content

The questionnaire was divided into six (6) dimensions. The content of Dimensions 1 - 5 was identical for both the late-career and recently-retired questionnaires. Dimension 6 varied in two ways: the recently-retired survey contained one additional item (Item 30); and the semantic tense of some items varied from future tense for the late-career respondents (as they projected into the future) to past tense for the recently-retired principals (as they reflected on their experiences). The dimensions, and the items within each dimension, are outlined below:

Dimension 1 (**Individual Profile)**: Item 1: personal information; Item 2: teaching profile; Item 3: location; Item 4: gender; Item 5: school level; Item 6: employer.

Dimension 2: **(Retirement):** Item 7: reason to retire; Item 8: inducements/options not to retire; Item 9: reasons not to retire.

Dimension 3: **(Work in retirement: refocusing):** Item 10: decision to work; Item 11: work field; Item 12: type of work; Item 13: reasons to work; Item 14: family influences; Item 15: voluntary work.

Dimension 4: **(Late-career leadership):** Item 16: effectiveness; Item 17: motivation; Item 18: satisfaction.

Dimension 5: **(Leadership Development: practice and theory):** Item 19: mentoring; Item 20: leadership development experiences; Item 21: leadership development opportunities**;** Item 22: leadership style; Item 23: leadership theory (personal knowledge); Item 24: leadership theory (depth of knowledge); Item 25: leadership theory (need for knowledge).

Dimension 6: **(Projection into retirement)**	**Dimension 6: (Reflection on retirement)**
Late-career	Recently-retired
Item 26: preparation for retirement	Item 26: preparation for retirement
Item 27: perceived activities in retirement	Item 27: preferred activities in retirement
Item 28: perceived difficulties in retirement	Item 28: difficulties experienced in retirement
Item 29: perceived satisfaction in retirement	Item 29: satisfaction experienced in retirement
	Item 30: experience of retirement compared with expectations of retirement

The questionnaires were designed to allow for the analysis of the responses for both sample groups independently; and for the direct comparison of the responses between the aspirations and expectation*s* of late-career principals and the experiences and reflections of recently-retired principals.

Questionnaire pilot study

Draft questionnaires were developed to test, adjust and refine the reliability and validity of the instrument; and to identify potential problems in the administration of the instrument. On 14th September, 2008 the draft on-line questionnaire was piloted with eight principals (from a list supplied by the presidents of the two NSW principal professional associations: NSWPPA and NSWSPC). This cohort consisted of four who were late-career and four who were recently-retired participants; four who were metropolitan and four who were rural participants; four who were male and four who were female participants; and four who were primary and four who were secondary participants. These eight principals were invited to be the pilot group (Appendix 3.11) and by accepting they were then not eligible to participate in the full study. Each pilot group member completed the questionnaire on-line; responded (via email) to a brief survey regarding the format, style and administration of the questionnaire (Appendix 3.12); and was then interviewed individually (some face-to-face; some by phone). Feedback from those eight principals informed the final composition and process of the on-line questionnaires. The pilot study resulted in the revision of the format and items to ensure a logical, clear and concise instrument. The final questionnaires (late-career: Appendix 3.13; and recently-retired: Appendix 3.14) were then ready for distribution along with an accompanying email (late-career Appendix 3.15; recently-retired Appendix 3.16) which contained a statement of purpose; completion instructions; and a restatement of the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality.

Data collection and analysis of the questionnaire

Questionnaire distribution and data collection was by an electronic on-line computerized survey (through SurveyMonkey @ http://www.surveymonkey.comm). Emails were distributed as blind copies to ensure confidentiality using a web-link to the survey site. Relevant statistical techniques were used to analyze the data collected and to identify the relationship between the variables. The data was analyzed using descriptive and comparative statistics. The methods of correlation, factor analysis and multivariate analysis were used to analyze the mean scores. The software used for the management, indexing and searching of the data was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 12.0 for Windows, 2003). The statistical analysis appears @ Appendix 3.17.

THE INTERVIEWS

Interview perspectives

The study considered two qualitative perspectives for the interviewing phase. The first was an *ethnography perspective* which aims to uncover and document patterns of behaviour that reflect the cultural norms of the stakeholders (i.e. the principals). Ethnography would have required close *in situ* observation of the lived realities of the participants (i.e. the principals). This was not the nature of this research which instead relied upon questionnaire and interview to collect the data. The second (perspective) was the *phenomenology perspective* which aims to describe what the participants (i.e. the principals) feel, believe and know from their perception, knowledge and experience through conversation and interviews. Johnson and Christensen (2008) state that through the phenomenology perspective "the researcher attempts to understand how people experience phenomena" (p. 48). This was the selected interview perspective as it most closely aligned to the parameters of the methodology.

Interview case studies

The study adopted what Stake (2000) called the *collective case study* approach, in which several similar cases are examined in depth in order to investigate a phenomena, population or general condition. Whilst both ethnographical and phenomenological perspectives were used to collect data through the Phase 2 interviews and the Phase 3 triangulation focus groups, late-career and recently-retired principal interviews were also treated as case studies. This facilitated in-depth investigation of the specific perceptual meanings and the specific nature of the late-career phase, transition to retirement phase and retirement phase for participants. The case studies highlighted certain recurring phenomena and encouraged the researcher to re-interrogate the interview data.

Interview content

From the Phase 1 questionnaire, five of the six dimensions (representing 22/29 items from the late-career questionnaire and 23/30 items from the recently-retired questionnaire) were purposefully selected for inclusion in Phase 2 interviews. The selection was based on the following criterion: the need to more deeply explore the participants' numerical questionnaire responses. Only Dimension 5 (Leadership Development) was not included as a separate interview component because four of the items in this dimension (Items 22-25) were judged to be adequately investigated by the questionnaire and the other three items (items 19-21) became consumed in other components of the interview process. This process meant that 75.7% of the late-career and 76.6% of the recently-retired phase 1 questionnaire dimensions/items formed the content of the phase 2 interviews. In this way the content of the research was exhaustively investigated.

Interview population sampling

Originally it was planned that 10% of the questionnaire respondents (a typical interview sample) would be positively sampled to participate in the interview. That would have meant approximately 10 late-career plus 10 recently-retired principals would participate in individual interviews. However, the researcher sought deeper data than that which might be provided by a 10% sample. Consequently it was decided that 25 - 30 participants from each original sample group would be sourced who best fitted the criteria for selection to be interviewed. From the Phase 1 questionnaire, respondents were purposefully selected based on the following criteria: (1) the percentage distribution of participants in the Phase 1 questionnaire on the three variables of gender, geographical location and school-level was maintained; and (2) the percentage distribution of *responses* for each of the Phase 1 questionnaire dimensions was maintained. This process of selection (late-career: Appendix 3.18; recently-retired Appendix 3.19) located 30 late-career and 28 recently-retired principals to be interviewed. This represented approximately 30% of the original late-career research cohort (N=100) and approximately 26% of the recently-retired cohort (N=108).

The first step in the interview process was to contact the fifty-eight (58) principals who had been positively selected to form the draft interview cohorts and seek their co-operation to participate. The initial contact was by email. If there was a positive response, phone contact was made to negotiate a date, time and venue for the interview. Four of the participants contacted (two late-career and two recently-retired principals) were unable to participate in the interviews. The two late-career principals were overseas on extended leave; and for the two recently-retired a personal health problem/family trauma situation was the reason for not being able to participate. Fifty-four (54) interviews were completed (28 late-career and 26 recently-retired principals). This represented a 93.1 % participation rate from the original interview population cohort.

Interview pro-forma

Guide-sheets (pro-forma) of questions for the semi-structured interviews were developed (late-career Appendix 3.20; recently-retired Appendix 3.21). These interview guide-sheets provided consistency by standardizing the interviewer's behavior and flexibility by allowing the sequence, the timing and the interest of the interviewee to have priority. A heuristic elicitation technique (Richardson, 1994) was implemented whereby open-ended questions were asked to elicit responses. Where necessary these responses were re-framed as follow-up questions by the interviewer to check the intended meaning; and to align with the guide-sheet questions.

Interview data collection

In line with the “naturalist nature” of qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, p.5) the interviews were conducted in the *field* which was reflective of the participants’ everyday life situations. The late-career principals’ interviews were conducted in the principal’s office (across the first half of 2009). The recently-retired principals’ interviews were conducted in the interviewee’s home (across the second half of 2009). The researcher travelled across NSW to conduct the interviews on site. Interviews lasted from 60 to 120 minutes, which was longer than the time originally allocated. The researcher was surprised at the willingness of the interviewees to discuss in depth the personal feelings and emotions about their late-career and their retirement. Some interviewees volunteered that they had not previously shared these thoughts with anyone. All Interviews were audio-taped (with the permission of the interviewee) to facilitate data collection and to allow the interviewer to concentrate on the interviewee’s responses. The taped recorded interviews were later fully transcribed for analysis. Summaries of the transcriptions were also produced as a point of reference to back-track to the original transcription; and as a means of capturing specific quotes.

Semi-structured interviews

In conducting the interviews, the researcher chose the semi-structured interview model incorporating the integration of the three components as suggested by Patton (2002): (1) the informal interview component; (2) the guided interview component; and (3) the standardized question component. The interview visit usually started with the informal or unstructured conversational component with no preconceived or formatted questions. The aim was for conversation to occur in a natural setting; for background information to be shared; and questions to emerge casually. The interview then moved into the guided approach in which the researcher described the dimensions from the Phase 1 analyzed questionnaire data which formed the basis of this Phase 2 interview. The third component of the interview was the standardized interview component which utilized the more formal predetermined questions and wording (Appendix 3.20; and Appendix 3.21) as was deemed necessary to allow for each interviewee to give input on each dimension. In this third component respondents were ask the same questions, using the same wording, to provide a fixed data collection framework. This purpose-designed interview protocol was used to simultaneously encourage flexibility and open-ended responses as well as to provide consistent standardization of the content to be addressed.

Interview data analysis decision

The fruits of qualitative inquiry are in its capacity to produce patterns and themes. Patton (2002) believes that "raw field notes and verbatim transcripts constitute the undigested complexity of reality. Simplifying and making sense out of that complexity constitutes the challenge of content analysis. Developing some manageable classification or coding system is the first step of analysis. Without classification there is chaos and confusion" (p.463). The first step in the qualitative data analysis was to seek and use a recommended software package. The initial classification and coding process was undertaken with the use of a computer software program, *NVivo*. The researcher employed this program to complete the first cut of the raw data and to organize that data into topics and files (during the second half of 2009). Using this computerized program approach created two challenges for the researcher: (1) the time required to become efficient in managing the program; and (2) more significantly the extent to which it was felt that the program was forming a barrier between the researcher and the data. The first of these challenges (mastering the functions of the software package) was achieved over a few months with training and practice. However the second challenge remained a personal difficulty and grew to a major inhibitor for the researcher. The primary concern was the difficulty in staying close to the intent of the participants' words. Consequently at the start of 2010 the researcher dispensed with the specific data analysis computerized software package and recommenced the data analysis process using a more traditional approach. As Patton (2002) concludes, "software programs provide different tools and formats for coding, but the principles of the analytical process are the same whether doing it manually or with the assistance of a computer program" (p.463). For this study the researcher opted for the more traditional manual method (as outlined below in "**Interview data analysis framework "**and "**Interview data analysis definitions"**).

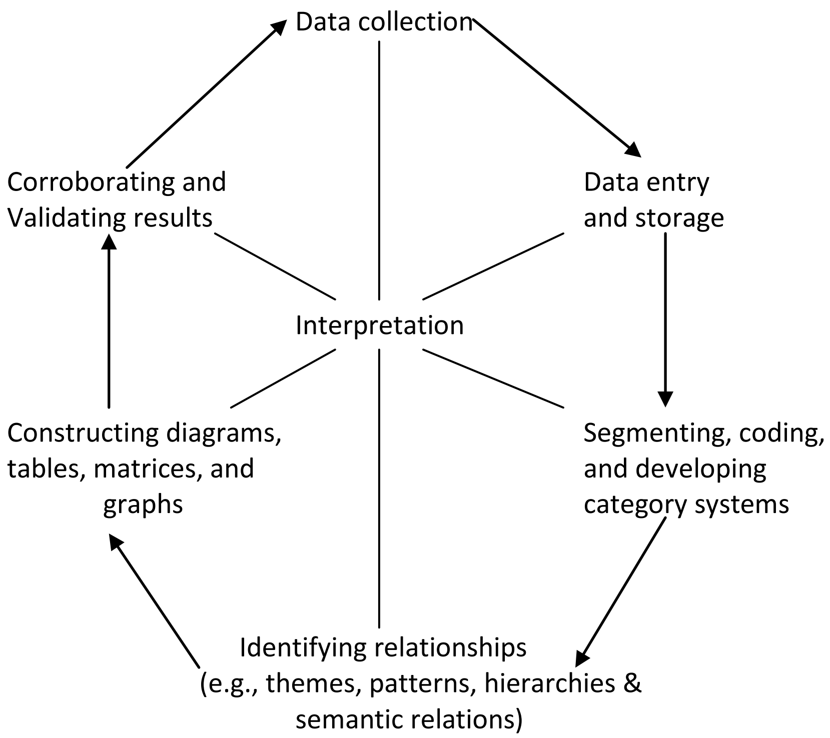
Interview data analysis framework

Stake's (1995) data analysis framework includes five stages: (1) categorical aggregation; (2) direct interpretation; (3) pattern discovery; (4) naturalistic generalizations; and (5) triangulation. Operating concurrently with this framework the researcher adopted Miles and Huberman's (1994) specific framework strategies which define qualitative analysis as three concurrent flows of activity:

1. *data reduction* which "refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data" (p. 10) from the transcripts;
2. *data display* which "includes many types of matrices, graphs, charts and networks" (p.11);
3. *conclusion drawing/verification* which involves "noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions. The competent researcher holds these conclusions lightly, maintaining openness and skepticism, but the conclusions are still there, inchoate and vague at first, then increasingly explicit and grounded… " (P.11).

The qualitative data analysis model which this research is based upon, draws from the two frameworks referred to above (i.e. Stake 1995; and Miles & Huberman, 1994), and is encapsulated in Johnson and Christensen's (2008) model of "Data Analysis in Qualitative Research" (Figure 3.2):

Figure 3.2: Data analysis in qualitative research



Adapted from Johnson & Christensen (2008: p.531)

Interview data analysis definitions

The qualitative data analysis design developed for this study has employed the following definitions in relation to coding, categorizing and classifying data (Table 3.5):

Dimension	Topic section (from Phase 1 Questionnaire) selected for inclusion in Phase 2 Interviews
Category	Topic sub-section (within Phase 2 interviews dimension; identical with "Item" from Phase 1 Questionnaire)
Free category	Topic sub-section (not aligned to Phase 1 questionnaire item/dimension)
Transcriptions	Transfer of audio-taped interviews into word-processing format
Transcription summaries	Abbreviated form of transcription in word-processing format
Track coding (by number)	LC= Late-career; RR=Recently-retired
Variable coding (by letter)	P=Primary; S=Secondary (including Central) M=Male; F=Female M=Metropolitan; R=Rural
Matrix	The horizontal and vertical recording structure
Vertical axis	Dimension/category (item and question)
Horizontal axis	Individual respondents
Colour codes	Similar individual responses (according to open, axial and selective coding)
Open codes	Initial categorizing of data
Axial codes	Organization of categories according to concepts
Selective codes	Emergence of story line (and theory)
Findings	Repeated similar responses
Themes	Synthesis of findings into generic position, reaction or belief
Cross-classification	Simultaneous comparison of all variables (sample; school level; gender; location)

Table 3.5: Qualitative data analysis definitions

The interview "words"

The aim of the interview analysis was to work totally from the *words* of the respondents. The words were assembled, sub clustered and categorized; they were organized to permit contrasting, comparing, analyzing and patterning. Therefore although the words of the respondents needed to be transcribed and summarized, the words were also vigorously sustained in their original form. This allowed the researcher to constantly re-visit the interview in its original natural setting: to hear the inflection; to reflect on the context; and to listen to the feelings behind the words. Miles and Huberman (1994) believe that “findings from qualitative studies have a quality of ‘undeniability’. Words, especially organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader - another researcher, a policymaker, a practitioner - than pages of summarized numbers” (p. 1).

Interview coding

The qualitative data was displayed using Miles and Huberman’s (1994) “conceptually clustered matrix (which) has its rows and columns arranged to bring together items that belong together” (p.127). The interview respondents were coded to indicate the research variables: cohort (late-career or recently-retired); school level (primary or secondary); gender (male or female); and location (metropolitan or rural). The coding is shown in Appendix 3.22 (late-career principals) and Appendix 3.23 (recently-retired principals). The names were withdrawn to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The response matrices developed are shown at Appendix 3.24 (late-career) and Appendix 3.25 (recently-retired). The analysis of the qualitative data rests centrally on effective data coding and display which compress and order data to permit the drawing of coherent conclusions. Such coherent conclusions are the life-blood of an effective interpretative phase. The initial coding followed the process as recommended by Johnson and Christensen (2008): open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Upon initial completion of the matrices there was a conscious decision to return to the interview transcripts and re-analyzed these to ensure that all possible codes had been captured. Although time-consuming the constant returning to the original data followed by further recording and coding was employed to guard against the danger of moving too quickly into naming a pattern, rather than working loosely with the chunks of meaning (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Interview data description and interpretation

The descriptive and the interpretative phases result when meanings are extracted from the data, comparisons are made, creative frameworks for interpretation are constructed, conclusions are drawn, significance is determined, and in some cases, theory is generated (Strauss, 2002). Once the researcher moved on from describing (recording) and started to form comparisons, attach significance, draw conclusions, make inferences and in general place some order around an otherwise disparate set of data, the bridge from description to interpretation was being crossed. The interpretative phase essentially meant the analyzing of the core content of interviews to determine what patterns were arising and what was significant. Sensing a pattern is often referred to as *seeing* a pattern. Boyatis (1998) believes that, “the seeing as, provides us with a link between a new or emergent pattern and any and all patterns that we have observed and considered previously” (p.4).

Interview findings: conclusions and verifications

Miles and Huberman (1994) noted that “people are meaning-finders; they can quickly make sense of chaotic events…The critical question is whether the meanings you find in qualitative data are valid, repeatable, and right” (p.245). Johnson and Christensen (2008) and Patton (2002) propose a series of strategies through which data verification can be assessed including: checking for the representativeness of the conclusion by inviting in others (such as colleagues and critical friends); triangulation (checking the data source, the methods, the data type and the initial conclusions with other individuals/groups); following-up surprises; checking with experts in the field; and getting feedback directly from informants who provided the initial data. This research employed each of these listed strategies to verify the findings and themes which emerged from the data analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) concluded that “the meanings emerging from the data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their ‘confirmability’ - that is, their validity” (p.11).

Interview findings: significance

In lieu of statistical significance, qualitative findings are judged by their substantive significance and so the researcher looked to establish solid, coherent and consistent evidence. To ensure the significance of the findings the qualitative analyst must initially and most significantly rely directly on the responses of those who participated in the study. Accordingly the interviews were treated as the primary and most valuable qualitative resource within the study. The second qualitative source was feedback in the form of *participant review*. In this process, the participants (who formed the Phase 1 questionnaire and Phase 2 Interview cohorts) were invited to reflect and comment on the initial findings from the research. The qualitative analyst next needed to seek out and openly consider responses from those who were not participants in the original research in order to triangulate the findings. This third source of feedback was used to determine the strength of the evidence supporting the finding as viewed by peers who read and/or reviewed the initial findings. The researcher was very aware of the responsibility to ensure that an ethical, valid, effective and rigorous research methodology was employed.

PARTICIPANT REVIEW

The initial form of review and feedback for this study was an on-line questionnaire to all principals who had participated in the research (*participant review*) seeking their opinion as to the extent to which the findings might represent the commonly held view of principal colleagues i.e. the representativeness of the findings (Appendix 7.1). Participant review is a logical and powerful tactic for verifying findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; and Patton, 2002).

TRIANGULATION

Benefits of triangulation

Patton (2002) believes "it is in data analysis that the strategy of triangulation really pays off, not only in providing diverse ways of looking at the same phenomena but in adding to credibility by strengthening confidence in whatever conclusions are drawn" (p.556). Compatibility is seldom a straight forward process when triangulating findings from different research methods. Areas of convergence naturally increase confidence in the findings, but areas of divergence can actually open the way to a better understanding of the deeper more complex nature of the phenomenon being researched and as such should be embraced, rather than be ignored. Patton (2002) adds that "given the varying strengths and weaknesses of qualitative versus quantitative approaches, the researcher using different methods to investigate the same phenomenon should not expect that the findings generated by those different methods will automatically come together to produce some nicely integrated whole" (p. 557). For this reason the researcher took a deep interest in exploring the points of divergence to continue the constant re-engagement with the data.

Triangulation processes

Triangulation can contribute to verification and validation through (1) *methods triangulation* where the consistency of the findings from different data collection methods (qualitative and quantitative) are checked; and (2) *triangulation of sources* where the consistency of the findings from different data sources are checked.

To triangulate the responses the same on-line questionnaire which was distributed to the research participants (in the participant review) was distributed to principals who had read/seen the initial findings (through participation in the NSWDET *Transition to Retirement Program*, outlined below) but were not participants in the original research. This process (source triangulation) sought the opinion of this peer cohort about the extent to which the initial findings might represent the commonly held view of the wider NSWDET late-career principal cohort i.e. representativeness of the finding (Appendix 7.1).

Email conversations were continuously conducted with all the original research participants keeping them up-to-date with progressive findings. This allowed comment and feedback not only on the initial findings generically but specifically on new phenomena which emerged from the phase 2 interviews. One such new phenomenon was the *phases of retirement* which the recently-retired cohort recognized from their experiences. A specific email conversation (methods triangulation) was conducted with the recently-retired cohort seeking their feedback in relation to phases of retirement (Appendix 7.2).

Another new phenomenon emerged from principals who had opted to stay-on past their superannuation retirement age, rather than to retire at the traditional time. This phenomenon was further investigated through an on-line survey plus a follow-up face-to-face/phone interview (source and methods triangulation) with principals who had made that conscious decision to *stay-on* (Appendix 7.3 and Appendix 7.4).

Each of these processes was a means to triangulate the findings from the original methods or sources of the study as well as the findings which produced new phenomena. Patton (2002) concluded that “by triangulation with multiple data sources, observers, methods, and/or theories, researchers can make substantial strides in overcoming the skepticism that greets singular methods, lone analysts, and single-perspective interpretations” (p.556).

FORMATIVE PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, PAPERS AND PROGRAM

Journal publications

Following the analysis of the Phase 1 questionnaire and some early analysis from the Phase 2 interviews the researcher published the initial findings in a three-part series in *The Australian Educational Leader* (Marks, 2009a; Marks, 2009b; Marks, 2009c). Feedback from these articles informed the researcher’s continuous engagement with the data.

Conference presentations and papers

During 2009-2010 the researcher was invited to present the initial findings at the following conferences: (1) June 2009 at the Australian Council for Educational Leaders ,NSW state conference (Sydney); (2) July 2009 at the International Confederation of School Principals 9th World Convention, Singapore (Marks, 2009d); (3) June 2010 at the NSW Secondary Principals’ Annual State Conference (Wollongong); July 2010 at 2nd International Conference on Education, Economy and Society (Paris), where 1000 educational leaders were in attendance (Marks, 2010); May 2011 at the International Journal of Arts and Sciences Conference (Teaching and Education Strand) at Harvard University, Boston, USA (Marks, 2011a); and August 2011 International Confederation of School Principals 10th World Convention, Toronto (Marks, 2011b). Comments from these conference presentation and papers further informed the researcher’s continuous engagement with the data.

Transition to Retirement Program

In November 2009, NSWDET approached the researcher to design and implement a *Transition to Retirement Program* for late-career principals based on the initial research findings. This two-day program was trialed in the NSWDET Sydney Region in December, 2009. Following a very positive evaluation, the program was approved for implementation in all the NSWDET regions of NSW across 2010 - 2011. Interaction with over 250 late-career principals who attended these programs

(2009 - 2011) provided a rich source of feedback and significantly informed the researcher's constant comparative engagement with the data.

ADMINISTRATION

Anonymity

The questionnaire (Phase 1) could be completed anonymously. Alternatively respondents who were willing to be considered for the interviews (Phase 2) and/or the participant review (Phase 4) could choose to provide their name and contact details on the survey. The choice for anonymity was clearly explained on the Consent Form (Appendix 3.10). In all subsequent written reports (including articles and thesis) and all oral reports (presentations, keynotes) no individual principal or individual school were identified with or linked to any response or comments provided in this study.

Confidentiality

The identity and school location of all respondents was treated with total confidentiality by the researcher. This information was (and is) not available to employing authorities or any other party (except the thesis supervisor). All email communication is protected by password which only the researcher has access to. All email communications were sent as "blind copies" so that no other individual participant's name appears on any email. All hard copies (emails, Consent Forms, Expressions of Interest and Questionnaires) are securely locked. Once data analysis was completed, all material (including tapes and transcripts) was de-identified. All participants in the Questionnaire (Phase 1), the Interviews (Phase 2) and the Focus Groups (Phase 4) were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The findings and recommendations of the research methods (survey, interviews and focus groups) have been disseminated to all major stakeholders according to the protocols established with each stakeholder.

LIMITATIONS

This research explores the phenomena of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for NSWDET principals across the period 2008 - 2012. The data is consciously collected from the direct responses of the participating NSWDET principals through questionnaire and interview. The context is limited to the national demographic, economic, social, workplace and generational challenges as identified in Chapter 1; and to the current national educational leadership context identified in Chapter 2. Whilst differing contextual factors would impact on principals in other jurisdictions, the study does nonetheless make a meaningful contribution to the educational leadership and general literature specifically in relation to: work and ageing in the 21st century; the late-career phase; the transition to retirement phase; succession planning, knowledge transfer and capacity retention.

CONCLUSION

The researchable questions guiding this study were: (1) what is the perceptual meaning and nature of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for baby boomer principals? and (2) do late-career and recently-retired principals express or demonstrate an interest in staying connected to the workforce for longer? The responses from Phase 1 (questionnaire) informed Phase 2 (individual interviews). The responses from the questionnaires and the interviews were analyzed in Phase 3. The findings were investigated for validity through Phase 4 (the triangulation process). In this way the research followed a mixed methods model with the data continually driving and directing the evolving grounded theory. The initial findings from the Phase 1 questionnaire are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

QUESTIONNAIRE: LATE-CAREER AND RECENTLY-RETIRED PRINCIPALS

The contextual background for this study of the phenomena of late-career and transition to retirement for baby boomer school principals in NSW, was the interaction between the demographic, economic, social, generational and educational changes impacting on Australia across the first half of the 21st century. These changes are summarized in the following points:

1. Australia's population is increasing.
2. Australian's are living longer so the population is ageing.
3. The "dependency ratio" is rising.
4. A skills shortage is threatening.
5. Eligibility ages for aged pensions are rising.
6. *The new retirement* movement is gathering momentum (Mackay, 2007).
7. *The changing nature of work* (Calvo, 2006) is impacting on the composition and configuration of the 21st Century workforce.
8. *Ageing and work in the 21st Century* (Schultz & Adams, 2007) is challenging the composition and configuration of the 21st Century workforce.
9. Large numbers of experienced baby boomer principals are retiring.
10. The potential shortage of principals is exacerbated by a low numbers of aspirants.

A core educational leadership issue to be investigated through this research is whether late-career and recently-retired principals express or display an interest in staying connected to the workforce for longer. To explore these issues the perceptual meaning and nature of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for principals were examined. The direct responses of both cohorts (late-career and recently-retired) were sought to the following questions:

1. When and why do principals choose to retire, to stay-on or to refocus?
2. What are the personal/professional implications of staying-on, refocusing or retiring for individual principals, employing authorities and professional associations?
3. Are late-career principals on a "plateau path" to retirement?
4. Do late-career principals see themselves as effective, motivated and satisfied?
5. Is the transition to retirement a smooth or rough journey?
6. Are principals following the traditional or the "new retirement" model?
7. How satisfying do principals find retirement?
8. What factors influence principals' satisfaction levels in retirement?
9. What are the implications of the retirement bulge for employing authorities in relation to knowledge transfer, succession planning and leadership capacity retention?

Each of these issues has relevance for individual principals, employing authorities, professional associations, government policies and educational leadership theory and practice.

QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

The initial responses were collected through the Phase 1 on-line quantitative questionnaires. The late-career questionnaire (Appendix 3.13) contained 29 items the recently-retired questionnaire (Appendix 3.14) contained 30 items. All item responses were analyzed (as described in Chapter 3) and are presented in Chapter 4 in the following format: a brief description each item; the **finding** from the item; a **comment** on the finding; and from the finding the identification of any emerging **themes** considered worthy of deeper investigation.

DIMENSION 1: INDIVIDUAL PROFILE

Dimension 1 contained six individual items. Item 1 (personal profile) and Item 2 (teaching profile) provided background information for participant identification purposes only and did not form part of the analysis. Item 6 (school system) became irrelevant when it was decided not to include the Catholic Education Office principals and to involve NSWDET principals only. The analysis of Dimension 1 (Table 4.1) focused on the remaining three items as variables: Item 3 (geographic location), Item 4 (gender) and Item 5 (school level) at the data collection time (i.e. 2008):

Variable	Variable component	NSWDET total principal population	Sample A (late –career principals)	Sample B (recently-retired principals)
Gender	Male	57.6 %	61.0 %	56.5 %
	Female	42.4 %	39.0 %	43.5 %
Location	Metropolitan	53.2 %	55.0 %	54.6 %
	Rural	46.8 %	45.0 %	45.4 %
Level	Primary	79.0 %	72.2 %	75.0 %
	Secondary	21.0 %	27.6 %	25.0 %

Table 4.1: Principal populations by location, gender and school level (December, 2008)

Finding

Each variable closely mirrored the total state principal population (in percentage distribution terms)

Comment

Both sample groups reflected the total NSWDET state principal population(in percentage distribution terms) thus enhancing the relevance of the sample group findings in relation to the total population.

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT

Dimension 2 contained three items: Item 7, 8 and 9.

Reasons to retire (Item 7)

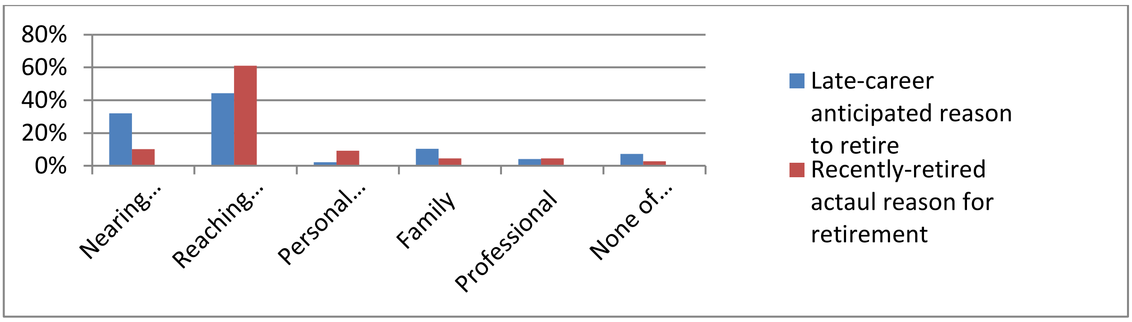
In Item 7 respondents were asked to indicate which of the listed reasons best matched their *anticipated* reason to retire (late-career principals); and which reason best matched the *actual* reason for retirement (recently-retired principals). The majority (88.7%) of principals in these cohorts belong to the NSW State Superannuation Scheme. As outlined in Chapter 2 ("Superannuation and retirements"), this scheme is a public sector defined benefit scheme which was closed to new members in July, 1985. Under the regulations members had to nominate a retirement age when commencing their teaching career. Most males nominated 60 years of age (the choice being 60 or 65) and most females nominated 55 years of age (the choice being 55 or 60). At those ages members can retire with full access to their superannuation moneys.

Finding

The analysis showed that reaching (or nearing) the superannuation retirement age is quite clearly the overwhelming reason for principals to retire when they do:

1. 44.3% of late-career principals expected to work till their superannuation retirement age whilst 32.0% anticipated retiring early when nearing their superannuation retirement age.
2. 61.1% of recently-retired principals actually worked till their retirement age whilst only 10.2% retired early when nearing their superannuation retirement age.
3. Factors other than superannuation retirement age (i.e. personal health factors, family factors, or professional factors) registered between 2.1% and 10.1% for other reasons to retire (Figure 4.1):

Figure 4.1: Reasons to retire



Comment

Retirement decisions for these baby boomer principals were linked most closely to the pre-nominated superannuation retirement age with 76.3% of late-career and 71.3% of recently-retired principals indicating that retirement was either when nearing or when reaching that retirement age. It was also of interest to note that although 32.0% of late-career principals anticipate retiring early (i.e. when nearing the superannuation retirement age), the experience of their recently-retired colleagues was that very few (just 10.2%) did actually retire early. Most waited till their superannuation retirement age when the monetary benefit maximized. Other factors (e.g. family, health or professional reasons) appeared to have a much lesser impact on the decision to retire. Retirement for NSW baby boomer school principals is predominantly superannuation-driven. A finding which was more deeply explored through the Phase 2 interviews.

Variables

Late-career principals showed a variation on gender with significantly less females indicating that they expected to retire early than their male counterparts (Table 4.2):

Reason to retire	Male	Female
Nearing superannuation retirement age	46.7 %	11.4 %

Table 4.2: Late-career principals’ early retirement (by gender)

Comment

During the interviews (Phase 2) female participants indicated that this gender variation was likely due to the facts that under the “old super scheme” regulations the majority of females chose 55 years of age as their pre-nominated retirement age and to retire earlier than that would seem far too soon from a personal, professional or career viewpoint; and secondly many women resigned to have a family and upon return to the workforce were only able to join the later superannuation schemes which had a later (58 years old) retirement age. These issues are further investigated in the Phase 2 Interviews (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6).

Options to stay-on (Item 8)

Principals were presented with a number of options which might induce them to stay-on past their retirement age. The inducements were reduced to three options: (1) interested in staying-on full-time with no financial disadvantage (i.e. with access to superannuation); (2) interested in staying-on part-time through job-sharing (again with access to superannuation); and (3) not interested in any inducement to stay-on.

Finding

1. Staying-on full-time (with access to superannuation) was favoured by 40.1% of late-career and 41.1% of recently-retired principals.
2. Staying-on part-time (with access to superannuation) was favoured by 32.6% of the late-career principals and by 32.1% of the recently-retired cohort.
3. Not interested in staying-on was favoured by 27.3% of late-career principals and 26.8% of recently-retired principals (Table 4.3):

Option to stay-on	Late-career	Recently-retired
Option to stay-on full-time	40.1%	41.1%
Option to stay-on part-time/job-share	32.6%	32.1%
Would not take any option to stay-on	27.3%	26.8%

Table 4.3: Staying-on options

Comment

The findings showed that *if* there were no financial disadvantages then principals would be very interested in staying-on either in a full-time and a part-time capacity. The level of interest was almost identical for both cohorts (i.e. 72.7% for late-career and 73.2% for recently-retired). However under the existing regulations within the State Superannuation Scheme (the scheme to which these principals belong), the condition for release of the money to the member is that the principals *must* have permanently retired. At present there is little financial incentive to stay-on past 55 for females and 60 for males. The response to this item suggests that if this Sate Superannuation Scheme *conditions of release* (of the money) were more flexible (i.e. the money could be accessed at the superannuation retirement age even if the principal opted not to retire) there may well be a significant number of late-career principals who would be interested in staying-on. At a time when high retirements from the principalship are creating a "succession challenge" (Fink, 2010), this was potentially a very significant finding and was assessed as being worthy of further exploration in later phases of the research.

Reasons to stay-on (Item 9)

This item explored the reasons (i.e. the motivators) for these principals being interested in staying-on (past their superannuation retirement age). This item introduced two categories of motivators. For the purpose of this research these two categories were defined as: (1) the *emotional domain* which referred to the inner welfare (e.g. feelings of anxiety, isolation, boredom, self-esteem, identity, self-worth) of the participants; and (2) the *practical domain* which referred to the external welfare of the participants (e.g. financial situation, family situation, state of health). These two domains became significant in the later phases of the research.

Finding

From the list of five reasons (motivators) the three most popular reasons to *stay-on* were all in the emotional domain (i.e. Intellectual stimulation, social interaction; and feeling too young to retire). The fourth and fifth highest reasons (motivators) were in the practical domain (i.e. financial reward *and* leaving a legacy). Financial reward received a much lower percentage ranking from the recently-retired principals than the late-career principals (Table 4.4):

Reasons to stay-on	Late-career	Recently-retired
Financial reward	18.1 %	10.5%
Intellectual stimulation	26.5 %	28.0 %
Social interaction	23.9 %	25.9 %
Feeling too young to retire	20.0 %	23.8 %
Leaving a legacy	10.3 %	9.8 %
None of above	1.3 %	2.1 %

Table 4.4: Reasons to stay-on

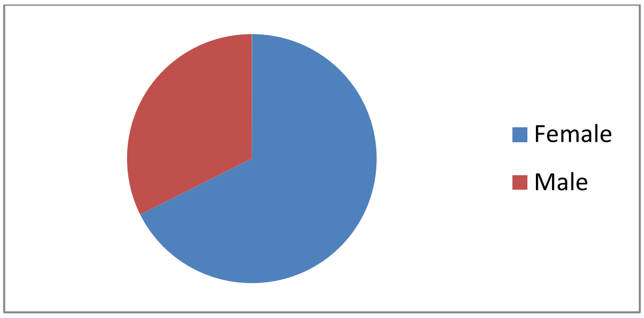
Comment

For the majority of both cohorts it was the emotional domain reasons which rated more highly than the practical domain reasons to stay-on. Principals in this study who were interested in staying-on were not primarily motivated by financial return. To what extent this finding may relate to the current economic situation of the time (i.e. December 2008 was before the Global Financial Crisis) and the superannuation scheme which most principals in the study were members of (i.e. the State Superannuation Scheme), was deemed worthy of further exploration in the later phases of the research.

Variables

Recently-retired female principals (67.6%) responded much more strongly than recently-retired male principals (32.4%) to the criterion of “feeling too young to retire” (Figure 4.2):

Figure 4.2: Recently-retired principals who felt “too young to retire”



Comment

As in Item 7 above (“Reason to retire”) this gender variation would seem to relate directly to the fact that for the majority of females the superannuation retirement age was 55 years (as opposed to 60 years for males). Basically female principals *felt too young to retire* because they were indeed up to five years younger than their male counterparts.

DIMENSION 3: WORK IN RETIREMENT (REFOCUS)

Dimension 3 contained six items: Items 10-15 (inclusive).

Decision to refocus (Item 10)

Item 10 sought responses from principals who saw their retirement pattern as one of initial retirement followed by refocusing back into the workforce.

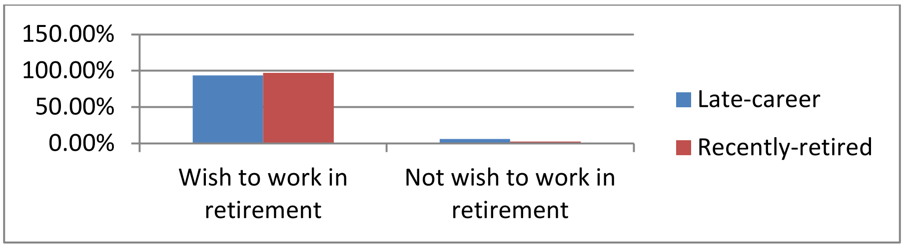
Finding

The analysis of the responses towards refocusing showed that 93.6% of late-career principals and 97.3% of recently-retired principals expressed an interest in refocusing. This very strong support for the concept (retirement model) of refocusing is shown in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3:

Principals interested in refocusing	Late-career	Recently-retired
I would like to; expect to; plan to; or seek to work in retirement	93.6%	97.3%
I do not wish to work in retirement	6.4%	2.7%

Table 4.5: Interest in refocusing in retirement

Figure 4.3: Interest in refocusing in retirement



Comment

Interest in refocusing following retirement was at an extremely high level (Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3). These figures align with the findings of Johnson (2001) who suggested that the *new retirement* for baby boomers will include some form of work; and social researchers (McCrindle, 2009; Cooper, 2008; Salt, 2007; and Mackay, 2007) who have reported that baby boomers feel a need to make a meaningful contribution to society through re-engagement with the workforce. Refocusing would seem to be a core concept of the preferred retirement model for these educational leaders also. This initial finding indicating a strong interest in refocusing was further explored in Items 11-15 (below); and was judged worthy of deeper investigation in the later phases of this research.

Variables

Recently-retired metropolitan principals exhibited a stronger expectation to work in retirement (i.e. refocus) than their rural colleagues as shown in Table 4.5.1:

	Recently-retired metropolitan principals	Recently-retired rural principals
Expect to work in retirement	76.6 %	23.4 %

Table 4.5.1: Refocusing by location

More late-career males (76.5%) expect to be approached to work than their female colleagues (23.5%) as shown in Table 4.5.2:

	Late-career male principals	Late-career female principals
Expect to be approached	76.5 %	23.4 %

Table 4.5.2: Refocusing by gender

Refocused work setting (Item 11)

This item asked principals who wished to (or had) refocused, whether they found the work in an educational or non-educational setting.

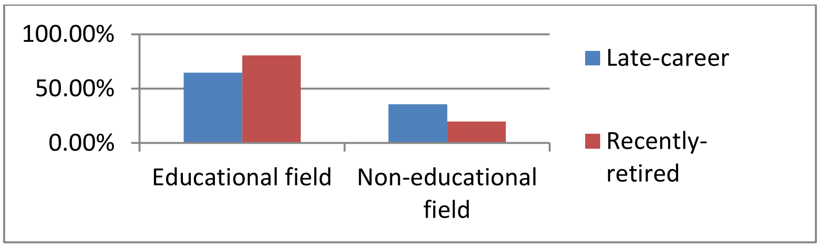
Finding

80.4% of recently-retired principals found work in an educational setting; and 64.5% of late-career principals anticipated finding work in an educational setting (Table 4.6 and Figure 4.4):

Refocused work setting	Late-career	Recently-retired
Educational field	64.5 %	80.4 %
Non-educational field	35.5 %	19.6 %

Table 4.6: Refocused work setting

Figure 4.4: Refocused work setting



Comment

It would not seem surprising that retiring educators would seek work in an education-related setting. Of greater interest is the anticipation by 35.5% of the late-career principals that refocused work might be found in a non-education field. The experiences of the recently-retired cohort indicated that only 19.6% had found work in a non-educational field.

Refocused work type (Item 12)

This item explored the type of work (e.g. part-time, full-time) which most appealed to principals when refocusing in retirement.

Finding

1. 60.8% of late-career and 57.3% of recently-retired principals preferred part-time work
2. 21.0% of late-career and 18.5% of recently-retired principals preferred voluntary work
3. Only 4.5% of late-career and 5.3% of recently-retired principals preferred full-time work (Table 4.7):

Type of work preferred	Late-career	Recently-retired
Full time	4.5 %	5.3 %
Part –time	60.8 %	57.3 %
Salaried employee	9.4 %	6.2 %
Self-employed	4.5 %	11.5 %
Voluntary	21.0 %	18.5 %

Table 4.7: Preferred type of work in retirement

Comment

Principals looking to refocus were clearly most interested in some form of part-time work. The dominance of part-time refocusing was further explored in later phases of the research.

Reasons for refocusing (Item 13)

This item explored the personal motivation for principals to *refocus*. When principals were asked for their motivation to stay-on (Table 4.4 above), the emotional domain was more strongly supported than the practical domain.

Finding

Each motivator (in either the emotional or practical domain) received similar support (Table 4.8):

Reasons to refocus	Late-career	Recently-retired
Financial reward	20.8 %	20.3 %
Intellectual stimulation	20.8 %	20.7 %
Sharing expertise	19.6 %	19.9 %
Social interaction	19.6 %	19.9 %
Community involvement	19.2 %	19.3 %

Table 4.8: Reasons to refocus

Comment

The motivators were evenly distributed across the five (5) options. When the emotional domain motivators were combined 79.2% of late-career and 79.3% of the recently-retired principals indicated that it would predominantly be the emotional domain factors which would encourage them to *refocus* back into the workforce following retirement. The dominance of the emotional domain when considering refocusing was consistent with the findings in relation to the reasons to *stay-on* (Table 4.4 above). These initial findings may well align with the view that baby boomers have a personal and generational need to make a meaningful and altruistic contribution to the community (Mackay, 2007; Handy, 2007). This issue was further explored through the Phase 2 interviews.

Refocusing and family influences (Item 14)

This item explored the extent to which family factors might limit principals' availability to refocus (work) in retirement.

Finding

The responses demonstrated that principals did not see either dependent children or dependent parents as restricting access to refocusing in retirement (Table 4.9):

Factors restricting refocusing	Late-career	Recently-retired
Dependent children	20.5 %	10.4 %
Dependent parents	4.5 %	1.1 %
Neither dependent children nor dependent parents restricted refocusing	75.0 %	88.5 %

Table 4.9: Refocusing and restrictive family influences

Comment

Cooper (2008) noted that the baby boomer "generation is often responsible for the care and support of elderly parents while, at the same time, helping the children pay for their education, early-career expenses and, ultimately, their first home and their grandchildren's education" (P. 15). As such the baby boomers are anecdotally portrayed as "the sandwich generation" (Cooper, 2008; Salt, 2007; Gibbs, 2008) who are thwarted in their dreams for a free and uninhibited retirement involving the opportunity to refocus. However the responses to this item (Table 4.9) do not support the "sandwich generation" argument for this cohort of baby boomer principals.

Refocusing and voluntary work (Item 15)

This item asked principals to indicate their interest in undertaking voluntary work in retirement.

Finding

1. 30.5% of late-career principals expected to be involved in voluntary work in education whilst only 10.2% of recently-retired principals were actually involved.
2. 62.7% of late-career principals expected to be involved in voluntary community work whilst 53.1% of recently-retired principals were actually involved.
3. Only 6.8% of late-career principals expected not to be involved in voluntary work, but in reality 36.7% of recently-retired principals were not involved in voluntary work (Table 4.10):

Refocusing in voluntary work	Late-career	Recently-retired
Voluntary work in education	30.5 %	10.2 %
Voluntary community work	62.7 %	53.1 %
No voluntary work	6.8 %	36.7 %

Table 4.10: Refocusing in voluntary work

Comment

Although 63.3% of recently-retired principals were engaging in some form of voluntary work in retirement, this was lower than the expectations of the late-career principals where 93.2% presumed they would be involved in some form of voluntary work. Further investigation into the reasons for the variation between expectations and experiences in relation to voluntary work in retirement may clarify this situation but was judged to be outside of the scope of this research.

DIMENSION 4: LATE-CAREER LEADERSHIP

Dimension 4 contained three items: Items 16-18 (inclusive).

Dimension 4 explored whether principals in their late-career phase saw themselves as being on a “plateau path”; gliding and coasting into retirement whilst disengaging from the demands of the role. The issue of “plateau path” (Earley & Weindling, 2007; Oplatka, 2007and 2010) is discussed in Chapter 2. In Dimension 4 respondents were asked to self-assess their levels of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction in their late-career phase as a means of determining their own perceptions about a plateau path being a reality (or not) in their late-career phase.

Late-career effectiveness (Item 16)

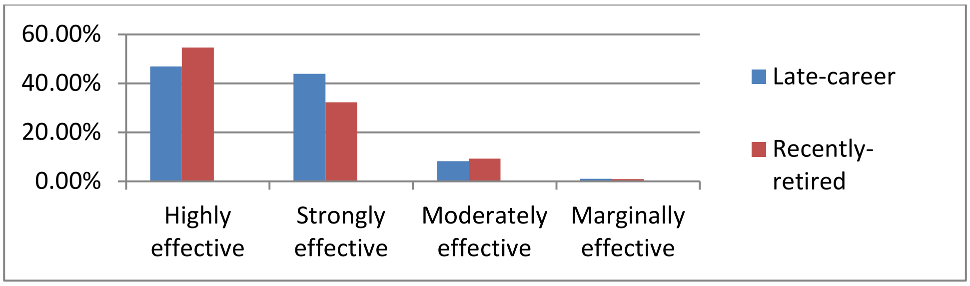
Finding

1. 46.9% of late-career principals and 54.6% of recently-retired principals judged themselves as being highly effective.
2. 43.9% of late-career principals and 32.2% of recently-retired principals judged themselves as being strongly effective.
3. Moderately /marginally effective categories received low support (Table 4.11/ Figure 4.5):

	Late-career	Recently-retired
Highly effective	46.9 %	54.6 %
Strongly effective	43.9 %	32.2 %
Moderately effective	8.2 %	9.3 %
Marginally effective	1.0 %	0.9 %

Table 4.11: Principals' late-career effectiveness

Figure 4.5: Principals' late-career effectiveness



Comment

When the two higher categories (highly effective and strongly effective) were combined, the principals' self-assessed effectiveness ratings were 90.8% for late-career principals and 86.8% for recently-retired principals. This was a clear indicator that principals judged themselves as being very effective in their late-career phase.

Late-career motivation (Item 17)

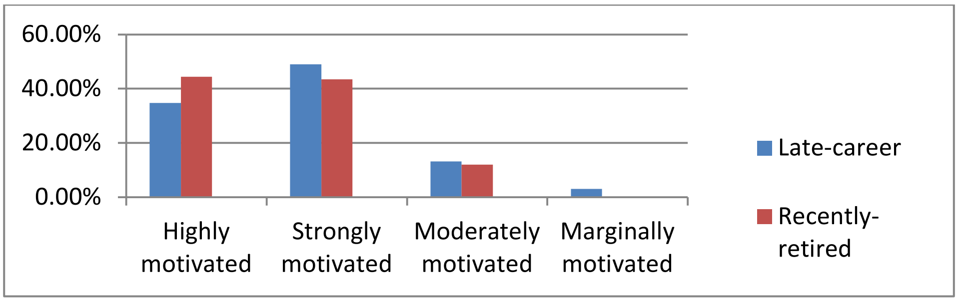
Finding

1. 34.7% of late-career principals and 44.4% of recently-retired principals saw themselves as being highly motivated.
2. 49.0% of late-career and 43.5 % of recently-retired principals saw themselves as being strongly motivated.
3. The moderately and marginally motivated categories received limited support (Table 4.12 and Figure 4.6):

	Late-career	Recently-retired
Highly motivated	34.7 %	44.4 %
Strongly motivated	49.0 %	43.5 %
Moderately motivated	13.2 %	12.0 %
Marginally motivated	3.1 %	0.1 %

Table 4.12: Principals' late-career motivation

Figure 4.6: Principals' late-career motivation



Comment

When the higher categories (highly and strongly motivated) were combined, the principals' self-assessed motivation rating was 83.7% for late-career and 87.9% for recently-retired principals. This indicated that principals judged themselves as being very motivated in their late-career phase.

Late-career satisfaction (Item 18)

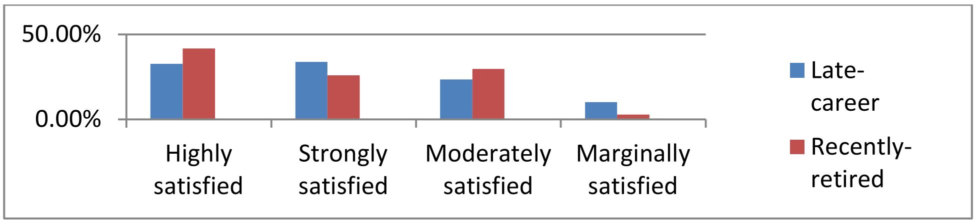
Finding

The responses for *satisfaction* were spread more evenly across the first three categories, with an increase in the final category, marginally satisfied (Table 4.13 and Figure 4.7):

	Late-career	Recently-retired
Highly satisfied	32.7 %	41.7 %
Strongly satisfied	33.7 %	25.9 %
Moderately satisfied	23.5 %	29.6 %
Marginally satisfied	10.1 %	2.8 %

Table 4.13: Principals' late-career satisfaction

Figure 4.7: Principals' late-career satisfaction



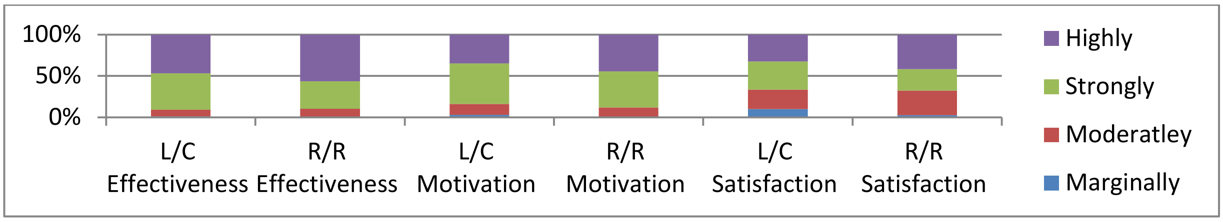
Comment

The self-assessed satisfaction levels were consistently and markedly lower for both the late-career and recently-retired cohorts than the self-assessed effectiveness and motivation levels.

Overall comment (for Dimension 4)

The findings indicated that these principals did not see their late-career phase as being a "plateau path" gliding into retirement. The effectiveness and motivation ratings were very high. However there were a greater number of respondents in the lower categories for satisfaction than for the effectiveness or the motivation criteria (Figure 4.8):

Figure 4.8: Comparative levels of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

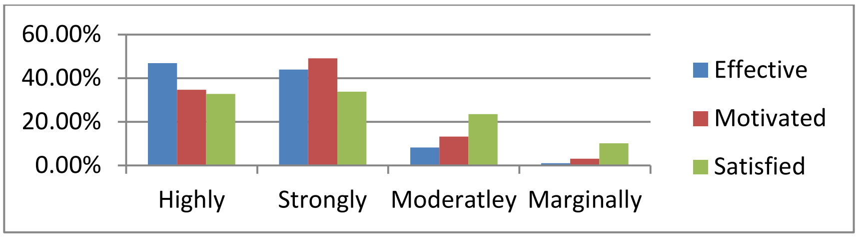


This finding was particularly noticeable with the late-career cohort (Table 4.14 and Figure 4.9):

	Effectiveness	Motivation	Satisfaction
Highly	46.9%	34.7%	32.7%
Strongly	43.9%	49.0%	33.7%
Moderately	8.2%	13.2%	23.5%
Marginally	1.0%	3.1%	10.1%

Table 4.14: Late-career principals' effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

Figure 4.9: Late-career principals' effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction



The finding that the self-assessed satisfaction levels were consistently lower than the self-assessed effectiveness and motivation levels was deemed worthy of further examination through later phases of the research.

DIMENSION 5: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Dimension 5 contained seven items: Items 19-25 (inclusive).

This Dimension explored two aspects of leadership development: principals' involvement in the leadership development and preparation of aspiring principals (with the findings presented in Items 19-21); and principals' knowledge of and engagement with various leadership theories and leadership styles (with the findings presented in Items 22-25).

Mentoring (Item 19)

This item sought principals' responses to the effectiveness of mentoring as a leadership development strategy.

Finding

When compared to other forms of leadership development principals saw mentoring as being more effective than or equally as effective as other strategies (Table 4:15):

The effectiveness of mentoring	Late-career	Recently-retired
More effective	41.3 %	24.8 %
Equally effective	39.4 %	51.4 %
Less effective	19.3 %	23.8 %

Table 4.15: Mentoring compared to other forms of leadership development

Comment

Mentoring was strongly supported with 80.7% of late-career and 76.2% of recently-retired principals seeing mentoring as being more or equally effective as other forms of leadership development. The late-career cohort was more strongly in support of mentoring than the recently-retired cohort.

Variables

Late-career male principals saw mentoring as more effective than late-career female (Table 4.15.1):

Mentoring	Late-career male principals	Late-career female principals
More effective	46.8 %	27.0 %

Table 4.15.1: Mentoring effectiveness by gender

Primary principals saw mentoring as more effective than secondary principals (Table 4.15.2):

Mentoring	Late-career secondary principals	Late-career primary principals
More effective	7.4 %	23.9 %

Table 4.15.2: Mentoring effectiveness by school level

Delivering leadership preparation programs (Item 20)

This item sought principals' responses to delivering leadership preparation programs to aspirants both within and outside their own schools. The principals were asked if they had used consultancy skills (i.e. mentoring and coaching) when conducting such leadership programs; and what was their level of involvement in such programs.

Finding

1. 49.2 % of late-career and 54.7 % of recently-retired principals used consultancy skills (e.g. mentoring/coaching) with leadership aspirants.
2. 36.6 % of late-career and 33.8 % of recently-retired principals were involved in delivering leadership programs to aspirants both inside and outside their own schools (Table 4.16):

Leadership preparation programs	Late-career	Recently-retired
Used consultancy skills (mentoring and coaching) with leadership aspirants	49.2%	54.7 %
Delivered leadership preparation programs to aspirants within and outside your school	36.6 %	33.8 %
Neither of the above	14.2 %	11.5 %

Table 4.16: Principals involved in delivering leadership programs

Comment

International researchers (Fullan, 2003; Fink, 2010; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Pont et al., 2008; Hargreaves et al., 2008) strongly urge educational jurisdictions to make increased use of experienced principals as *system leaders* who work across schools, districts and regions to support newly-appointed principals and aspiring leaders. The responses indicated that approximately 50% of the principals utilized mentoring/coaching to support leadership aspirants; and approximately 35% of the principals had been asked to facilitate leadership preparation of aspirants outside of their own school. This finding was judged to be worthy of further investigation in the later phases of the research.

Desire to deliver leadership preparation programs (Item 21)

This item sought principals' responses to being offered mentoring/coaching training; and to being involved in leadership preparation programs.

Finding

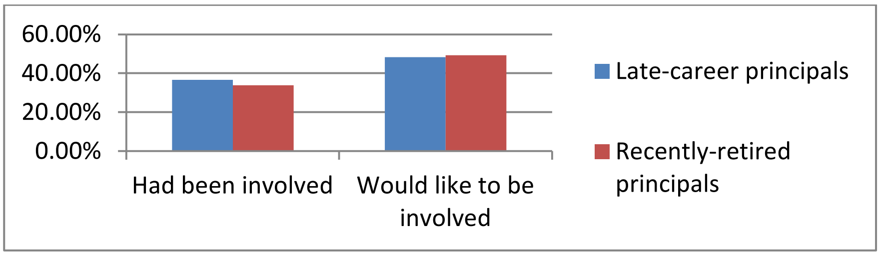
1. 31.5 % of late-career and 43.4 % of recently-retired principals would like to be offered consultancy skills training.
2. 48.2 % of late-career and 49.3 % of recently-retired principals would like to be involved in delivering leadership preparation programs outside of their own school (Table 4.17):

Leadership preparation opportunities	Late-career	Recently-retired
Like to be offered consultancy skills development	31.5 %	43.4 %
Like to be delivering leadership preparation programs outside your school (i.e. systems leadership)	48.2 %	49.3%
Neither of the above	13.3 %	7.4 %

Table 4.17: Principals wanting to be involved in delivering leadership programs

The number of principals who wanted to be involved in delivering leadership development programs to aspirants outside of their school (Item 21) was higher than the number who indicated that they had the opportunity to be involved (Item 20) as shown in Figure 4.10:

Figure 4.10: Principals who would have been/would like to be involved as system leaders



Comment

There was a desire from these principals to act as system leaders engaging in leadership capacity building with a wider audience of aspirants outside their own school. Fullan (2005) believes that, "successful districts…foster cross-school (and beyond) learning-lateral capacity building, which has powerful benefits for individual schools and the system as a whole" (p.80). This concept was assessed as worthy of further exploration in later phases of the research.

DIMENSION 6: LATE-CAREER PROJECTION, AND RECENTLY-RETIRED REFLECTION, ABOUT RETIREMENT

Dimension 6 contained five items: Items 26-30 (inclusive).

Dimension 6 explored various aspects of expectations about retirement (for the late-career cohort) and experiences about retirement (for the recently-retired cohort). The findings are presented in Items 26-29 (below). The Dimension explored the responses of each cohort separately; and then compared the responses between the two cohorts.

Preparation for retirement (Item 26)

This item sought principals' opinions about how well they prepare for retirement.

Finding

1. 19.0% of late-career and 19.7% of recently-retired principals identified themselves as being not well prepared.
2. 64.0% for late-career and 46.6% of recently-retired principals identify themselves as being moderately well prepared.
3. 17.0% of late-career and 32.7% of recently-retired principals identify themselves as being extremely well prepared (Table 4.18):

Preparation for retirement	Late-career	Recently-retired
Extremely well prepared	17.0 %	32.7 %
Moderately well prepared	64.0 %	46.6 %
Not well prepared	19.0 %	19.7%

Table 4.18: Preparation for retirement

Comment

More recently-retired principals (than late-career principals) indicated that they were *e*xtremely well-prepared. The experiences of the recently-retired cohort may be indicating that people are indeed better prepared than they perceive themselves to be (in late-career). This concept of preparedness raised the issue of readiness for retirement. Being *ready* was talked about in questionnaire comments more than being *prepared*. This finding relating to readiness for retirement was assessed as being worthy of deeper exploration in the later phases of the research.

Preferred activities in retirement (Item 27)

This item sought late-career principals' expectations of, and recently-retired principals' experiences of, preferred activities in retirement. The aim was to build a picture of both the anticipated and the experienced retirement life-style activities.

Finding

1. Recreational activities were clearly the highest ranking responses from both cohorts: 33.7% for late-career and 33.0% for recently-retired principals.
2. Travel and Family were the next highest ranking activities in retirement for both cohorts.
3. With the exception of *work* all criteria were ranked in the same priority order for both cohorts (Table 4.19):

Preferred activities	Late-career expectations	Recently-retired experiences
Recreational (sports, hobbies, leisure, fitness, relaxation and socialization)	33.7%	33.0 %
Travel	21.7%	17.2 %
Family	13.7%	12.2 %
Community and voluntary work	13.3%	12.2 %
Work	11.7%	18.8 %
Home renovating & maintenance	4.0%	3.6 %
Study	2.0%	3.6 %

Table 4.19: Preferred activities in retirement

Comment

Recreational, travel and family activities were the most popular retirement activities for both cohorts. This finding would seem to align with the traditional concept of retirement. Many of the activities listed (e.g. regular gymnasium sessions and regular sport) were very physically energetic pursuits. This may be a sign of an increasing emphasis on aiming to stay younger for longer in retirement and would seem worthy of further investigation. Although most items were rated similarly by both cohorts, one item which received a higher ranking amongst the recently-retired cohort was *work.* This was indicated to be the second most preferred activity in retirement by the recently-retired cohort; but was only anticipated to be the fifth most preferred activity by the late-career cohort. This finding (which related to refocusing in retirement) seemed worthy of further exploration in the later phases of the research.

Difficulties in retirement (Item 28)

This item sought the late-career principals' expectations about the difficulties they may encounter with their transition into retirement; and recently-retired principals' reflections of the difficulties which they had experienced in transitioning to retirement.

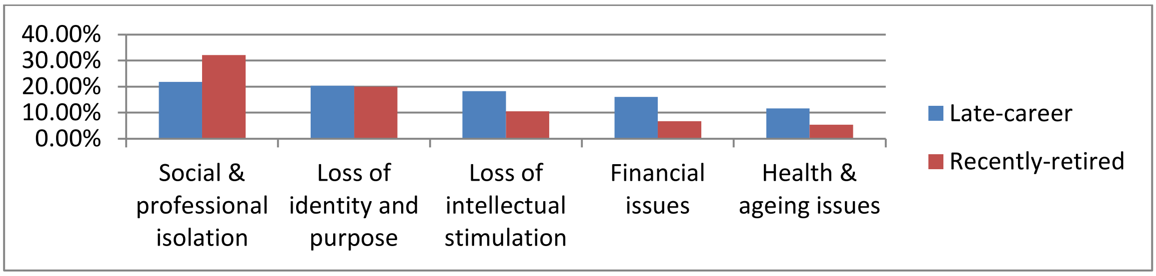
Finding

1. 21.8% of late-career principals and 31.2 % of recently-retired principals indicated that social and professional isolation was the main difficulty in retirement.
2. 20.4 % of late-career anticipated, and 20.0% of recently-retired principals found the loss of purpose and identity *to* be the second major difficulty (Table 4.20; Figure 4.11):

Difficulties in retirement	Late-career expectations	Recently-retired experiences
Social /professional isolation	21.8%	31.2 %
Loss of identity, purpose and self-esteem	20.4%	20.0 %
Intellectual stimulation and boredom	18.2%	10.5 %
Financial	16.1%	6.8 %
Health and aging	11.6%	5.4 %
Time management	3.9%	17.3 %
Relationship adjustments	3.2%	5.1 %
Slowing down	3.2%	2.4 %
Care of aging parents	1.6%	1.3 %

Table 4.20: Expected and experienced difficulties in retirement

Figure 4.11: The major expected and experienced difficulties in retirement



Comment

Conventional wisdom (as portrayed through media and social mores) indicate that the traditional areas of concern for retirees are located in the practical domains (i.e. financial security and health care). Traditionally support services for those areas have been supplied through government welfare agencies, voluntary welfare organizations and families). However initial findings from this research indicated that the real difficulties for baby boomer principals when transitioning to retirement are in the emotional domain (e.g. social and professional isolation; loss of identity, purpose and self-esteem; and loss of intellectual stimulation) and not in the practical domain. This finding, which challenged current practice and conventional wisdom, was judged as being worthy of much deeper investigation in the later phases of the research.

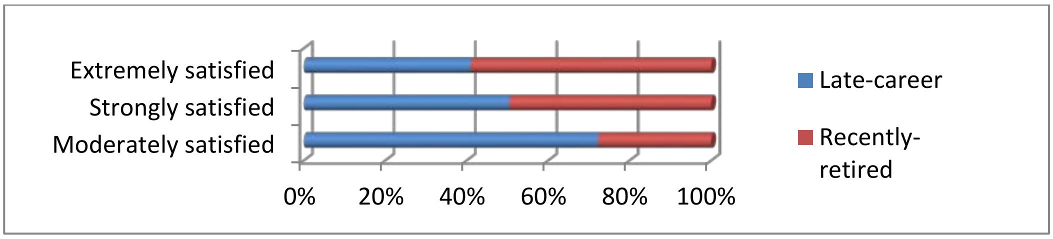
Satisfaction in retirement (Item 29)

This item sought late-career principals' expectations about, and recently-retired principals' reflections on satisfaction levels in retirement.

Finding

1. 34.0% of late-career principals expected to be extremely satisfied*,* whilst 49.1% of recently-retired principals reported being extremely satisfied.
2. 43.3% of late-career principals expected to be strongly satisfied*,* whilst 42.6% of recently-retired principals reported being strongly satisfied.
3. 21.6% of late-career principals expected to be only moderately satisfied*,* whilst 8.3% of recently-retired principals indicated being moderately satisfied (Table 4.21; Figure 4.12):

Figure 4.12: Perceived (late-career) and actual (recently-retired) retirement satisfaction



Satisfaction level in retirement	Late-career expectation	Recently-retired experiences
Extremely satisfying	34.0%	49.1 %
Strongly satisfying	43.3%	42.6 %
Moderately satisfying	21.6%	8.3 %

Table 4.21: Satisfaction in retirement

Comment

Satisfaction levels in retirement were higher for the recently-retired cohort (who had experiences on which to reflect) than for the late-career cohort (who were projecting into the future). Given this finding, it was decided to explore with the recently-retired cohort what factors contributed most to a feeling of high satisfaction in retirement. This exploration became a component of the Phase 2 interviews for the recently-retired cohort (Chapter 6).

Variables

Rural-based principals (both late-career and recently-retired) registered a significantly higher *strongly satisfied* level than metropolitan principals (Table 4.21.1):

Satisfaction in retirement	Late-career metropolitan principals	Late-career rural principals	Recently-retired metropolitan principals	Recently-retired rural principals
Strongly satisfied	22.5 %	42.1 %	36.8 %	47.8 %

Table 4.21.1: Satisfaction in retirement (by location)

Comment

The question arises as to why rural areas provided a more satisfying environment than metropolitan areas for retirement. This geographical variation seemed worthy of further exploration but was judged to be outside of the scope of this research.

Experiences of retirement compared to expectations of retirement (Item 30)

Item 30 was the additional item solely included in the recently-retired principals' questionnaire as this item sought feedback on the experiences of actually being retired. Recently-retired principals were asked to reflect on their experiences of retirement compared to their late-career expectations about retirement.

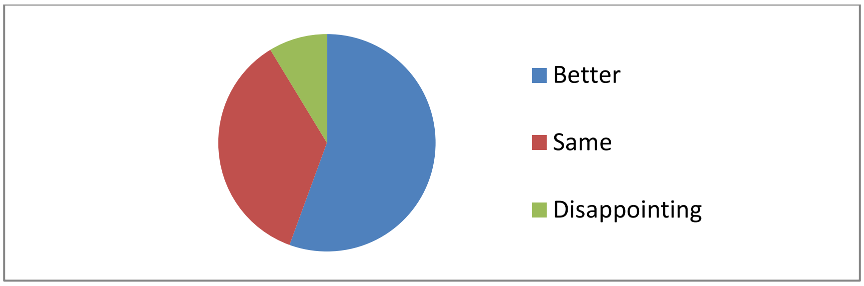
Finding

55.6% of recently-retired principals reported that retirement was better than expected; 35.7% reported that it was the same as expected; and 8.7% reported that they were more disappointed than expected (Table 4.22 and Figure 4.13):

Experiences in retirement	Recently-retired principals
Better than expected	55.6 %
The same as expected	35.7 %
More disappointing than expected	8.7 %

Table 4.22: Retirement experiences compared to expectations

Figure 4.13: Retirement experiences compared to expectations



Comment

For these recently-retired principals retirement had proven to be a more satisfying experience than had been anticipated. This finding may well provide comfort for those who are approaching retirement with some trepidation. To further interrogate this finding the factors which the late-career principals identified as producing this better than expected satisfaction level in retirement were further explored in later phases of the research.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS AND THEMES

Dimension 1 (variables)

The three variables of geographic location (metropolitan v rural); gender (male v female); and school level (primary v secondary) had little impact on the questionnaire findings.

Dimension 2 (retirement decisions and staying-on options)

1. Retirement for principals was driven by the superannuation retirement age rather than by any professional or personal factors.
2. Principals were interested in staying-on (full-time or part-time) past retirement age if there were more flexible superannuation regulations; and part-time if there were more flexible work practices which allowed part-time/job sharing options.
3. Principals are interested in staying-on for the emotional factors (e.g. intellectual stimulation; social interaction; and because they feel too young to retire) rather than for the practical factors (e.g. financial rewards).

Dimension 3 (refocusing)

1. Principals were extremely interested in refocusing back into the workforce.
2. Principals strongly favoured part-time work in retirement.
3. Principals indicated that refocusing was motivated by emotional factors (e.g. social/professional contact; intellectual stimulation; and a sense of identity and purpose) rather than by practical reasons (e.g. financial return).

Dimension 4 (late-career leadership)

1. Late-career principals saw themselves as highly effective and highly motivated.
2. Late-career principals did not see themselves as being on a plateau or a glide path to retirement.
3. Late-career principals' self-assessed satisfaction level was not as high as their self-assessed levels of effectiveness and motivation.

Dimension 5 (professional development)

1. Principals saw mentoring as an effective process for leadership preparation and development.
2. Principals used mentoring and coaching when delivering leadership preparation programs to aspirant leaders.
3. Principals believed that high-level mentoring and coaching skills training would enhance their capacity to participate in aspirant programs.
4. Principals would like the opportunity to be involved as system leaders in aspirant programs both within and outside their school.

Dimension 6 (late-career projection into and recently-retired reflection on retirement)

1. Principals indicated that the most favoured activities in retirement would be/are: recreational activities; travel; family activities; community/volunteering activities; and work.
2. Principals reported that the most significant personal difficulties in retirement would be/are: social and professional isolation; lack of intellectual stimulation; and the loss of a sense of purpose, identity and self-esteem.
3. Recently-retired principals reported not only being extremely satisfied in retirement but also strongly supported the concept that retirement is better than expected.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 outlined the initial findings and themes from the quantitative analysis of the Phase 1 questionnaire. Miles and Huberman (1989) concluded that "the careful measurement, generalizable samples, experimental control, and statistical tools of good quantitative studies are precious assets. When they are combined with the up-close, deep, credible understandings of complex real-world contexts that characterize good qualitative studies, we have a very powerful mix" (P. 42). Holtzhausen (2001) concluded that "by following a multimethod research approach…a more complete, holistic and contextual portrayal can be captured…and the understanding of human nature and social reality…is increased as well" (p.1). Combining two (or more) research methods limits potential errors and omissions and increases the potential for a deeper and more accurate understanding of human phenomena. Johnson and Christensen (2008) have supported this position stating that "the fundamental principal of mixed research…says that it is wise to collect multiple sets of data using different research methods and approaches in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination has complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses".

These constructs were powerful motivators for next moving to the individual personal interviews (Phase 2) for the qualitative component of this mixed methods framework. From the Phase 1 findings, specific dimensions (and items) had been purposively selected to be further explored. The interviews were conducted with 56 purposively selected principals: 30 late-career and 26 recently-retired principals. The aim of the qualitative interviews was to facilitate a deeper and broader exploration and investigation of the initial quantitative findings and themes (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Miles & Huberman (1989). The Phase 2 interview findings are presented in Chapter 5 (for the late-career cohort) and Chapter 6 (for the recently-retired cohort).

CHAPTER 5

INTERVIEWS: LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALS

The Phase 1 quantitative findings (Chapter 4) indicate the initial expectations and aspirations of late-career principals in relation to their late-career and transition to retirement. However as Easterby-Smith et al., (1994) note “the world and its reality are not objective and exterior, but they are socially constructed and given meaning by people” (p. 78). The study moved from the objective and numerical indicators of the quantitative questionnaire to the subjective words and comments of the qualitative interviews. Cohen & Mansion (1994) remind us that qualitative research (such as interviews) provides access to “the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world” (p. 8). This process facilitated the development of the grounded theory for this research.

When discussing grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967) contend that theory should emerge inductively from the empirical data and that researchers need to “discover theory from data” (p.1). Johnson and Christensen (2008) described this inductive analysis process as “getting into your data (during data collection and analysis) ‘living there’ or ‘hanging there for a while’ and developing an understanding of the phenomenon based on the data” (p.411).

This chapter presents the quantitative findings from the late-career interviews using the following format: the five **dimensions** (purposively selected from the Phase 1 questionnaire analysis) are presented for deeper analysis; the analyzed interview data from these dimensions are presented as the interview **findings** and initial **sub-themes;** the sub-themes (which were further analyzed by revisiting the original audio-taped interviews) are **commented** upon and are presented as the **major themes**. This process is followed for each of the selected dimensions/items of the interviews. The conclusion to the chapter is presented as a **summary** of the major themes.

INTERVIEW COHORT AND CONTENT

From the Phase 1 questionnaire, respondents were purposefully selected based on two criteria. Firstly the percentage distribution of participants on the three interview variables of gender, geographical location and school-level needed to be maintained (Table 5.1):

Interview cohort	Males	Females	Metropolitan	Rural	Primary	secondary
30	18	12	18	12	22	8

Table 5.1: Interview cohort sample

Secondly the percentage distribution of responses for each interview dimension was maintained (appendix 3.17). From the Phase 1 questionnaire, five of the six dimensions (representing 22/29 items) were purposively selected for inclusion in Phase 2 late-career interviews (Appendix 3.19). Dimension 5 (Leadership Development) was not included in the interviews as further investigation of the responses to Items 22-25 (Leadership Styles) was judged to be outside of the scope of this study; and items 19-21 (mentoring/coaching and involvement in leadership development programs) became consumed in other components of the interview process. This meant that 75.7% of the late-career phase 1 questionnaire dimensions/items formed the content of the phase 2 interviews. Following this process five dimensions (from the Phase 1 questionnaire) were purposively selected for deeper investigation through the Phase 2 individual interviews:

1. Individual profile
2. Retirement
3. Staying-on (options)
4. Late-career satisfaction levels
5. Projection into retirement :
    1.1 Social isolation
    1.2 Professional isolation
    1.3 Loss of purpose and identity
    1.4 Loss of intellectual stimulation
    1.5 The perfect retirement
    1.6 Readiness for retirement

INTERVIEW DATA RECORDING

The categorization and collation of the interview responses (for the purposively selected five dimensions) appears at Appendix 3.23.

DIMENSION 1: INDIVIDUAL PROFILE

The name, gender, geographic location and school-level for each of the interview participants now became a live and personal matter for the researcher. Each interviewee was contacted by email and phone to arrange a suitable interview time and location. The researcher travelled to the interviewee's school (across NSW) and the interviews were conducted in the interviewee's (i.e. principal's) office.

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT

Question 1: ["What are you feeling about your approaching retirement?"]

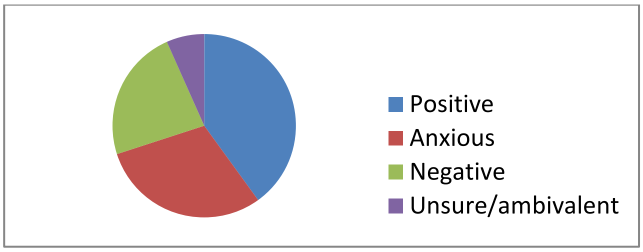
This was a *free category* item (Table 3.5) which was not part of the Phase 1 questionnaire, but was purposively selected to commence the interviews. The intention was to facilitate an open discussion about the interviewee's current emotional reaction to their approaching retirement.

Finding

The interview responses were collated under four headings: positive, negative, anxious and unsure/ambivalent. These headings were collapsed into two categories i.e. positive towards retirement and not positive towards retirement:

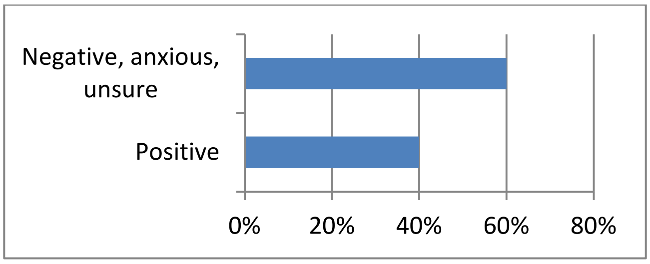
1. 40% of respondents were positive about retirement.
2. 60% were not positive (Figure 5.1):

Figure 5.1: Late-career principals' feelings about approaching retirement



Viewed another way, the strength of the not-positive response was evident (Figure 5.2):

Figure 5.2: Late-career principals' feelings about approaching retirement



Discussion

Anecdotally (and through conventional wisdom) retirement is generally presented as *a state of bliss* and a fitting reward for a life of hard work. However the majority of these late-career principals were not approaching retirement with that positive frame of mind. The finding is presented as three sub-themes.

A. Principals who were totally positive about retirement (and who anticipated a less stressful life):

> *I'm really looking forward to a new era. I want a much slower life-style; and I want more control over my life. Life at work seems to have become too hectic and too stressful. Therefore I'm looking forward to retirement as a circuit-breaker to this hectic life which is not doing anything for my health. (Primary male)*

B. Principals who were positive about retirement but anticipated some difficulties:

> *I'm really looking forward to retirement. However I do have some real concerns. I'm very concerned that there will not be enough of a challenge in this retired life. I can see a situation where I see a lack of purpose in my life. (Secondary male)*

C. Principals who were negative or anxious about retirement and were concerned that the loss of work could mean the loss of identity and purpose:

> *To tell you the honest truth I am not relishing seven days/week away from work. I really don't know what I'm going to do. This has been my life and I love it! My work is my reason for getting out of bed each day. I fear that when it's taken from me I'll be lost. (Primary male)*

Comment

This group of late-career principals did not present as being positive about the approaching phenomenon of retirement. This response would seem to align closely with the views expressed by social researchers that baby boomers are not comfortable with the very concept of *retirement* (Salt 2007, McCrindle, 2009, Gibbs, 2008, Cooper, 2008); and with research indicating that the broad baby boomer community movement is away from the traditional model of retirement (Denmark et al., 2007; Johnson, 2001).

The anxiety/concern about approaching retirement demonstrated through the Phase 2 interviews links with the Phase 1 questionnaire finding that late-career principals are very interested in staying-on or refocusing rather than retiring in the traditional model. This finding was assessed as being worthy of further investigation in later phases of the study.

Major themes from Dimension 2 (Retirement)

1. Retirement is associated with feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and negativity.
2. Retirement threatens the sense of purpose and identity.

DIMENSION 3: STAYING-ON OPTIONS

This dimension combined elements of Questionnaire Dimension 2 (which explored staying-on) with elements of Questionnaire Dimension 3 (which explored refocusing).

Staying-on full-time

In Phase 1, 72.7% of late-career principals indicated that they would consider staying-on (either full-time or part-time) past their superannuation retirement date, if they could simultaneously access their superannuation entitlements. Within this 72.7% support, staying-on *full-time* attracted interest from 40.1% of late-career principals. Due to the strength of this response it was decided to deliberately locate (from within the late-career research cohort) principals who had taken this staying-on full-time option (although they did not have access to their superannuation entitlement as they had opted not to permanently retire). Thirteen principals were located who fitted this criteria. During 2011 these principals were invited to complete a specific on-line questionnaire (Appendix 7.3) and participate in a phone interview (Appendix 7.7). The findings into the specific category of *staying-on full-time* are presented in Chapter 7 (Triangulation).

Staying-on part-time

This was the option relating to ramping-off from full-time work by having access to part-time/job-share opportunities (e.g. a co-principalship model). This ramping off option attracted 32.6% support from late-career principals in the Phase 1 questionnaire. The Phase 2 Interviews sought to gain a deeper understanding of this interest in the part-time job-share (co-principalship) concept:

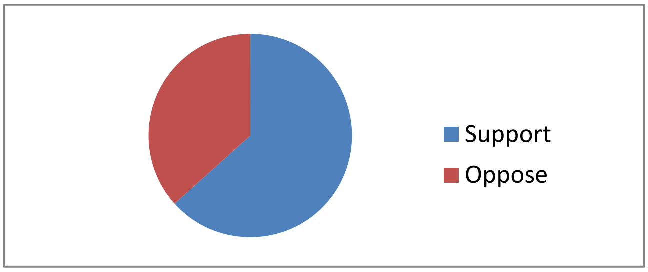
Question 2.1 ["Do you believe that co-principalship can benefit the school and student outcomes?"]

Finding

Comments were collated under two headings i.e. support for or opposition to co-principalship:

1. 63.3% of respondents were supportive of co-principalship.
2. 36.7 % opposed to co-principalship (Figure 5.3):

Figure 5.3: Late-career principals' support for co-principalship



Discussion

Although the issue of "co-principalship" has received little attention within NSW (Cannon, 2004; Anderson & Lacey, 2007), there would appear to be a growing interest with recent research exploring a variety of models when more than one person shares the principal role (Duignan & Cannon, 2011). Duignan and Cannon's (2011) findings support earlier research (d'Arbon et al., 2002: Lacey & Gronn, 2005; Anderson & Lacey, 2007) that principals in the field were very supportive of the concept of "collective leadership" (p. 111). Principals believe that job-sharing would allow better work-home balance; would bring renewed energy and enthusiasm; would bring freshness, energy and sanity; would allow flexibility as life/ family situations changed; and could be specifically beneficial for women (Duignan & Cannon, 2011, p. 66-67).

The co-principalship model was supported by 63.3% of the late-career principals interviewed. The finding is presented as two sub-themes.

A. Principals who supported the co-principalship concept and highlighted the benefits of shared leadership:

Having the talents of two people, with special skills, would be a great advantage for a school community. This scheme would allow both the experiences and the energies of two leaders to benefit the school. (Primary male)

I believe that at present there is far too much loss of expertise as the baby boomers retire and 'walk out the door' with all that knowledge. This scheme therefore would stop that and assist school communities and students by providing strong, experienced leadership teams. (Primary female)

B. Principals who opposed co-principalship and believed that shared leadership would bring inconsistency:

I don't believe that you can share authority if you want consistency. There can only ever be one CEO. (Primary male)

Consistency is all important in schools, and this model with two principals would make consistency difficult if not impossible; it won't work. (Secondary female)

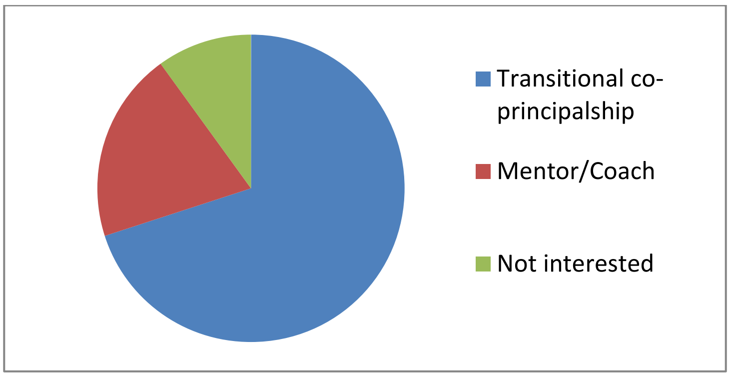
Question 2.2 [Under what conditions might co-principalship interest you?]

In the very first late-career principal interview, one respondent (primary female) suggested a strategy which this research has termed the *Transitional Co-principalship Model* (afterwards referred to as TCM). Under this model the second-in-charge (i.e. Deputy Principal) would relieve as the principal whilst the substantive principal reduced to part-time (e.g. the deputy-principal assumes the principal position for 2 days/ week and the substantive principal works 3 days/week) leading into retirement. A question about TCM was subsequently included in the remaining 29 late-career interviews. The purpose of this question was to seek this cohort's response to the co-principalship concept generically; and the TCM suggestion specifically.

Finding

1. 10% were not interested in any co-principalship model.
2. 20% were interested in a mentor/coaching co-principalship model.
3. 70 % were in favour of the TCM (Figure 5.4):

Figure 5.4: Late-career principals' preferred co-principal model



Discussion

Staying-on part-time (i.e. ramping-off in a co-principal model), was an attractive option to 90% of late-career principals. This was a very strong endorsement of interest in not retiring in the traditional mode. The finding is presented as three sub-themes.

A. Principals who did not support any co-principalship model (10%):

   The concept would not interest me under any conditions. (Secondary female)

   I don't believe that the Transitional Co-principalship Model would work. Transitional co-principalship is just prolonging the agony of a new principal being appointed and the older one retiring. (Primary female)

B. Principals who preferred the mentoring/coaching model (20%):

   A principal mentor role, where I would support new principals on a part-time basis, is the one which offers the best solutions. (Primary female)

   My ideal would be co-principals who are employed for their expertise in late-career or retirement to mentor/ coach new or aspiring principals. (Primary male)

C. Principals who supported the TCM (70%) and who highlighted it as a job-sharing model which captured the expertise and provided effective leadership development:

   This Transitional Co-principal Model would allow ramping off for the principal; plus a transition plan and a succession plan for the school. Such a scheme would provide an excellent leadership preparation plan. (Primary male)

   The Transitional Co-principaship Model would be an excellent way to stop expertise from 'walking out the door'. The phasing out/ ramping off would be a great way for a principal to finish. (Primary female)

Comment

In a recent retirement survey conducted with NSW public sector employees Hesketh and Griffin (2010) found that less than one third of the respondents expected to follow the traditional retirement model (i.e. staying in full-time work up till the point of official full-time retirement). The majority of these public sector employees favoured some transitional part-time arrangement. Findings from the research presented here are indicating that principals are very interested in ramping-off through part-time/job-share work. This new data added significantly to an understanding of principals' perceptual meaning and nature of late-career and retirement. One particularly interesting observation came from a secondary principal who indicated that he had always been opposed to the co-principalship concept and had expressed that opposition when answering Phase 1 Questionnaire (December, 2008). However in the time which elapsed between completing the Phase 1 questionnaire and being involved in the Phase 2 interviews (June 2009) he was unexpectedly involved in a shared principalship situation at his own school:

I have always thought that the Principal cannot be part-time. Therefore I was not in support of this concept and did not believe that it could be of any real benefit to the school or the students. However, in my current situation it did work. I now can see how it can be a huge benefit to the school if the leadership role is shared, along the Transitional Co-principalship Model. This produced significant professional development. The students and the community thought that they were special to have two principals. (Secondary male)

Major themes from Dimension 3 (Staying-on options)

1. Part-time work and job-sharing models which allow ramping-off are very popular.
2. The part-time mentor/coach model is an attractive option.
3. The Transitional Co-principalship Model is the most popular staying-on part-time option.

DIMENSION 4: LATE-CAREER SATISFACTION LEVELS

The Phase 1 self-assessed satisfaction levels indicated that for late-career principals the satisfaction level was lower than the effectiveness and motivation levels (Table 5.2):

	Effectiveness	**Motivation**	**Satisfaction**
High	46.9%	34.7%	32.7%
Strong	43.9%	49.0%	33.7%
Moderate	8.2%	13.2%	23.5%
Marginal	1.0%	3.1%	10.1%

Table 5.2: Late-career principals: effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

Through two questions the interviews sought to further investigate the original finding in order to locate the main factors which principals believed were causing the lower satisfaction ratings.

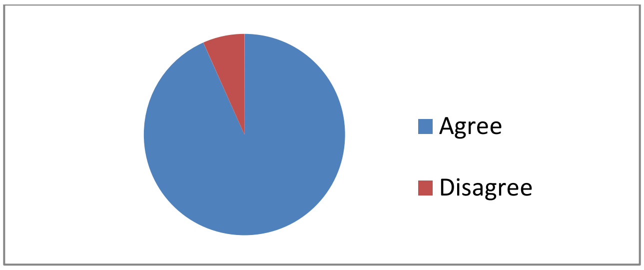
Question 3.1

["Do you agree that your satisfaction levels amongst late-career principals are lower than effectiveness and motivation levels?"]

Finding

The interviews verified the Phase 1 findings with 93.3% of the interview cohort agreeing that satisfaction levels were lower than effectiveness and motivation levels (Figure 5.5):

Figure 5.5: Principals' satisfaction is lower than their effectiveness and motivation



Question 3.2

["What factors do you believe are leading to satisfaction levels being lower?"]

Finding

The main five reasons for the satisfaction levels being lower were presented as:

Reason 1: The politically-driven educational agenda which depowers the principal;

Reason 2: The excessive clerical and administrative demands which deflect the principal from the core educational business;

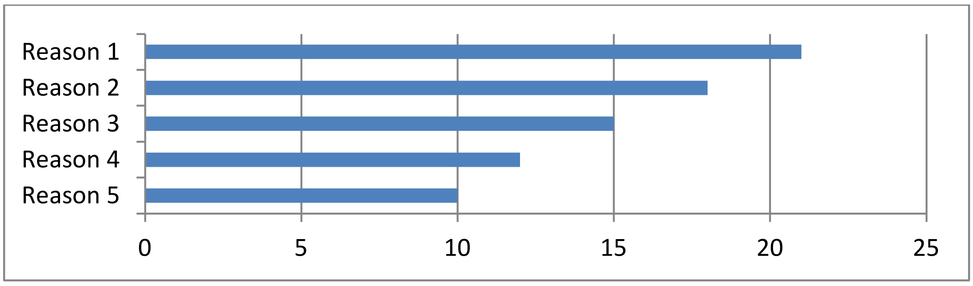
Reason 3: The lack of control by the principal over staffing appointments (which inhibits effective program implementation);

Reason 4: The poor communication practices from the employer which results in hasty decisions being made at the school level;

Reason 5: The expanding role as a site-manager which deflects the principal from the core educational business.

The frequency with which each factor was mentioned in the interviews is shown in Figure 5.6:

Figure 5.6: Ranking of reasons for lower satisfaction



Discussion

This finding is presented as two sub-themes.

A. Principals who identified one specific reason for lower satisfaction:

> *There is a growing frustration coming from schools being 'used' as part of the political landscape (no embarrassment to government of the day is the prevailing philosophy). This is an unethical use of schools and eats away at the principal's sense of 'satisfaction'. I am forced into being an apologist for the political masters. From this one builds a sense of cynicism and frustration. This diminishes a sense of 'satisfaction'. (Secondary male)*

> *The main reason is the desk-bound administrative demands of the role. This means that it is harder to find time to professionally develop staff, which is always one of the more satisfying components of a job. (Secondary male)*

B. Principals who identified a combination of reasons for lower satisfaction:

> *I find that maintenance issues which see the principal as the site manager and not the educational leader produce high levels of frustration in my colleagues. Probably the greatest deterrent to high satisfaction is the lack of control over staffing which leads to increasing frustration and lowers satisfaction. (Secondary female)*

> *Overall we seem to have an ever increasing lack of control. The political agenda has high-jacked the educational agenda. This is very frustrating. I believe that the nature of job has changed dramatically. I'm an educator…I'm a leader…I'm not a site-manager!! Greater responsibility and accountability has been directed into the wrong areas such as OH&S and finance rather than 'education'. (Secondary male)*

Comment

The issue of satisfaction levels for late-career principals may well have significance for the potential retention of late-career principals. Research findings from the recent NSW Public Sector Retirement Planning Survey indicated that "low job satisfaction and being tired at work are strong predictors of a desire to retire at a younger age" (Hesketh & Griffin's 2010, p.4). The finding in this study indicating that late-career principals' satisfaction levels are lower than effectiveness and motivation levels, could well be a factor influencing the current high-level of principal retirements. This finding was considered worthy of further investigation in later phases of the research.

Major themes from Dimension 4 (Late-career satisfaction levels)

1. The self-assessed satisfaction levels are lower than effectiveness and motivation levels.
2. The satisfaction levels are negatively influenced by the loss of professional control of the educational agenda, in favour of political control.
3. The satisfaction levels are negatively influence by deflection from the core business of education, in favour of administrative tasks.

DIMENSION 5: PROJECTION INTO RETIREMENT

In Phase 1, late-career principals were asked to anticipate what would be the main difficulties when transitioning to retirement. The main three issues identified were components of the emotional domain: social/professional isolation; loss of purpose and identity; and loss of intellectual stimulation (Table 4.25). The highest ranking concern (i.e. social/professional isolation) was now sub-divided into two discrete items for closer investigation.

Social isolation (Dimension 5.1)

Questions 4.1:

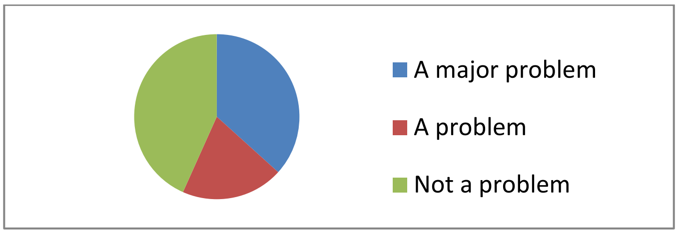
[**"**From our research so far, *social isolation* presents as a problem. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?"]

Finding

The comments were collated into two headings: social isolation as a problem or not as *a* problem:

1. 43.3% anticipated no problem with social isolation.
2. 20.0% anticipated social isolation as a problem.
3. 36.7% anticipated social isolation as a major problem (Figure 5.7):

Figure 5.7: Social isolation foreseen as a problem in retirement



Discussion

These Phase 2 interviews verified the initial concerns (from Phase 1 questionnaire) with 56.7% of the interview cohort anticipating that social isolation would be a problem/major problem when transitioning to retirement. This finding is presented as four sub-themes:

A. Principals who did not see social isolation as a problem because of existing social networks:

Social isolation is not a problem for me. We have a wide and active circle of friends and family. The broader the social group before retirement the safer the situation. (Secondary female)

I feel that social isolation can be a real possibility. It depends on the individual networks which you have developed whilst in the job. If you give your 'heart and soul' to the job seven days a week, you will not have those social networks at retirement. (Primary male)

B. Principals who saw social isolation as a major problem, but had not taken any preventative action:

Social isolation is a very real concern to me. I'm very fearful of becoming isolated. The loss of that every day, continuous inter-action looms as a major drawback to retirement. Where do I find the replacement contact? (Primary female)

This is an issue close to my heart and my experiences. Family-wise I am socially isolated as my family lives in the UK; my kids have all grown up and left home; and my husband is semi-retired and has developed own interests and passions which don't really have much meaning or significance for me. (Primary female)

C. Principals who recognized social isolation as a potential problem and had taken deliberate preventative action:

I know work defines me but to ensure that it is only to a point I have other interests such as sport, Judo, community work, property business, boating plans and travel plans, which all are aimed at substituting for social isolation in retirement. (Primary male)

D. Principals who recognized social isolation as a problem resulting from their career mobility (i.e. moving for promotion):

We are relatively new to this area so retirement concerns me in relation to 'social isolation'. We don't know many people and we don't have a well developed social network. My concern is that whilst the principalship is a lonely job, retirement might be even lonelier! I suppose that my wife and I are looking to grandparent responsibilities as a substitute if loneliness is an issue. (Secondary male)

Comment

An interesting gender perspective on social isolation was supplied by one female principal:

> *I am becoming painfully aware that I have not been building meaningful or deep relationships with other women during my time as a principal. I returned to teaching after a break for child-rearing and so once I started on the promotion ladder I had a short time-frame to be successful. Consequently I devoted myself to the job 24/7. I've been, or allowed myself to be, so busy that I have let friendship lapse. I haven't chased those cups of coffee with female colleagues; or those weekend shopping trips. You know those "girlie" things that actually bore me stupid but because I've concentrated on work instead of cultivating these networks, I'm now staring down the barrel of a lonely and isolated retirement. No wonder I'm not keen to retire. (Primary female)*

This response aligns with the Phase 1 Questionnaire Item 7 (Reasons to retire) and Item 9 (Reasons to stay-on) which had found that females where less inclined to retire early and more inclined to stay-on. One factor may be that females are in fact younger than their male colleagues due to gender variations in the State Superannuation Scheme retirement age but this deeper investigation through interview uncovered a further factor which relates to female broken service and truncated time-line to achieve promotion to the principalship. Whilst this finding was considered worthy of further investigation in later phases of the research, it was also judged there could be a major examination of this finding which would be outside the scope of this present study.

The new data analyzed through this dimension further developed an understanding of the meaning and nature of late-career and transition to retirement for principals.

Major themes for Dimension 5.1 (Social isolation)

1. Social isolation is anticipated to be a problem.
2. Previously established social networks help to alleviate/avoid social isolation.
3. Relocation late in the career (usually to seek promotion) exacerbates social isolation.

Professional isolation (Dimension 5.2)

Questions 4.2:

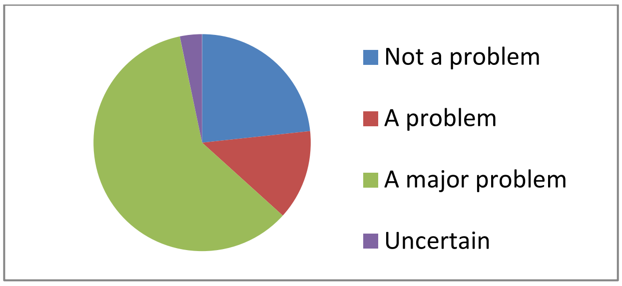
[**"**From our research so far, *professional isolation* presents as a problem. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings i.e. professional isolation as a problem or not as a problem:

1. 23.3% anticipated no problem.
2. 73.4% anticipated a problem (with 60.0% of this group anticipating a major problem).
3. 3.3% were uncertain (Figures 5.8):

Figure 5.8: Professional isolation foreseen as a problem in retirement



Discussion

Professional isolation (now that it was a separate item) was judged to be even more of a problem (73.4%) than social isolation (56.7%). This finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals who did not foresee any problem being professionally isolated because they would seek new alternatives:

To avoid professional isolation, I'm keen to re-invent myself to do stuff outside of as well as within education. This will be my next career. It's all a learning journey." (Primary female)

"I don't find professional isolation such a huge issue. I think we need to accept that this is the end of the stage/career and we need to look for an alternative (e.g. volunteer work). (Primary male)

B. Principals who saw a significant problem in being professionally isolated in retirement:

Professional isolation I do see as a problem. The large role I play in the school and with my professional association (Secondary Principals Council) involves lots of interaction with many colleagues. This will all end and I know that I will miss this. (Secondary male)

Professional isolation is a real problem: I will need to find something purposeful to do! I cannot simply walk away and play golf. I know myself. (Primary male)

C. Principals who saw the mentoring/coaching as an appealing alternative to alleviate professional isolation:

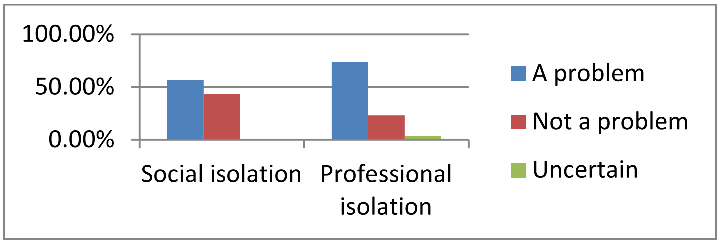
Professional isolation is a different issue and can may be overcome by systems harnessing the huge expertise which will 'walk out the door' over the next few years. This expertise could be deployed into mentoring and coaching new or aspiring leaders. This would be a benefit for the system and would overcome professional isolation. (Primary male)

Professional isolation is a major issue. I would be very happy to help out with mentoring of principals. (Secondary female)

Comment

These Phase 2 interview findings added verification, clarity and depth to the Phase 1 questionnaire findings by confirming that both areas of isolation (social and professional) are anticipated as being significant problem areas in retirement; and that professional isolation is seen as the greater problem (Figure 5.9):

Figure 5.9: Social isolation compared with professional isolation



Major themes from Dimension 5.2 (Professional isolation)

1. Professional isolation is anticipated to be a major problem.
2. Replacement activities organized during the late-career phase lessen the impact of professional isolation.
3. Coaching/mentoring (of aspiring or newly-appointed principals) is seen as a solution to professional isolation (and knowledge transfer).

Loss of purpose and identity (Dimension 5.3)

In Phase 1 the next highest ranked perceived difficulty in retirement (after social/professional isolation) was the anticipated loss of purpose, identity, status and self-esteem (Table 4.25). For convenience**,** this item is referred to as *loss of purpose and identity.*

Question 5

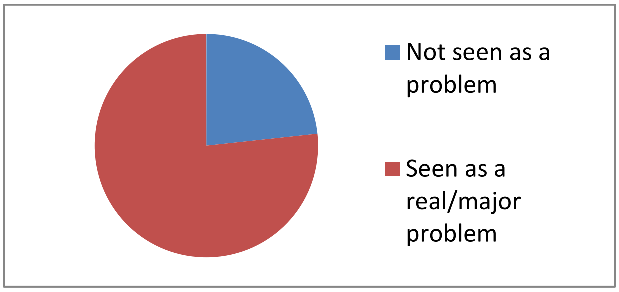
[**"**From our research so far, the *loss of purpose and identity* present as a problem. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings: loss of purpose and identity seen as a problem or not as a problem:

1. 23.3% did not anticipate loss of purpose and identity to be a problem.
2. 76.7% expected loss of purpose and identity to be a real/major difficulty (Figure 5.10):

Figure 5.10: Loss of purpose and identity foreseen as a problem in retirement



Discussion

The majority of these late-career principals (76.7%) indicated that the loss of purpose and identity is a major concern for transitioning to retirement. The finding is presented as two sub-themes:

A. Principals who did not see loss of purpose and identity as a problem (because that their personal identity was not tied to their role as a principal):

I'm not defined by my role as principal. I have never felt a sense of status so I believe that will be fine. (Secondary female)

I don't believe this is a problem for me. I have never lost sight of who I am. I am a daughter, mother, a wife, a friend ….and then a teacher who became a principal. Whatever other job I might have chosen I would still have been a daughter, wife, a mother and a friend. So therefore to me that is what I am. My job in no way defines who I am. (Primary female)

B. Principals who saw the loss of identity and purpose as a major problem:

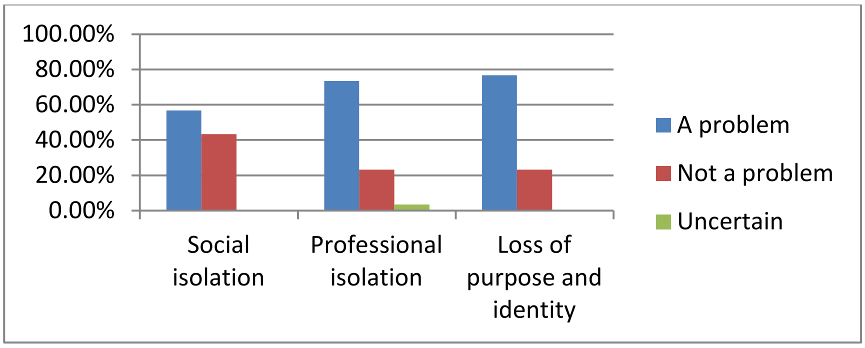
The kudos attached to the role is important and can become intoxicating. A principal's identity can be bound up in role of being a principal. This job can easily be an ego trip which can become an ego trap in retirement. (Secondary female)

Although status has never been important to me I'll be going from 'a somebody' to a 'nobody'. I'm not sure if I'm ready for that. I don't need to be important but am I ready to just be the "retired" lady at the supermarket checkout? (Primary female)

Comment

Although the loss of purpose and identity was the third highest concern in the Phase 1 questionnaire findings, in the Phase 2 interviews this item now presented as this cohort's second highest perceived difficulty in retirement. (Figure 5.11):

Figure 5.11: Comparison of social isolation; professional isolation; and loss of purpose/identity



This finding may well highlight a relationship between role identity and personal identity for people in leadership positions. This finding which would seem worthy of further investigation was assessed as being outside the scope of this study.

Major themes from Dimension 5.3 (Loss of purpose and identity)

1. Late-career principals anticipate the loss of purpose and identity to be the major problem when transitioning into retirement.
2. The loss of the "role" (i.e. work-related identity), poses a significant personal problem for educational leaders in retirement.

Loss of intellectual stimulation (Dimension 5.4)

In Phase 1 the next highest ranked perceived difficulty in transitioning to retirement (following social/professional isolation and loss of purpose and identity) was the feared loss of intellectual stimulation (Table 5.5).

Question 6

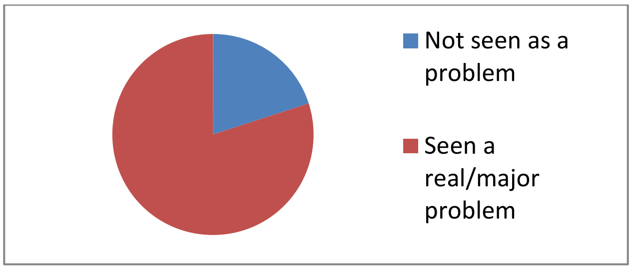
[**"**From our research so far, *loss of intellectual stimulation* presents as a problem. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into the following two headings i.e. lack of intellectual stimulation seen as a problem or not seen as a problem.

1. 20.0% saw no problem with the potential loss of intellectual stimulation (i.e. boredom).
2. 80.0% saw this as a real/major concern (Figure 5.12):

Figure 5.12: Loss of intellectual stimulation foreseen as a problem in retirement



Discussion

In a similar pattern to the other emotional domain concerns, the loss of intellectual stimulation became a more strongly defined (articulated) concern once the research moved into the Phase 2 interviews. The finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals who did not anticipate a problem (and who cited existing hobbies and self-motivation as the solutions):

   I don't really see this as an issue for me. I've always been able to provide my own mental stimulation. In addition I already have a range of hobbies and friends outside of school. (Secondary female)

   I will chase my own mental stimulation. I have always done this. This is not a retirement from intellectual stimulation. Rather it's an opportunity to engage in a newer and potentially far deeper intellectual stimulation. (Primary female)

B. Principals who expected that boredom would be a major problem:

   There are only so many crosswords one can do! I don't want pretend Intellectual stimulation. It must be real and purposeful. (Secondary male)

   I'm sure that while others around me are going to be prepared to just socialize and play, I will need something more intellectually challenging or I will become very restless. My concern is that I'll do all the physical stuff, you know gym, golf, and walking but I'll avoid intellectual stuff. That is a trap I'm concerned about. (Primary female)

C. Principals who had developed safeguards to counter any loss of intellectual stimulation:

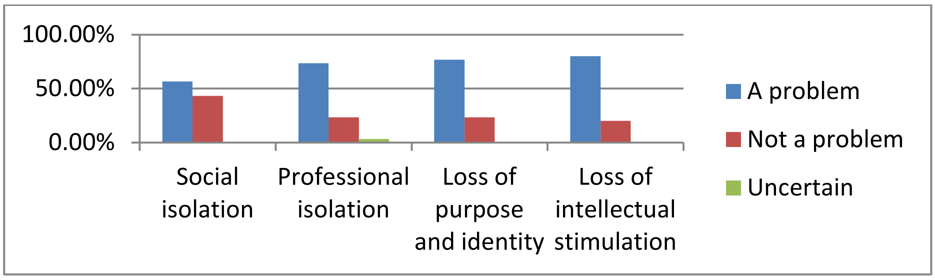
To ensure that I have enough intellectual stimulation I plan to learn other languages to assist with our overseas travel plans, and of course being a marriage celebrant will provide constant intellectual stimulation meeting people; running the business; and dealing with public functions. (Secondary female)

For me the safeguards I've thought about are: an active physical life; involvement in local environmental groups; submission writing for local groups and principals' associations. I believe that intellectually retirement should not be an end but a transition point". (Secondary male)

Comment

In the Phase 1 questionnaire this late-career cohort rated both social/professional isolation and loss of purpose/ identity *as* more significant problems than loss of intellectual stimulation. However in the Phase 2 interviews the reverse applied, with the loss of intellectual stimulation now rated as the greatest concern in retirement (Figure 5.13):

Figure 5.13: Comparison of social isolation, professional isolation, loss of purpose/identity and loss of intellectual stimulation as difficulties in retirement



Major finding from dimension 5.4 (Loss of intellectual stimulation)

1. The loss of intellectual stimulation is strongly anticipated as a major problem.
2. Consciously established safeguards (hobbies, interest, passions) can alleviate or mitigate the loss of intellectual stimulation in retirement.

Special comment concerning Dimension 5.1 - Dimension 5.4

For late-career principals the emotional domain (i.e. social/professional isolation; loss of purpose/identity; and loss of intellectual stimulation) has presented as the major anticipated concern in retirement. The practical domain (e.g. financial concerns; health and ageing concerns) has registered less concern. Anecdotal evidence would indicate that it has been the practical domain which has traditionally dominated support services offered by organizations associated with retirement (e.g. financial planners; superannuation companies; and government welfare agencies). This finding is indicating that the emotional domain represents an under-recognized and an under-resourced component of the phenomena of late-career and transition to retirement phases for late-career principals. This finding is further investigated in later phases of the research.

The perfect retirement (Dimension 5.5)

The perfect picture of retirement was a free-category item which did not appear in the Phase 1 questionnaire but was purposively selected to encourage respondents to articulate how they visualized their life once they had retired.

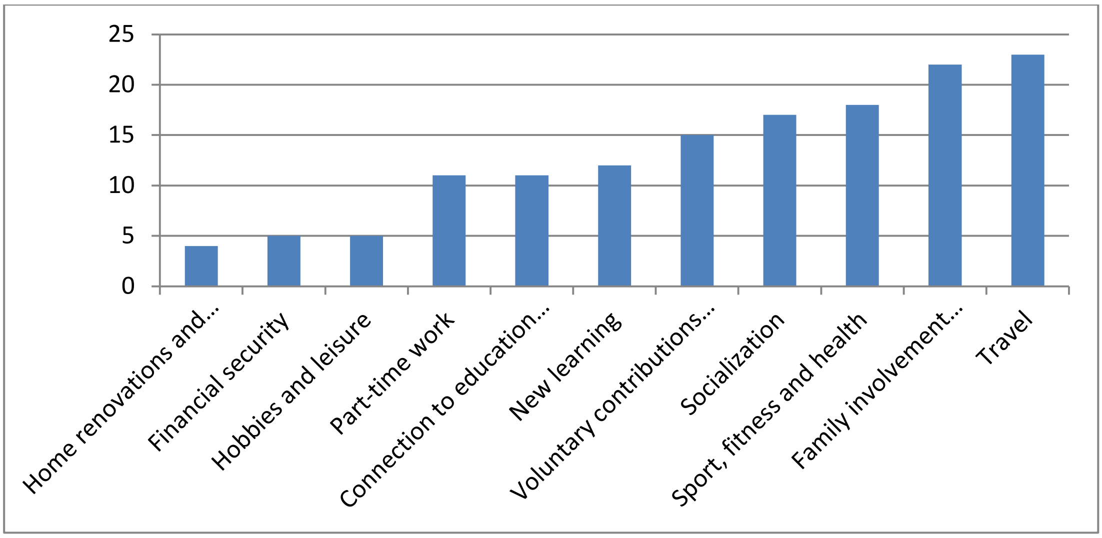
Question 7

["What is your perfect picture of life in retirement?"]

Finding

Respondents identified a diverse mixture of activities including: travel, volunteering, home renovations, gardening, part-time work, family involvement (especially with grandchildren), sport/fitness and health; new learning; hobbies and leisure; educational involvement (especially mentoring and coaching), socialization and financial security as components of their perfect picture of retirement. The frequency with which each of the activities was mentioned during the interviews is shown in Figure 5.14:

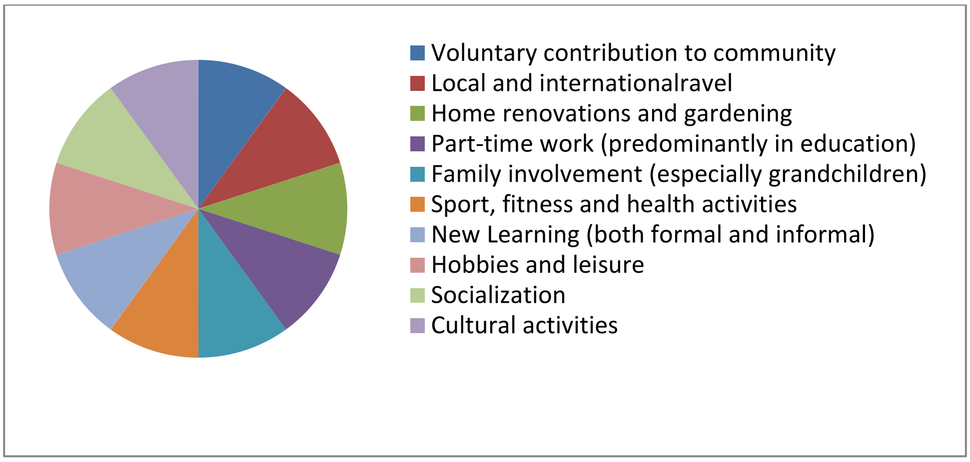
Figure 5.14: Most popular activities in retirement



Comment

For this perfect picture of retirement this study utilizes the terms *portfolio retirement*; a retirement model with multiple investments (Salt, 2007). The portfolio retirement model (Figure 5.15) represents the most popular investments (not representative of their ranking) mentioned by the late-career cohort as being desirable components on their perfect retirement. This finding (i.e. the portfolio retirement wheel for late-career principals) provided an important insight into the hopes, anticipations and expectations of baby boomer principals. This perfect picture of retirement may well be a window into what retirement in 21st Century will really look like. Employers, professional organizations and government agencies may well be able to pro-actively utilize this information to strategically plan for ageing and work in the 21st Century. This finding was considered worthy of further investigation in later phases of this research.

Figure 5.15: Portfolio retirement: late-career principals' perfect retirement picture



Discussion

Late-career principals presented a vision of retirement as being a multi-faceted active phase of their life. The finding is presented as one dominant theme (i.e. portfolio retirement):

> *In my perfect picture I would have enough money to pursue my interests and leisure activities. I would spend great times with my grandchildren. I would be heavily involved in part-time paid work and some time in voluntary community work also. I will be undertaking some personal new learning such as through a university program. (Secondary female)*

> *I hope that my life will be a mixture of enjoyable family time; lots of travelling; a fun-filled social life; and part-time work which is purposeful and challenging. (Primary male)*

> *The perfect picture for me will involve some educational engagement; some extended and deepened family time; some personal hobbies; some travel; plenty of socialization; and some leisure activities. (Primary male)*

Comment

This finding added significantly to a deeper understanding of the meaning and nature of transition to retirement for late-career educational leaders. Of particular relevance to education leadership systems are two of the preferred components of the baby boomer retirement portfolio: (1) the desire to engage in part-time work; and (2) and the desire to continue to contribute to education (society) through mentoring and coaching as a means of knowledge transfer.

Major theme from Dimension 5.5 (The perfect retirement)

For this baby boomer late-career principal cohort, the perfect picture of retirement is of an active and vibrant life-phase filled with a multitude of purposeful and rewarding activities (including work).

Readiness for retirement (Dimension 5.6)

Readiness (for retirement) was also a free-category which did not appear in Phase 1 but was purposively selected to encourage respondents to reflect on their transition to retirement. The use of the term “readiness” rather than “preparation” (as per the Phase 1 questionnaire) was the result of comments in the questionnaire responses which highlighted “readiness” as being the more significant factor.

Question 8

[“How would you describe your readiness to retire on the following five categories: physical, professional, intellectual, financial and emotional?”].

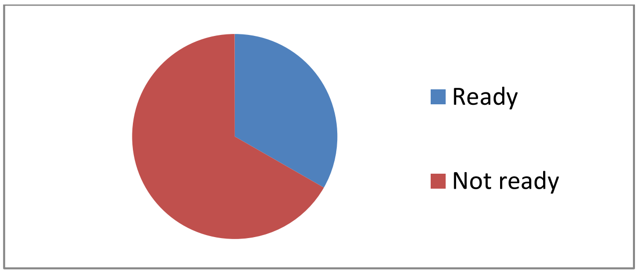
These five criteria were used to capture a holistic assessment of the principals’ readiness to retire.

Finding

The interview comments are presented as two headings i.e. ready or not ready for retirement. The analysis of the responses (taking a majority of the five categories outlined above as a ready or not ready rating) produced the finding that:

1. 66.7% saw themselves as being not ready.
2. 33.3% saw themselves as being ready (Figure 5.16):

Figure 5.16: Late-career principals’ readiness to retire



Discussion

Two-thirds of the late-career principals did not see themselves as being ready to retire. Most principals felt ready to retire financially. However on the professional and emotional criteria principals expressed deep reservations about their readiness. Many also expressed a sense of powerlessness about the inevitability of retirement; as if they were not in control of their own destiny. These principals saw themselves as being spectators sitting in an audience rather than as the lead character. The finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals who described themselves as being ready *financially* but who still had other reservations:

I’m ready to retire financially. However I need to ensure that I’m going to be OK intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally and not become bored. I may not be ready on any of these other criteria. (Secondary male)

I'm certainly ready financially and it's probably a good thing. However I'm not ready emotionally, intellectually or professionally. I feel I have much more to give. I feel I'm on the top of my game. I'm just not ready. (Primary male)

B. Principals who more clearly saw themselves as *not ready* based on the *professional, intellectual and emotional* domains:

I'm not ready on any criteria except maybe the financial one. My husband thinks I'm delaying joining 'his' life in retirement and to some extent he is right. I want my own life, as I have had it through my career, but I haven't set up a new life very well at all. I claim I've been too busy, but if I was honest I've just been paralyzed by the inertia of not knowing where to start. So I haven't started at all and just kept my head down and worked hard! I wonder at whose costs I've taken this path? (Primary female)

I'm not really ready to retire. I know this because I actually feel fearful of retiring. I fear that I may be retiring too soon and that I'll regret it. I may be financially ready but I'm certainly not emotionally, professionally or intellectually ready to retire. (Secondary male)

C. Principals who saw retirement as inevitable and who expressed a sense of powerlessness:

I'm not ready to retire. I'm not sure why I'm doing this other than everyone says I should. I'm 'that' age…whatever that means! (Primary female)

I'm fearful and disinterested in what appears to be a forgone formality. If I speak against retirement I'm looked at by my colleagues as if I have really lost my marbles this time! (Primary female)

I'm not ready. If it wasn't for the superannuation loss I wouldn't retire at all. (Primary male)

Comment

The finding that most late-career principals felt they were not ready to retire contributed significantly towards a deeper understanding of the nature of retirement for principals. The inevitability of retirement due to an inflexible pre-determined superannuation age (and the current lack of flexibility with part-time work options at a principal level) appeared to create a tension for principals who see themselves as too young, too energetic and too good at what they do to have to retire. This finding was further investigated in the later phases of the research.

Major themes from Dimension 5.6 (Readiness for retirement)

1. Principals do not see themselves as being ready to retire professionally, emotionally, intellectually and physically.
2. Principals feel financially ready to retire.

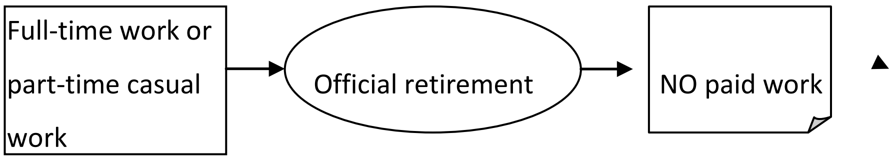
SPECIAL COMMENT: LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALS'RETIREMENT INTENTIONS (AS A MICROCOSM OF NSW PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS)

The responses from this late-career principal cohort were consistent with findings from the recent research conducted with public sector employees in NSW. Hesketh and Griffin (2010) reported that

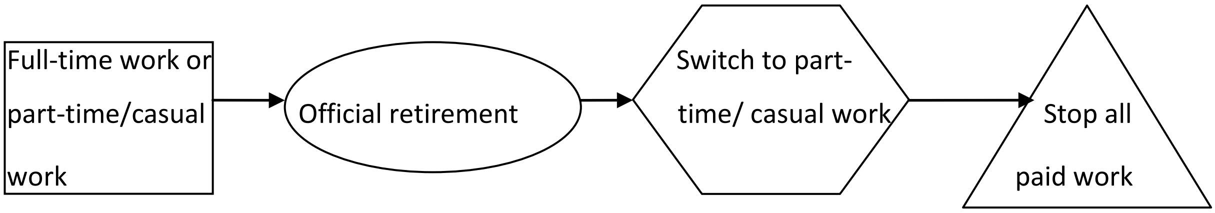
In the *Retirement Planning Survey for NSW* respondents were asked which of three patterns of retirement transition (A, B or C) they expected to take. Pattern B proved to be the most popular with a 41.0% approval rating (Figure 5.17):

Figure 5.17: Retirement transition patterns for NSW public sector employees

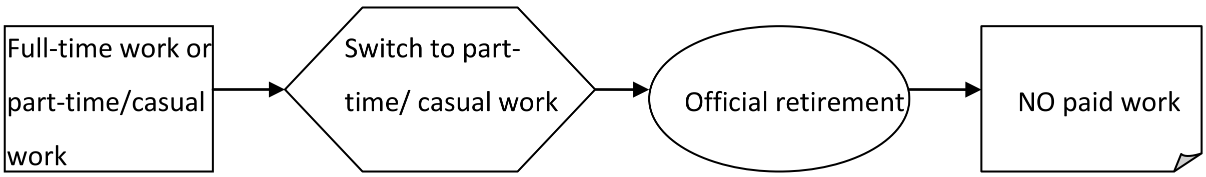
Pattern A (29.5%)



Pattern B (41.0%)



Pattern C (29.5%)



Source: *Retirement Planning Survey, 2010* (in Hesketh and Griffin, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2010, p.15).

The analysis of the data from Phase 1 (questionnaire) and Phase 2 (interviews) for the late-career principals indicated that their retirement intentions align almost identically with Pattern B (the favoured pattern for all NSW public sector workers surveyed). It is interesting to note that the more traditional Pattern A (from full-time work to official retirement to no paid work) is no longer be the desired option for those approaching retirement; including late-career principals. This finding related to one of the core questions under examination in this study (i.e. are baby boomer principals interested in working longer by staying-on or refocusing?). This finding was further investigated in later phases of this study.

SUMMARY OF LATE-CAREER PRINCIPAL INTERVIEWS

The major themes to emerge from the Phase 2 interviews with this late-career cohort indicated that late-career principals:

1. Do not see themselves as being on a *plateau path* to retirement.
2. Self-assess as being effective and motivated.
3. Self-assess their satisfaction level as restricted by political and system interference.
4. Are anxious (or negative) about retirement.
5. Perceive themselves as not being ready to retire.
6. Are interested in staying-on full-time with the flexibility to collect their superannuation without retiring.
7. Are extremely interested in staying-on part-time/job-share with the flexibility to collect their superannuation without retiring.
8. Anticipate that the emotional domain (social and professional isolation; the loss of purpose and identity; and the loss of intellectual stimulation) will be the major problem in transitioning to retirement.
9. Feel that due to superannuation regulations and community/family/peer expectations they have little personal control about the timing of retirement.
10. Visualize that the perfect retirement can be a vibrant and active mixture of leisure and work (i.e. a portfolio retirement).

These ten points summarize the findings and themes which emerged from the thirty late-career interviews. Simple in format, these interviews produced deeply emotional and personal responses. The interview process allowed the researcher to become part of the principal's world; and to privately engage with the day-to-day complexities of the principal's personal and professional life. As Miles & Huberman (1994) noted "the apparent simplicity of qualitative 'data' masks a good deal of complexity, requiring a good deal of care and self-awareness on the part of the researcher"(p. 10). This late-career principal cohort expressed a collective view that these phases of their life (late-career and transition to retirement) were proving to be a more complex emotional journey than they had previously imagined.

CONCLUSION

Dealing with qualitative research means living with complexity and ambiguity; coming to terms with it; and forming conclusions to clarify and deepen an understanding of the phenomena being investigated. The findings and themes which emerged from the late-career interviews delivered a deepening and developing understanding of the perceptual meaning and nature of the phenomena under investigation. The constant comparative nature of the research next moved to explore (and compare) the experiences and reflections of those principals who had already retired (i.e. the recently-retired principals). The findings and themes to emerge from the recently-retired principal interviews are described in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

INTERVIEWS: RECENTLY-RETIRED PRINCIPALS

Chapter 6 reports on the initial findings (and major themes) to emerge from the experiences and reflections of the recently-retired principal cohort. In addition Chapter 6 compares and contrasts these findings/themes with the findings/themes to emerge from the late-career interviews (Chapter 5). The extent to which (if at all) the expectations about retirement (from late-career principals) are replicated by the experiences of retirement (from the recently-retired principals) is reported in this chapter.

This chapter presents the qualitative findings from the recently-retired interviews using the following format: the five **dimensions** (purposively selected from the Phase 1 questionnaire analysis) are presented for deeper analysis; the analyzed interview data from these dimensions are presented as the interview **findings** and initial **sub-themes;** the sub-themes (which were further analyzed by revisiting the original audio-taped interviews) are **commented** upon and are presented as the **major themes**. This process is followed for each of the selected dimensions/items of the interviews. The conclusion to the chapter is presented as a **summary** of the major themes.

INTERVIEW COHORT AND CONTENT

From the Phase 1 questionnaire, respondents were purposively selected based on two criteria. Firstly the percentage distribution of participants in the Phase 1 questionnaire on the three variables of gender, geographical location and school-level was maintained (Appendix 3.18 and Table 6.1):

	Total	Metropolitan	Rural	Primary	Secondary
Male	14	4	10	12	2
Female	12	8	4	7	5
Total	26	12	14	19	7

Table 6.1: Distribution of variable for interviewed recently-retired principals

Secondly the percentage distribution of responses for each of the Phase 1 questionnaire dimensions was maintained (Appendix 3.18). From the Phase 1 questionnaire, five of the six dimensions (representing 23/30 items) were purposively selected for inclusion in Phase 2 recently-retired interviews (Appendix 3.20). Dimension 5 (Leadership Development) was not included in the interviews as four of the items in this dimension Items 22-25 (Leadership Styles) were judged to be outside of the scope of this study; and items 19-21 (mentoring/coaching and involvement in leadership development programs)became subsumed in other components of the interview process. This meant that 76.6% of the recently-retired phase 1 questionnaire dimensions/items formed the content of the phase 2 interviews. The following five dimensions (from the Phase 1 questionnaire) were purposively selected for deeper investigation through the Phase 2 individual interviews:

1. Individual profile
2. Retirement
3. Staying-on options
4. Work in retirement
5. Reflections on retirement
    - 5.1 Social and professional isolation
    - 5.2 Loss of purpose and identity
    - 5.3 Loss of intellectual stimulation
    - 5.4 Retirement life-style
    - 5.5 Retirement satisfaction
    - 5.6 Readiness for retirement

INTERVIEW DATA RECORDING

The categorization and collation of the interview responses (for the purposively selected five dimensions) appear at Appendix 3.24.

DIMENSION 1: INDIVIDUAL PROFILE

The name, gender, geographic location and school-level for each of the interview participants now became a live and personal matter for the researcher. Each interviewee was contacted by email and phone to arrange a suitable interview time and location. The researcher travelled to the interviewee (across NSW) and the interviews were conducted in the interviewee's home.

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT

This was a *free category* item (Table 3.11) which was not part of the Phase 1 questionnaire, but was purposively selected to commence the interviews. The intention was to facilitate open discussion through two questions: (1) about the emotional feelings associated with being retired; and (2) about the timing of their retirement.

Question 1

["What are your feelings about being retired?"]

Finding

The responses were collated into the three headings i.e. positive, negative, and mixed (unsure/ambivalent):

1. 73.1% felt positive about being retired.
2. 15.9% felt negative.
3. 11.5% expressed a mixed response (Figure 6.1 and 6.2):

Figure 6.I: Recently-retired principals' feelings about being retired

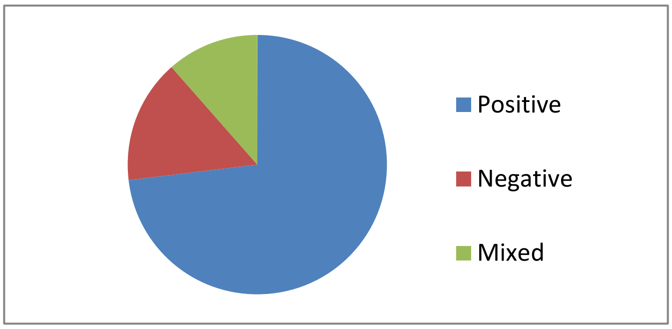
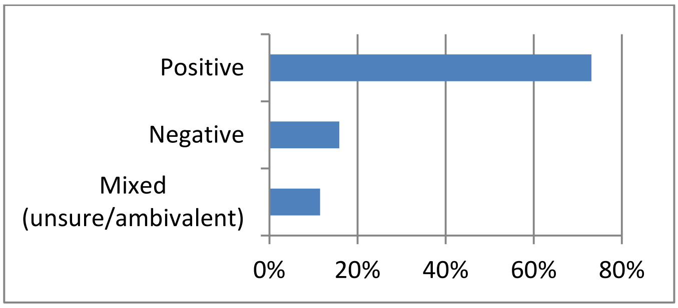


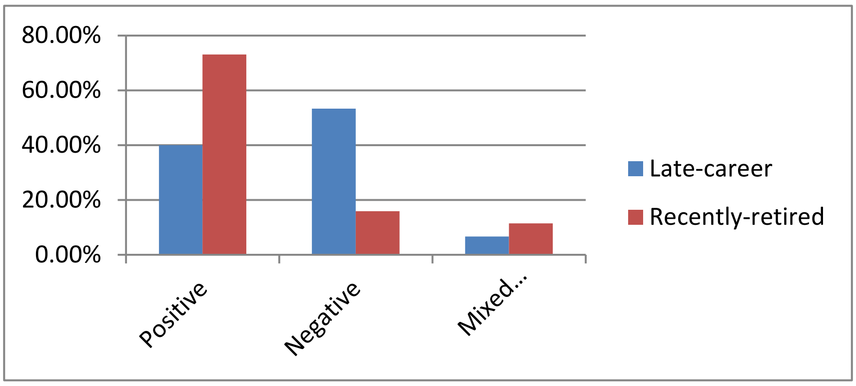
Figure 6.2: Recently-retired principals' feelings about being retired



Comparison of cohort findings

It is interesting to note that when comparing the two cohorts, the recently-retired principals' reflections about being retired were far more positive than the late-career principals' expectations about retirement (Figure 6.3):

Figure 6.3: Late-career expectations about retirement compared with recently-retired experiences



Discussion

The majority of these recently-retired principals indicated that they felt very positive about retirement. The finding is presented as four sub-themes.

A. Principals who were very positive and focusing on freedom, choice, flexibility and lack of pressure in retirement:

   I am thoroughly enjoying my retirement. It's very rewarding. It's been a marvelous opportunity to do things I didn't have the time or opportunity to do whilst I was working. I have choice and flexibility. I'm the master of my own destiny. I now have a balance in my life and can give something back to my family especially. (Secondary female)

   Retirement is excellent. I have balance; flexibility and financial security in my life (thanks to the old State Superannuation Fund). I work part-time and that makes all the difference financially. (Primary female)

B. Principals who became positive towards being retired (over time), thus raising the possibility that there may be *phases* in retirement:

   Initially I hated being retired. I wasn't ready or prepared. I would frantically do stuff around the house every morning (to give some purpose to my life) and then feel totally lost and disorientated all afternoon. I felt I was a failure. I felt am emptiness. I felt I was wasting time. I just couldn't settle. Now after two years my retired life is just full and wonderful. (Primary male)

   I'm much better this year. I'm much more relaxed. But last year was very difficult. I went from feeling valued and important to 'what am I going to do today'? I had no direction; no purpose; and felt that 'no one loved me!' I missed the daily buzz and my wife was still working. I was 'alone'. (Primary male)

C. Principals who believed and articulated that *phases of retirement* existed and focused on the improvement in retired life-style over time:

   I have gone through different phases. Firstly because I didn't have any routines or commitments I was feeling very lost and stressed. The second phase was when I started into working on my family history. This gave me a sense of purpose and direction for a while. Now that is finished I'm moving into the third phase where I'm starting to find meaningful things to do through some paid and voluntary work. (Primary male)

D. Principals who were negative about being retired:

   I feel frustrated and bored. There is a lack of intellectual stimulation and there is no valuing of my expertise or experience. I imagined that I would have an opportunity to dream and to work laterally in interesting areas. None of this has materialized. (Secondary female)

Comment

The recently-retired principals were more positive about retirement than the late-career cohort. It may be that some of the anxieties felt when approaching retirement become resolved in the reality of retirement. One interesting theme which arose through this question was the concept of *phases* of retirement (i.e. a journey over time rather than a single static event). This new concept was considered worthy of further investigation. This exploration was completed through feedback from participant review questionnaires and peer review questionnaires, as part of the triangulation process (Chapter 7).

Question 2

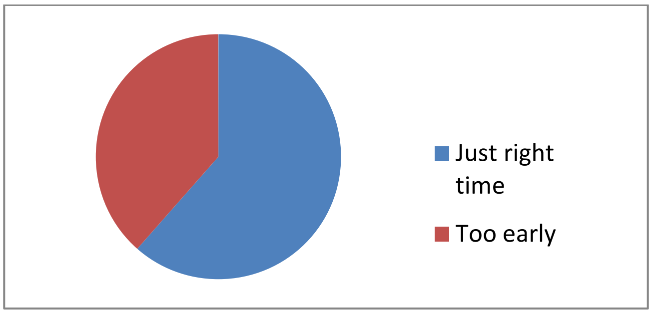
["Did you retire at the right time?"]

Finding

The responses were collated into three headings i.e. just the right time, too early or too late:

1. 61.5% felt they retired at just the right time.
2. 38.5% felt they retired too early.
3. 0.0% felt they retired too late (Figure 6.4):

Figure 6.4: Timing of retirement for recently-retired principals



Discussion

Over one-third of the recently-retired cohort said that retirement happened too early. The principals indicated that they felt highly effective and highly engaged at the time of retirement. No principal in the cohort indicated that they had retired too late (i.e. no respondent felt they worked too long). The finding is presented as four sub-themes.

A. Principals who selected *just the right time* citing personal and professional reasons for their decision:

   It was just right the right time. My health issues diminished my ability to think on my feet. The job had squeezed the last drop out of the orange. (Primary male)

   Personally and professionally it was 100% the right time. We had enjoyed great success so it was time to move on. I saw colleagues' health starting to suffer and I didn't want that to happen to me. I didn't want to reach a point where I was perceived as going downhill. (Secondary female)

B. Principals who felt they retired *too early* citing personal or health reasons to explain their circumstances:

   On reflection I think I retired too early. My husband had retired and I felt guilty about going to work. I should have stayed longer. (Primary female)

At the time I felt physically and mentally exhausted. But on reflection I definitely retired too soon. Professionally and intellectually I was not ready and should have stayed on. (Secondary female)

My retirement was forced upon me by medical retirement. I was 57 years old and had always planned to retire at 60, so I felt I was short-changed. It was too early. (Primary male)

C. Principals who on reflection felt that they retired *too early* and cited superannuation regulations as the main reason/cause for their early retirement:

On reflection I believe that I did retire too early. However, it had been ingrained in me since my college days that I must retire at my nominated superannuation age (55 years old) or otherwise I would be working for nothing. (Primary female)

I was fit, healthy and at the top of my game. I had some misgivings about whether I was finishing too soon. I retired because it was the superannuation age to retire; not for any other reason. (Primary male)

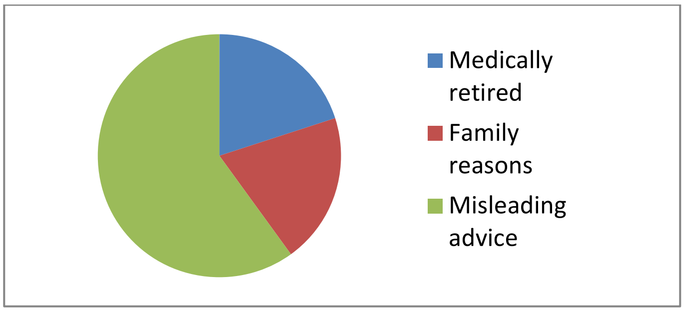
D. Another group who felt that they retired *too early* very specifically cited false financial and/or peer advice to explain their early retirement. Their concern is epitomized by this comment:

I now believe that I retired too early and I can identify what happened. I would warn others to be careful. All my financial advice was that I was going to work 'for nothing' and therefore why would I continue to work. Many of my colleagues said the same: they 'earned' as much money in their superannuation pension not working so I was crazy to keep working. I actually succumbed to that peer pressure and thought also that I was mad to keep working 'for nothing'. However, on reflection I now realize that I was working for much more than financial return. I was working for the intellectual challenge; the personal satisfaction; the professional engagement; the social interaction; and the social justice issues which drive us as teachers and principals. I conveniently forgot about those and accepted that I was 'working for nothing'. This meant that now on reflection I realize that I retired too soon. I wasn't ready and could have done a most enjoyable few more years. (Primary male)

Comment

A total of ten (10) out of twenty-six (26) principals interviewed indicated that they retired too early (i.e. 38.5%). Of this group two were medically retired for health reasons; two retired for personal family reasons; and the remaining six believed they had made a poor decision based on flawed, misleading or inappropriate advice (Figure 6.5):

Figure 6.5: Reasons for retiring too early



This finding added deeper data to the perceptual meaning and nature of retirement by highlighting potential retirement pitfalls (e.g. relying too heavily on financial advice; accepting peer advice rather than seeking expert advice; and ignoring that there may be extremely significant professional, intellectual, social and emotional reasons to stay at work rather than retire at the superannuation age). This finding was judged to be worthy of further investigation.

Major themes from Dimension 2 (Retirement)

1. Retirement is a very positive experience for the recently-retired cohort.
2. Retirement proved to be a far more positive experience than the pre-retirement expectation.
3. Retirement is a journey over time (with phases) rather than a single event. Retirement may initially prove to be difficult (characterized by a loss of purpose and identity; social and professional isolation; and a loss of intellectual stimulation) but will improve over time.
4. Most principals felt they retired at the right time.
5. A significant percentage (38.5%) believed that they retired too early.
6. Principals who retired too early (and regretted that decision) cited misleading financial/ peer advice as the primary cause.

DIMENSION 3: STAYING-ON OPTIONS

In Phase 1, 73.0% of recently-retired principals indicated that they would consider staying-on (either full-time or part-time) past their superannuation retirement date, if they could simultaneously access their superannuation entitlements without having to permanently retire. Staying-on full-time attracted interest from 41.1% of the recently-retired principals. Due to the strength of this response it was decided to deliberately locate (from within the late-career research cohort), principals who had taken this staying-on full-time option. Across 2010 - 2011 thirteen such principals were located who fitted this criteria. During 2011 these principals were invited to complete a separate and specific on-line questionnaire (Appendix 7.3) and participate in a phone interview (Appendix 7.7). The findings from the investigation into the specific category of *staying-on full-time* are presented in Chapter 7 (Triangulation).

The second option was for staying-on *part-time*. This option related to ramping-off from full-time work by having access to part-time/job-share opportunities (e.g. a co-principalship model) and retaining simultaneous access to their superannuation entitlements without having to permanently retire. This ramping off option attracted 32.1% support from recently-retired principals. The Phase 2 Interviews sought to gain a deeper understanding of this interest in the part-time co-principalship concept by asking two questions.

Question 3.1

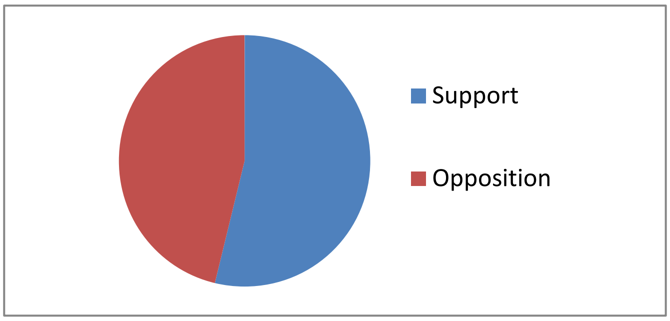
["Do you believe that co-principalship can benefit the school and student outcomes?"]

Finding

The comments were collated into two headings i.e. support for or opposition to co-principalship:

1. 53.8% supported the concept.
2. 46.2% opposed the concept (Figure 6.6):

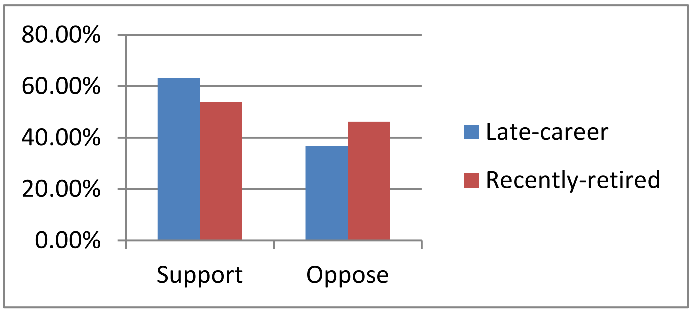
Figure 6.6: Recently-retired principals' support for/opposition to co-principalship



Comparison of cohort findings

Although both cohorts supported the co-principalship concept, the support was approximately 10% stronger from the late-career (i.e. still working) cohort (Figure 6.7):

Figure 6.7: Comparison of both cohort's support for/opposition to co-principalship



Discussion

This finding is presented as two sub-themes.

A. Principals who supported co-principalship highlighted the benefits of sharing the role:

The energy, expertise, enthusiasm and freshness of two people would be a great benefit to the school community, the staff and should help improve student outcomes. (Primary female)

The students can see a vibrant team of leaders blending enthusiasm and experience. The energy and experience of the leadership team would set a great model for the staff. (Primary male)

B. Principals who opposed co-principalship focused on the difficulties with sharing the role:

I have mixed feelings. It sounds great but it would be very tricky to get two people with the same values, beliefs and actions. (Primary female)

This is not workable. To introduce co-principalship would be poor policy. The dynamic of leadership cannot be shared. Leadership is not divisible. (Primary male)

Question 3.2

["Under what conditions might co-principalship interest you?"]

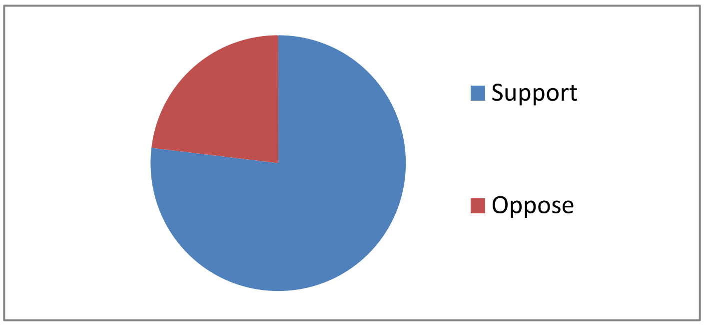
In the very first interview, one respondent (primary female) suggested a model called *Transitional Co-principalship Model* (afterwards referred to as TCM). Under this model the second-in-charge (e.g. Deputy Principal) would relieve as the principal whilst the substantive principal reduced to part-time (e.g. the deputy-principal assumes the principal position for 2 days/week and the substantive principal works 3 days/week) leading into retirement. A question about TCM was subsequently included in all the recently-retired interviews. After establishing what the generic support and opposition was for the co-principalship concept (Question 3.1), this group was now asked about their personal commitment to the co-principalship concept.

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings i.e. support for or opposition to the TCM:

1. 76.9% supported the model
2. 23.1 % opposed the model (Figure 6.8):

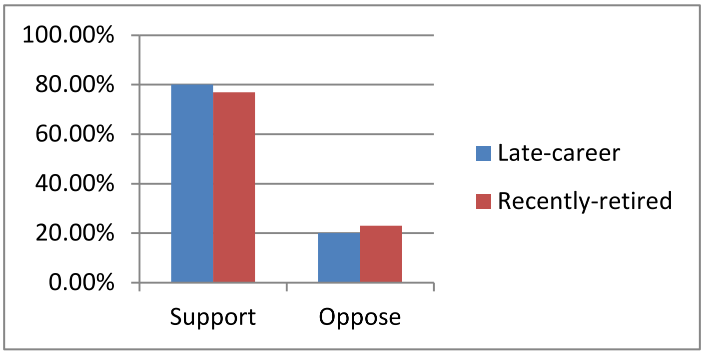
Figure 6.8: Support for /opposition to Transitional Co-principalship Model



Comparison of cohort responses

This 76.9% support from the recently-retired principals for the TCM was almost an identical to the 80.0% support which was recorded by the late-career principals (Figure 6.9):

Figure 6.9: Comparison of support for/opposition to the Transitional Co-principalship Model



Discussion

Both the generic co-principalship concept and the TCM model were supported by the majority of both cohorts. Approximately 10% less of the recently-retired principals supported the general "co-principalship" concept (Figure 6.7), the support level for the TCM was very strong (and very similar) from both cohorts: 80.0% from late-career and 76.9% from recently-retired. The finding is presented as four sub-themes.

A. Principals who supported TCM and cited the professional development and the succession planning advantages of the model:

   I believe that Transitional Co-principalship would be great professional development for any aspiring principal; that it would allow the community a transition period to a new principal; and that it would allow the older principal to ramp off without that school or system suffering that instant loss of experience and expertise. (Primary male)

   I particularly like the Transitional Co-principal model as it is an excellent succession planning strategy with the senior person working as a coach. (Secondary female)

B. Principals who were cautious cited achieving "compatibility" as the difficult issue:

   The success would depend massively on the compatibility of the two sharing the role. There would need to be total agreement on work ethic, beliefs and vision. (Primary female)

   I would need to share with someone who was compatible with my beliefs and values but complementary in skills. (Primary female)

C. Principals who opposed the TCM cited delegation and role-sharing as being too problematic:

   I could not do a co-principalship. I'm too meddlesome. I would need to be involved in everything whether I was there or not. It just wouldn't work for me. (Secondary male)

   It wouldn't suit me because I have difficulty letting anyone do my stuff. I was always a poor delegator. You need to know yourself. (Primary male)

D. Some principals did not support the co-principalship concept but supported the TCM:

   I'm not necessarily a great supporter of this co-principalship concept. However, given my personal situation I would have loved to have a Transitional Co-principalship arrangement. The context of my school was right. There were two outstanding deputies either of whom could have been co-principal with me in a transitional 12 months. This would have provided a 'horizon of disengagement'; a true sharing of my expertise and knowledge of the school; a brilliant leadership training experience for the deputies; and an opportunity for the community to prepare for the change. (Secondary male)

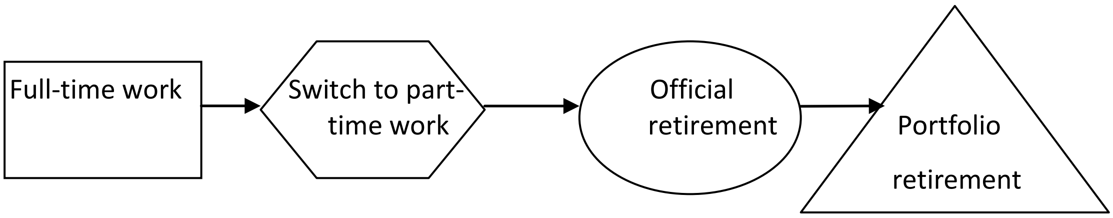
   Although co-principalship wouldn't attract me I would be quite keen on the Transitional Co-principalship Model. With the right deputy and the right planning this could work quite well. (Primary male)

Comment

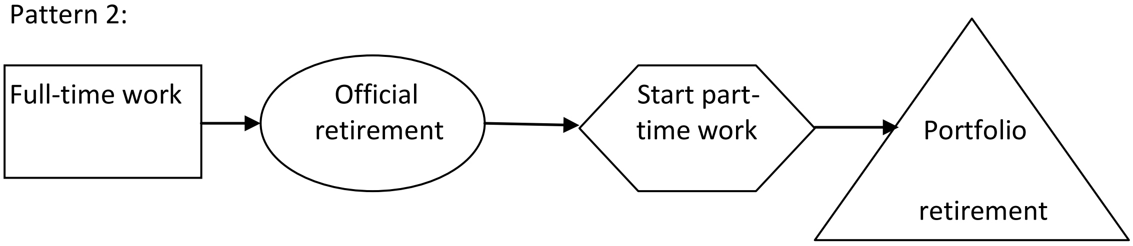
Like their late-career colleagues, recently-retired principals were strongly supportive of the concepts of part-time and job-sharing work as a mechanism for ramping-off; for capturing expertise; and for succession planning. The high level of interest in flexible work patterns from by both cohorts provided new and deeper data in relation to how baby boomer principals perceive the phenomena of late-career and transition to retirement. The finding suggested that there are two preferred patterns of principal retirement emerging which are represented by the following models/patterns (Figure 6.10):

Figure 6.10: Emerging preferred patterns of transition into retirement

Pattern 1:



Pattern 2:



Both these newly-documented patterns (emerging from this study) suggested that baby boomer principals do not want to retire in accordance with the traditional model. These educational leaders are expressing a desire to (in the case of late-career cohort) or a trend towards (in the case of recently-retired): move either from full-time work to part-timework and then to official retirement (Pattern 1); or to move from full-time work to official retirement and then to part-time work (Pattern 2). This finding was further investigated in later phases of the research.

Major themes from Dimension 3 (Staying-on options)

1. Principals indicated a desire to stay working longer (through the new transition to retirement model).
2. Principals supported both job-sharing and part-time co-principalships.
3. Principals believed that knowledge transfer; leadership development; and succession planning can be facilitated through the part-time job-sharing co-principalships.

4. Principals strongly supported both The Transitional Co-principalship Model and Coach/Mentor Model as part-time/job-share models.

DIMENSION 4: REFOCUSING

The Phase 2 Interviews sought to gain a deeper understanding of the extent and nature by which recently-retired principals were following the national baby boomer movement to refocus (McCrindle, 2009; Cooper, 2008; Salt, 2007; and Mackay, 2007). Three questions were posed to this recently-retired cohort.

Question 4.1

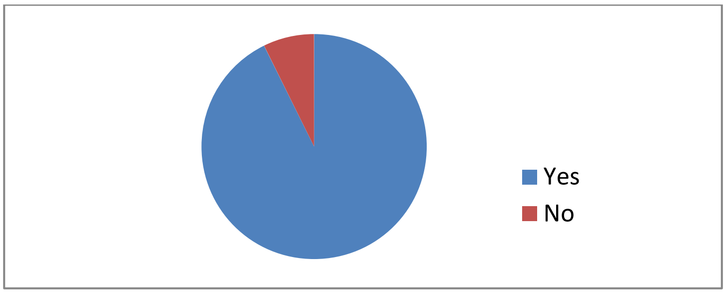
["Have you worked in retirement?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings i.e. yes or no:

1. 92.6% indicated they had refocused.
2. 7.4% indicated they had not refocused (Figure 6.11):

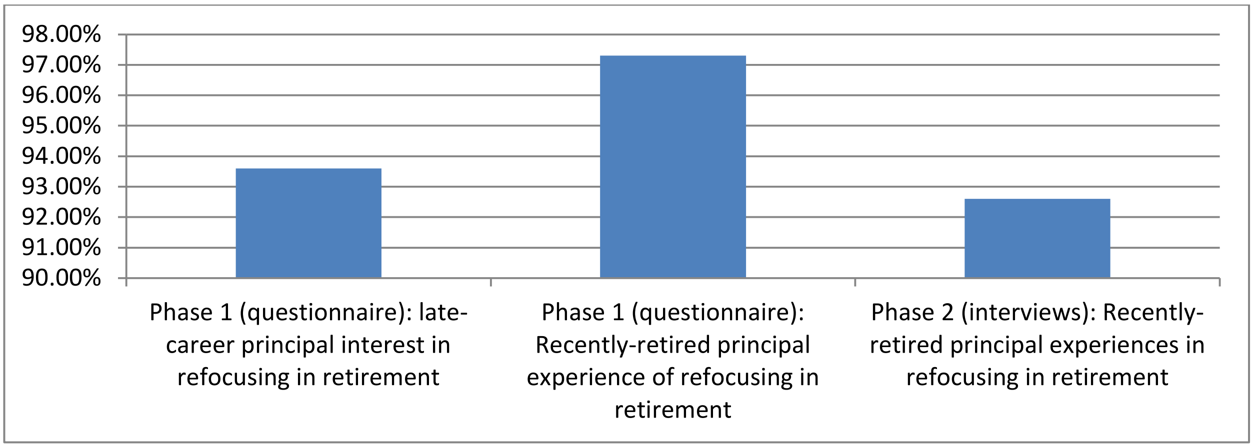
Figure 6.11: principals who had refocused in retirement



Comparison of cohort findings

This finding was consistent with other data collected throughout this research. In both the Phase 1 questionnaires and the Phase 2 interviews in excess of 90% of all respondents continually indicated either: (1) an interest in refocusing (if it was the late-career cohort); or (2) experiences in refocusing (if it was the recently-retired cohort) as shown in Figure 6.12:

Figure 6.12: Principals and refocusing



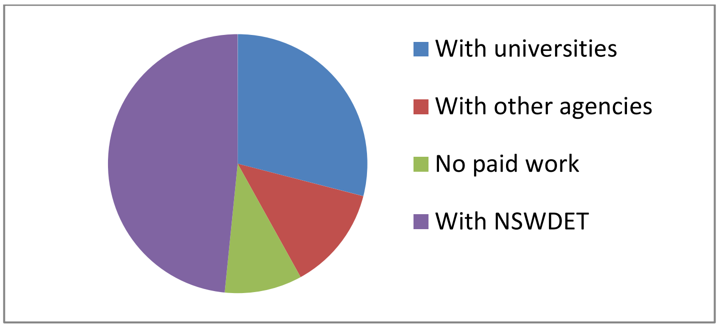
Question 4.2

["In what sector (education or non-education) have you undertaken paid work?"]

Finding

1. 91.6% worked in the educational sector (NSWDET or universities).
2. 8.4% worked with non-educational sector (Figure 6.13):

Figure 6.13: Refocused work sector



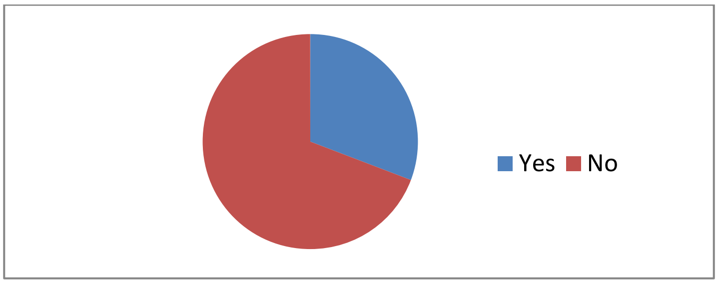
Question 4.3

["Have you undertaken voluntary community work?"]

Finding

1. 30.8% had undertaken voluntary work.
2. 69.2% had not undertaken voluntary work (Figure 6.14):

Figure 6.14: Retired principals who had undertaken voluntary work.



Discussion

The interview finding is presented as six sub-themes.

A. Principals who failed to gain re-employment with NSWDET:

   I was led to believe by senior NSWDET officers that there would be lots of work available as a retired principal. However, that was not the case. No offers came my way. I felt (and still do to some extent) that NSWDET didn't care and didn't value my expertise and experience gained over 40 years with that employer. (Primary male)

B. Principals who gained employment with NSWDET but saw problems with the re-employment procedures:

   The problem exists that some of my retired colleagues who also want to work for NSWDET are not being approached. No one knows how this happens. There needs to be a greater transparency in the processes. (Primary male)

I wanted to work and have actively sought work with DET but very little is forthcoming. I believe that it's all in the networking and I'm not on the inside. (Secondary female)

C. Principals who gained employment through pre-existing networks:

I have been approached to do lots of work through the networks which were established before I retired. (Secondary principal)

As a principal I trained as a Youth Justice Convener so through those networks I now do lots of conferences. I was then approached (through being known in networks) by a legal firm to write 'expert briefs' for their educational litigation cases. I also supervise practicuum students; adjudicate school debates; and act as the coach for school debating teams which is all through pre-existing school networks. (Secondary male)

D. Principals who found working in retirement to be enjoyable and satisfying:

I did some Graduate Recruitment interviews which were rewarding. I'm involved in a community gardening project at a local school through a local network. This is also very rewarding. (Primary male)

I was offered some part-time work at university. I felt energized by the valuing of my expertise and the status I was afforded. This work is now full-time and I love it. (Secondary female)

E. Principals who found working in retirement to be personally beneficial:

I work part-time with the University and thoroughly enjoy it. It provides recognition and valuing of me as a person with something to offer. (Primary male)

My road to recovery from that feeling of grief and loss (and depression) was being approached to be involved in educational programs. The work I've done across 2008-2009 has totally changed my approach to being retired. I'm much happier and much more relaxed about that now. (Primary male)

F. Principals who undertook new learning so as to work in retirement:

In retirement I trained in Coaching and action research. I then worked as a coaching consultant (mainly in other states). I loved the work. (Primary female)

I have been offered and accepted work with the university. This work enables me to stay intellectually engaged in new learning. There is a lot of background reading with the new learning and I thrive on that. (Primary female)

Comment

These experiences and reflections concerning refocusing added significant new data to the perceptual meaning and nature of retirement for baby boomer principals. Johnson (2001) suggested that the *new retirement* for baby boomers would include some form of refocusing (work in retirement). In the Phase 1 questionnaire 93.6% of late-career principals indicated that they hoped to work in retirement. In the Phase 2 interviews 92.6% of recently-retired principals indicated that they had re-entered the workforce in retirement. The refocusing hopes of the late-career principals are being realized by their recently-retired colleagues. Refocusing would seem to be forming a significant component of the meaning and nature of retirement. This finding was further researched in later phases.

Major themes from Dimension 4 (Refocusing)

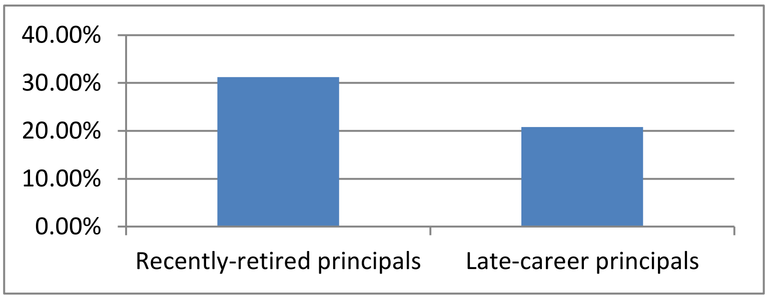
1. Principals have refocused in retirement.
2. Principals primarily refocused into the education sector.
3. Principals viewed refocusing as enjoyable, satisfying and beneficial.
4. Refocusing often required new learning.
5. Refocusing opportunities often come through pre-existing networks.
6. Refocusing opportunities with the NSWDET required a more transparent and equitable recruitment process.

DIMENSION 5: REFLECTIONS ON RETIREMENT

5.1 Social and professional isolation

In Phase 1 Questionnaire (item 28), 21.8% of late-career principals expected social and professional isolation to be the greatest problems they would face in their transition to retirement. In that Phase 1 Questionnaire (Item 28) the recently-retired cohort confirmed the late-career principals' expectations with 31.2% (the highest response rate) indicating that social and professional isolation were indeed the major problems experienced of retirement (Figure 6.15). The Interviews with the recently-retired cohort sought to further investigate these Phase 1 findings.

Figure 6.15: Social and professional isolation as a problem for each cohort



Question 5

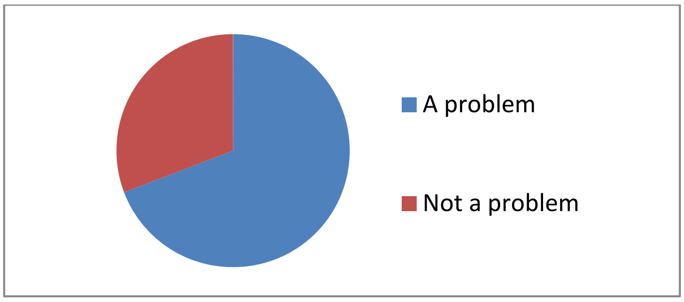
["From our research so far, *social and professional isolation (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings i.e. social and professional isolation seen either as a problem or not as a problem by recently-retired principals:

1. 69.2% saw social and professional isolation as real problems.
2. 30.8% did not see these issues as problems (Figure 6.16):

Figure 6.16: Social and professional isolation as a problem for recently-retired principals



Discussion

Isolation in retirement presented as a very real problem. This finding is presented as three sub-themes.

A. Principals for whom isolation was not a problem stressed the need to establish networks prior to retirement:

   I worked very hard at my social networks whilst I was in the job. That's the secret. It's too late if you leave that to retirement. The key is to have those networks firmly established. This is absolutely essential. (Primary female)

   I believe that the solution is to have already well-developed social networks before retirement. This means realizing the importance of this and working at establishing those networks. (Primary female)

B. Principals for whom isolation proved to be a major problem:

   This is absolutely a huge problem. I really became quite depressed. I sought things to overcome this such as regular breakfasts and lunches with colleagues, but those things really didn't work. (Secondary female)

   I love people and thrive on social contact. Lunches and morning tea gossip sessions don't do it for me. I need some depth and challenge in the relationships and that is lacking. So I do feel socially and especially professionally isolated. (Primary female)

C. Principals who initially experienced isolation but who took direct action to overcome isolation:

   My social networks were small (too small) because my work was my life. Now I have joined U3A; I attend wood working courses; I attend art training; we travel; we try to see the family; and we socialize. We have had to make these deliberate changes in our life-style to overcome isolation. (Primary male)

   For the first year I was lost and bored. I did a TAFE course but I still felt that sense of loss. Then I completed the Coach Training. That changed everything for me as I was fully involved in something new; new learning; challenging professional work; and an area where I felt valued". (Primary female)

Comment

The interviews confirmed the previous finding that isolation was indeed a significant difficulty experienced in retirement. This finding confirmed of the importance of the emotional domain in the transition to retirement period for baby boomer principals.

Major themes from Dimension 5.1 (Social and professional isolation)

1. Principals indicated that isolation (social/professional) in retirement is the major issue.
2. Principals indicated that developing social and professional networks prior to retirement is essential to avoid, alleviate or minimize isolation.
3. Principals believed that taking personal responsibility (e.g. joining groups and organizations; undertaking new learning) can overcome isolation in retirement.

Dimension 5.2: loss of purpose and identity

In Phase 1 recently-retired principals indicated that their second greatest difficulty in retirement was the loss of purpose and identity. This finding was another emotional domain factor which was further investigated through the interview process.

Question 6

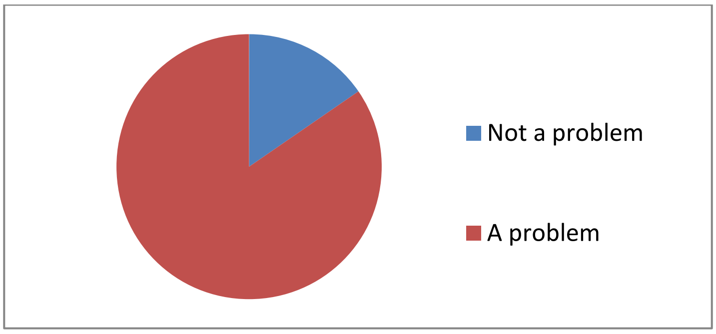
["From our research so far, *loss of purpose; loss of identity and loss of esteem (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?"]

Finding

The responses were collated into two headings i.e. loss of purpose and identity seen either as a problem or not a problem.

1. 84.6% saw this as a real problem in retirement.
2. 15.4 % did not see this as a problem (Figure 6.17):

Figure 6.17: Loss of purpose and identity in retirement



Discussion

Loss of purpose and of identity presented a very real problem in retirement. This finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals for whom loss of identity and purpose was not a problem:

Status never meant a lot to me so I found retirement away from the role very liberating. I had much more control over my life. (Secondary female)

I just love the anonymity. I have no need for the status, the attention, or the adoration. (Primary male)

B. Principals for whom loss of identity and purpose was a problem:

I believe this is a huge problem. You suffer a huge loss of purpose and a huge loss of esteem. In retirement you can overnight become a no-body. You become invisible! (Primary female)

This has absolutely been a huge issue for me. I was defined by my career and my role as a principal. I feel I have been stripped naked! (Secondary female)

C. Principals who found their solution to loss of purpose and identity through part-time work:

I was lucky that by doing the coaching I was fruitfully and professionally engaged during what I can now see is a very disengaging period: one that is potentially very dangerous and can have long-term effects on your sense of well being. (Primary female)

After that first 12 months I've had to rebuild my life through paid work. It's all coming good now but I went a 'long way down' before I started to regain a sense of purpose and a sense of being worthwhile. (Primary female)

Comment

Some principals offered the additional suggestion that a mechanism for lessening the feeling of loss when transitioning into retirement would be for the employer (i.e. NSWDET) to implement Exit Surveys and Exit Interviews (at the point of retirement):

A good way for a caring employer to assist here would be to conduct exit interviews for all retiring principals. Not only could the employer gather vital information but the retiring principal would be able to access vital retirement information and advice. (Primary male)

At the point of retirement, NSWDET could conduct a series of Exit Interviews. That would not only capture some excellent information before it walks out the door, but it would have principals feeling valued by their employer at that important phase of retirement. (Primary male)

Major themes from Dimension 5.2 (Loss of purpose and identity)

1. Principals indicated that loss of purpose and identity in retirement is a major issue.
2. Principals suggested that meaningful and purposeful activities (e.g. work) tend to counteract the loss of purpose, identity and self-esteem experienced.

Dimension 5.3: loss of intellectual stimulation

In Phase 1 recently-retired principals indicated that the third greatest difficulty in retirement was another emotional domain factor: the loss of intellectual stimulation. The Phase 2 Interviews sought to further investigate this finding.

Question 7

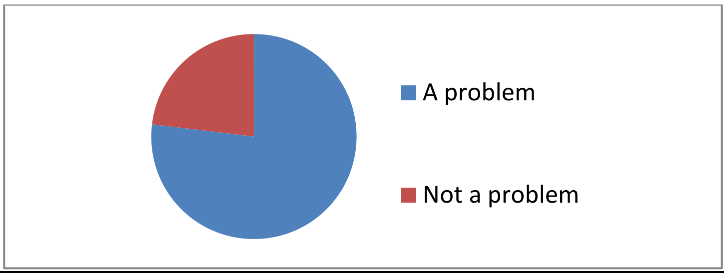
[“From our research so far, *lack of intellectual stimulation & boredom (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?”]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings i.e. loss of intellectual stimulation as either a problem or not a problem:

1. 76.9% saw this as a problem in retirement.
2. 23.1 % did not see this issue as a problem (Figure 6.18):

Figure 6.18: Loss of intellectual stimulation in retirement



Discussion

Loss of intellectual stimulation presented as a very real problem in retirement. This finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals who reported a loss of intellectual stimulation:

As a principal my intellectual stimulation was 24/7. Overnight it became about 2/7: that’s how long it takes to read the paper & do the crossword. (Primary female)

The lack of intellectual stimulation has led me back into depression (Secondary female).

B. Principals who found a solution to loss of intellectual stimulation through part-time work:

High interest even if poor pay is the answer. In my case I only had two months of retirement (just like a summer holiday) before I got involved in part-time work. (Primary female)

I felt significantly bored and I was lacking intellectual stimulation. I was probably more depressed than I realized, if you ask my wife. Now I have part-time work I have enough to stimulate me, and avoid returning to that dark place of two years ago. (Primary male)

C. Principals who found a solution to loss of intellectual stimulation through new learning:

After twelve months of feeling sorry for myself I started seeking out TAFE courses. At first they were more recreational and didn’t really work for me. Now I’ve decided to do a Taxation Certificate with the view of a new career. I’ve applied and feel very keen to learn. (Primary female)

This is a real problem. I’ve now compensated for this through part-time counseling; woodwork, welding and my art courses; in fact through all this new learning. I’m loving this new learning. (Primary male)

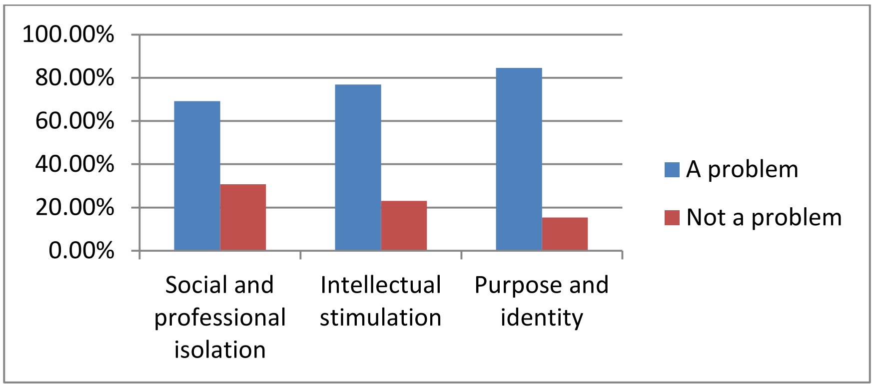
Major themes from Dimension 5.3 (Loss of intellectual stimulation)

1. Principals confirmed that the loss of intellectual stimulation is a significant issue.
2. Principals believed that part-time work (refocusing) may provide a solution.
3. Principals found that new learning provided a buffer against loss of intellectual stimulation.

Comment

The Phase 2 interviews validated the Phase 1 finding that the greatest difficulties facing recently-retired principals were in the emotional domain (i.e. social and professional isolation; loss of purpose and identity; and loss of intellectual stimulation). Each of these emotional areas were seen as a problem/concern for in excess of 70% of the recently-retired cohort reinforcing the significance of these issues in an understanding of the transition to retirement phenomenon (Figure 6.19):

Figure 6.19: Main areas of difficulty when transitioning into retirement



Dimension 5.4: retirement life-style

The late-career principals visualized a portfolio retirement life-style: a vibrant period filled with a multitude of activities including voluntary community involvement; paid part-time work; deepening family time; extensive travel; broader social interactions; and new learning (Figure 5.15). The recently-retired principals were asked to describe the components of their current retired life-style.

Question 8

[“What are the components of your ‘retired’ life-style?”]

Finding

The majority of this cohort (88.5%) described retirement as a positive and active life-style.

Discussion

The retired life-style described by the recently-retired cohort aligned closely with the late-career principal’s anticipated/visualized portfolio retirement model (figure 5.15). Typically recently-retired principals described their retired life-style in terms such as:

I play golf a lot and I love that. I work part-time and that is very important. We travel extensively and that is supported by the part-time work. I see my family and friends a lot *more than I did when I was working. I now have time for exercise and gym work. (Primary female)*

My life is multi-faceted. My creative side is being met through greater involvement in photography which was always an unfulfilled passion. I have my consultancy roles which provide extra funds and that sense of purpose. I have a much richer family role now. I'm also involved in house renovations pending a sale and re-location. In addition, we are attending the theatre regularly and having a full social life with friends. Travelling has also become a bigger part of our lives. (Secondary male)

I have excellent networks for social interactions. I exercise regularly; I have a family and a partner; I work and love it; I travel; I'm a reader; and I love theatre and concerts. I have never been happier or more content. (Secondary female)

My life is currently made up of theatre trips; a huge variety of committee work; part-time supervision work; a personal fitness and exercise program; my new learning; my wonderful extended family; my bike riding (with Ulysses); my socialization with friends; and our travels. I love this life. (Primary male)

I work part-time (about 3 days per week) and that meets my needs to be actively involved and connected to education. This money allows my husband and I to travel overseas. I spend quite a deal of time with my aging parents and even more with my grandchildren. I wasn't able to do this when I was working and this is a great joy. We attend the theatre and musical concerts regularly and we have an extended social network which I keep active by arranging all different types of get-togethers. (Primary female)

Comment

Rather than being a gradual slide away from the fullness of life, this finding in relation to the portfolio retirement model seems to accurately describe the experiences of these recently-retired baby boomer principals in providing an expanding rather than a constricting sense of self-worth.

Major theme from dimension 5.4 (Retirement life-style)

The finding and themes which emerged from this study's examination of recently-retired principals' life-style indicated that once the emotional domain factors associated with the transitional period (e.g. isolation) are overcome, baby boomer principals are living an active, positive and fulfilling life through a portfolio retirement style model.

Dimension 5.5: retirement satisfaction

The Phase 1 Questionnaire for the recently-retired cohort contained one more item than for the late-career cohort. The additional item, Item 30 (experiences in retirement) supplemented Item 29 (satisfaction in retirement) and allowed the recently-retired cohort specifically to reflect and describe their experience of retirement.

Question 10

["On a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being the highest) how would you rate your 'satisfaction' with retirement?"]

Finding

The finding indicated a high satisfaction rating of 8.3 out of 10.

Discussion

This finding is presented as two sub-themes.

A. Principals who were totally positive about their retirement life-style:

   I love my retirement life-style. I'm very content. I would class it as 9/10. (Primary female)

   9/10: I love this time of my life! (Primary male)

   9/10: this is the best time of my life! (Primary male)

B. Principals who indicated that retirement had improved over time (once again making the connection with possible *phases* of retirement):

   Now 8/10 but it was significantly less in the first 6 months! (Secondary female)

   Now it's 10/10. In the first year it would have been 1/10. (Primary male)

   Across 2007-2008 it would have been 1/10. Now in 2009 it is 6/10. So as you can see it's a lot better than it was but I have a long way to go yet. Some of this might change when my wife retires too. (Primary male)

Comment

This positive satisfaction rating with retirement life-style (Dimension 5.5) aligns with the positive retirement portfolio finding (Dimension 5.4).

Major themes for Dimension 5.5 (Retirement satisfaction)

1. Principals indicated a very high satisfaction with retirement.
2. Principals warned that the initial transition can be difficult.
3. Principals reflected that satisfaction with retirement can improve over time.

Dimension 5.6: retirement readiness

Readiness (for retirement) was a free-category which did not appear in Phase 1 but was purposively selected to encourage respondents to reflect on their retirement. The majority of the late-career cohort (66.7%) saw themselves as not being ready for retirement. In a similar way the recently-retired principals were asked to reflect on their readiness to retire (when they did retire) as a means of comparison.

Question 12

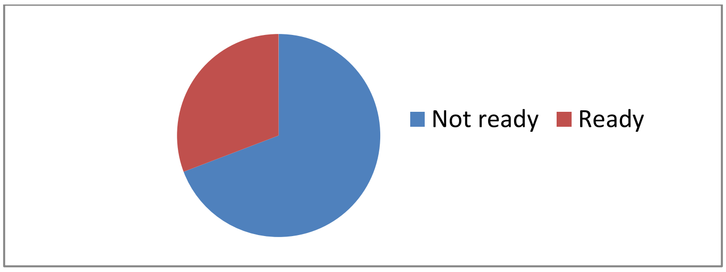
["How would you describe your readiness to retire on the following five categories: physical, professional, intellectual, financial and emotional?"]

Finding

The interview comments were collated into two headings: ready or not ready. The analysis of the responses (taking a majority of the five categories outlined above as a ready or not ready rating) produced the finding that:

1. 69.2 % saw themselves as being not ready.
2. 30.8% saw themselves as being ready (Figure 6.20):

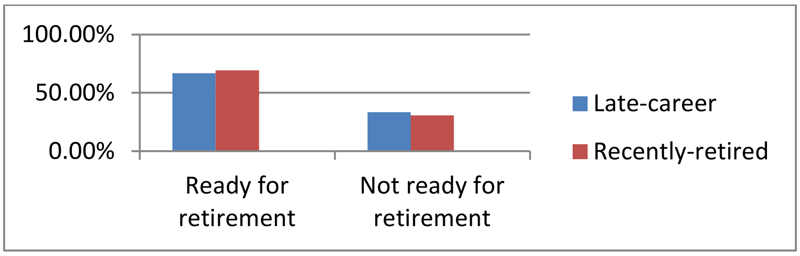
Figure 6.20: Recently-retired principals' reflection on readiness for retirement



Comparison of cohort responses

This finding that 69.2% of recently-retired principals were not ready when they retired was almost identical to the finding from the late-career cohort where 66.7% indicated they did not feel ready to retire (Figure 6.21):

Figure 6.21: Comparison of late-career and recently-retired principals' readiness for retirement



Discussion

This finding (of not being ready to retire) aligns with this cohort's interest in staying-on or refocusing following retirement. The finding is presented as three sub-themes:

A. Principals who saw themselves as being *ready* focused on financial readiness:

> *Physically I was ready as I'd had that health scare at 59. Financially I was ready because of the equity in the house. Professionally, intellectually and emotionally I was more than ready: I had done it all before and was becoming bored with the same old issues. It was time to try something new. (Secondary male)*
>
> *I was financially ready to retire because of the superannuation scheme. I was emotionally ready to retire because of wanting to start the next phase of my life with my already retired husband. (Primary female)*

B. Principals who saw themselves as *not ready* focused on the professional, personal and emotional domains:

Physically I was fit and ready. Financially I was ready. However professionally I was not ready as I felt I was doing a great job and had more in me; intellectually I was not ready as I had nagging doubts about the new life in retirement and was I going to fade away; and emotionally I was not ready because I was having a real internal tug-o-war about facing the concept of being retired: only old people are retired. (Primary male)

Physically (the job was taking its toll) & financially I was ready. Professionally, intellectually and emotionally I wasn't ready because I was at the top of my game: calm, confident, comfortable and productive. (Primary male)

C. Principals who only realized they were not ready after they had taken the retirement step:

Financially I was ready to retire but on every other criteria (physically, intellectually, professionally and emotionally) I was not ready to retire. I felt the pressure of the financial advisors and retired colleagues who insisted that I was working for nothing. That may well have been true in a financial sense but I was actually working for something much more important for me: professional satisfaction; contributing to making a difference in the lives of students, parents and teachers and intellectual stimulation. However I have only realized this after I retired. It was too late! I was on the top of my game and keen on my work. I should have stayed longer. (Primary male)

Comment

Both cohorts indicated quite strongly that they did not see themselves as ready to retire. This finding was deemed worthy of further investigation in later phases of the study.

Major themes from Dimension 5.5 (Retirement readiness)

1. Principals felt financially ready to retire.
2. Principals felt they were not emotionally, intellectually or professionally ready to retire.

SUMMARY OF RECENTLY-RETIRED PRINCIPAL INTERVIEWS

The major themes to emerge indicated that for the recently-retired cohort:

1. Principals considered that that they were not ready to retire when they did.
2. Principals felt that due to superannuation regulations and limited part-time work options, they had little personal control over retirement.
3. Principals expressed an interest in staying-on past retirement age in a full-time or part-time capacity (with access to their superannuation entitlements).
4. Principals expressed a strong interest in staying-on part-time through the TCM and the Coaching/Mentoring Model (if that option had been available).
5. Principals found the emotional domain factors to be the significant problems in the transition phase of retirement.
6. Principals reported that transition had not been a static experience but had contained phases (especially across the first years of retirement).
7. Principals described retirement as a highly satisfying vibrant new life, filled with a multitude (portfolio) of activities.

8. Principals refocused into the workforce following retirement.
9. Principals found refocused work to be in the education sector.

PHASE 2 INTERVIEWS: SUMMARY

It was decided to report the Phase 2 Interviews in two separate chapters (i.e. Chapter 5 for late-career principals and Chapter 6 for recently-retired principals) as the aspirations and expectations of the former initially needed to be viewed separately from the reflections and experiences of the later. During Chapter 6 some comparisons of the findings between the two cohorts appeared as appropriate. This closing section for both Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 draws together the findings from the interviews with both cohorts.

Comparing the findings from late-career and recently-retired principals

The major themes to emerge from the Phase 2 Interviews comparing the expectations and anticipations of late-career principal (Column A) with the experiences and reflections of the recently-retired principals (Column B) are shown in Table 6.2:

Dimension	**Column A** The expectations and anticipations of *late-career principals*:	**Column B** The experiences and reflections of *recently-retired principals:*
Feelings about retirement	Expressed a high level of anxiety and/or negativity about retirement as it was anticipated to be a difficult transition	Reflected that after some initial difficulties the experiences of retirement were very positive
The personal/emotional factors: social and professional isolation; loss of purpose and identity; and loss of intellectual stimulation	Anticipated that the personal/ emotional issues would be significant problems in retirement	Found that the personal/emotional issues were significant problems in the transition phase of retirement
Readiness for retirement	Anticipated that they would not be ready for retirement	Reflected that they were not ready for retirement (when it happened)
Control over retirement	Felt they have little personal control about when to retire (due to superannuation regulations)	Found they have little personal control about when to retire (due to superannuation regulations)

Staying-on (past superannuation retirement age)	Expressed strong interested in staying-on past superannuation retirement age in full-time or part-time (if superannuation was more flexible)	Reflected strong interest in staying-on past superannuation retirement age in full-time or part-time (if superannuation had been more flexible)
Part-time/ job-share models	Expressed a strong interest in staying-on part-time/job-sharing (e.g. the Transitional Co-principalship Model and the Coaching/Mentoring Model) as a mechanism for ramping-off	Reflected a strong interest in staying-on part-time/job-sharing (e.g. the Transitional Co-principalship Model and the Coaching/Mentoring Model) as a mechanism for ramping-off.
Refocusing	Anticipated or planned to refocus back in to the workforce in retirement (93.6%)	Refocused back in to the workforce following retirement (92.6%)
Refocus work-field	Expected to refocus into the education sector (schools and universities)	91.6% refocusing into the education sector (schools and universities)
Retirement life style	Anticipated a vibrant new life, filled with a multitude (portfolio) of activities	Experienced as a vibrant new life, filled with a multitude (portfolio) of activities
Satisfaction levels	Assess job satisfaction as being lower than their effectiveness and motivation	Reflected that their satisfaction level with retirement was very high
Retirement as a static or changing phase of life	Anticipated retirement to be a single/static phase of life	Reflected that retirement was not a static phase but actually contained *phases* which changed over time

Table 6.2: The major findings from the Phase 2 Interviews

Summary of the major findings involving late-career and recently-retired principals

1. The traditional model of working full-time till retirement (and then ceasing all work) is no longer principals' preferred model.
2. Principals are interested in working longer.
3. State Superannuation Scheme regulations are the primary inhibitor for principals wishing to staying-on either full-time or part-time.
4. Staying on in a job-sharing part-time co-principal role is popular with principals.
5. Refocusing in a part-time capacity is a very popular option for principals transitioning into retirement.
6. The emotional domain factors are more significant for principals than the practical domain factors when transitioning to retirement.
7. Retirement for principals is not a single static event but a journey over time.
8. Retirement can be satisfying, positive, active, vibrant and stimulating for principals.
9. Late-career principals do not assess themselves as being on a plateau path to retirement.
10. Late-career principals' self-assessed satisfaction levels are lower than the self-assessed effectiveness and motivation levels.

CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the phenomena of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for baby boomer principals in NSW. Quine & Carter (2006) have argued that " If policies in this area are to be effective, empirical research obtaining information directly from baby boomers is required" (p.3). In this research the questionnaires (Phase 1) and the interviews (Phase 2) produced the data directly from baby boomer principals. It is that data (through quantitative and qualitative analysis) which has produced the initial findings and themes (as outlined in Chapters 4-6). These findings and themes form the basis of the emerging theory which is "tested" for validity through two processes: (1) through feedback from the original participants (i.e. participant review) which is a logical and powerful tactic for verifying findings; and (2) through feedback from principals across NSW who were not involved in the original research (i.e. peer review), so as to gain an even wider perspective on the findings. The results of the feedback and triangulation processes appear in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

TRIANGULATION OF FINDINGS AND THEMES

Triangulation is the term employed when the researcher uses different methods to seek reflective consideration, alternative perspectives, conflicting viewpoints, convergence or corroboration about the initial research findings in relation to the specific phenomena being investigated. Johnson and Christensen, (2008) believe that “triangulation can substantially increase the credibility or trustworthiness of a research finding...when the investigator seeks elaboration, enhancement, illustration and clarification of the results from one method with the results from the other method” (p.451). The mixed methods approach in this research utilized both qualitative and quantitative data analysis providing a constant comparative framework. Patton (2002) supports this position stating that “it is in data analysis that the strategy of triangulation really pays off, not only in providing diverse ways of looking at the same phenomena but in adding to credibility by strengthening confidence in whatever conclusions are drawn” (p.556).

The purpose of triangulation in this research was to validate the initial findings from the questionnaires and the interviews in relation to the phenomena of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for principals; to extend and deepen the data gathered through the questionnaires and interviews; and to invite both participants and non-participants to comment on the initial findings from both the Phase 1 questionnaires and the Phase 2 interviews. As Denzin (1989) concluded “by combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and data sources, researchers can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single-observer, and single-theory studies” (1989, p. 307).

At the same time it is easy to overstate the purpose of triangulation and to look for triangulation to “prove” the initial findings. The need to be ever vigilant in maintaining distance, objectivity, impartiality and neutrality was acknowledged through the triangulation process. The purpose was not to simply verify the initial findings; or to demonstrate that different data sources (i.e. late-career principals and recently-retired principals) and different inquiry methods (i.e. questionnaire and interviews) yielded essentially the same result. The real purpose was to “test” for such consistencies. Areas of convergence naturally increase confidence in the findings. However as Patton (2002) concludes, “the researcher using different methods to investigate the same phenomenon should not expect that the findings generated by those different methods will automatically come together to produce some nicely integrated whole…inconsistencies ought not to be viewed as weakening the credibility of the results, but rather as offering opportunities for deeper insights into the relationship between inquiry approach and the phenomenon under study”

(p. 556-557). For this reason the researcher took a deep interest in the points of divergence (as well as the points of convergence) to continue the constant re-engagement with the data. The areas of divergence were welcomed as an opportunity for deeper investigation of the complex nature of the phenomena under investigation.

Triangulation can contribute to verification and validation through both *methods triangulation* where the consistency of the findings from different data collection methods are checked (in this case questionnaires and interviews); and *sources triangulation* where the consistency of the findings from different data collection sources are compared (in this case late-career principals and recently-retired principals). In this study both methods triangulation and sources triangulation were incorporated in the triangulation processes.

TRIANGULATION PROCESSES

Five triangulation processes were used in this study: two processes with groups in excess of 100 respondents (Process 1 and Process 2); and three processes with groups of less than 20 (Process 3; Process 4 and Process 5).

Participant group questionnaire (Process 1)

This was an on-line questionnaire (Appendix 7.1) with an accompanying email (Appendix 7.3) distributed to all 208 principals who had participated in Phase 1 of the research, seeking their feedback as to the extent to which the research findings represented the commonly held view of principals they knew and/or with whom they interacted. This was the process of "review by enquiry participants" (Patton, 2002; p.560). The questionnaire was distributed via email. Twenty-two bounced back as no longer accessible through that email address. In the two years since the distribution of the original on-line Phase 1 questionnaire (December, 2008), to the distribution of this Participant Group questionnaire (December, 2010), some late-career principals had retired and were no longer accessible via their NSWDET email address; whilst some recently-retired principals had changed their personal email addresses. Of the 186 participants who appeared to have received this on-line Participant Group questionnaire, 117 responded. This represented a 62.9% response rate.

Peer-review group questionnaire (Process 2)

The same on-line questionnaire (Appendix 7.2) as described in triangulation Process 1, with an accompanying email (Appendix 7.4) was distributed to principals from across NSW who had *not* participated in the research, seeking their opinion as to the extent to which the findings represented the commonly held view of principals they knew and/or with whom they interacted. This peer review process represented "triangulation with multiple analysts" (Patton, 2002; p.560). This peer-review group was a random selection of late-career principals from across NSW who had not participated in the research project but who had attended the NSWDET Transition to Retirement Program conducted by the researcher during 2010 (Chapter 3). Of the 250 late-career principals who attended these programs, 106 responded. This represented a 42.4% response rate.

Comparative analysis of participant and peer-review group questionnaires (Process 1 and 2)

Both groups completed the identical survey. Items 1-3 were the personal variable items used for identification and variable comparison: name; gender; and school level. Each of the remaining items (4-10) was analyzed comparing the results from both cohorts. The respondents were not asked for their personal reflections but were asked to reflect upon the views of their colleagues; to consider those views; and to respond according to the perceived majority views of those colleagues. The intention was to seek feedback on the reliability and validity of the major findings (from Phase 1 and Phase 2) by phrasing the questions in the following ways: “from your interactions with principal colleagues would this (finding/theme) seem to be a common feeling?” or “from your interactions with principal colleagues would this (finding/theme) seem to be accurate?” The data from this triangulation process were analyzed through quantitative methodology.

This process potentially expanded the triangulation cohort well beyond the 117 participants in the participant group and 106 participants in the peer-review group. The number of “conversations” which each respondent drew upon in answering each item was not measurable. Potentially this reflective assessment of the initial findings drew from a deep pool of late-career principals across all regions of NSW. This process provided a deep well of triangulated feedback. Some respondents may not have answered as intended by reflecting the comments of peers but rather may have given their personal reflection. This variable was also not measurable. This process was one of five triangulation processes employed (as described above) used to compile a triangulation perspective. The data from triangulation processes 1, 2 and 3 were analyzed through quantitative methodology.

“Phases of retirement” group survey (Process 3)

This was an email survey (conversation) held specifically with the recently-retired principals’ research cohort seeking their opinions about a new phenomenon emerging from the data: *phases of retirement*. In the Phase 2 interviews it emerged that retirement was proving to be more of a journey with phases rather than a single static event. This qualitative method was specific “perspective-based triangulation” (Patton, 2002; p.562) related to a developing theory. All 108 members of the recently-retired cohort were emailed (Appendix 7.5) to seek their response to this new phenomenon of phases of retirement. From the 108 emails distributed 12 bounced back (indicating that the email address was no longer current). From the 96 emails which were delivered, 35 responses were received. This represented a response rate of 36.4%.

Staying-on group questionnaire (Process 4)

This was a separate on-line questionnaire (Appendix 7.7) distributed solely to principals who had consciously opted to stay-on (full-time) past their superannuation retirement age; the age at which they were entitled to retire with full superannuation benefits. The questionnaire sought the opinions of the thirteen staying-on principals (who had been located through the research) as to the reasons for; success of; and reflections on their decision to stay-on. Twelve responded representing a response rate of 92.3 %. This quantitative method was specific "perspective-based triangulation" (Patton, 2002; p.562) concerning a developing theory.

Staying-on group interview (Process 5)

As a follow-up to the on-line survey (Appendix 7.7), all thirteen staying-on principals were invited to participate in phone or face-to-face interview. These interviews were conducted in June 2011. Again this was a "perspective-based triangulation" (Patton, 2002; p.562) which explored a developing theory about staying-on. These personal interviews represented qualitative methodology. The interview data (Appendix 7.8) was analyzed following the four stages as described by Marshall and Rossman (1989): organizing the data; generating categories, themes and patterns; testing any emergent hypothesis; and searching for alternative explanations. Oplatka (2010) commented on this process indicating that "this analysis aims at identifying central themes in the data, searching for recurrent experiences, feelings and attitudes, so as to be able to code, reduce, and connect different categories into central themes" (p.798). The coding was guided by the principles of "comparative analysis" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), which included the comparison of any coded element in terms of emergent categories and subcategories.

The decision to complete such detailed triangulation using the five processes (and both quantitative and qualitative methods) aligns with Patton's (2002) belief that "by triangulation with multiple data sources, observers, methods, and/or theories, researchers can make substantial strides in overcoming the skepticism that greets singular methods, lone analysts, and single-perspective interpretations" (p.556).

TRIANGULATION GROUP COMPOSITION

The percentage distribution of the gender and school level variables for each phase of the research (including the triangulation phase) as compared with the total NSWDET principal population at the time of the research commencement (December, 2008) is displayed in Table 7.1:

	Male Principals	Female Principals	Primary Principals	Secondary Principals
Total NSWDET principals (N=2106)	52.6%	47.4%	79.0%	21.0%
Phase 1 questionnaire group (N=208)	58.7%	41.3%	73.6%	26.4%
Phase 2 interview group (N=54)	59.2%	40.8%	72.2%	27.8%
Phase 4 triangulation participant group (N=117)	54.3%	45.7%	73.3%	26.7%
Phase 4 triangulation peer-review group (N=106)	51.9%	48.1%	79.8%	20.2%
Phase 4 triangulation "phases of retirement" group (N=35)	54.3%	45.7%	62.8% %	37.2% %
Phase 4 triangulation "staying-on" group (N=12)	16.6%	83.4%	50.0%	50.0%

Table 7.1: Male/female and primary/secondary principal populations

The overall consistency of the composition of variables for all phases of this research added to the reliability of the initial themes/ findings and to the validity of the triangulation phase findings. The only group which deviated from being representative of the average norm size was the "staying-on group". In this group females were over-represented. Although this group was small (N=12) this was an interesting variation. Under the State Superannuation Scheme ("the old scheme) rules, females are able to retire at 55 years of age whilst for males the age is 60 years. This factor may have resulted in an over-representation of female principals who would be categorized as *staying-on* if working past 55 years of age; as opposed to males who would only be categorized as staying-on if working past 60 years of age.

TRIANGULATION CONTENT

The findings investigated through the various triangulation processes were purposively selected from the initial major findings which had emerged from the previous phases of the research. These findings (themes) were that:

1. The emotional domain (e.g. isolation and identity issues) is of greater concern than the practical domain (e.g. financial and health care issues) in late-career transition to retirement.
2. The traditional model of working full-time till retirement and then ceasing all work is no longer the preferred model.

3. Refocusing back in to the workforce in some part-time capacity (e.g. in education through mentoring/coaching) is the preferred model of transition into retirement.
4. Late-career phase principals do not see themselves as being on a plateau path to retirement but satisfaction levels are lower than effectiveness and motivation levels.
5. The *new retirement* is visualized and articulated as being a satisfying, positive, active, vibrant and stimulating phase of life (which has *work* as one component).
6. Retirement is not a single static event but is a transitional process (i.e. a journey) which contains changing phases over time.
7. Staying-on past superannuation retirement age in a full-time capacity is an option being consciously selected by some late-career principals.

These seven major findings/themes were examined through the five triangulation processes (outlines above) in the following manner (Table 7.2):

Theme	Triangulation Process	Specific items	Document
Theme 1: Importance of the emotional domain when transitioning to retirement	Process 1: Participant questionnaire Process 2: Peer-review questionnaire	Item 4, 5,6,7	Appendix 7.1 & 7.2
Theme 2: Models of transitioning to retirement	Process 1: Participant questionnaire Process 2: Peer-review questionnaire	Item 8	Appendix 7.1 & 7.2
Theme 3: Re-focusing in education (through mentoring and coaching)	Process 1: Participant questionnaire Process 2: Peer-review questionnaire	Item 9	Appendix 7.1 & 7.2
Theme 4: Satisfaction levels (in late-career)	Process 1: Participant questionnaire Process 2: Peer-review questionnaire	Item 10	Appendix 7.1 & 7.2
Theme 5: The new retirement and work	Process 1: Participant questionnaire Process 2: Peer-review questionnaire.	Item 11	Appendix 7.1 & 7.2
Theme 6: Phases of retirement	Process 3: Recently-retired electronic conversation	Email conversation	Appendix 7.5
Theme 7: Staying-on in the principalship	Process 4: Staying-on cohort questionnaire. Process 5: Staying-on cohort interviews.	Items 1-17	Appendix 7.7 & 7.8

Table 7.2: Triangulation processes and content

THEME 1: THE EMOTIONAL DOMAIN OF RETIREMENT

In Phase 1 and Phase 2 principals consistently indicated that the greatest areas of concern approaching retirement were in the emotional domain.

Item 4: Retirement brings a mixture of anticipation and anxiety

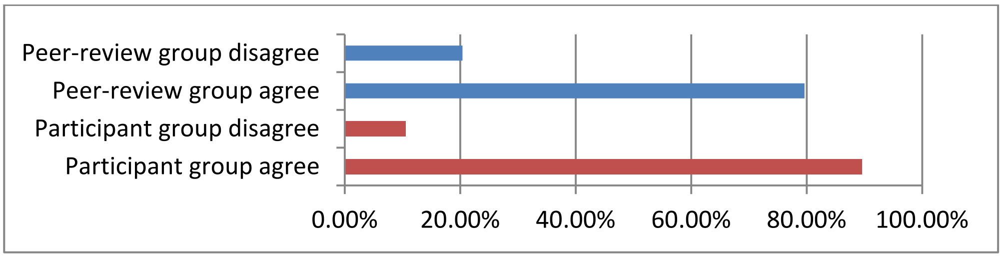
(As indicated Items 1-3 were used for identification and variable comparison only).

Item 4 sought the participant group and peer-review group reactions to the finding that principals approaching retirement experienced a mixture of anticipation and anxiety.

Finding

89.5% of the participant group and 79.6% of the peer-review group agreed that their principal colleagues approached retirement with mixed feelings (Figure 7.1):

Figure 7.1: Approaching retirement produces both positive and negative emotions



Discussion

The majority of comments supported the view that retirement brings a combination of anticipation and anxiety:

> *Outwardly many principals only see positives in retirement. This outward persona is tempered with the loss of professional and social contact and fear about what the future will hold. (Primary male)*
>
> *A fear of freedom and a loss of relevance sums up what I hear from my colleagues. (Primary female)*
>
> *Usually anticipation seems to be for a restful and more relaxed lifestyle. However there is also anxiety around uncertainty and loss of contact with colleagues. (Secondary female)*
>
> *Anxiety about 'relevance deprivation' seems most common. (Secondary female)*

Comment

This triangulation finding supported the initial finding that approaching retirement brings a mixture of anticipation (for a new life); uncertainty (about the new life); and grief/loss (for the old life).

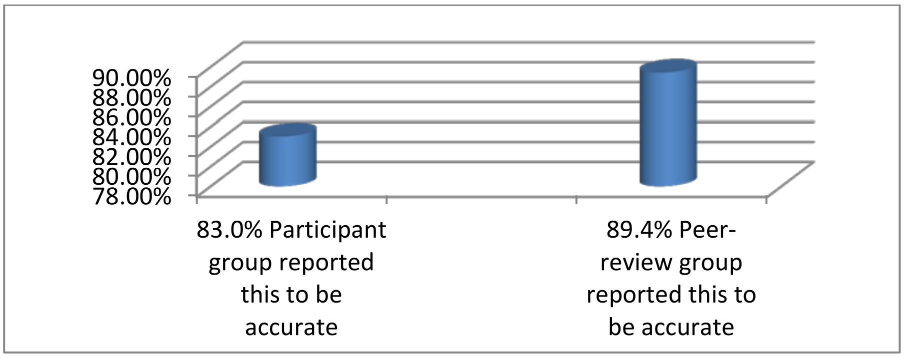
Item 5: The greatest difficulties in retirement are the emotional issues

In earlier findings the late-career principals indicated that the greatest concerns when approaching retirement were in the emotional domain. Recently-retired principals' experiences confirmed this response. Feedback was now sought from the participant and the peer-review groups.

Finding

83.0% (participant group) and 89.4% (peer-review group) agreed that the greatest difficulties for their principal colleagues transitioning to retirement were in the emotional domain (Figure 7.2):

Figure 7.2: The emotional domain contains the greater concerns for/in retirement



Discussion

The majority of comments (such as the ones quoted) supported this view:

> *I would rate lack of intellectual stimulation and loss of purpose and status as the most prominent fears in the "close to retirement" principals I know. (Primary male)*

> *From my observation this becomes stronger as retirement approaches. Five years out people don't see this as such a big issue but it becomes critical in the months before and can reach a crisis level for some immediately after retirement. (Primary male)*

Comment

These triangulated findings supported the original findings that the emotional domain is seen by principals as containing the most significant difficulties when approaching retirement (i.e. late-career principals) and when experiencing retirement (i.e. the recently-retired cohort).

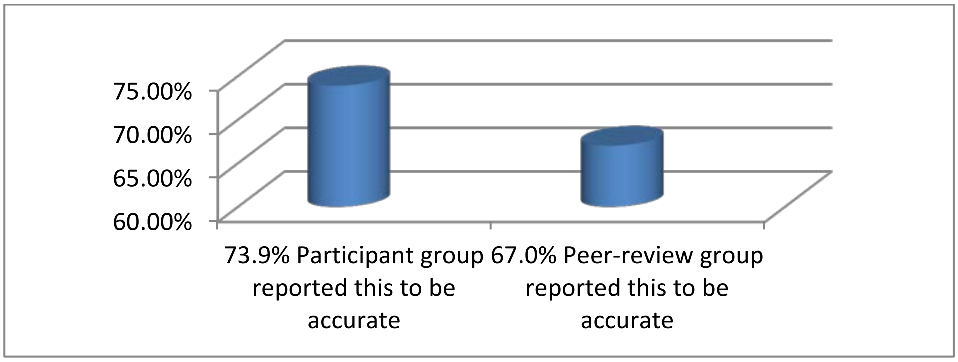
Item 6: The emotional issues are of greater concern than the financial issues

Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings consistently indicated that in transition to retirement the emotional domain was of greater significance than the specific practical domain area of financial security.

Finding

73.9% of the participant group and 67.0% of the peer-review group agreed that emotional issues are of greater concern than financial issues with their principal colleagues (Figure 7.3):

Figure 7.3: The emotional issues are of greater concern than the financial issues



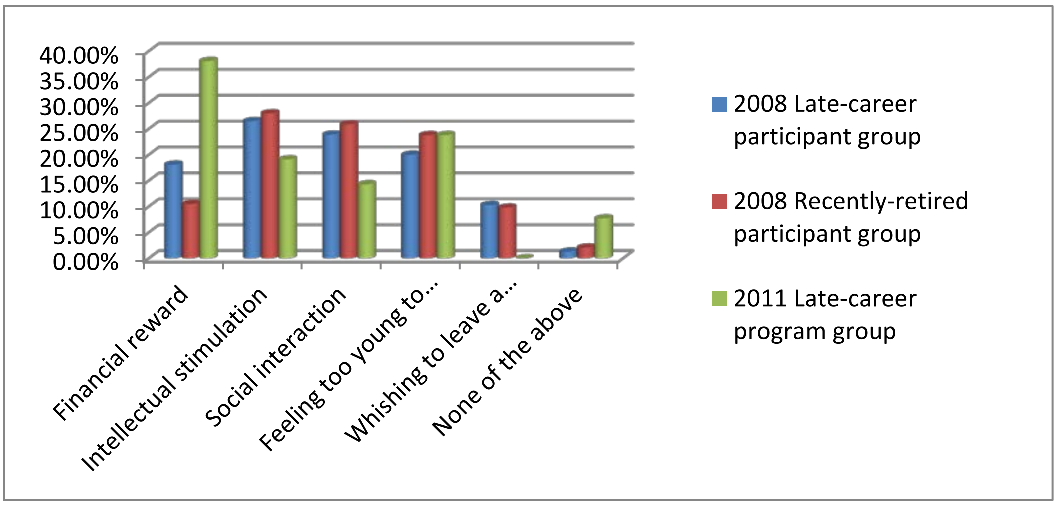
Discussion

Although the majority of comments supported this view, late-career principals also commented that in the future the dominance of emotional over financial issues may well be reversed due to changes in superannuation, the Global Financial Crisis and a possible bias against females:

> *I notice that women who left the old super scheme early in their career and/or divorced and therefore do not have the generous 'old scheme' upon which to rely have far more concerns about finances. (Primary male)*
>
> *Principals in the SSS scheme (the old scheme) feel secure, but as time moves on and principals are in less generous schemes, the concern is expressed that financial issues may become more of a concern than the emotional issues. (Secondary female)*
>
> *Principals on the old scheme are very confident about finances. Principals who are not on the old scheme appear to be more concerned about finances and world economic conditions than anything else. (Primary female)*

These comments from the triangulation process involving the participant and peer-review groups foreshadowed that the priority of emotional factors over financial factors may be linked to the fact that the majority of participants in this research are members of “the old super scheme” (State Superannuation Scheme) and as such generically do not foresee significant financial concerns. However the last “old super scheme” members retire in 2023 and by 2016 the majority of principals will be in the newer schemes (Lawley, 2011). Thus it was decided to further test this later suggestion that financial considerations would become more significant for future principals. In November 2011, the researcher conducted a *Transition to Retirement* program for principals in the NSWDET Sydney Region. The program participants (25 late-career principals) were asked to respond to the same question “What might be your reasons to stay-on past your retirement age? “(Item 9, Phase 1 Questionnaire: December, 2008) the results are shown in Figure 7.4:

Figure 7.4: Comparison of motivators for staying-on: 2008 and 2011



Comment

These findings appear to demonstrate a significant shift towards the importance of financial issues. Financial reward was clearly identified by the 2011 program group as the highest motivator for staying-on. Between December 2008 and November 2011 the situation would seem to have changed. Those changes may relate to: (1) the Global Financial Crisis; (2) greater financial insecurity; (3) the phasing out of the remaining “old super scheme” members; or (4) any other factors or combination of factors yet to be assessed. Although beyond the scope of this investigation, the changing response to what might motivate future late-career principals to stay-on, would seem to be an area worthy of further research.

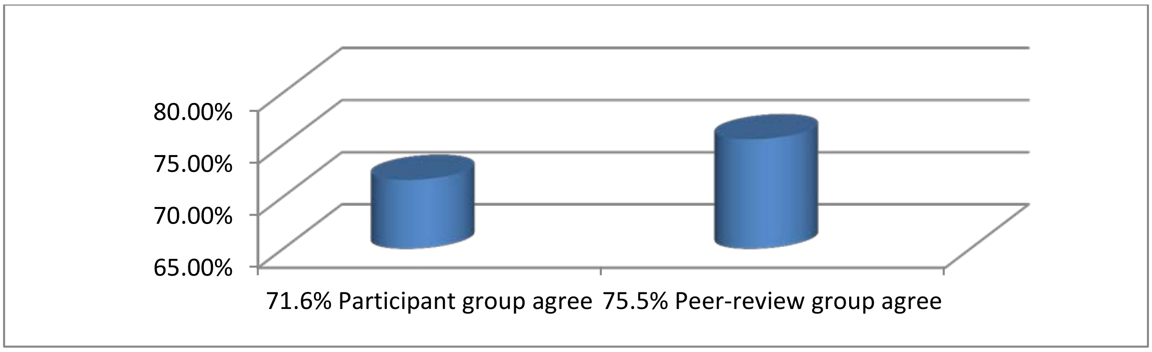
Item 7: The emotional issues are of greater concern than health issues

Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings consistently indicated that the emotional issues associated with retirement were of greater significance to principals than health considerations.

Finding

71.6% of the participant group and 75.5% of the peer-review group agreed that the emotional issues are of greater concern than health issues with their principal colleagues (Figure 7.5):

Figure 7.5: Emotional issues are of greater concern than health issues



Discussion

Although the majority of comments supported this view (finding), these late-career principals also noted that this is not an area which colleagues discuss openly. It was felt that mental health issues (stress and anxiety) may well be masked by discussion about physical health. In addition it was felt that improvements in medical science may be resulting in sixty year olds principals feeling fit and healthy enough to continue working or to refocus back into the workforce rather than follow the traditional retirement models:

> *Most appear to be enjoying relatively good health at this stage. As the retirement age continues to rise for future principals - this could be interesting to observe. (Primary male)*
>
> *No one really talks about health issues as we all like to think that it won't happen to us. (Primary male)*
>
> *Emotional health impacts on physical health but I hear the emotional issues spoken about more than the physical issues. (Secondary female)*

Comment

These triangulation findings indicated that there may be more subtleties and nuances in the linkage between emotional and physical health than was initially reported in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the research; and although beyond the scope of this study, this may also be an area well worthy of further research. However for principals in this research, health considerations were less important than the emotional issues associated with transitioning to retirement.

Conclusion to Theme 1 (The emotional aspects of retirement)

Whilst foreshadowing a potential rise in the importance of the financial situation for the late-career and the transition to retirement phases, the triangulation findings across items 4-7 endorsed one of the major themes to arise from the previous phases of this research for baby boomer principals: that transition to retirement has far more to do with the emotional domain than with the practical domain (i.e. financial and health issues). This would seem to be a largely unrecognized, undiagnosed and under-resourced aspect of the phenomena of late-career and retirement phases. Traditionally retirement support services (both governmental and community services) have focused almost exclusively on financial, health and welfare concerns. NSW professional associations of principals may of late be grasping the significance of this issue with the NSWPPA forming a Retired Primary Principals Association in 2005 and the NSWSPC forming an "as yet" loosely connected social network for retired secondary principals.

THEME 2: MODELS OF RETIREMENT

The findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 indicated principals were no longer interested in the traditional models of retirement.

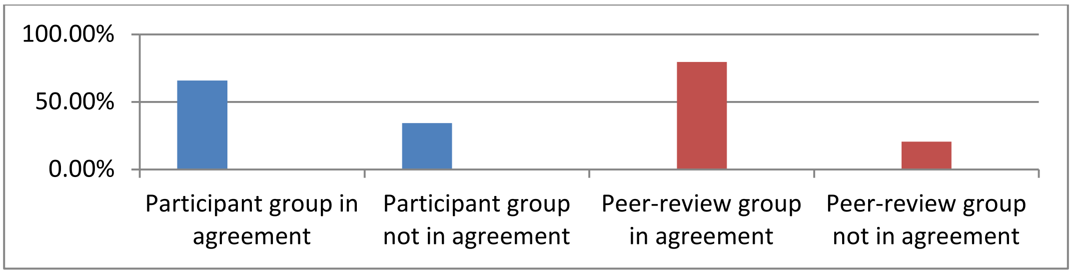
Item 8: The popularity of ramping-off through part-time work

The findings had indicated that principals preferred retirement models which involved ramping-off through part-time work rather than a sudden cessation of all work.

Finding

65.7% of the late-career participant group and 79.6% of peer-review group agreed that ramping off was the most popular model amongst their principal colleagues (Figure 7.6).

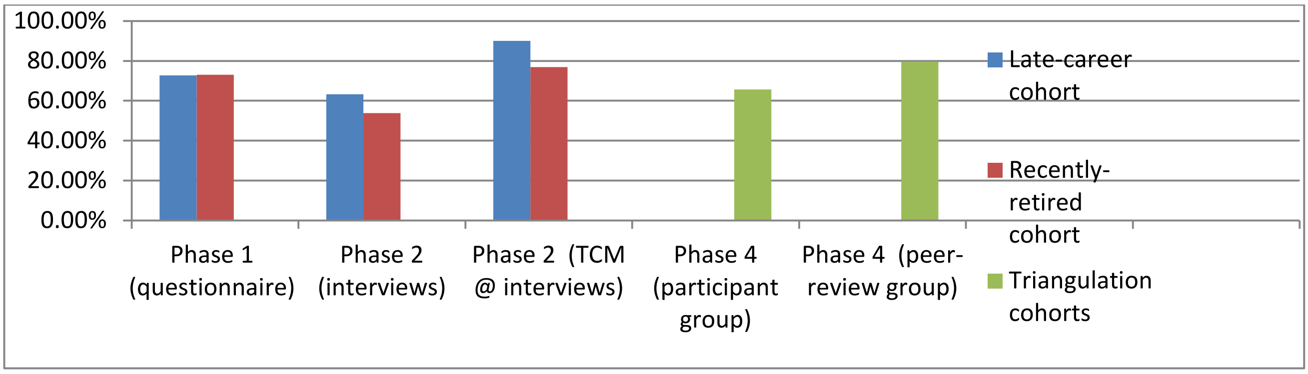
Figure 7.6: A ramping-off phase is the preferred transition to retirement model



Discussion

Phase 1 and Phase 2 had demonstrated a level of support for phased retirement through co-principalship models ranging from 55% - 85%. This was validated in the Phase 4 triangulation (Figure 7.7). It is interesting to note that whilst there was general support for the co-principalship concept, it was the Transitional Co-principalship Model (TCM) which registered the most positive reaction.

Figure 7.7: Support for phased retirement through co-principalship



Although job-sharing (co-principalship) was very strongly supported, principals reported that colleagues held very strong views both for and against this concept. Some principals reported that it had never really been discussed; others suggested that secondary principals were more opposed to the concept than primary principals; whilst others had believed that women far more favourably disposed towards the concept than male. The divergence in views was captured in these comments:

> *Two camps seem to address this idea. Those opposed to any involvement and the other expressing some interest and willingness to explore this option. (Primary female)*

I mainly hear support for this coming from primary principals not secondary. (Secondary male)

Women seem to think it would be great - I don't hear that from men. (Primary male)

A common topic of conversation, and generally seen as very positive and very 'doable. This is now being spoken about by an increasing number of colleagues. (Secondary female)

Conclusion to Theme 2 (Models of retirement)

Clearly the traditional model (i.e. working full-time till retirement day and then ceasing all work) would no longer seem to be the preferred model for principals. That model has been replaced by a preference for part-time/job-sharing as a ramping-off transition from full-time work, pending official retirement. This work model does not appear to be available for principals in NSWDET except where there is a situation involving some form of official leave (e.g. part-time sick leave or maternity leave). It is interesting to note that although opposition to job-sharing (co-principalship) came from a minority of the research participants, that opposition was very strongly expressed. The issue raised more passionate and emotive comment than any other item in the triangulation processes (as it did during the Phase 2 Interviews). Whilst ramping-off work through a part-time/job-share model is generically supported by principals, there are principals who although supportive of the job-share concept generically, do not believe that it can be (or should be) applied to the principalship.

THEME 3: REFOCUSING

This triangulation component concentrated on the option of refocusing. Phase 1 questionnaire indicated that refocusing was supported by 93.6% of late-career and 97.0% of recently-retired principals; and that part-time work was clearly the most popular model. Phase 2 interview provided further evidence of the extent to which refocusing had become a component of the retired life-style. In total 92.6% of recently-retired principals reported that they had indeed refocused into part-time work in retirement; and that 91.6% of these had found that work in the education sector.

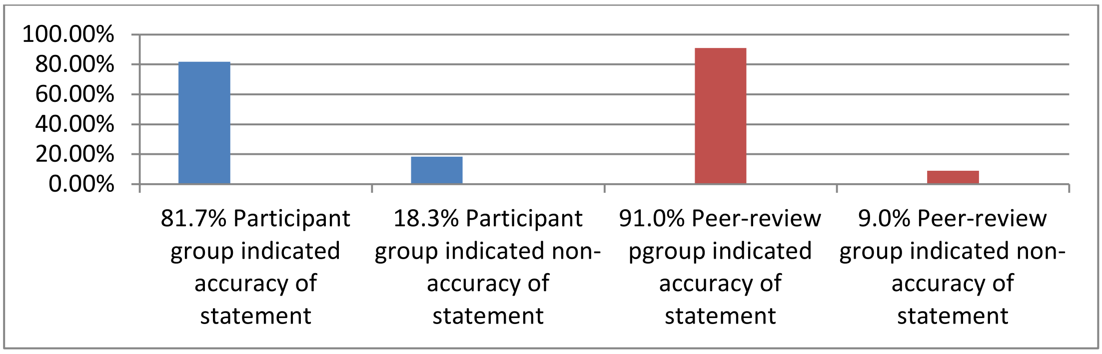
Item 9: The popularity of refocusing into (part-time) work in retirement

In the Phase 2 interviews the late-career cohort indicated that mentoring or coaching (in the education sector) was the second most popular part-time model for transition to retirement (following the TCM). In the triangulation questionnaires (Appendices 7.1 & 7.2), Item 9 asked principals if their colleagues “were really extremely interested in refocusing (in education) through a mentor/coach role” (as had been indicated in those earlier phases of the research).

Finding

81.7% of the late-career participant group and 91.0% of the late-career peer-review group felt this be accurate (Figure 7.8):

Figure 7.8: Principals highly interest in refocusing into part-time mentoring and coaching



Discussion

The majority of comments strongly supported the view that refocusing in education through some form of mentoring/coaching was a very popular option. However some concerns were expressed about: (1) principals being retired too long (i.e. passing their "use-by-date"); and (2) the suitability criteria for selection to be a mentor/coach:

> *Most agree that there is a wealth of corporate knowledge leaving at present and the use of recently retired principals is an excellent way to sustain and transfer the knowledge. (Secondary female)*

> *I think refocusing through mentoring and coaching is the strongest desire that I have heard expressed from my colleagues. (Primary female)*

> *Time in retirement seems to diminish this interest. Time away from the system is seen as a loss of currency. (Primary male)*

Conclusion to Theme 3 (Refocusing through mentoring/coaching)

This triangulation finding supported the initial finding and theme that following retirement principals are extremely interested in refocusing part-time into the education sector through the mentoring/coaching of leadership aspirants and neophyte principals. This finding was deemed worthy of further investigation as a model for capturing capacity and for knowledge transfer.

THEME 4: SATISFACTION IN LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALSHIP

Phase 1 questionnaire findings indicated that self-assessed satisfaction levels were well below self-assessed levels of effectiveness and motivation for late-career principals (Table 7.3):

	Effectiveness	Motivation	Satisfaction
High	46.9%	34.7%	32.7%
Strong	43.9%	49.0%	33.7%
Moderate	8.2%	13.2%	23.5%
Marginal	1.0%	3.1%	10.1%

Table 7.3: Late-career principals: effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

In the Phase 2 the following four factors were reported as being the major contributors to lower levels of satisfaction for late-career principals: (1) politicization of the educational agenda; (2); centralized decision-making; (3) inappropriately rapid response times; and (4) Increasing deflection away from the core-business of educational leader.

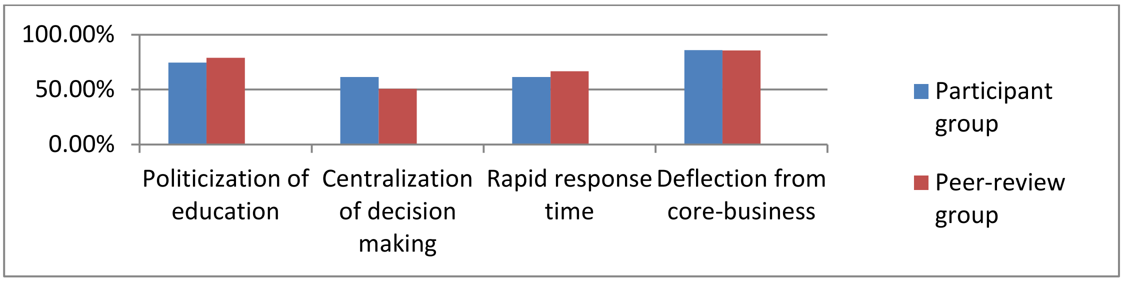
Item 10: Factors causing lower satisfaction levels in late-career principals

Item 10 (of the triangulation questionnaire) asked late-career principals to what extent did their principal colleagues agree that these four issues were the causes of lower satisfaction:

Finding

1. *Politicization of education:* 74.6% of the participant group and 79.0% of the peer-review group believed this accurately reflected their colleagues' opinions.
2. *Increasing centralization of decision making :* 61.4% of the participant group and 50.0% of the peer-review group felt this accurately reflected their colleagues' opinions;
3. *Inappropriate rapid response times:* 61.4% of the participant group and 66.7% of the peer-review group felt this accurately reflect their colleagues' opinions;
4. *Increasing deflection away from the core-business as the educational leader:* 86.0% of the participant group and 85.7% of the peer-review group found this accurately reflect their colleagues' opinions (Figure 7.9):

Figure 7.9: Principals in agreement with stated causes of lower satisfaction



Discussion

Although the majority of comments supported the generic view that satisfaction levels were being negatively influenced by the four factors cited, it was the items relating to political interference and deflection away from the core educational role of the principal which attracted most support in this triangulation process:

> *Principals feel that the profession is driven by short term political goals which seem to have a daily priority over learning and teaching. (Secondary male)*

> *Principals comment about their dissatisfaction with 'the politics' that take them away from teaching and learning. (Secondary female)*

> *Principals lament that the job these days is becoming more remote from children. (Primary female)*

My colleagues claim that managing additional administrative tasks has become a major intrusion upon the core educational activities of their schools. (Primary male)

Comment

This triangulation process produced a deeper analysis and delineation of the data from Phase 1 and Phase 2. Of the four causes (of lower satisfaction) investigated through this process, two factors (the centralization of decision making; and the rapid response times required) received only mid-range support ranging from 50.5% - 66.7%. However for the other two items (the politicization of education and the deflection away from core-business of education) the support was much stronger, ranging from 74.6%-86.0%. The triangulation process differentiated between the four initial causes of lower satisfaction, and focused attention on the finding that the two predominant causes were *political interference* and *deflection from the core-business of education*.

Conclusion to Theme 4 (Satisfaction levels in late-career)

In a recent survey of the attitudes towards retirement in the NSW public sector (which includes education) Hesketh and Griffin (2010) found that "there was a significant relationship between attitudes at work and intended retirement age: the less satisfied at work and the more tired of work a person was the younger their intended retirement age" (p. 23). If principals' lower satisfaction levels are influencing their decisions to retire earlier (rather than later) that may well be exacerbating any premature loss of corporate knowledge and expertise.

THEME 5: MOTIVATION TO REFOCUS (work in retirement)

Theme 5 ("The new portfolio retirement model") specifically examined the reasons or motivation for continuing to work (by refocusing) when full-time retirement was available.

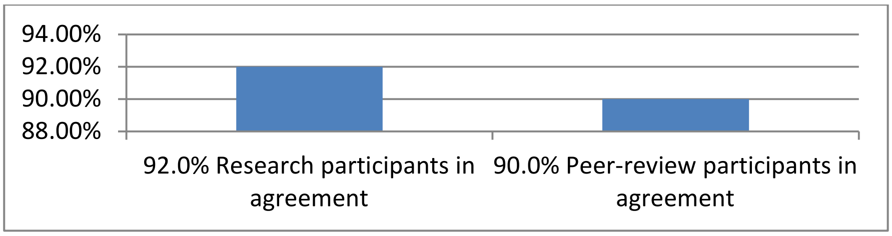
Item 11: The reasons principals are interested in refocusing

The Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings indicated that principals opted to refocus more for personal rewards (e.g. social contact; contributing towards the community; contributing towards education; maintaining a sense of purpose; maintaining a sense of self-worth) than for the financial rewards. Item 11 sought to establish the accuracy of this initial finding.

Finding

92.0% of the late-career participant group felt this to be accurate and 90.0% of the late-career peer-review group felt this to be accurate (Figure 7.10):

Figure 7.10: Refocused work is undertaken for personal rather than financial rewards



Discussion

The triangulation phase comments strongly supported the findings but again raised some very interesting and subtle variations which did not arise through the earlier phases of this research. The respondents noted that the principals opting to work for personal (and sometimes altruistic) rewards tended to be the ones in the "old super scheme" whilst those who were in the later less-generous schemes were more inclined to work for financial reasons. Some respondents identified two distinct groups emerging: "old super scheme" principals with altruistic and personal motivation to work; and newer superannuation scheme principals who will refocus back to work for the money. In addition respondents commented that for women who retire at 55 the motivation for work seemed to be higher than for males who retired at 60; and that the Global Financial Crisis has increased the financial reason to work for everyone:

> *Principals I speak to feel that they are doing something that really matters for our society. It's a way to demonstrate self worth and in almost all the cases I know, the financial aspect is of minor consideration. (Primary male)*

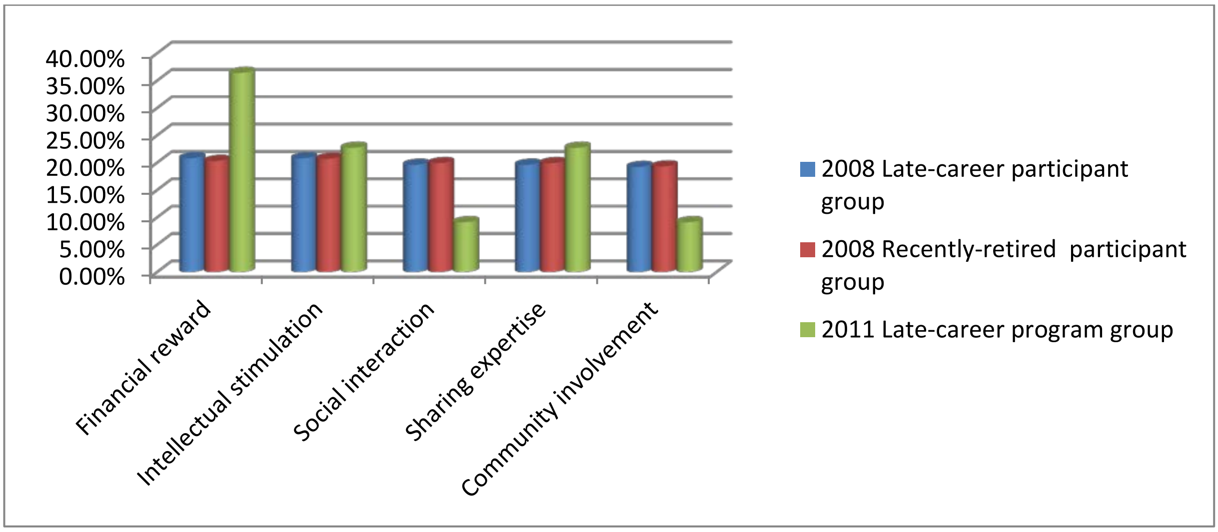
> *Those principals in the 'old' State Super scheme are probably stronger financially so their post-retirement work is defined more in terms of emotional reasons. (Primary male)*

> *There were definitely two distinct groups (old super scheme and SASS/First State newer super schemes). This made a significant difference to people's decisions and attitudes to work and retirement. (Secondary male)*

> *Women forced to retire at 55 say they feel too young to really retire; and may also need the financial rewards of work to maintain their life-style (Secondary female)*

In the light of these comments from principals foreshadowing a rise in the importance of financial reward in any decision to refocus, the researcher decided to further investigate this apparent variation. Late-career principals at the NSWDET Sydney Region November 2011 *Transition to Retirement* program had confirmed that their greatest motivator to *stay-on* full-time (past their superannuation retirement age) was now the financial (Figure 7.4). The program participants (25 late-career principals) were now asked to respond to the same question which the original research participants completed in the December, 2008 about *refocusing*: "What might be your reasons for working [refocusing] following retirement?" (Item13). The results are shown in Figure 7.11:

Figure 7.11: Comparison of motivators for refocusing 2008 to 2011



Comment

Although a relatively small sample (N=25), this November 2011 *Transition to Retirement* program group response indicated that they foresaw financial reward as their major motivator for refocusing in retirement.

Conclusion to Theme 5 (Motivation to work in retirement)

The triangulation finding supported the theme that principals who retired and re-focused back into the workforce, did so more for social and emotional rewards than for the financial rewards. However the comments of principals that this situation might be about to change due to changing financial conditions (and because the number of principals in "the old scheme" is declining and the number of those in the newer schemes is growing at an expanding rate) encouraged the researcher to further examine this potential shift. The contradictory nature of the findings seems worthy of deeper investigation. These findings added significantly to an understanding that the meaning and nature of transitioning to retirement (for principals) may well alter over time with the impact of other changing variables.

THEME 6: PHASES OF RETIREMENT

In the Phase 1 questionnaires there had been no indication that recently-retired principals actually experienced different phases during transition to retirement. This concept was first raised in the Phase 2 interviews where twelve of the twenty-six recently-retired principals mentioned experiencing *phases* in their retirement (Appendix 3.24). Some of the specific Phase 2 interview comments which brought to light this new concept are shown in Appendix 7.5.

Retirement as a static single event

The concept of *phases* was then explored through an email conversation where the recently-retired principals were invited to reflect on their experiences. There were 37 email replies representing a 38.5 % response rate (Appendix 7.6). This was a specific “perspective-based triangulation” process (Patton, 2002; p.562) related to the developing theory of phases of retirement.

Email content

The content for this email conversation focused on four *sub-themes* which had arisen during the Phase 2 interviews: (1) retirement is a journey and contains distinct phases; (2) the initial phase can be difficult and unsettling; (3) work in retirement proved to be enjoyable and worthwhile; and (4) accepting real retirement becomes easier and more attractive following a period of refocused work. These themes were presented as discussion items seeking retired principals’ reflections on their experiences across the first years of their retirement. The email was not framed as a series of questions to be answered, but more as a conversation device seeking personal reflection.

Sub-theme 1: Retirement is a journey (rather than an event) and contains distinct phases

Finding

There was 100% agreement from the 37 recently-retired respondents that they had experienced phases in their retirement.

Discussion

Samples of the comments supporting the phases of retirement concept were:

> *Yes I do agree with other principals who indicated that there are phases in retirement. (Primary female)*
>
> *I like the concept of different phases of retirement. This has definitely been my experience. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I agree that my attitude to retirement has gone through phases: first a great desire to still make a worthwhile contribution and feel needed; followed by acceptance that age does slow you down; and now a third phase of satisfaction with all the leisure activities that I am now able to participate in. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I went through a series of different phases in finding my own balance. (Primary male)*
>
> Whilst agreeing with the concept of “phases” one respondent raised a timely note of caution:
>
> *I guess what I am trying to say is that the concepts of "phases" is very much a mindset that may to some extent inform, enrich and shape our lives but on the other hand has the potential to limit the richness of possibilities that lie within a continuum of life rather than its partitions. (Primary male)*

Comment

Rather than retirement being a full-stop, an end or a specific point-in-time these recently-retired principals strongly supported the concept that retirement was a journey over time which contained different phases. The number and composition of the phases varied across the respondents.

Sub-theme 2: The initial phase proved to be difficult and unsettling

Finding

No recently-retired respondent disagreed with this theme but not all made any specific reference.

Discussion

Those who did acknowledge that they had experienced some difficulties in the initial re-adjustment period offered comments such as:

> *In my particular case I was a bit "uneasy" with retirement in the first six months being at a 'loose end' doing mundane things; and missing the friendship of teaching colleagues and ancillary staff. (Primary female)*
>
> *I felt lost just facing the sudden end. You are working so hard for such long hours with such a strong goal focus that the sudden end seemed hard. (Primary male)*
>
> *From a personal perspective I found retirement very difficult to accept. I felt lost and ill prepared. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I was lonely. [My wife] was still working. The few friends I had made in the district since moving to the coast were still working.. I knew a few neighbours by name and would exchange waves but that was about it. I went for weeks without talking with anybody. (Primary male)*
>
> *I was depressed. I certainly didn't acknowledge this at the time but in hindsight can clearly identify the symptoms. (Secondary female)*

Comment

The responses supported the earlier finding that when transitioning from late-career to retirement there is an initial adjustment phase. During this phase there seemed to be the potential for social and professional isolation; a loss of purpose, identity and self–esteem. Many principals openly wrote about their level of distress and in some cases depression. This consistent message had been shared by other recently-retired principals during the Phase 2 interviews. Isolations (and depression) would seem to be issues of deep concern for many retiring principals in this initial transition phase.

Sub-theme 3: Work in retirement proved to be enjoyable and worthwhile

Finding

With 92.6% of recently-retired principals having refocused (as indicated in the Phase 2 interviews) this item was positively responded to in the email conversation.

Discussion

Recently-retired principals commented on the personal benefit and value of working in retirement:

> *I have been very satisfied with the nature and level of my 'work' for the past six years since retirement. (Primary male)*
>
> *I was employed as a mentor for beginning teachers which I found most rewarding. (Secondary male)*
>
> *I am currently tutoring at UWS in teacher education two days a week and feel valued and worthwhile. I don't want to work forever but I am enjoying this stage. (Secondary female)*
>
> *In the first 5 years (after 60) I found doing some part-time work quite rewarding. I think mentally it helps you adjust to retirement, gives you time to set yourself up for the social aspects of retirement. (Primary male)*
>
> *The employment has increased in 2009 - 2010 and I find it challenging and rewarding. For the first time ever in my life I charge what I think my work is worth, and get paid without question. (Secondary male)*

Some recently-retired principals linked their refocusing to a feeling that they may have retired too early (supporting the observation made by 38.5% of this cohort during the Phase 2 interviews):

> *In hindsight I probably should have gone on for another few years until [my wife] was closer to retiring age. (Primary male)*
>
> *Since going back to work I can honestly say I retired much too soon. (Secondary male)*
>
> *In my case there were certainly regrets about retiring early even though it has all worked out pretty well for me because of the work (in retirement)which I have been able to find. (Secondary female)*

Some recently-retired principals also commented on the significant financial incentives of refocusing:

> *Working also had financial and tax advantages. This all helped to build up a small bank for a holiday or renovations to the house. (Primary male)*
>
> *In each of the financial years since my retirement my 'take home' pay has been greater than in my final year as a Principal. (Secondary male)*
>
> *Indeed what I thought was 'silly money' being offered to remain in the workforce saw me accepting job offers that I had not contemplated or even imagined when going into retirement. And the money has been an influence as it provides bonus funds for travel and family. (Secondary male)*

Comment

The Phase 1 questionnaire had indicated that refocusing is very much part of principals' view of retirement. The Phase 2 interviews had established that principals who refocused had found the experience personally worthwhile. The triangulation further supported those findings and indicated that for many refocusing was a way of creating a satisfying initial phase of retirement. Staying connected to the workforce in this initial phase of retirement would then seem to lead into a later phase when the principals felt more ready to retire.

Sub-theme 4: Accepting retirement becomes easier following a phase of refocusing

Finding

Principals who opted to refocus indicated that there appeared to be a time (a later phase) at which they became far more ready and relaxed about moving out of the work-force altogether and into the really-retired phase.

Discussion

Recently-retired principals were keen to comment on this movement towards full-time retirement following part-time retirement:

> *Beyond 5 years I don't imagine I'll be continuing part-time work indefinitely. I think I'll gradually ease into to full-time retirement. (Primary female)*
>
> *After working almost full-time for 4 years in retirement I recently went with my retired girl friends to the movies. I took the day off to go with them. For the first time I felt retired. I am happy about that. This position has been my transition. If it stopped tomorrow I would be entirely ready. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I worked, enjoyed it, and now probably feel ready to move to a time of being 'fully' retired. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I can feel that I am becoming more drawn to the idea of not working. It is a very gradual process for me and I have loved these interim years, as a chance to really complete my professional life in a fuller and more self-actualized sense. (Primary female)*

Comment

For principals not personally ready to fully retire or permanently disengage from the workforce, refocusing appeared to provide a positive buffer zone (phase) which preceded full-time retirement.

Conclusion to Theme 6 (Phases of retirement)

The triangulation explored in much greater depth, and subsequently validated, the new theory concerning phases of retirement which had emerged in Phase 2 interviews. Each aspect of this finding (i.e. retirement is a journey with phases; the initial phase can be quite difficult; refocusing work can be very personally worthwhile; and retirement following refocusing, can be a very helpful) was encapsulated in one principal's very personal journey (Appendix 7.6).

THEME 7: STAYING-ON (full-time)

As part of the movement away from the traditional model of retirement baby boomers are indicating an interest in continuing full-time employment for longer (MacKay, 2007; Salt, 2007; Johnson, 2001). This study identified thirteen late-career principals who had taken that decision to stay-on full-time past the ages at which they had an entitlement to retirement from full-time work with access to an income stream (State Superannuation Scheme pension). This cohort of staying-on principals had been discovered at random from within the late-career cohort. They were invited to participate in a triangulation phase involving an on-line questionnaire and a follow-up phone interview. Members of this cohort were purposively included on one criterion only: they had opted to stay-on past their eligible retirement age.

The Staying-on questionnaire

An on-line questionnaire with seventeen (17) items (Appendix 7.7) was distributed to these thirteen principals in January 2011. Twelve principals responded to the questionnaire by the close of the survey period (February, 2011). This represented a 92.3% response rate. The intent of this questionnaire was to more deeply explore *staying-on* as a particular aspect of the phenomena of transition to retirement for late-career principals.

Items 1-3: personal variables

These items were the personal variables used for identification and variable comparison: name; gender; and school level. In this group females were over-represented (Table 7.1).

Finding

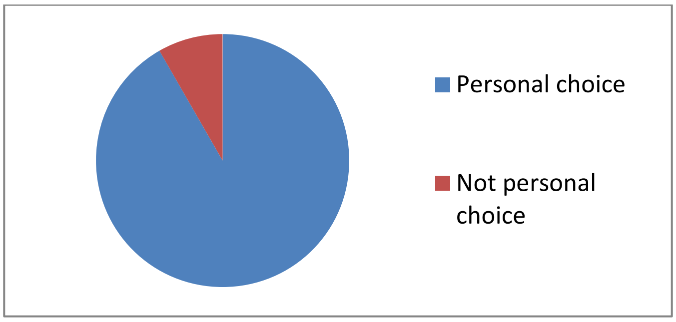
The gender and school-level variables for the staying-on focus group did not match the percentage distribution for the other phases of the research (Table 7.1). Although this group was small (N=12) there was an over-representation of female principals which may well have related to the fact that females are classified as staying-on if they work past 55 year of age; whilst males are not considered to have stayed-on till they have passed 60 years of age.

Item 4: Was the staying-on decision a personal choice?

Finding

Eleven (11) staying-on principals (91.7%) indicated that it was a personal decision (Figure 7.12):

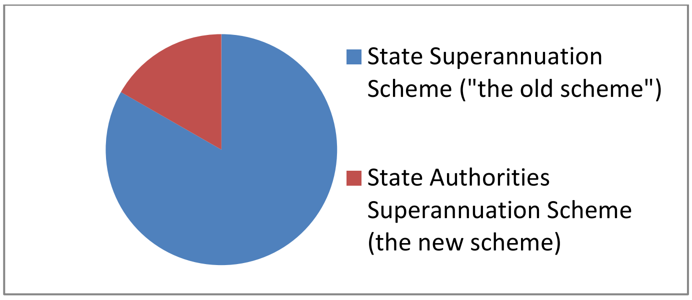
Figure 7.12: Principals who stayed-on through personal choice



Item 5: Which superannuation scheme did these staying-on principals belong to?

Finding: 83.3% (10 staying-on principals) were members of the State Superannuation Scheme ("the old scheme") and 16.7% (2 staying-on principals) the members of the newer State Authorities Superannuation Scheme (Figure 7.13):

Figure 7.13: Staying-on principal's superannuation scheme



Comment

The "old scheme" provides a pension in retirement which is approximately equivalent to a principal's final salary. For at least the 10 of these principals (83.3%) who were in "the old scheme" the decision to stay-on would seem to have been primarily for reasons other than financial. If they had retired as 60 year olds, their fortnightly pension would have produced a similar financial return as their fortnightly salary did for continuing to work. However, if they decided to work past 65 years then under existing taxation and superannuation legislation, these principals could access both their fortnightly superannuation pension plus their fortnightly principal's salary. Two of this cohort had continued in the role past 65 years of age and were accessing both forms of financial income.

Item 6: What were the motivators for staying-on full-time?

Respondents were presented with five (5) choices to arrange in rank order for their decision to stay-on: financial return; social interaction; maintaining a sense of purpose and identity; professional stimulation; and intellectual stimulation.

Finding

The staying-on principals' motivators in rank order from most – to - least popular were:

First: Professional stimulation

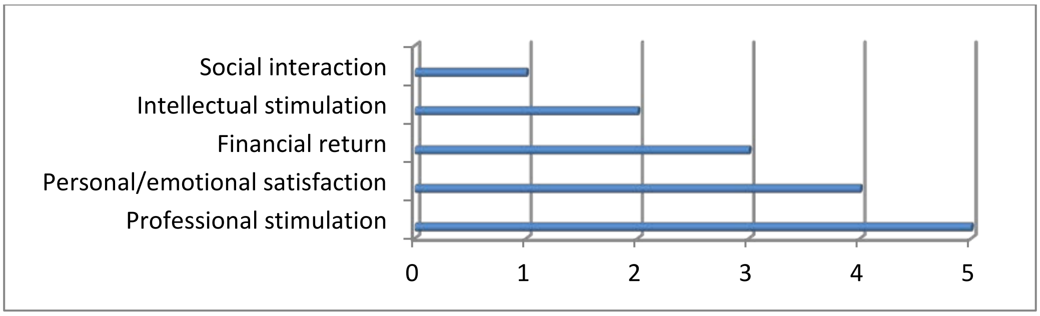
Second: Maintaining a sense of purpose and identity

Third: Financial return

Fourth: Intellectual stimulation

Fifth: Social interaction (Figure 7.14)

Figure 7.14: Reasons for choosing to stay-on full-time



Discussion

Staying-on principals were keen to elaborate on their reasons for taking this a-typical choice:

> *My first choice was that I made my decision for the professional stimulation I needed. The others options were not that important to me. (Primary male)*
>
> *I have an excellent relationship with my partner (who is retired) but do not want to spend all the time together. Expectation of our children is to mind the grandchildren. Continuation of work is a great solution.(Secondary female)*
>
> *Since completing my BA majoring in politics I have mostly been involved with Low SES communities and in particular indigenous communities. I saw coming to (this school) as a real opportunity to put some of my personal passion to make things work to the test. I have not been disappointed. My real concern is where to go next! (Primary male)*

Comment

These needs for professional stimulation and a sense of identity/purpose were consistent with the finding from both principal cohorts who expressed a deep anxiety about losing their professional networks; their intellectual stimulation; and their sense of purpose/identity in retirement.

Item 7: How satisfied are these principals with their decision to stay-on?

Respondents were given three (3) choices: extremely pleased, quite pleased and regretful.

Finding

100% were extremely pleased with their decision to stay-on.

Discussion

These principals elaborated on the positive outcome of their decision to stay-on:

> *It was simply the best thing that I could have done...I am now finishing my career on an absolute high. I hadn't realized the psychological impact of being able to work by choice. (Secondary male)*
>
> *It has been one of the best decisions I have made in my life. (Primary male)*
>
> *My staying-on experience…has been enormously satisfying, and definitely the right thing for me to do…I am acutely aware of my physical state, and aware that it may limit me in the future. At this point, however, I have no regrets. For me, staying on was right. (Secondary female)*

Comment

There was no indication that they had made the wrong choice or regretted the decision.

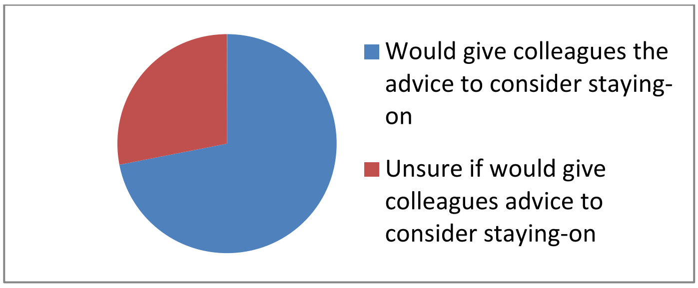
Item 8: Would you advise colleagues to consider staying-on?

The respondents were given three options: yes, no and unsure.

Finding

80.0% indicated "Yes, I would give this advice"; and 20.0% indicated that they were "unsure if I would give this advice" (Figure 7.15):

Figure 7.15: Staying-on principals' advice to colleagues about staying-on



Discussion

The staying-on cohort emphasized the personalized nature of this decision:

> *It would really depend on the person; their school and its context and their personal needs/interests. (Primary male)*

> *It needs to be right for the person. We need experienced people with a passion not a mission to use their experience. (Secondary male)*

Item 9-11: Self-assessed staying-on levels of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

These items asked principals to self-assess their levels of *effectiveness*, *motivation* and *satisfaction* in their current staying-on principal role as compared to the levels in their previous late-career role.

Finding

1. 66.7% reported higher effectiveness levels in their current staying-on role.
2. 41.7% reported higher satisfaction levels in their current staying-on role.
3. 25.0% reported higher motivation in their current staying-on role.
4. No staying-on principals felt that their effectiveness, motivation or satisfaction had lessened compared with their late-career phase (Table 7.4):

	Effectiveness	Motivation	Satisfaction
Higher	66.7%	25.0%	41.7%
Similar	33.3%	75.0%	58.3%
Lower	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 7.4: The staying-on phase compared to the late-career phase

Discussion

The staying-on cohort outlined some of the personal and professional benefits which had impacted on their self-assessed levels of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction:

> *I'm developing new skills all the time. (Secondary male)*

> *I am not so tired. I sleep better and can really relax on holidays/weekends. (Secondary male)*

> *I felt that I was just getting to be really effective when I was due to retire! (Primary female)*

> *There is enormous satisfaction that comes from being here by choice...not necessity. I am unrestrained. (Secondary female)*

> *I am VERY satisfied with my work and life at present because I have achieved a balance between the two.(Primary female)*

> *I am now able to pass on skills and knowledge to others; to more effectively give something back to the profession. (Primary male)*

Comment

1. The 0.0% response to effectiveness, motivation or satisfaction being lower in the staying-on phase indicated that none of this cohort judged their performance to be diminished by age.
2. A significant percentage felt that they were maintaining their previous late-career levels of effectiveness (33.3%); motivation (75.0%); and satisfaction (58.3%) despite being past the usual retirement age.
3. A significant percentage assessed their staying-on levels as being higher than their previous late-career levels: 66.7% for *effectiveness*; 41.7% with *satisfaction*; and 25.0% with *motivation*.

Recent research (Early & Weindling, 2007 in the United Kingdom; Oplatka, 2007 in Israel; and Mulford, et al., 2009 in Australia) indicated that late-career principals were not on a glide-path (plateau path) to retirement but were in fact highly energized, motivated and effective. These findings indicated that principals' performance was not being diminished by age. The finding from this current research (that staying-on principals report their effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction levels as being higher than was the case in their late-career phase), potentially extends the argument that performance of school principals is not related to age. Although a small sample, this group of staying-on principals assessed themselves as becoming more effective, more motivated and having higher satisfaction levels in this staying-on phase than they had in their late-career phase. This finding is worthy of further investigation.

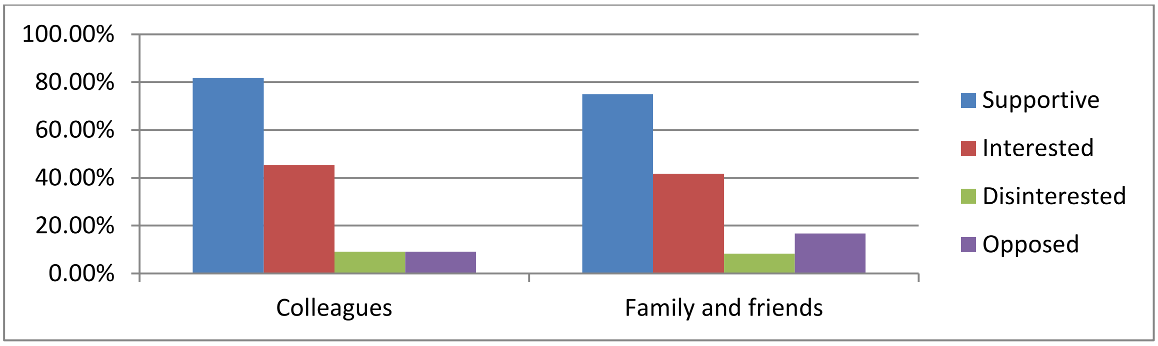
Item 12-13: Reaction of colleagues, family and friends to the decision to stay-on

These items sought to explore the reaction of colleagues (Item 11) and family/friends (Item 12) to these principals' decision to stay-on rather than retire. The principals were presented with four options to describe the reaction from colleagues and family/friends: (1) supportive; (2) interested; (3) disinterested; and (4) opposed.

Finding

1. Supportive: 81.8% reported that their colleagues were supportive; and 75.0% reported that family/friends were supportive.
2. Interested: 45.5% reported that their colleagues were interested; and 41.7% reported that family/friends were interested.
3. Disinterested: 9.1% had found their colleagues to be disinterested; whilst 8.3% had reported family/friends to be disinterested.
4. Opposed: 9.1% had found colleagues to be opposed; and 16.7% reported that family/friends were opposed (Figure 7.16):

Figure 7.16: The reactions of others to the decision to stay-on



Discussion

The comments indicated a generally high level of interest and support for the decision to stay-on:

> *Many who are not yet at retirement age, say they are perplexed by my decision and question why I don't want to retire. (Primary female)*

> *It has actually been quite complex and changed over time… I was one of the first so the views have ranged from surprise...to support; and finally a number of people have spoken to me wanting to explore their options if they stay on. (Secondary female)*

> *Some think you're mad. Those who had a job, rather than a profession or a career, don't understand. (Primary male)*

> *Family and friends say that I am much happier in myself when I am working." (Secondary female)*

> *My husband is very supportive but our daughters are opposed as they would appreciate more involvement with minding the grandchildren. (Secondary female)*

Comment

There was a high level of acceptance and support for the decision of these late-career principals to stay-on past their nominated (superannuation) retirement age.

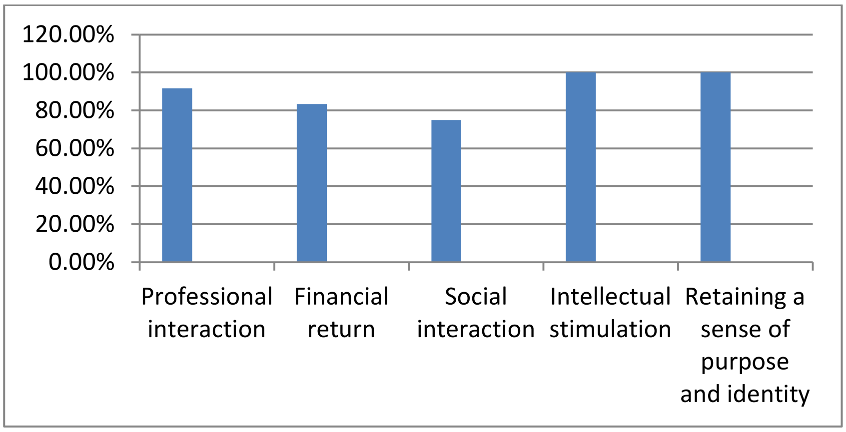
Item 14: The perceived personal benefits of staying-on

From a list of options provided, this item asked the staying-on cohort to indicate what they saw as the personal benefits of staying-on: professional interaction; financial return; social interaction; intellectual stimulation; and retaining a sense of purpose and identity.

Finding

1. 100.0% reported intellectual stimulation to be a benefit.
2. 100.0% found retaining a sense of purpose and identity to be a benefit.
3. 91.7% reported professional interaction as a benefit.
4. 83.3% found financial return as a benefit.
5. 75.0% indicated social interaction to be a benefit (Figure 7.17):

Figure 7.17: Principals reporting the benefits of staying-on



Comment

Findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 indicated that in the transition to retirement phase, principals anticipated and experienced a loss of professional and social interaction; a loss of intellectual stimulation; and a loss of their sense of purpose and identity. This finding indicated that for those principals who opted to stay-on, these emotional needs are being met through that decision.

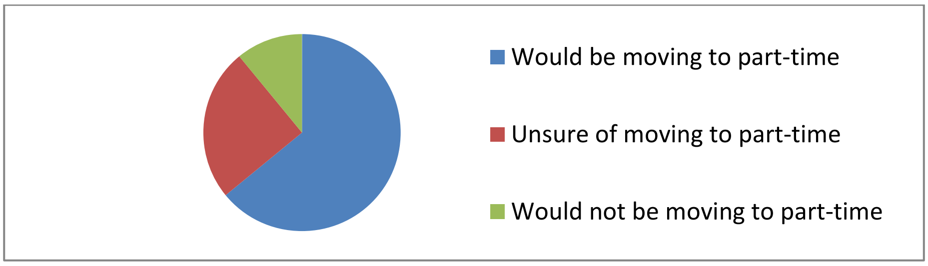
Item 15: Will staying-on principals' next move be part-time work or full-time retirement?

This item asked staying-on principals to project their next move.

Finding

50.0% indicated the next move would be part-time work (before full-time retirement); 41.7% indicated they would next retire full-time; and 8.3% were unsure (Figure 7.18):

Figure 7.18: Staying-on principals' future plans



Discussion

Some staying-on principals indicated that they would like to stay in the principal role as a part-time/job-share but that the current NSWDET structure does not support such an option:

> *I would like to do this in the future but don't see it as possible in the current structure. (Secondary female)*

> *I would like to, but that option is not available in this position. (Primary male)*

Comment

Although these principals have already extended their full-time working life past the norm (for principals), 50.0% are still looking to ramp-off through part-time work rather than move directly into full-time retirement.

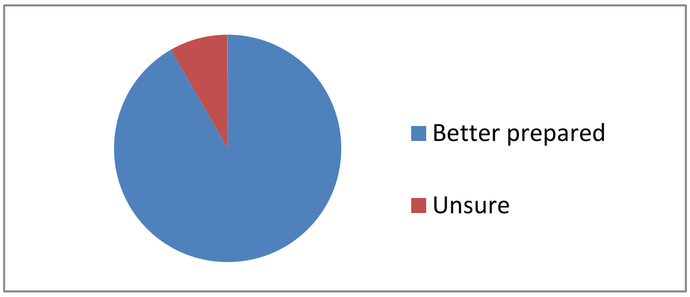
Item 16: Preparedness for retirement

This item asked the full-time staying-on cohort if they believed they were better prepared for retirement because of their decision to stay-on past their superannuation retirement date.

Finding

91.7% indicated they felt better prepared for retirement and 8.3% were unsure (Figure 7.19):

Figure 7.19: Staying-on principals' level of preparation for retirement



Comment

This finding would seem to indicate that the principals who made the decision to stay-on were not ready (either personally or professionally) to retire when their nominated superannuation retirement age arrived.

Item 17: Open comment

This was an open-ended item which encouraged respondents to make any final comments.

Finding

All the comments about the decision to stay-on in the full-time principal role were positive as indicated in the sample below:

> *I didn't fancy being retired for up to 40 years! Longevity runs in my family. (Primary male)*

> *I have had a very positive experience and am fortunate to possess stamina and am in good health: necessities for staying on. (Primary male)*

It has been one of the best decisions I have made in my life. (Primary female)

Some principals commented on the professional benefits:

Satisfaction, commitment and challenges have been an important part of my life as principal for almost 20 years. I have no plan yet for retirement and until I have one I plan to continue. (Secondary female)

My staying-on experience has been enormously satisfying, and definitely the right thing for me to do. I think it is a very personal decision - not everyone is as fulfilled in their career as I am, nor does everyone at my age enjoy good health. At this point, however, I have no regrets. For me, staying on was right. (Secondary male)

I have great satisfaction as I work in a low socio-economic school and I am able to use years of experience to guide the direction of curriculum; and to mentor young teachers and executive. (Primary male)

One principal drew attention to the age-gender linkage for females and on the future financial motivation for staying-on. Similar comments had arisen in other triangulation processes:

The 55 retirement age was too young for me. I had an extremely generous SSS pension due to me but I wasn't ready. The decision I made was unusual. Now it is more common although the reason for many people is financial. Many people will simply not be able to afford to retire. A number of women who have spoken to me about choices are motivated by lack of money. Broken service and marriages have taken a toll. The system will see real changes in the future! Longer working periods where people have no choice do not seem to be as exciting as it has been for me. Every additional day I do because I want to be here. All employers, including NSWDET, may need to find ways to cater for these baby boomers who can't retire. (Primary female)

The staying-on Interviews

As a follow-up to the analysis of the questionnaire, phone interviews (Appendix 7.8) were arranged with the thirteen staying-on principals in June 2011. Only twelve principals participated as one was overseas on extended leave. This again represented a 92.3% response rate. The intent of this interview was to more deeply explore three key issues of staying-on which had arisen during the questionnaire: (1) the attraction of a part-time/job share co-principalship; the next career/life phase; and (3) the personal reflections on the decision to stay-on?

Issue 1: The attraction of a co-principalship

[Question 1: “At your superannuation retirement date would you have opted for a part-time/job-sharing co-principal role rather than continuing in a full-time capacity had that option been available?”]

Finding

These principals indicated that 25.0% (three out of twelve) would have been interested in part-time job-sharing; and 75% (nine out of twelve) would not have been interested.

Discussion

The following comments indicate the range of responses to this issue:

Principals who supported the part-time concept:

> *This is what I wanted & I virtually had it lined up but the superannuation consequences forced me to give the idea away. (Secondary female)*

Principals who opposed the concept:

> *Part-time work in the principal's role is very problematic." (Secondary female)*
>
> *I was not interested in part-time. I had made my decision at 57 to move past 60 with full-time work. (Secondary male)*

Principals who had changed their mind through experience:

> *At the time I would have opted for full-time only. However my experiences over the last 5 years have shown me that part-time can work. I have a different perspective. (Secondary female)*

Principals who re-joined full-time:

> *I was different. I had retired and was bored. I had done the world trip; I had landscaped the new garden; and now I "hit the wall". I was intellectually and professionally dying. I decided to seek a full-time principalship through Merit selection which only became available in May, 2005. (Primary male)*

Comment

Although a small sample (N=12) these staying-on principals were indicating on a 3:1 ratio that they favoured the full-time principal role (as opposed to the part-time). This finding was almost the direct reverse of the responses from the Phase1 and Phase 2 cohort of late-career and recently-retired principals who strongly favoured the part-time principal concept. This variation would seem worthy of further investigation along with the total co-principalship issue. Such research was considered to be outside the scope of this study.

Issue 2: The next career/life phase

[Question 2: "Do you see yourself as moving from this full-time work to part-time work and *ramping-off*; or to full-time retirement?"]

Finding

91.6% (eleven out of twelve) planned to ramp-off from full-time work to part-time work whilst only 8.4% (one out of twelve) planned to move to full-time retirement.

Discussion

The comments indicated that, irrespective of their age (with the range being from 64 years - 78 years of age) full-time retirement was still not the desired option:

> *I'm not going to retire. I may move to part-time work or some other full-time work. I'm motivated by intellectual stimulation and a sense of doing something challenging, worthwhile and satisfying. I'm 67 now. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I'm interested in moving to part-time. I'm 67 now and look forward to moving into something interesting as a ramping-off model. (Secondary male)*

Ramping-of through part-time is the most attractive option as I'm not ready to retire. I can still travel and have family time; I don't have to be fully retired to do those things. (Primary female)

I'll be moving to part-time work in education. I just love this life. (Secondary female)

I'm not going to retire: I see myself as staying full-time. I love my work. Money is not an issue. My work gives me a sense of purpose and identity. I turn 65 soon and then I'll have the best of all worlds: super plus salary. (Secondary female)

Comment

Principals who made the deliberate decision to stay-on full-time past their superannuation retirement age appear to be in no hurry to enter full-time retirement. The most popular option is to ramp-off through part-time work when they judge the time is right. For these principals age does not seem to be a factor.

Issue 3: Personal reflections on the decision to stay-on

[Question 3: "Do you have any regrets about your decision to stay-on past your superannuation retirement date?"]

Finding

These principals were unanimous (100%) in stating that they had no regrets about their decision:

This was the right decision at the right time. I was tired and exhausted. I'm now activated, energetic and love this life. (Secondary female)

Had I finished at 55 I would have felt flat, lost and unfulfilled. This is the best thing I've ever done. I'm now at the top of my skills...this may go on improving. I have choice which is a huge issue. Previously I did not have any power, rights or authority...I now have all these and it makes a difference to satisfaction levels. (Secondary female)

No regrets. This decision has given me 'life' as I want it. I'm not caught babysitting the grandchildren whilst my kids engage in the workforce. I have no fear or restrictions about voicing my opinions. I have control over what I do and don't do. I'm sharper than I've ever been because of: greater reflection time; being more relaxed in the role; loving the continuous learning (I cannot get enough); freedom and control; more able to be guided by my values and beliefs; more effective and motivated because it's my choice. (Secondary female)

I love what I'm doing. I get great satisfaction and enjoyment. I love the intellectual challenge. This has stopped me from dying intellectually and professionally (and probably socially also). My solution was not in 'leisure'...that is not satisfying for me. (Primary male)

One staying-on principal provided a variety of insights with her response to this question:

This has been the best decision of my career (so far). I'm now 68. I could have retired at 55. I am now operating more effectively than ever. On reflection across these 13 years I have brought together all the skills and knowledge that I have acquired so far and I'm able to operate at a higher level than ever (and there is no reason for this to stop). Many people retire between 55 and 60 because they feel they are 'entitled' to. That sense of entitlement is paraded like a badge of honour but I wonder if it's really a trap. It seems to be used as a *self-fulfilling 'right' to retire (on a generous superannuation) and do nothing when they could actually be utilizing their considerable talents, expertise and intelligence for the good of themselves and the community… if you were to take my situation and apply it across the whole system that is an enormous waste of skills, knowledge and wisdom. Systems need to encourage and retain this experience and expertise...but first systems to value that experience and expertise. That is not the current situation in DET. (Secondary female)*

Comment

Although all the principals reflected that they had no regrets about their decision, some specific comments consistently arose indicating that staying-on had been a very good life and career decision; had provided intellectual stimulation; had delivered professional and social interaction; and had led to a higher level of professional effectiveness than in their earlier phases of the principalship. This cohort of principals indicated that they perceived their performance and skill level to have been enhanced by working longer.

This final point is of great significance. In earlier phases of this research the late-career principal cohort strongly self-assessed their performance as being highly effective and highly motivated; thereby providing an alternative point-of-view to the traditional "plateau path" syndrome as it is often applied to late-career workers (including principals). The finding from this other cohort (the staying-on principals) supports that previous finding from this study: i.e. age is not seen an inhibitor to effective performance.

Conclusion to Theme 7 (Staying-on full-time)

This cohort was very positive about the personal and professional outcomes (of the staying-on decision); and reported a higher level of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction than they experienced during their previous late-career phase. This latter finding specifically challenges the conventional wisdom that ageing workers suffer from declining intellectual capacity (Schaie, 1996); are unwilling/unable to learn (Charness et al., 2007); and display falling motivation and career obsolescence (Rosen & Jerdee, 1990). In fact 21st Century meta-analytic studies have shown little or no relationship between age and declining job performance (Cleveland & Lim, 2007); job satisfaction and motivation (Barnes-Farrell & Matthews, 2007); and training performance (Maurer, 2007).

Schultz and Adams (2007), draw attention to the fact that most developed countries are experiencing a rapid ageing of the national population which will inevitably lead to an ageing of the workforce. The questions then arise: can an ageing workforce be an effective and productive workforce? Has an ageing workforce the capacity to deliver improved outcomes? This concept challenges the tradition thinking about an ageing workforce and will be further examined in Chapter 8.

CONCLUSION

Five separate triangulation processes were employed to further investigate the initial findings and themes from Phase 1 (i.e. the questionnaires) and Phase 2 (i.e. the interviews) of this research. These triangulation processes (three on-line questionnaires; one email conversation and one set of personal interviews) focused on the seven major themes for school principals that had emerged from the Phase 1 Phase 2:

1. The emotional domain (e.g. isolation and identity issues) is more significant than the practical domain (e.g. financial and health issues) in the late-career and the transition to retirement phases.
2. The traditional model of working full-time till retirement (and then ceasing all work) is no longer the preferred model.
3. Refocusing back in to the workforce in some part-time capacity (e.g. in education through mentoring/coaching) is the preferred model of transition into retirement.
4. Late-career phase principals do not see themselves as being on a plateau path to retirement (but satisfaction levels are lower than effectiveness and motivation levels).
5. Retirement can be a satisfying, positive, active, vibrant and stimulating phase of life which has work as a core component.
6. Retirement is not a single static event but is a transitional process/journey which contains changing phases over time.
7. Staying-on past superannuation retirement age in a full-time capacity is an option being selected by some late-career principals.

The triangulation findings contributed to the verification, validity, credibility, and trustworthiness of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings through both *methods triangulation* (questionnaires and interviews); and *sources triangulation* (participant group review and peer-group review). The majority of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings were strongly supported in the triangulation processes. However significant divergences were uncovered (e.g. the core factors which were contributing most to late-career principals recording lower satisfaction levels); and new information was discovered (e.g. age may not diminish performance; phase*s* of retirement exist for retiring principals; and a shift towards financial reward is becoming the dominant motivator to work longer).

The key themes and the new knowledge which these findings bring to the educational leadership field are a component of the fundamental challenge being confronted by modern societies with significant baby boomer populations: viz. ageing and work in the 21st Century. The challenge for microcosm within societies, in this case the educational community in NSW, is to address the issue of *ageing and work* in such a way as to produce a strong, effective, knowledgeable future-orientated educational leadership platform which can successfully capture late-career (and recently-retired) leaders' capacity, knowledge and wisdom for the benefit of schools and students. This challenge provided the foundation and the parameters for the Chapter 8 presentation of the key findings and the major recommendations emanating from this study.

CHAPTER 8

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The key findings from all phases of the research are presented with recommendations for educational leadership policy and practice; for current educational leadership theory; and for further educational leadership research. The key findings relate to the following ten issues:

1. Baby boomer retirement: a new roadmap.
2. Retirement approaching: beware.
3. The emotional domain: unrecognized dangers.
4. Staying-on full-time: the continuing principal.
5. Staying-on part-time: sharing the principal role.
6. Refocusing: work in retirement.
7. The plateau path syndrome: fact or fantasy.
8. Systems leaders: sharing the expertise.
9. Portfolio retirement: a beginning not an end.

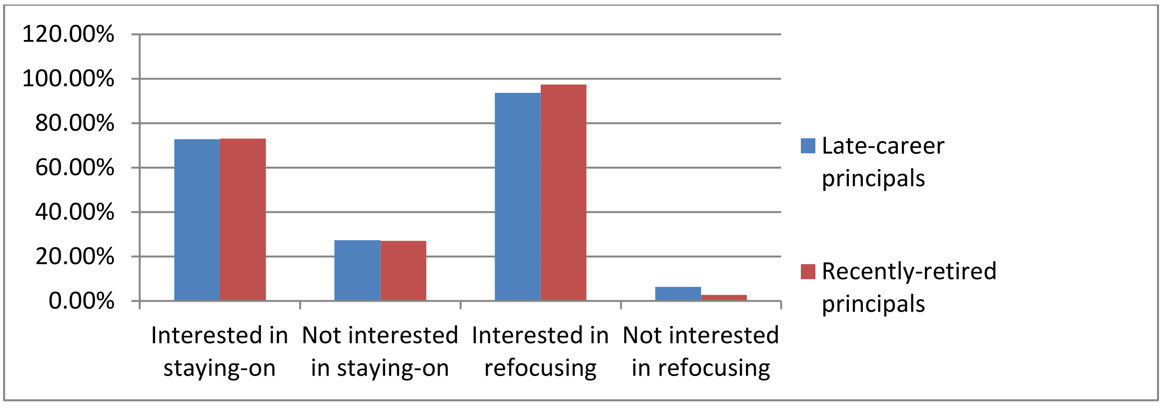
While the recommendations have specific relevance for NSWDET, NSW public schools' principals' associations and NSWDET principals (as NSWDET principals formed the sample groups for the study) they also have generic implications for all educational jurisdictions, principals' professional associations and individual principals.

1. BABY BOOMER RETIREMENT: A NEW ROADMAP

Key finding

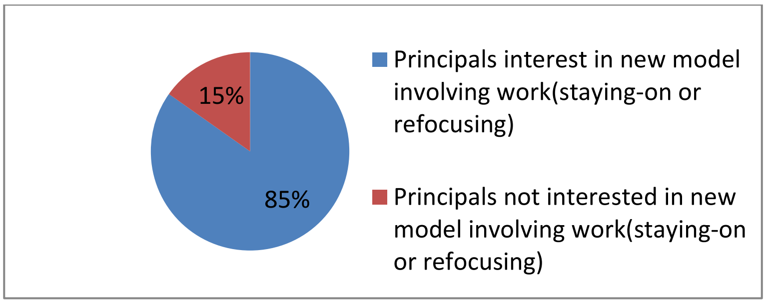
For NSW baby boomer principals the traditional model of working full-time till retirement, and then ceasing all work, is no longer the preferred model. The models of staying-on (full-time or part-time) or refocusing before moving to full-time retirement were strongly supported with both cohorts registering an almost identical level of interest (Figure 8.1):

Figure 8.1: Interest in working longer: late-career and recently-retired principals



When viewed collectively (i.e. both cohorts combined) the movement towards models which involve working longer is clearly evident (Figure 8.2):

Figure 8.2: Interest in working longer: combined cohorts

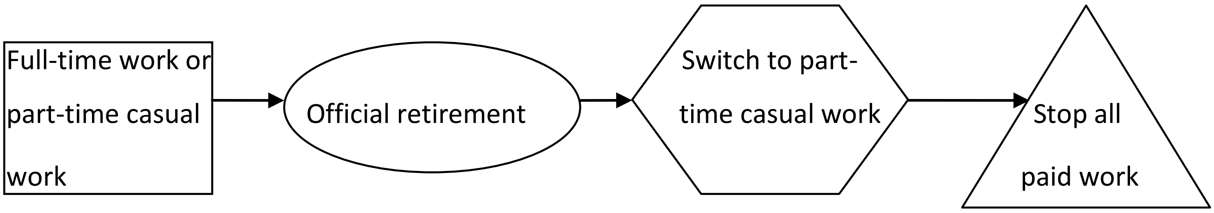


These findings within the educational leadership community are consistent with the generic national retirement movement of staying connected to the workforce for longer (Denmark et al., 2007; Mackay, 2007; Salt, 2007; Cooper, 2008; McCrindle, 2009). In the recent Retirement Planning Survey for NSW public sector employees (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010), respondents were asked which of following three models of retirement transition (A, B or C)they expected to follow (Figure 8.3):

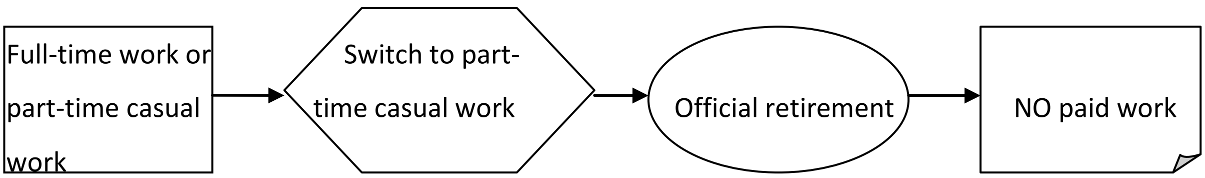
Figure 8.3: Retirement transition patterns for NSW public sector employees

Model A**:** Traditional retirement model (29.5% supports)

Model B: non-traditional model (41.0% supports)



Model C: non-traditional model (29.5% supports)

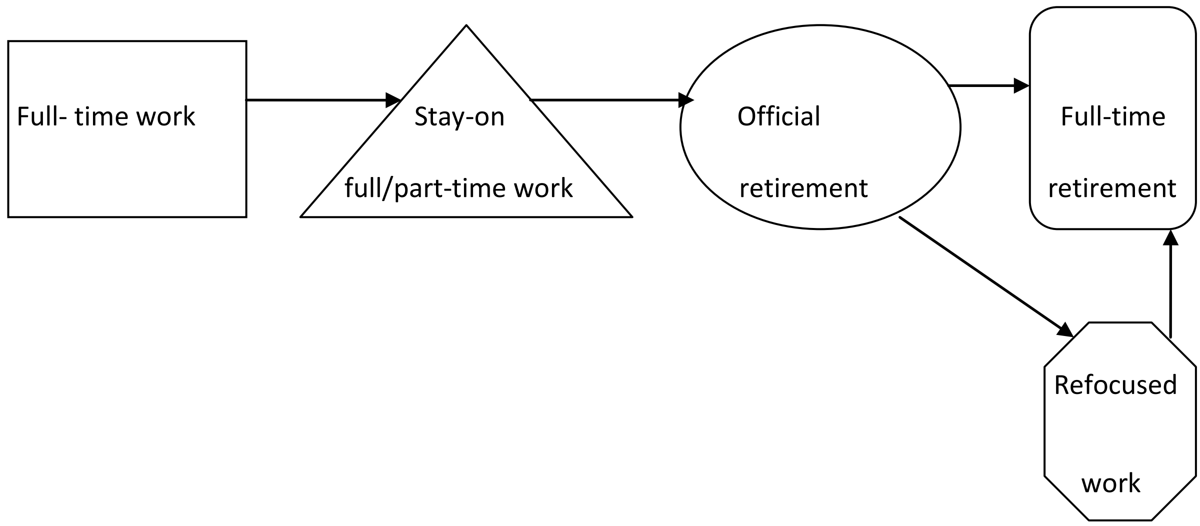


Source: *Retirement Planning Survey, 2010* (in Hesketh & Griffin, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2010, p.15).

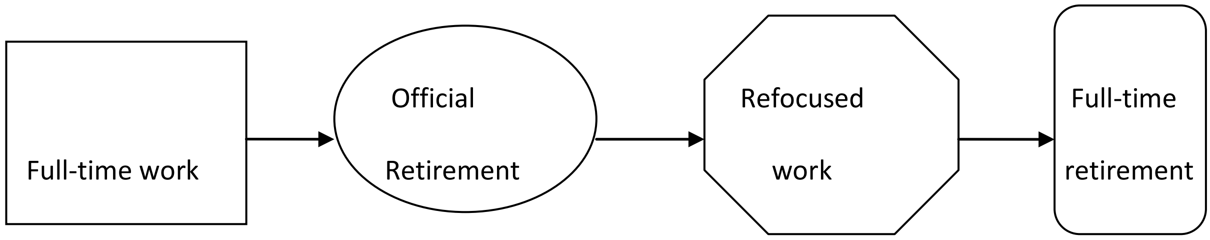
Model A (the traditional model) received the lowest level of support (29.5%). The non-traditional Model B proved to be clearly the most popular (41.0% support). When combined with the other non-traditional Model C (with 29.5% support) the support level for the non-traditional models amongst NSW public sector workers was 70.5%. In this research (with NSW public sector school principals) the level of support for the new transition to retirement models was replicated to an even greater extent with an average support level of 84.2%. The finding from this study in relation to principals' preferred transition to retirement is encapsulated in the following two models (Figure 8.4):

Figure 8.4: Principal support for transition to retirement models

Model 1: The staying-on model (with a combined 72.9% support from both cohorts)



Model 2: The refocusing model (with a combined 95.5% support from both cohorts)



Comment

Both of these models allowed the principals to stay connected to the workforce longer. The traditional model would no longer appear to be the preferred model for baby boomer principals in NSW. This finding aligns with the findings and conclusions of Hesketh & Griffin (2010), McCrindle

(2009), Salt (2007) and Mackay (2007) in Australia; and Cooper (2008), Winston and Barnes (2007, Harris et al., (2005) and Johnson (2001) in North America who all concluded that the traditional model of retirement (i.e. moving from full-time work to full-time retirement) was no longer the preferred mode for the baby boomer generation.

Recommendations for educational leadership policy and practice

Educational jurisdictions (in consultation with principals' professional associations) are encouraged to review existing workforce policies and practices to ensure that they cater for and reflect the current preferred transition to retirement models of late-career principals. Workforce policies and practices which actively encourage, promote and facilitate flexible work options would align with these late-career principals' preferred transition to retirement models. The introduction of flexible workforce practices would be an opportunity for educational jurisdictions to retain leadership expertise (capture capacity) and leadership knowledge (knowledge transfer) at a time when in the NSW public sector 40% of those with extensive experience (e.g. late-career principals) are intending to retire by 2015 (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010).

Recommendation for educational leadership theory and for further research

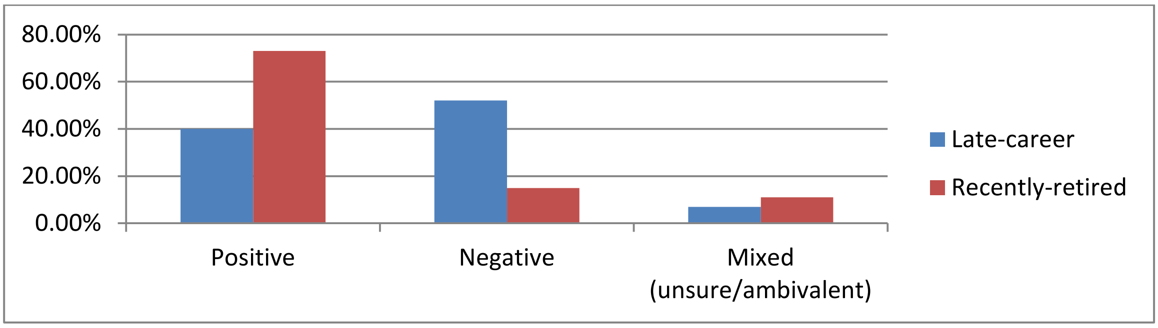
This study's late-career sample (N=100) represented 4.7% of the total NSWDET principals population (N=2106) in 2008. The total population of NSWDET late-career principals at that time was approximately 630 (or 29.9% of the total NSWDET principal population). It is recommended that research with a larger sample group of late-career principals be undertaken to specifically explore their aspirations and expectations for staying connected to the workforce for longer through flexible part-time/job-share transition practices. Such research would be occurring at a time when the foreshadowed economic and superannuation changes would be motivating more principals to stay connected to the workforce longer for financial security. Such research would provide educational planners with vital information for workforce planning policies and strategies in relation to implementing a late-career principal retention policy.

2. RETIREMENT APPROACHING: BEWARE

Key finding

Principals' recorded a mixed attitude towards retirement. There was certainly no euphoria (i.e. *state of bliss*) which is often the popular and conventional wisdom associated with being retired. The late-career principals were not approaching retirement with a positive frame of mind. Comparatively recently-retired principals were more positive about being retired (Figure 8.5):

Figure 8.5: Attitudes towards retirement



Comment

The negative attitudes towards retirement (resistance, apprehension, anxiety and concern) may in part be a reaction to the lack of opportunity/encouragement due to very limited flexibility with superannuation and part-time leadership roles; and may in part be an example of changing generational values in relation to growing old and being retired. This baby boomer principal cohort's (and maybe of future cohort's) interest in not retiring could be beneficial for the economic health of the nation (Costello, 2002 & 2207; Swan, 2010); the leadership capacity health of educational jurisdictions (Fink, 20010; Hargreaves et al., 2008); and the emotional health of the individual principals (Barty et al., 2005; Lacey & Gronn, 2005). This finding also aligns with the recent findings of Gibbs (2008), Johnson et al., (2008), Maurer (2007), Handy (2007), and Beehr and Bennett (2007) who all found that baby boomers exhibited a growing resistance towards retirement.

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that employing authorities capitalize on the late-career principals' reluctance to retire (in the traditional model) by investigating more flexible work options to encourage and facilitate their retention in the workforce.

Recommendation for current educational leadership theory and further research

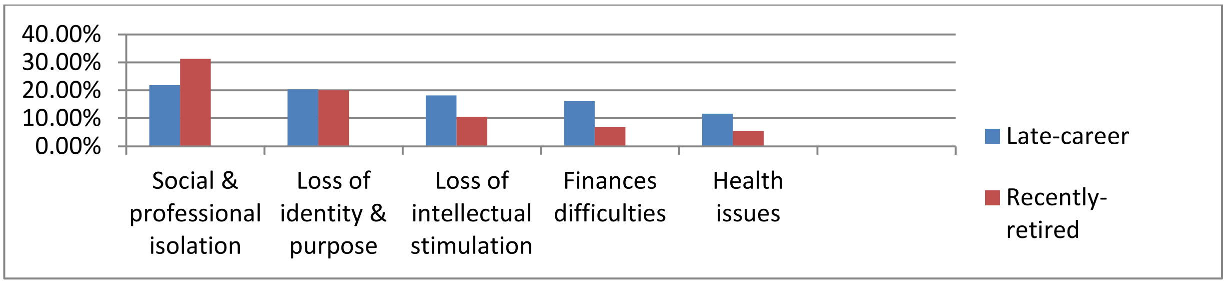
It is recommended that additional research be undertaken with a larger sample of principals to further explore the concept of *retirement*. It would seem that the term itself may no longer be appropriate or relevant to a 21st Century workforce whose members will not follow the traditional lateral conveyor-belt from learning (at school/ college/university) to work and then to retirement (Schultz & Adams ,2008). Rather the life-cycles of the 21st Century worker will be more flexible and more circular (i.e. moving in-and-out-of work, training and leisure) as retirement becomes a less clearly defined entity. If this is an accurate description of the 21st Century worker, then it is recommended that educational employers respond to, or enact research to plan for, late-career principals to access a more flexible work-based transition to retirement model.

3. THE EMOTIONAL DOMAIN: UNRECOGNIZED DANGERS

Key finding

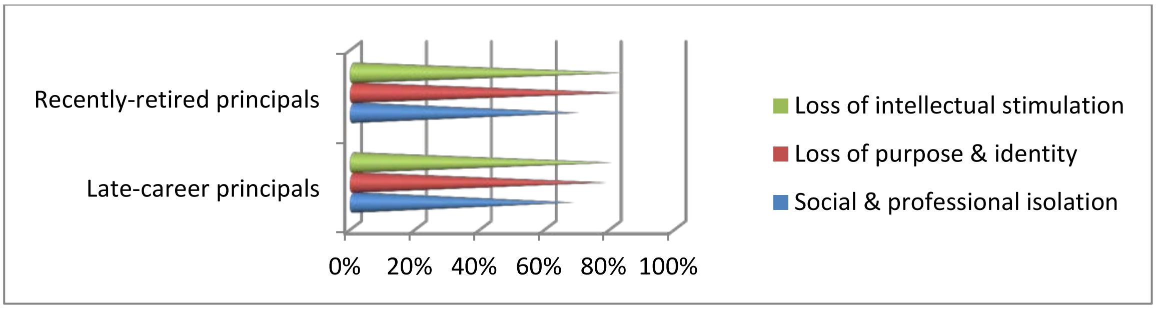
In the Phase 1 questionnaire principals were asked to identify the major difficulties they perceived or experienced when transitioning into retirement. It was anticipated that from conventional wisdom the concerns for those approaching retirement would be the practical aspects: financial difficulties, health issues and caring for ageing parent. Contrary to these expectations, principals indicated quite strongly that it was the emotional aspects (i.e. social and professional isolation; loss of identity and purpose; and loss of intellectual stimulation) which were the major difficulties faced in the transition to retirement phase (Figure 8.6):

Figure 8.6: Major difficulties when transitioning to retirement (Phase 1)



This Phase 1 finding drew the researcher's attention to the possibility that the emotional aspects may represent an un-recognized and an under-serviced dimension of the entire transition to retirement journey. In the Phase 2 interviews the initial findings were confirmed when 60.0% to 80.0% of both cohorts again indicated that the emotional aspects were expected to be (late-career) or were experienced as (recently-retired) significant problems when transitioning to retirement (Figure 8.7):

Figure 8.7: Major difficulties when transitioning to retirement (Phase 2)



The dominance of the emotional factors as the major concerns or difficulties was expressed throughout the interviews with comments such as these from recently-retired principals:

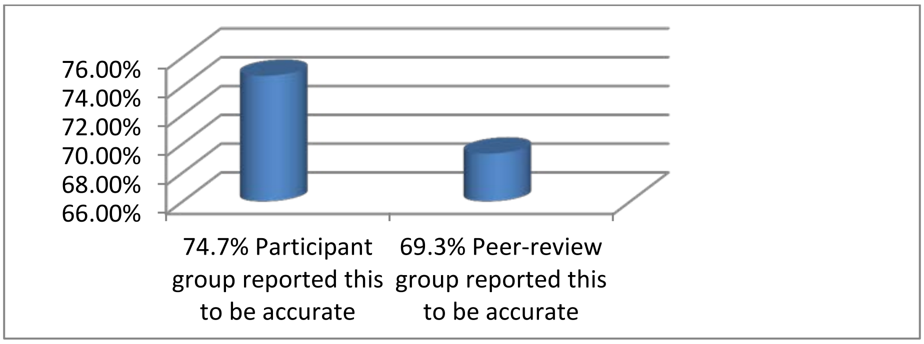
> *I love people and thrive on social contact. Lunches and morning tea gossip sessions don't do it for me. I need some depth and challenge in the relationships and that is lacking. So I do feel socially and especially professionally isolated. (Primary female)*

You suffer a huge loss of purpose and a huge loss of esteem. In retirement you can overnight become a no-body. You become invisible! (Primary female)

The lack of intellectual stimulation has led me back into depression. (Secondary female)

The Phase 4 triangulation verified these findings when both the participant group and the peer-review group strongly supported the proposition that principals see the emotional aspect of transition to retirement as more significant than the practical aspects (Figure 8.8):

Figure 8.8: The emotional domain is the more significant (Phase 4)



Comment

The finding is highly significant as it is at the core of principal well-being. As such it is strategically important that educational jurisdictions, professional associations, individual principals, support agencies and health professionals are aware of this finding. If ignored this issue not only exacerbates the wastage of leadership capacity and the loss of knowledge transfer within the educational system, but it also increases the personal trauma for the individual and the remedial health costs for the society. If not addressed these issues have the potential to have a dramatic effect on national health costs; a fact which has been acknowledged by the national government through the Intergenerational Reports (Costello, 2007; Swan, 2010).

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that educational jurisdictions (as caring employers) and principals' professional associations (as advocates for the welfare of their members) collaborate in providing career planning and transition to retirement programs which increase knowledge, awareness and options for individual principals. Such an initiative would benefit the corporate health and effectiveness of the organization; the personal health of the systems leaders; and the workforce effectiveness of the late-career principals.

Recommendation for current educational leadership theory and further research

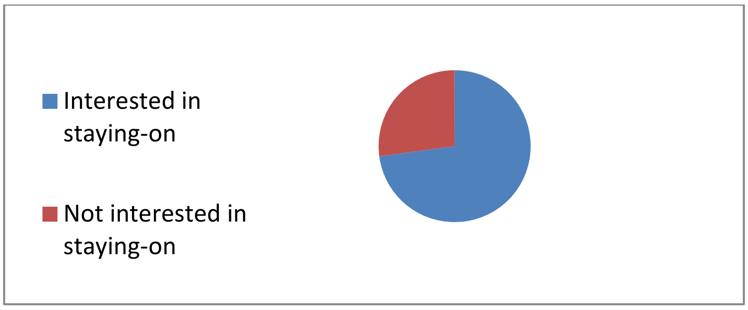
It is recommended that larger scale educational leadership research be undertaken to explore the relationship between of ageing and work in the 21st Century. The meaning and relevance of the term *retirement* for principals (and other leaders) in a 21st Century education system would seem worthy of further research. Such research would further explore the relationship between the emotional domain; the workforce domain; and the ageing domain in a 21st Century context.

4. STAYING-ON FULL-TIME: THE CONTINUING PRINCIPAL

Key finding

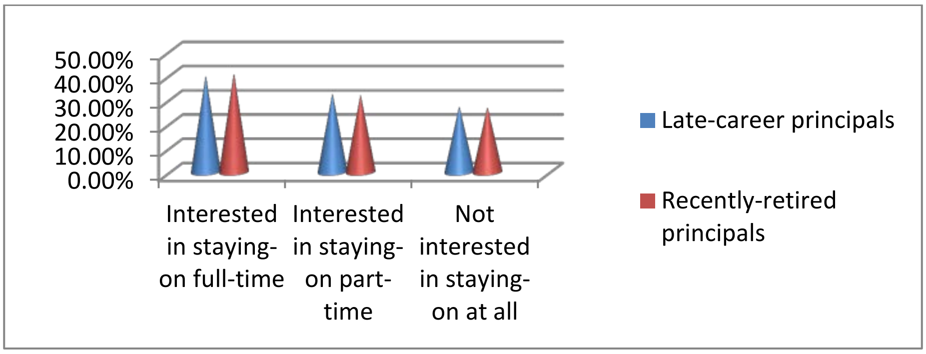
Across all phases of the research principals indicated a high level of interest in staying-on past their superannuation retirement ages (55 for women and 60 for men) if there were changes to superannuation regulations removing the financial disadvantages; and if there more flexible work options introduced by NSWDET (Figure 8.9):

Figure 8.9: Interest in staying-on past superannuation retirement age



When the level of interest in staying-on was separated into the options of staying-on full-time or part-time there was a high level of consistency between the two cohorts (Figure 8.10):

Figure 8.10: Interest in staying-on full-time; part-time; or retiring



In 2008 there were there were 63 (or just 3% of the total NSWDET principal population) who were staying-on principals (i.e. where still working past their superannuation age). Of this group 42 were females (working past 55 years of age) and 21 were males (working past 60 years of age). This dominance of females within the state-wide staying-on cohort replicated the staying-on group within this research where females were also dominant (Table 7.1).

A group of thirteen staying-on (full-time) principals was located within this research and these principals were chronological peers of the recently-retired research cohort (N=108). The difference was that these principals had decided to stay-on when their colleagues decided to retire. In the

2008 in the Phase 1 questionnaire 73.2% of the recently-retired cohort indicated that they would have been interested in staying-on if the conditions had been more attractive. In reality just 12.0% (13) of this cohort had actually chosen that path. There would appear to be a far greater pool of principals potentially interested in staying-on than is currently being realized.

The Phase 4 triangulation further investigated the reflections of this staying-on cohort:

1. 100% indicated they were extremely pleased with the decision to stay-on.
2. 80% indicated they would advise their colleagues to consider staying-on (20% were unsure).
3. 41.7% indicated higher satisfaction levels in the staying-on phase than in their late-career phase.
4. 91.7% reported professional interactions, intellectual stimulation and retaining a sense of identity and purpose as being benefits of staying-on.
5. 91.7% felt they were now better prepared for retirement.
6. 100.0% indicated "no regrets' about their decision to stay-on.

One staying-on principal echoed the feelings of many in the group:

> *This has been the best decision I have ever made in my career. I am at the top of my game. I am working smarter; I'm intellectually sharper; I'm reflecting and utilizing my past experiences better; I'm freer to follow my beliefs and values than ever before; and I'm undertaking more new learning than at any other part of my career. (Secondary female)*

Principals who had retired (rather than stay-on) indicated strongly that their decision related to their membership of the State Superannuation Scheme ("the old scheme"). Through the interviews (Phase 2) principals expressed the opinion that the "restrictive" superannuation regulations acted as a disincentive to stay-on and inhibited principals from taking staying-on options. Many principals indicated both through the questionnaire (Phase 1) and the interviews (phase 2) that they did not feel ready to retire (at 55 or 60 years of age). However there was no financial incentive (actually a financial disincentive) to stay-on. Many felt powerless and frustrated as summed up with comments such as:

> *I was fit, healthy and at the top of my game. I had some misgivings about whether I was finishing too soon. I retired because it was the superannuation age to retire; not for any other reason. (Primary male)*

> *I'm not ready to retire. If it wasn't for the superannuation loss I wouldn't retire at all. (Primary male)*

Comment

The *retention* of principals would seem to be an effective human resource strategy to overcome the projected principal shortages resulting from high levels of baby boomer retirements; to capture the capacity (expertise) of late-career principals at a time when inexperienced teachers may need to be promoted rapidly into the principalship; and to facilitate knowledge transfer from experienced principals to their inexperienced successors. The core stumbling block would seem to be the existing superannuation regulations which are working against:

1. The professional and personal interest of principals who wish to stay-on and not retire at the 'superannuation retirement age.
2. The recommendations of The *NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan* (2004-2006) which recommended that government agencies "find ways to allow mature age employees to phase their retirement to progressively take on less responsibility, work shorter hours and have access to other more flexible working arrangements" (p.12).
3. The Department of Premier and Cabinet*, Retirement Intention Survey* (June 2006) which found that "some 72 % of those intending to retire in the next five years would delay their retirement if they could reduce their hours without reducing their superannuation" (p. 15).
4. The NSW Auditor General's report (2008) which recommended that NSWDET "encourage the retention of mature age workers; for example by facilitating a phased retirement…to increase its focus on knowledge continuity" (p.7).
5. The findings of the recent *Retirement Planning Survey* (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010) for NSW public sector employees which confirmed that "at least 40% of those (in the public sector) with extensive experience are intending to retire…representing a significant loss of organizational knowledge" (p. 12).
6. The finding of the *Retirement Planning Survey* (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010) that a significant barrier to staying-on is restrictive superannuation: "The SSS ("old scheme") that I'm in very strongly influences me to retire when really I'd prefer to work on for some time longer. If I work on beyond 60 I'm denied benefits that I would otherwise receive" (p. 26).
7. Successive federal government *Intergenerational Reports* (Costello, 2002; Costello 2007; Swan, 2010) which openly require and encourage older workers to work longer.
8. The direct advice of COAG (The Council of Australian Governments) which commented in 2006 that "the workforce participation of Australians drops off more sharply than many other nations after the age of 55. With an ageing population, we can no longer afford to lose the valuable skills and experiences that older workers offer to business, the economy and the society. Living longer provides opportunity to work longer for those who are willing and able to. Policies need to support and promote ongoing attachments to the labour market" (Auditor General, 2008; p.12).

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended as a matter of urgency that all parties (NSW state government, NSWDET and principals' professional associations) work collaboratively for the liberalization of NSW State Superannuation Scheme regulations to encourage and attract principals to stay-on past their superannuation retirement age: (1) without financial penalty; (2) with financial encouragement; and (3) with access to flexible full-time and part-time principalship options. This can be achieved through the whole or part release (at the superannuation retirement age) of the superannuation benefit for those continuing in the workforce past their superannuation retirement date.

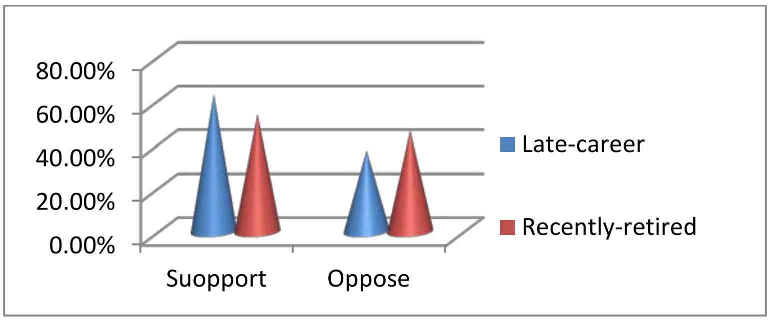
5. STAYING-ON PART-TIME: SHARING THE PRINCIPAL ROLE

Staying-on part-time in the principal role has the same superannuation disincentives as outlined above for those wishing to stay-on full-time. In addition staying-on part-time brings into focus the issue of flexible part-time work in the principal role. NSWDET policies and guidelines do not advocate a part-time job-share role for principals and actually state that "the most common pathway for principals to stay connected to the profession and phase into retirement is by returning to work after retirement on a casual, temporary or part-time basis" (*A Guide for Retiring Principals*, NSWDET 2010; p.7). There is no mention of principals staying-on in a part-time (job-sharing) principalship.

Key finding

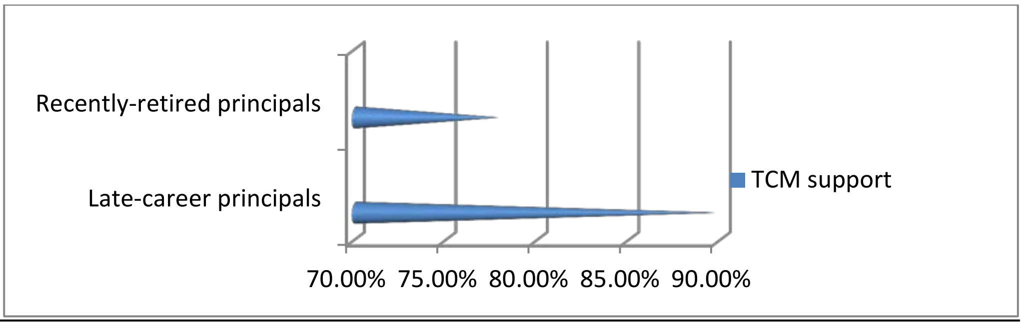
Three different part-time/job-share models were explored throughout the research. One, the Co-principal Model proved to be the most controversial. In this model two substantive principals would share the role as principal with each working part-time. In the Phase 1 questionnaires, the co-principalship option was strongly supported. However in the Phase 2 interviews and the Phase 4 triangulation (see Chapter 7) opinions were divided (Figure 8.11):

Figure 8.11: Support for/opposition to co-principal model support (Phase 2)



Across the research a second model, the Transitional Co-principalship Model (TCM) was the most strongly supported option. This option received 90.0% support from late-career principals and 77.9% support from recently-retired principals (Figure 8.12):

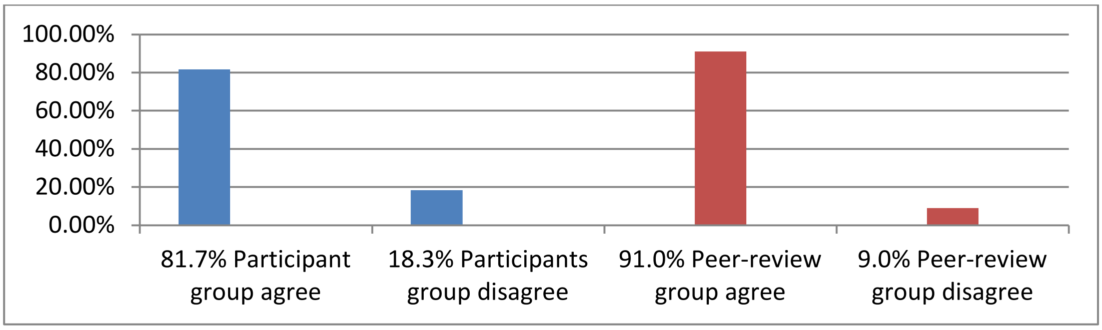
Figure 8.12: Support for Transitional Co-principalship Model (TCM)



The TCM involved ramping-off through part-time job-sharing of the principalship. However rather than being two substantive principals each working part-time (as in the Co-principalship Model), this TCM model operated with the school's existing principal and deputy-principal; and with the principal having a significant level of control over if and how this model would operate. Under the TCM model the existing deputy-principal would job-share the principal role with the substantive principal (who would reduce to part-time work). In this model the principal would know the job-sharing partner and would have control over recommending such a model.

The third model, the Coaching/Mentoring Model was also of high interest to principals in all phases of the research. This model primarily saw principals relinquishing their full-time principalship in a particular school to operate as a part-time mentor/coach. This model would involve ramping-off before full-time retirement. The Phase 4 triangulation process validated the strong support for this model which had appeared in the earlier phases of the study (Figure 8.13):

Figure 8.13: Part-time Coaching/Mentoring Model is extremely popular



Comment

Across the research the concept of ramping-off through part-time work was consistently supported by NSWDET principals. However from the employer's perspective unless the situation is one relating to illness or maternity leave, the *Phased Retirement Guidelines* (NSWDET, 2008) do not advocate a part-time job-sharing role for a principal. In 2007 the *NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan* (2004 - 2006) recommended that government agencies "find ways to allow mature age employees to phase their retirement to progressively take on less responsibility, work shorter hours and have access to other more flexible working arrangements" (p.12). There would appear to be a clear difference between principals' desires for part-time transition to retirement and NSWDET human resource policies. From the findings of this research there is high-level alignment between these recommendations to government and the wishes of late-career principals. The desire by principals to transition to retirement aligns with the findings of Anderson and Lacey (2007), Lacey (2006), Barty et al., (2005) and Cannon (2004) who all found a strong desire within principals in Australia to access part-time leadership positions.

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that the major stakeholders (NSW state government, NSWDET and principals' professional associations) collaboratively initiate action to create more flexible part-time job-sharing work options for principals. It is recommended that the strongly supported part-time Coaching and Mentoring Model and the Transitional Co-principalship Model be investigated jointly by employing authorities and professional associations. Flexible part-time and/or job-sharing work options could result in: (1) the retention and capturing of expertise and knowledge for educational systems; and (2) in the meeting of the personal and professional needs of principals.

6. REFOCUSING: FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME WORK (IN RETIREMENT)

In the initial Phase 1 questionnaire principals indicated a strong interest in refocusing i.e. retiring and then re-entering the workforce (Table 8.1):

Principals interested in refocusing	Late-career	Recently-retired
I would like to; expect to; plan to; or seek to work in retirement	93.6%	97.3%
I do not wish to work in retirement	6.4%	2.7%

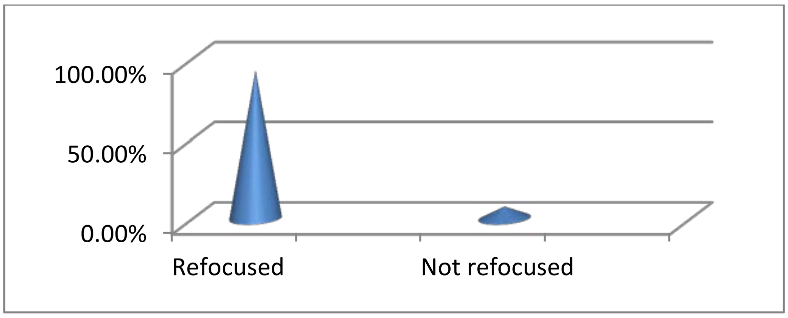
Table 8.1: Interest in refocusing following retirement

This was the first indicator in this research that only a very few principals (6.4% of late-career and 2.7% of recently-retired) were *not* interested in working in retirement in some manner.

Key finding

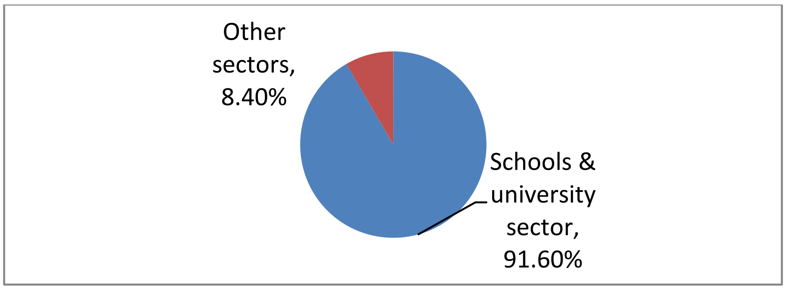
The initial high-level interest in refocusing was validated through the Phase 2 interviews with the recently-retired principal indicating that 92.6% had in fact refocused in some way (Figure 8.14):

Figure 8.14: Principals who had refocused in retirement



The other significant component of the finding was that the vast majority of this refocusing work was taking place within the educational community (Figure 8.15):

Figure 8.15: Refocused work sectors



Comment

Johnson (2001) stated that generically baby boomers were opting to make work a central plank of retirement. Similarly the vast majority of the retiring baby boomer principals in this study had refocused in retirement. Whatever the motivation (e.g. generational, professional, intellectual, social, altruistic or financial), an on-going connection to the workforce was presented by these principals as a deliberate and desirable component (investment) of portfolio retirement (Salt, 2007). The extremely high incidence of refocusing by principals in this study builds on earlier generic indicators in U.S.A. (Harris et al., 2005) and Australian societies (ABS 2009a, 2009b), that refocusing and staying connected with the workforce following retirement is the dominant model for baby boomers.

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that NSWDET introduces the following two strategies to facilitate the capturing of the leadership capacity of retiring principals:

1. An Expression of Interest (EOI): at the point of retirement, principals to be offered the opportunity to complete an on-line EOI for future employment. This EOI would collect information about the principal's qualifications; areas of expertise; areas of demonstrated experience; time availability for work; geographical availability for work; willingness to participate in future training and development; plus all contact numbers, addresses and

emails addresses. This information to be stored on a central data-base to be available to all Regional and Functional Directors seeking the most suitable person for each prospective role (be that full-time, part-time or contractual).

2. A Senior Partner classification: that a review be undertaken to explore the feasibility of retired principals being re-employed under the classification of *Senior Partner*. This classification would extend the existing educational leadership continuum by adding Senior Partner to the career path (i.e. career trajectory) of educational leaders. Senior Partner would mirror other professions (e.g. law and medicine) where highly-respected experienced practitioners are encouraged to stay connected to the profession on a part-time basis to facilitate knowledge transfer and corporate wisdom.

7. LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALSHIP: THE PLATEAU PATH SYNDROME

In educational leadership theory, the various career-phases for principals have been distilled into four key stages: the introduction stage; the induction stage*;* the maintenance/renewal stage; and the disenchantment stage (Oplatka, 2010). The disenchantment stage (or "plateau path") characterizes late-career principals as being tired, trapped, autocratic and resistant to change. In the Phase 1 questionnaire late-career principals were asked to self-assess their levels of effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction. The purpose was to establish to what extent this cohort saw themselves as being on the disengagement "plateau path" stage to retirement (i.e. tired, trapped, unmotivated and ineffective).

Key finding

The finding indicated that these late-career principals did not support the "plateau path" hypothesis as they saw themselves as highly effective and highly motivated (Table 8.2):

	Effectiveness	Motivation	Satisfaction
Highly	46.9%	34.7%	32.7%
Strongly	43.9%	49.0%	33.7%
Moderately	8.2%	13.2%	23.5%
Marginally	1.0%	3.1%	10.1%

Table 8.2: Self-assessed effectiveness, motivation and satisfaction

This finding supported the research of Oplatka, (2007, 2010); and Mulford et al., (2009) who reported that late-career principals actually viewed themselves as being energetic, effective, committed, motivated, work-focused, passionate, courageous, collaborative, positive and willing to change. However these late-career principals did assess their satisfaction level as being considerably lower than their effectiveness and motivation levels. The Phase 2 interviews and the Phase 4 triangulation found the predominant causes of lower satisfaction levels as being: (1) political interference in education; and (2) deflection from the core business of education (due to the administrative, clerical and work-site maintenance functions required of the principal).

Comment

Hesketh and Griffin's (2010) reported that in the NSW public sector there is "a significant loss of organizational knowledge" (p.12) and that low job satisfaction is "a strong indicator of a desire to retire at a younger age" (p.4). These factors may need to be addressed if late-career principals' capacity is going to be captured and retained rather than be allowed to slip away prematurely.

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that NSWDET investigate the finding that self-assessed satisfaction levels amongst late-career NSWDET principals are lower than their effectiveness or motivation levels as such a finding may be leading to earlier than necessary retirements by experienced principals. It is further recommended that a review be conducted (with the principals' professional associations) to address the identified causes for lower satisfaction levels for late-career principals; especially the deflection from the core business of education due to the administrative, clerical and work-site maintenance functions as this factor seemed to be causing generic frustration.

Recommendation for current educational leadership theory and further research

It is recommended that the construct which categorizes late-career principals as "older workers" who present as obsolete, dispirited, dysfunctional and on a plateau path to retirement be re-investigated. With educational leaders indicating a desire to work for longer (as indicated in this study); with connection to the workforce moving towards 70 years of age (Denmark et al., 2007; Handy, 2007; McCrindle, 2009); and with life expectancy moving towards 90 years of age (Cooper, 2008; Denmark et al., 2007), it would be timely to investigate what the term *late-career* means for 21st Century educational leaders?

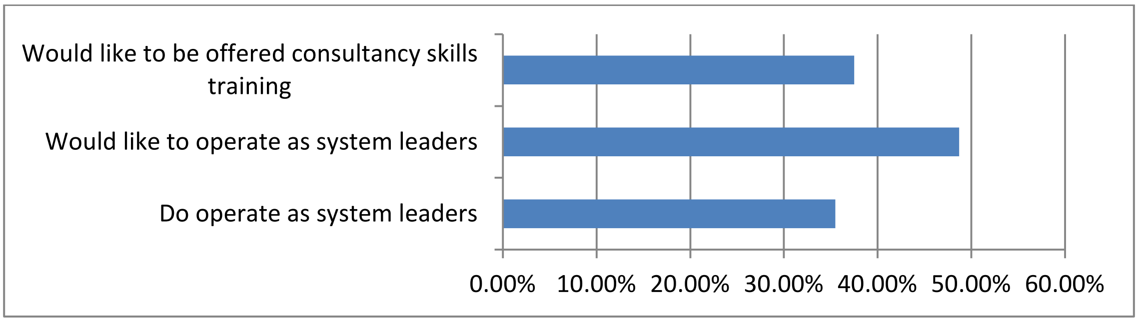
8. SYSTEM LEADERSHIP: SHARING THE EXPERTISE

System leaders are experienced and effective principals who operate across districts and regions building broad-based leadership capacity (Fullan, 2003; Fink, 2010; Dempster, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, Hargreaves et al., 2008).

Key finding

The findings from this research indicated that whilst 35.2% of experienced NSWDET principals have been offered an opportunity to operate in leadership development outside of their own school, more (48.7%) would like to be offered the opportunity. Those seeking that opportunity would be interested in receiving the relevant skills training (Figure 8.16):

Figure 8.16: Interest in operating as system leaders

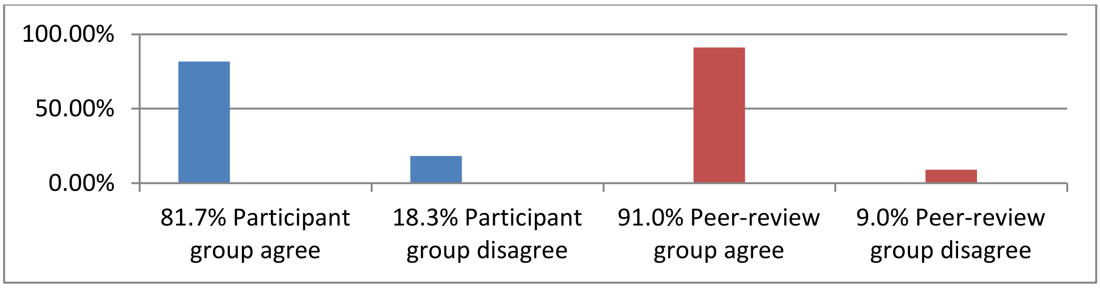


In the Phase 2 interviews many late-career principals expressed interest in the concept of operating as a system leader but the pressure of their own school's time and work demands limited their capacity to fill the role. As one principal commented:

> *I love working with aspiring principals from other schools. The problem is that I find the involvement difficult to sustain due to the demands and commitments at my school, which need to take precedence. (Secondary male)*

If the school-based demands are an inhibitor for practicing principals to be effective system leaders the solution may lie with their recently-retired colleagues. The Phase 4 triangulation indicated that retired principals are highly interested in being involved as system leaders (coaches/mentors for aspiring leaders). The agreement level registered 81% to 91% (Figure 8.17):

Figure 8.17: Retired principals are highly interested in part-time coaching/mentoring



Comment

The real opportunity for systems (e.g. NSWDET) to have highly trained, highly experienced and highly effective teams of system leaders operating across the districts or regions would seem to reside in the recently-retired cohort. Recently-retired principals (potentially acting as Senior Partners) would seem to provide a ready, willing and capable pool from which to create a sustainable system leadership model. The model which proved so popular with principals in this study of senior experienced principals (whether late-career or recently-retired) being a potential source of human capital, corporate knowledge and accumulated wisdom aligns with recommendations from international research (Fink, 2010; Hargreaves, 2008; and Fullan, 2005).

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that through an Expression of Interest process principals who have ceased full-time employment be merit selected (as Senior Partners) and trained in the consultancy skills of coaching and mentoring to form state-wide system leadership teams.

9. THE NEW RETIREMENT FOR PRINCIPALS: A VERY DIFFERENT CONCEPT

All phases of the research indicated that baby boomer principals (in NSW) had moved considerably away from the traditional retirement model. The new model of retirement presented in this research centered around three sub-themes: (1) retirement is not a static event but rather there are phases to be navigated; (2) satisfaction in retirement can be very high and considerably higher than anticipated; and (3) a portfolio retirement life-style has the ingredients (investments) to make retirement a very stimulating, active and fulfilling phase of life.

Phases of retirement

Principals indicated that retirement was no longer a demarcated (static) event which occurred at the point of full-time retirement as it had been the traditional model. Rather the recently-retired cohort identified the process as a journey and named the process *the phases of retirement.* Thirty-three recently-retired principals were asked to comment on the concept of phase of retirement and 100.0% agreed that this accurately described their personal experiences with comments such as:

> *I like the concept of different phases of retirement. This has definitely been my experience. (Secondary female)*
>
> *I agree that my attitude to retirement has gone through phases: first a great desire to still make a worthwhile contribution and feel needed; followed by acceptance that age does slow you down; and now a third phase of satisfaction with all the leisure activities that I am now able to participate in. (Primary male)*

Participants indicated that the phases varied and the initial phase was identified as the one which could prove to be disorientating and unsettling (with high levels of social and professional isolation; loss of purpose and identity; and loss of intellectual stimulation):

> *From a personal perspective I found retirement very difficult to accept. I felt lost and ill prepared. (Primary female)*
>
> *I was depressed. I certainly didn't acknowledge this at the time but in hindsight can clearly identify the symptoms. (Secondary female)*

Work in retirement (refocusing) was recommended by recently-retired principals as an effective mechanism for avoiding/overcoming the difficulties in the first phase of retirement:

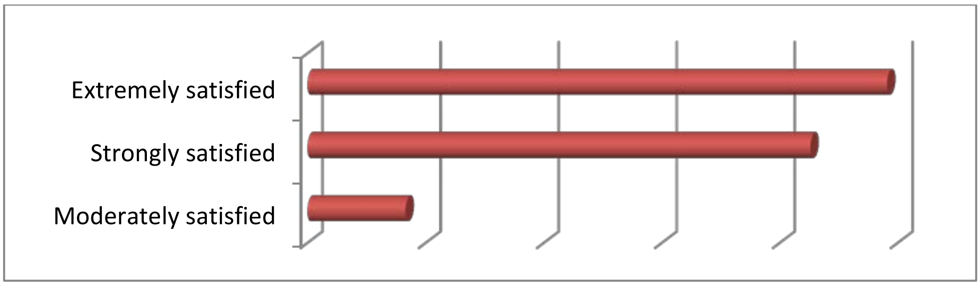
> *I am currently tutoring at UWS in teacher education two days a week and feel valued and worthwhile. I don't want to work forever but I am enjoying this stage. (Secondary female)*

> *In the first 5 years (after 60) I found doing some part time work quite rewarding. I think mentally it helps you adjust to retirement, gives you time to set yourself up for the social aspects of retirement. (Primary male)*

Satisfaction in retirement

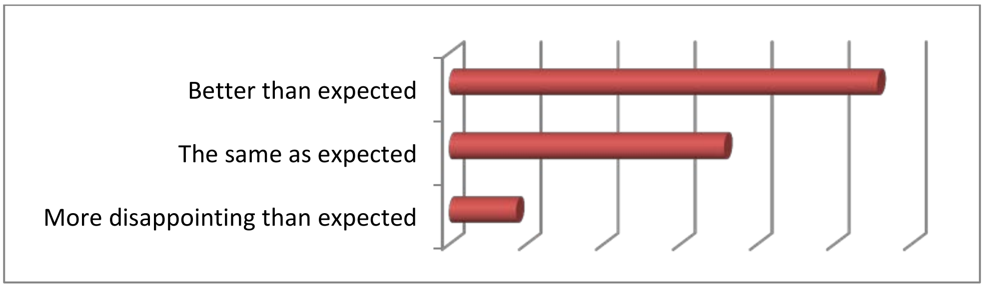
In the Phase 1 questionnaire the recently-retired cohort indicated that they were highly satisfied with retirement (Figure 8.18):

Figure 8.18: Satisfaction with retirement



In addition to being highly satisfied in retirement, the recently-retired cohort indicated that the retirement phase actually proved to be much better than they had expected. This would seem positive news for the late-career cohort which reported being anxious about their approaching transition to retirement (Figure 8.19):

Figure 8.19: Experience compared with expectations about retirement



The finding of high satisfaction levels with retirement (as reported by the recently-retired cohort) led to a deeper exploration of the factors which these principals believed as being most responsible for the high (and higher than anticipated) retirement satisfaction level. Satisfaction in retirement was linked to engagement with a portfolio retirement life-style (Salt, 2007).

Portfolio retirement

In the Phase 2 interviews recently-retired principals explained that their satisfaction with retirement related to their multi-faceted, positive and active life-style (which usually involved some part-time work):

> *My life is multi-faceted. My creative side is being met through greater involvement in photography which was always an unfulfilled passion. I have my consultancy roles which provide extra funds plus that sense of purpose. I have a much richer family role now. I'm also involved in house renovations pending a sale and re-location. In addition, we are*

attending the theatre regularly and having a full social life with friends. Travelling has also become a bigger part of our lives. (Secondary male)

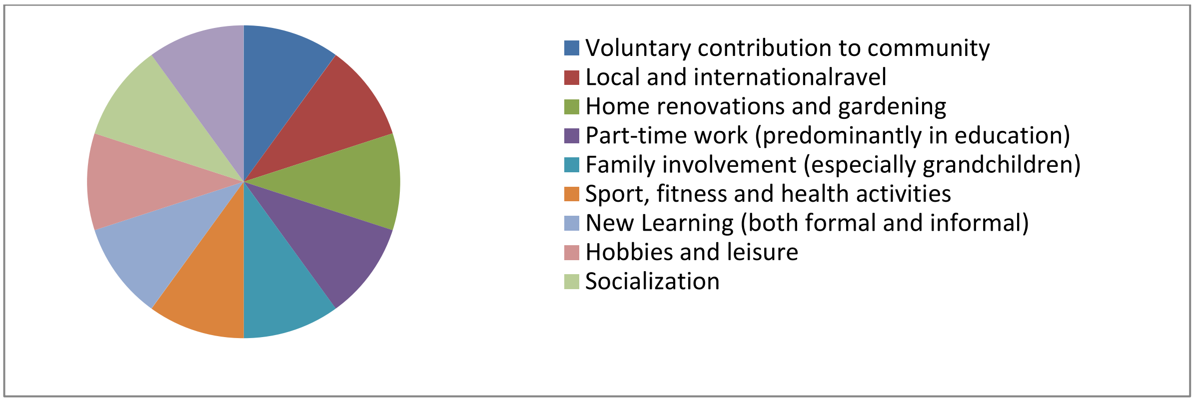
I have excellent networks for social interactions. I exercise regularly; I have a family and a partner; I work and love it; I travel; I'm a reader; and I love theatre and concerts. I have never been happier or more content. (Secondary female)

My life is currently made up of theatre trips; a huge variety of committee work; part-time supervision work; a personal fitness and exercise program; my new learning; my wonderful extended family; my bike riding (with Ulysses); my socialization with friends; and our travels. I love this life. (Primary male)

I work part-time (about 3 days per week) and that meets my needs to be actively involved and connected to education. This money allows my husband and me to travel overseas. I spend quite a deal of time with my ageing parents and even more with my grandchildren. I wasn't able to do this when I was working and this is a great joy. We attend the theatre and musical concerts regularly and we have an extended social network which I keep active by arranging all different get-togethers. (Primary female)

This new retirement life-style is appropriately described as a *portfolio retirement* (Salt, 2007) with lots of investments and can be diagrammatically represented as a bicycle-wheel retirement with multiple spokes (Figure 8.20):

Figure 8.20: The portfolio retirement life-style



Comment

This finding mirrors the generational trends within the broader community (Salt, 2007; Mackay, 2007). Baby boomers are replacing the previous image of retirees as "old people" with one more aligned to their values: fashionably well-dressed, physically energetic, emotionally adventurous, intellectually engaged; and able to contribute to society by staying connected to the workforce for longer (Johnson, 2001; Mackay, 2007; Cooper, 2008). Baby boomers have indicated that because they fear losing their intellectual and physical faculties as they grow older, they want retirement to be an active period of life involving a mix of work and leisure activities (Winston & Barnes, 2007).

Recommendation for educational leadership policy and practice

It is recommended that educational jurisdictions review their human resource and workforce policies in relation to retirement. The traditional nexus between retirement and age (i.e. retirement being tied to the ages of 55 to 60 years) may no longer apply. The changing dynamics in career phases; career trajectory; career longevity; ageing and work; life and career balance; cognitively-demanding work; knowledge transfer; capacity retention; life-long learning; and changing generational values in relation to work, need to underpin a re-appraisal of workforce planning strategies. Based on the meaning and nature of late-career and retirement as depicted by principals in this study; and based on the fact that these principals a have expressed an interest in (and a desire to) stay working longer, such a review could extend to explore and investigate the nature and structure of leadership in schools in the 21st Century.

Recommendation for current educational leadership theory and further research

In the discipline of educational leadership, it is recommended that further research be undertaken which builds on the findings of this and other recent research (Earley & Weindling, 2007; Schultz & Adams, 2007; Oplatka, 2007 & 2010; and Mulford et al., 2009) to further explore the relationship between ageing and work; the new retirement; and school leadership in the 21st Century.

CONCLUSION

The recommendations in Chapter 8 were based on the key findings. Those findings which emerged through the research process were based upon the aspirations and expectations of late-career NSWDET principals and the reflections and experiences of recently-retired NSWDET principals. The recommendations are presented for the information of the key stakeholders: governments (e.g. NSW State Government and Australian Federal Government); educational jurisdictions (e.g. NSWDET); principals' professional associations (e.g. NSWPPA and NSWSPC); individual principals; and educational leadership researchers. A summative discussion and the concluding remarks for this research are presented in Chapter 9.

CHAPETR 9

SUMMATIVE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ageing and work in the 21st century

The starting point for this research was as an investigation of the expectations and aspirations of late-career principals; and the reflections and experiences of recently-retired principals as a means to explore the perceptual meaning and nature of retirement for baby boomer principals. There was specific interest in investigating to what extent (if at all) late-career and recently-retired principals were interested in working longer (i.e. past their pre-arranged superannuation retirement age). One core finding indicated that staying-on full-time or part-time (in the principalship) was an attractive option if there could be greater flexibility in superannuation regulations and part-time work options. Another finding related to the working longer issue indicated that refocusing back into the work force following retirement was an extremely popular option. In fact principals reported that some form of work was a core component of a satisfying retirement life-style. By the completion of Phase 1 (the questionnaire) and Phase 2 (the interviews) many of the major findings and themes had coalesced around the issue of *working longer.* By the completion of the research the many variations of working longer had aggregated under the generic heading of *ageing and work in the 21st Century*.

The responses from the participants confirmed that for these baby boomer principals the traditional tripartite view of life (i.e. the first one third is spent learning; the second third is dedicated to working; and the final third is spent in retired leisure) was now disappearing. Irrespective of the motivation, working longer was now reported as being a desired option. Maurer (2007) raises the question that “since extending the average work-life of individuals will no doubt …alter the balance of work, learning, and leisure…what implications might this have for theorizing about ageing and work in the 21st century?” (p. 308). In the case of principals, to date there has been little research on which to base such theorizing. From the findings from this research, it is proposed that *ageing and work* is actually the core personal, professional, generational and societal challenge being faced by baby boomer principals as they engage with the meaning and nature of retirement.

It is further proposed that a deeper understanding of ageing and work (by employing authorities, professional associations and individual principals) is a prerequisite for capturing the capacity, expertise, experience, energy and willingness of baby boomer principals to stay connected to the workforce for longer. Strategic workforce planning to ensure effective and sustainable leadership in schools may well rest on the capacity of educational jurisdictions to research and act on the imperatives associated with ageing and work in the 21st Century. This will require an alignment of the organizational needs of employing authorities with the new life and career trajectory needs of individual principals. The core components of the phenomena of retirement (e.g. late-career, older worker, transition to retirement, workforce capacity) need to be viewed through the new lens of ageing and work in the 21st Century.

The case for re-conceptualization

Bayer et al., (2009) in their international analysis of over 30 years of research into teachers' career trajectories, note that "it will come as no surprise that research on teachers approaching retirement is sparse. After all, these teachers are on their way out of the profession anyway and therefore there is little incentive to fund and conduct research into the professional lives of these teachers" (P.22-23). Similarly Oplatka (2010) found in a recent international search for information about late-career principals that “there remains a paucity of research on this period amongst... school principals” (p.777), with just 10 citations located worldwide. At the point of retirement teachers and principals (like most other members of society) simply disappeared into that amorphous state called *retirement* and became invisible from the sense of career or making a meaningful working contribution to society.

This research responded to the challenges posed by both Bayer et al., (2009) and by Gronn (2010) that future research both rethink the ways in which teachers' and principals’ careers are investigated, and the way in which the term *career trajectory* is conceptualized so as to better reflect the complexity of current career patterns. This study purposively initiated an investigation into the late-career trajectory of this primarily ignored leadership group (i.e. late-career and recently-retired principals). As a result of the findings from this investigation, the traditional core components of the final phases of a principal’s career trajectory: (i.e. older worker; late-career; retirement; and retention) are proposed as being in need of re-conceptualization.

Set against 20th Century demographics, economics, workforce structures and generational values these terms have naturally had their own time-bound definitions. The findings and recommendations from this research would support other research (Dendinger et al., 2005; Handy, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008) in proposing that in the 21st Century the basic meaning of these concepts has now changed; at least in the minds of baby boomers even if not in the corporate philosophy of some organizations. The 20th Century definitions, with their inflexibility and lack of responsiveness to the more hierarchical societal structures of that era (Mackay, 2007), still appear to underpin the workforce policies and practices of many employers (Calvo, 2006; Schultz & Adams, 2007; Boyd, 2008). The findings from this research suggest that the 20th century definitions are no longer aligned to the needs and desires of 21st Century baby boomer school principals; and are in danger of becoming antiquated, irrelevant and counter-productive to the building of a sustainable and effective school leadership system for the 21st century context.

RE-CONCEPTUALIZATION

Older worker

With baby boomers living longer and working longer, the 21st Century concept of *older worker* can no longer simply be defined in chronological terms as was the previous situation. The construct around *older worker* is being re-defined. Baby boomers have an aversion to the term *retirement* (Mackay, 2007; Gibbs, 2008) and so it is reasonable to assume that *older worker* will not be viewed kindly. The 20th century connotation of an older worker as a person who is chronologically near or past traditional retirement age and who therefore is no longer productive or effective is becoming irrelevant. International research (Lahn, 2003; Kakabadse et al., 1998; Wood, 2002; Greller & Stroh, 2004; Oplatka, 2010) is now indicating that in the 21st century paradigm, the term *older worker* is potentially synonymous with more positive attributes such as experience, expertise, wisdom, commitment, energy and knowledge. Consequently the term will need to be re-defined or a substitute found.

The findings from this research would indicate that late-career principals who simultaneously operate in the cognitive, human relations, leadership and life-long learning domains, will welcome the demise of the term *older worker*. For baby boomer principals who have expressed an interest and a desire in staying-on and/or refocusing in the workforce of 21st Century the term older worker would appear to be irrelevant and demeaning. Re-conceptualizing of the term “older worker” would appear to be moving quickly for principals. This may become even more apparent if more principals opt to stay-on (as the research findings indicate); and the high number of principals who refocus in retirement (as indicated in the research findings) continue to increase. The real issue may well be whether educational employing authorities are keeping pace with their principals in relation to career trajectories (e.g. the late-career phase).

Late-career

Within a workforce like the NSW public sector education system it had previously been relatively easy to define as “late-career” those employees who were close to the chronological superannuation retiring age (55 years for women and 60 years for men). With the 21st Century changes including: the rise in government pensions entitlement age; the elimination of aged-based compulsory retirement; the changing generational values about ageing; and the government incentives to encourage baby boomers to working longer, *late-career* has become a much less clearly defined concept. The term is morphing into something quite different. The nexus between late-career and chronological age would appear to be blurring.

In one related finding from the research 69.2% of the recently-retired principals believed that they were not ready to retire (although they had reached their chronological superannuation retirement age). A further finding indicated that in excess of 92.6% of the recently-retired principals had refocused back in to full-time or part-time work. The findings indicated that the term *late-career* was not being accepted by the majority of these baby boomer principals as the end of their career trajectory. This was signaling a significant shift. With life expectancy in 21st Century being closer to 90 years of age (Denmark et al., 2007) work may continue to 70 years of age. That could indicate a 10 - 15 year extension to the 20th century working life norm. This paradigm shift could see an additional career stage for principals (e.g. Senior Partners) to accommodate this shifting definition of late-career. One challenge for educational jurisdictions will be to respond to principals' changing (and extending) career trajectories.

Retention

Traditionally workforce capacity building has been about attracting new workers to replace older workers. However in the 21st Century this policy is resulting in a workforce that is short on experience and corporate knowledge (Hesketh & Griffin, 2010; Schultz & Adams, 2007). Attraction (of younger workers) is a strategy which if used in isolation may exacerbate the problems (i.e. loss of corporate knowledge and wisdom) and miss a marvelous opportunity. The solution would appear to reside in a dual policy: the attraction of younger workers plus the simultaneous retention of older workers (often in part-time, job-sharing, mentoring, coaching, consultant and senior partner type roles).

Educational jurisdictions (e.g. NSWDET) have conducted significant campaigns to attract new employees to the teaching service. In the educational leadership area there have been a multitude of programs (succession planning programs) aimed at attracting new aspirants to the principalship. However there has been little employer-sponsored support for less restrictive superannuation regulations or for more flexible work options in an effort to retain late-career principals for longer. It would seem that a dual attraction and retention policy by educational jurisdictions would provide the best opportunity to capture the total available workforce capacity. Principals in this research have given a clear (even strong) indication that they are willing and interested in staying connected to the workforce so as to be part of the solution in capturing sustainable leadership capacity.

Retirement

Underpinning this research has been the global issue of population ageing (in nations such as Australia) due to the increasing longevity of the baby boomer generation. Consequently being retired for a long time (30+ years is now quite feasible) has become a topic of much concern, much debate and great elusiveness. Previously there was a general understanding and conventional wisdom about retirement*:* it was the time when people who had worked for three to four decades quit full-time work for full-time retirement for the brief remainder of their life. The focus was on supporting this short declining phase of life through governmental social welfare or family care.

That traditional retirement model no longer aligns with the life pattern, the expectations or the aspirations of ageing baby boomers. For principals in this research retirement was seen as an active and exciting life phase. One core plank of this life phase was work. When combined with other important components (e.g. travel, family, new learning, social activities, sports and fitness) the principals were describing the classic portfolio retirement model (Salt, 2007). There has been much discussion over the first decade of this century about baby boomers forging a "new retirement" (Johnson, 2001; Cooper, 2007; Winston & Barnes, 2007; Gibbs, 2008). The findings in this study indicate that for these research participants that new retirement has become a reality. The traditional concept of retirement (as a short window of slow leisure time followed by fading health) is seen as being many phases away by these recently-retired principals. Although the term retirement is officially still in use, it would seem to be undergoing significant re-conceptualization.

Authors and researchers from many disciplines, including sociology, economics, social work, psychology, demography, gerontology and business are now studying ageing and work (Maurer, 2007; Charness et al., 2007; Shultz & Adams, 2007). Each discipline brings a slightly different perspective but there is generic agreement with Beehr and Bennett's (2007) warning that "as the baby-boomer population ages… the proportion of society they represent will almost certainly increase to levels never before seen. It is thus now more important than ever to understand retirement" (p. 227).

CONCLUDING REMARK

The challenge for the educational leadership community within NSW is to address the issue of ageing and work in the 21st Century in such a way that the result will be a strong, effective, knowledgeable future-orientated educational leadership platform which maximizes the leadership capacity available for the benefit of schools and students. This research has provided a clear indication from one group of NSW principals that extending their working lives: (1) to match their increasing life span (2) to extend their professional career trajectory; and (3) to meet their personal generational needs, is clearly their preferred choice.

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Appendix 2.1

Educational leadership: Expert comments

Prior to the commencement of the research the author held email conversations with the following nationally-based and internationally-based educational leadership researchers, who are recognized leaders in the field of educational leadership. These researchers confirmed that: there appeared to be a growing trend for recently-retired principals to stay connected to the educational community by refocusing into work; that they were not aware of any specific research in this area of educational leadership; and that there existed a need for such research to be undertaken. This information supported the potential for this research to add to the existing knowledge in the field of educational leadership.

NATIONAL-BASED EXPERTS

Professor Patrick Duignan: P.duignan@mary.ca.edu.au (19th December, 2007)

Professor Geoff Scott: G.SCOTT@uws.edu.au (21st December. 2007)

Professor Steve Dinham: dinham@acer.edu.au (5th May, 2008)

Dr Kathy Lacey: klacey@tpg.com.au (5th May, 2008)

Professor Ross Thomas: rthomas@uow.edu.au (6th May, 2008)

Professor Brian Caldwell: brian@educationaltransformations.com.au (13th July, 2009) and a Face-to-face meeting @ Batemans Bay, 8th May, 2010

Professor Bill Mulford: Bill.Mulford@utas.edu.au (31st July, 2008)

INTERNATIONAL-BASED EXPERTS

Professor Reynold McPherson (New Zealand): Reynold.macpherson@hotmail.com (14th January, 2010) and a face-to-face meeting @ Macquarie University, Sydney: 4th December, 2007

Professor Peter Gronn (United Kingdom): P.gronn@educ.gla.ac.uk (8th May, 2008)

Professor Michael Fullan (Canada): mfullan@oise.utoronto.ca (20th December. 2007)

Professor Andy Hargreaves (USA): andrew.hargreaves@bc.edu (20th December, 2007) and a face-to-face meetings in Singapore: 10th July, 2010; Boston June, 2011

Dr Dick Weindling (England): dweindling@blueyonder.co.uk (4th January, 2008) and a face-to-face meeting in London: 8th July, 2010

Dr Dean Fink (Canada): deanfink@cogeco.ca (19th December, 2007) and a face-to-face meeting in Sydney: 20-25th July, 2011

Professor Keith Leithwood (Canada): kleithwood@oise.utoronto.ca (20th December, 2007)

Professor Peter Earley (England): P.Earley@ioe.ac.uk (25th June, 2008)

Appendix 3.1

Mixed Methods Paradigm

	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Mixed research
Scientific method	Confirmatory or "top-down". The researcher tests hypotheses and theory with data.	Exploratory or "bottom up". The researcher generates new hypotheses from data collected.	Confirmatory and exploratory.
View of human behaviour	Behaviour is regular and predictable.	Behaviour is fluid, dynamic, situational, social, contextual and personal.	Behaviour is somewhat predictable.
Focus	Narrow-angled lens, testing specific hypotheses	Wide-angles and deep-angled lens examining depth and breadth of phenomena to learn more.	Multi-lens focus.
Nature of reality	Objective.	Subjective, personal and socially constructed.	Common sense realism and pragmatic view of world.
Data collection	Quantitative data bases on precise measurement.	Qualitative data such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, field notes, and open-ended questions.	Multiple forms.
Data analysis	Identify statistical relationships.	Search for patterns, themes or holistic features.	Quantitative and qualitative combination.

Results	Generalizable findings providing representation of objective outsider viewpoint	Particularistic findings providing representation of insider viewpoints. Presents multiple perspectives.	Provision of insider and outsider viewpoints.
Form of final report	Statistical report (including correlations, mean comparisons and findings with statistical significance)	Narrative report with contextual descriptions and direct quotations from research participants	Mixture of numbers and narrative.

Source: Adapted from Johnson & Christensen (2008, p. 34)

Appendix 3.2

Ethics Approval

(Page 249 - 250)

26 September 2008

Mr Warren Marks
PO Box 71
Hill Top
NSW 2575

Reference: HE26SEP2008-D06091

Dear Mr Marks

FINAL APPROVAL

Title of project: "The contribution of late-career and recently-retired principals to the educational (and the wider) community"

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Committee and you may now proceed with your research. This approval is subject to the following conditions.

1. Please forward a copy of the approval from the Department of Education and Training when this is available.

In addition, thank you for your response to condition 2 where you undertake to provide a copy of the Interview questions and schedules for interviews and focus group discussions prior to the commencement of phase 2 and 3 of the project.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve (12) months. At the end of this period, if the project has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are required to submit a Final Report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. The Final Report is available at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms
2. However, at the end of the 12 month period if the project is still current you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval if the project has run for less than five (5) years. This form is available at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms. If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report (see Point 1 above) and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).
3. Please remember the Committee must be notified of any alteration to the project.
4. You must notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/policy

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)
LEVEL 3, RESEARCH HUB, BUILDING C5C
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
NSW, 2109 AUSTRALIA
Ethics Secretariat: Ph: (02) 9850 6848 Fax: (02) 9850 4465 E-mail: ethics.secretariat@vc.mq.edu.au
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project **it is your responsibility** to provide Macquarie University's Research Grants Officer with a copy of this letter as soon as possible. The Research Grants Officer will not inform external funding agencies that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Officer has received a copy of this final approval letter.

Yours sincerely

P.P.

Dr Margaret Stuart
Director of Research Ethics
Chair, Ethics Review Committee (Human Research)

Cc: Dr Norman McCulla, School of Education

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)
LEVEL 3, RESEARCH HUB, BUILDING C5C
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
NSW, 2109 AUSTRALIA
Ethics Secretariat: Ph: (02) 9850 6848 Fax: (02) 9850 4465 E-mail: ethics.secretariat@vc.mq.edu.au
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics

Appendix 3.3

Sydney Catholic Diocese Approval

(Page 252)

CEO Sydney

Catholic Education Office, Sydney

38 RENWICK STREET, LEICHHARDT NSW • PO BOX 217, LEICHHARDT 2040 • PH (02) 9569 6111 • FAX (02) 9550 00[illegible]

11th April 2008

Mr Warren Marks
PO Box 71
HILL TOP
NEW SOUTH WALES 2575

Dear Warren

Thank you for your application to conduct research in Catholic systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney. Approval is given by CEO Sydney to conduct this study. I am aware that you have had a phone conversation with Ms Natalie McNamara, Director of Human Resources, regarding this research study.

Permission is given for you to involve Principals and former Principals as outlined in your research proposal:

'Do baby boomer educational leaders really retire?'

Please note that this approval is for primary and secondary Principals of employed in or recently retired from Archdiocesan **systemic** schools, and does not extend to those employed by congregational/independent schools who do not come under the jurisdiction of the CEO, Sydney.

To assist you in contacting systemic Principals or retired Principals who meet your research study criteria, please find as attachments:

- A list of Principals currently employed by CEO, Sydney who are 55 years of age or above, and their current school contact details;
- A list of recently retired (in the last 3 years) Principals, and their last notified home address.

Also attached is the letter you forwarded which outlines for prospective participants the research study, edited to indicate that the study has been approved by the Executive Director of Schools for the Archdiocese of Sydney.

As you no doubt appreciate, it is the prerogative of any Principal whom you might approach to decline your invitation to be involved in this study or to withdraw from involvement at any time.

It is a condition of approval that the study complies with all privacy provisions as per university ethics requirements and those of the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

As there is no unsupervised contact with children during this research study, you are not required to undertake a working with children background check.

Would you please provide to this office the names (and schools as appropriate) of those who have agreed to participate in your study.

It is also a condition of approval that when your research has been completed you will forward a report of the findings/recommendations to this office as soon as practicable after results are to hand.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any further information you require. I wish you well in this undertaking and look forward to the report of your findings.

Yours sincerely,

Barrett

Christopher Barrett
Education Officer, Human Resources
on behalf of
Br Kelvin Canavan fms
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS
Attachments

Appendix 3.4

Catholic Education Office Parramatta

From: Sandra Dawson [Sandra.Dawson@parra.catholic.edu.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 2 June 2010 11:41 AM
To: Marks, Warren
Subject: RE: Research approval

Dear Warren

The email approval dated 26/11/2008 that I sent out to you was a list of principals that agreed to participate in the research study. There was no paper work sent out to you.

Regards
Sandra

From: warren.f.marks@det.nsw.edu.au [mailto:warren.f.marks@det.nsw.edu.au]
Sent: Sunday, 30 May 2010 9:36 AM
To: Sandra Dawson
Subject: Research approval

Dear Sandra,

In late 2008 I applied through you (& John DeCourcy) to undertake some research into late career principals. I lodge the full application & all was well to proceed.

Now I cannot locate the paper work which actually granted that approval (probably an email). I'm wondering if you might have a copy on your files that you could send to me?

If so that would be greatly appreciated.

Cheers,
Warren Marks

(0412049637 or 4889 8696)

Appendix 3.5

SERAP Approval

(Page 255)

NEW SOUTH WALES
DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
AND TRAINING

Mr Warren Marks
PO Box 71
HILL TOP NSW 2575

DOC 08/61710

Dear Mr Marks

Re: **SERAP Number 2008136**

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled *A cross-systemic study of the influence of demographic change and inter-generational culture on the separation patterns of school principals in New South Wales, during a period when strategies are being implemented to overcome a shortage of principals.* I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 10/10/2009.

No researchers or research assistants have been screened to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research.

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- school Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought
- the privacy of the school and the students is to be protected
- the participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience
- any research proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approval Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed, please forward your report marked to the Director, Strategic Initiatives, Department of Education and Training, Locked Bag 53, Darlinghurst NSW 2010. If you have any queries, please Dr Robert Stevens, Manager Schooling Research on telephone: 9244 5619.

Yours sincerely

Max Smith
Relieving Director, Strategic Initiatives
7 November 2008

NSW Department of Education and Training
Strategic Initiatives Directorate
Level 3, No. 1 Oxford Street, DARLINGHURST NSW 2010 Locked Bag 53, DARLINGHURST NSW 2010
T 9244 5080 F 9266 8233 E max.smith@det.nsw.edu.au

Appendix 3.6

NSW Primary Principals' Association Letter of Support

NSW PRIMARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION Inc.

www.nswppa.org.au

6 July 2008

Mr Warren Marks

Dear Warren,

On behalf of the NSW Primary Principals' Association, I am pleased to support your research project focusing on both retired Principals and on those Principals about to retire from the Teaching Service.

The NSWPPA supports this research which, as I understand it, aims to explore the experiences of Principals who have recently retired and their expectations about retirement, as well as the involvement in the research of late-career principals, to see if this first round of post-war born Principals to reach retirement, are actually retiring altogether as previous generations of retirees did, or if this generation is likely to seek further employment.

As an association, we fully support this research and believe it is important in adding to the current knowledge about educational leadership. One of the major elements of the DET Corporate Plan is to have "more people participating in education and training throughout their lives", utilising DET strategies to "drive development of workforce capability, introduce more flexible human resource policies and support staff to access professional development opportunities.."

Best wishes for the ongoing success of the research project. Please contact the Association if there is anything further which we can do to assist.

Yours sincerely,

Geoff Scott

NSWPPA President

C/- Blacktown South P.S.

Mob: 0427451359

Appendix 3.7

NSW Secondary Principals' Council Letter of Support

20-22 Villiers Road, PO Box 1074, MOSS VALE 2577

02 4868 2364 (w), 02 4869 3103 (h), 02 4869 3104 (f) 0411106267

DET Approval to Conduct Research

I write in support of an application by retired principal, Warren Marks, to conduct research in New South Wales Schools.

As President of the NSW Secondary Principals' Council, I are aware of and support this research which aims to explore the experiences of recently-retired principals & the expectations (about retirement) of late-career principals, to see if this first round of Baby Boomer principals to reach retirement age are actually retiring in the traditional model, or if in fact they are refocusing into other employment.

I fully support this research and see it as important in extending the field of knowledge in educational leadership. The research actually addresses one of the key elements of the DET Corporate Plan:

"More people participating in education and training throughout their lives"...with DET strategies to "drive development of workforce capability....introduce more flexible human resource policies... support staff to access professional development opportunities..".

This research should also assist my professional association in planning for the involvement of principals in professional development and support activities after they retire. I strongly support the application by Warren Marks.

Yours faithfully

Jim McAlpine

President

22 July 2008

Appendix 3.8

Retirement aspirations, expectations and experiences of New South Wales school principals: 2008-2012

An invitation to participate in this research

Dear colleagues,

I am a retired principal. I was a primary principal with NSWDET for 14 years, and retired in 2004 after 40 years with NSWDET. I am undertaking research about **recently-retired principals** (those who retired between 2004 and 2008) and **late-career principals** (those who plan to retire between 2008 and 2012). The research (which will be a PhD study through Macquarie University's "Australian Centre for Educational Studies") aims to investigate the expectations, aspirations and experiences of late-career and recently-retired principals in relation to the separation process. I am seeking your support and assistance with this venture. This project has the full support of the presidents of the two principals associations: Mr. Jim McAlpine (NSWSPC) & Mr. Geoff Scott (NSWPPA).

Over the next 2 years there will be three possible types of involvement:

Phase 1: A survey which will be emailed (or posted) to you to be completed in late 2008.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Phase 2: Individual interviews where I would visit you to record your story in relation to the issues raised in the survey. The interviews will take approximately an hour. These interviews are planned for mid 2009.

Phase 3: The focus groups will be used to provide feedback on the preliminary findings. Each focus group will include representatives of the key stakeholders (late-career and recently-retired principals; employing authorities; and principals' associations).In this sense the focus groups will provide a principal's perspective on the findings (built on their knowledge, experience and expertise); an employing authority's perspective; and a professional association's perspective.

There will be three focus groups designed to capture two of the most critical variations in the research (geographic location and educational system):

- one NSWDET urban group
- one NSWDET rural group
- one Catholic Education Office urban group

Each focus group will have: 8-10 participants.

Phase 1 (the survey) is open to all volunteers who match the criteria for recently-retired or late-career principals (as outlined above). There will be at least 10% of the respondents to the surveys involved in Phase 2 (individual interviews) and some 18 principals involved in Phase 3 (focus groups).It will be possible to register an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** to be involved in Phase 2 (individual interviews) and Phase 3 (focus groups) at the time of the survey.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be central to this research.

Anonymity: Survey may be completed anonymously. Alternatively respondents who are willing to be interviewed in the follow up phase may choose to provide their name on the survey. In all subsequent written reports (including articles and thesis) and all oral reports (presentations, keynotes) no individual principal or individual school will be able to be identified with or linked to any survey responses.

Confidentiality:

The identity and school location of all respondents will be treated with total confidentiality by the researcher. All email communication will be protected by password which only myself (as researcher) will have access to. All email communication will be sent as "blind copies" so that no individual participant's name will appear on any email. All hard copies (emails, Consent Forms and Expressions of Interest) will be securely locked. Once data analysis is completed, all material (including tapes and transcripts) will be de-identified. All participants in the Interviews (Phase 2) will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses. All participants in the Focus Groups (Phase 3) will be asked to respect the confidentiality of those meetings.

The results of the of the research methods (surveys, interviews and focus groups) will be disseminated to all major stakeholders according to the protocols established with each stakeholder.

Phase 1: Survey

Survey Expression of Interest (EOI): An EOI is not a commitment to participate. The EOI means that you will be contacted closer to the survey time with more detailed information and a **Consent Form** prior to actually participating in the survey.

If you wish to lodge an **Expression of Interest** to be part of the survey (Phase 1) please:

1. email me: Lazenbymarks@bigpond.com ; or

2. phone me on 4889 8696(H) or 0412049637 (M); or

3. post a response to Warren Marks, PO Box 71, Hill Top. 2575

Survey Consent: Before the survey is distributed, you will be sent a consent form with full information about the survey. At that point if you **consent** to participate, you will be asked to return that email confirming your consent, before receiving access to the survey.

Phase 2: Interviews

At the time of the **survey consent form**, you will also receive an **Expression of Interest** for those survey participants who might wish to be consider for participation in Phase 2 (Interviews) in 2009. This EOI will be followed at a later date by an **Information Sheet** and **Consent Form** about your potential participation in the Interviews for your consideration. Again, registering an EOI for the Interviews (Phase 2) does not indicate a commitment to participate.

Phase 3: Focus Groups

At the time of the **survey consent form,** you will also receive an **Expression of Interest** for those survey participants who might wish to be considered for participation in Phase 3 (Focus Groups) in 2010. This EOI will be followed at a later date by an **Information Sheet** and **Consent Form** about your potential participation in the Focus Groups for your consideration. Again, registering an EOI for the Focus Groups (Phase 3) does not indicate a commitment to participate.

Your support for this project would be greatly appreciated.

Cheers,

Warren Marks

Appendix 3.9

Retirement aspirations, expectations and experiences of New South Wales school principals: 2008-2012

An invitation to participate in this research

Dear colleagues,

I am a retired principal. I was a primary principal with NSWDET for 14 years, and retired in 2004 after 40 years with NSWDET. I am undertaking research about **recently-retired principals** (those who retired between 2004 and 2008) and **late-career principals** (those who plan to retire between 2008- and 2012). The research (which will be a PhD study through Macquarie University's "Australian Centre for Educational Studies") aims to investigate the expectations, aspirations and experiences of late-career and recently-retired principals in relation to the separation process. I am seeking your support and assistance with this venture. This project has the full support of the presidents of the two principals associations: Mr. Jim McAlpine (NSWSPC) & Mr. Geoff Scott (NSWPPA). Over the next 2 years there will be three possible types of involvement:

Phase 1: A survey which will be emailed (or posted) to you to be completed in late 2008.
The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Phase 2: Individual interviews where I would visit you to record your story in relation to the issues raised in the survey. The interviews will take approximately an hour. These interviews are planned for mid 2009.

Phase 3: The focus groups will be used to provide feedback on the preliminary findings. Each focus group will include representatives of the key stakeholders (late-career and recently-retired principals; employing authorities; and principals' associations).In this sense the focus groups will provide a principal's perspective on the findings (built on their knowledge, experience and expertise); an employing authority's perspective; and a professional association's perspective.

There will be three focus groups designed to capture two of the most critical variations in the research (geographic location and educational system):

- one NSWDET urban group
- one NSWDET rural group
- one Catholic Education Office urban group

Each focus group will have: 8-10 participants.

Phase 1 (the survey) is open to all volunteers who match the criteria for recently-retired or late-career principals (as outlined above). There will be at least 10% of the respondents to the surveys involved in Phase 2 (individual interviews) and some 18 principals involved in Phase 3 (focus groups).It will be possible to register an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** to be involved in Phase 2 (individual interviews) and Phase 3 (focus groups) at the time of the survey.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be central to this research.

Anonymity: Survey may be completed anonymously. Alternatively respondents who are willing to be interviewed in the follow up phase may choose to provide their name on the survey. In all subsequent written reports (including articles and thesis) and all oral reports (presentations, keynotes) no individual principal or individual school will be able to be identified with or linked to any survey responses.

Confidentiality:

The identity and school location of all respondents will be treated with total confidentiality by the researcher. All email communication will be protected by password which only myself (as researcher) will have access to. All email communication will be sent as "blind copies" so that no individual participant's name will appear on any email. All hard copies (emails, Consent Forms and Expressions of Interest) will be securely locked. Once data analysis is completed, all material (including tapes and transcripts) will be de-identified. All participants in the Interviews (Phase 2) will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses. All participants in the Focus Groups (Phase 3) will be asked to respect the confidentiality of those meetings.

The results of the of the research methods (surveys, interviews and focus groups) will be disseminated to all major stakeholders according to the protocols established with each stakeholder.

Phase 1: Survey

Survey Expression of Interest (EOI): An EOI is not a commitment to participate. The EOI means that you will be contacted closer to the survey time with more detailed information and a **Consent Form** prior to actually participating in the survey.

If you wish to lodge an **Expression of Interest** to be part of the survey (Phase 1) please:

1. email me: Lazenbymarks@bigpond.com ; or
2. phone me on 4889 8696(H) or 0412049637 (M); or
3. post a response to Warren Marks, PO Box 71, Hill Top. 2575

Survey Consent: Before the survey is distributed, you will be sent a consent form with full information about the survey. At that point if you **consent** to participate, you will be asked to return that email confirming your consent, before receiving access to the survey.

Phase 2: Interviews

At the time of the **survey consent form**, you will also receive an **Expression of Interest** for those survey participants who might wish to be consider for participation in Phase 2 (Interviews) in 2009. This EOI will be followed at a later date by an **Information Sheet** and **Consent Form** about your potential participation in the Interviews for your consideration. Again, registering an EOI for the Interviews (Phase 2) does not indicate a commitment to participate.

Phase 3: Focus Groups

At the time of the **survey consent form,** you will also receive an **Expression of Interest** for those survey participants who might wish to be considered for participation in Phase 3 (Focus Groups) in 2010. This EOI will be followed at a later date by an **Information Sheet** and **Consent Form** about your potential participation in the Focus Groups for your consideration. Again, registering an EOI for the Focus Groups (Phase 3) does not indicate a commitment to participate.

Your support for this project would be greatly appreciated.

Cheers,

Warren Marks

Appendix 3.10

Phase 1: Survey Information and Consent Form

Phase 2 and Phase 3: Expression of Interest Form

Retirement aspirations, expectations and experiences of New South Wales school principals: 2008-2012

You are invited to participate in a study of the separation patterns of school principals in New South Wales. The study investigates the current phenomenon of leadership separation and refocusing (exploring the expectations, experiences, expertise and aspirations of both late-career and recently-retired principals), with a view to drawing out implications for policy makers in educational leadership jurisdictions and for researchers in educational leadership theory. This research has been approved by Macquarie University (Australian Center for Educational Studies); Macquarie University Ethics Committee; NSW DET; and Catholic Education Offices (Sydney; Broken Bay; Wollongong and Parramatta).

The study is being conducted by Warren Marks:

- retired principal (New South Wales Department of Education and Training)
- 4889 8696 (H) or 0412049637 (W)
- PO Box 71, Hill Top. NSW, 25745
- Lazenbymarks@bigpond.com or
- Warren.Marks@det.nsw.edu.au

This study is being conducted to fulfill the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy (Educational Leadership). As previously indicated on the documentation where you registered your Expression of Interest ("Research Information and Phase 1 Expression of Interest"), there are three phases to this research project:

Phase 1: the survey
Phase 2: the individual interviews
Phase 3: the focus groups

If you consent to participate in Phase 1 (the survey) you will be asked to:

- Use the web link (when provided) which will give you access to the survey
- Complete the survey which will take approximately 15-20 minutes
- At Question 1 (your name): leave it blank if you wish your responses to be anonymous; or fill in your name if you wish to be considered for Phase 2 (individual interviews)

- The survey will seek your responses to your experiences, expectations, aspirations and reflections on being either a late-career principal (planning to retire between 2008 and 2012) or a recently-retired principal (having retired between 2004 and 2008). The questions will include your reasons for retirement; your assessment of your motivation and effectiveness in the principalship; your leadership professional development experiences; and your experiences or plans after separation.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be central to this research.
Anonymity: Survey may be completed anonymously. Alternatively respondents who are willing to be interviewed in the follow up phase should choose to provide their name on the survey. In all subsequent written reports (including articles and thesis) and all oral reports (presentations, keynotes) no individual principal or individual school will be able to be identified with or linked to any survey responses.

Confidentiality: The identity and school location of all respondents will be treated with total confidentiality by the researcher. All email communication will be protected by password which only myself (as researcher) will have access to. All email communication will be sent as "blind copies" so that no individual participant's name will appear on any email. All hard copies (emails, Consent Forms and Expressions of Interest) will be securely locked. Once data analysis is completed, all material (including tapes and transcripts) will be de-identified. All participants in the Interviews (Phase 2) will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses. All participants in the Focus Groups (Phase 3) will be asked to respect the confidentiality of those meetings.

The results of the of the research methods (surveys, interviews and focus groups) will be disseminated to all major stakeholders according to the protocols established with each stakeholder.

Consent to participate in Phase 1 (the survey)

I, ____________________________have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: ______________________________________

Investigator's Name: Warren Marks Date: _________________________

Expressions of Interest (for later phases of this research)

Please complete with a **YES** (on the lines provided), if you wish to register an EOI for one or both of the later phases of this research.

- **Expression of Interest** to participate in Phase 2 (Individual interviews) _______________

Please note: if you complete this Expression of Interest to be involved in Phase 2 (individual interviews) you should fill in your name at Question 1 when completing the survey on-line. If you do not complete your name on the survey, your responses will automatically be anonymous and then you cannot be considered for purposeful selection for Phase 2 (the individual interviews)

- **Expression of Interest** to participate in Phase 3 (Focus Groups) _______________

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Ethics Review Committee through its Secretary (telephone 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

Appendix 3.11

Pilot Group Invitation

Dear

Following our recent phone conversation, I am writing to formally thank you for agreeing to be to be part of the eight (8) principals (four late-career and four recently-retired) who form the pilot group to trial the questionnaire in relation to the planned research ("The perceptual meaning of the late-career and the transition to retirement phases for NSW principals").

As you are aware:

1. You were nominated by the president of either the NSWPPA or the NSWSPC
2. By being part of the pilot group you will not be participating in the remaining phases of the research as a participant
3. I will ensure that you are kept informed of the progress of each stage of the research
4. Your anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved (as per our discussion)

On 14th September I will email you the questionnaire. Imbedded in the email will be a link to the trial questionnaire. The instructions for accessing and completing the questionnaire will be in the email.

Following the return of the questionnaire I will send you a brief evaluation form (and also ring you) to gather your responses to the format and content of the questionnaire.

My sincere thanks for agreeing to be part of the pilot group.

Cheers,

Warren

1st September, 2008

Appendix 3.12

Pilot Group Feedback Survey

After completing the pilot survey could you please answer these questions:

1. Approximately **how long** did it take to complete the survey:_________________________
2. Was it **easy** or **difficult** to access the survey from the link: __________________________
3. Generally were the instructions **easy** or **difficult**: _________________________________
4. Nominate questions which were **confusing or difficult**:

   ____

5. Were the questions generally **relevant** for you: ____________________________________
6. Nominate the questions which were not relevant for you:____________________________
7. Please give any **comments or suggestions** to improve the survey:______________________

____

Thank you for your generous involvement in this pilot phase.

Warren Marks

Appendix 3.13

Late-career questionnaire

(Page 270 - 277)

1. The late-career principals

1. Personal information

Name (optional)

Date of birth

Country of birth

2. Personal Profile

The number of years in the teaching profession

The first year appointed as a substantive principal

The number of years as a substantive principal

The number of years in your current school as principal

The year you are planning to retire

Your academic qualifications

3. Geographic location of current principalship

- ◯ Sydney (including the Blue Mountains,the Central Coast & Sutherland Shire)
- ◯ Hunter (including Forster)
- ◯ Mid-North Coast (including Port Macquarie & Coffs Harbour)
- ◯ Richmond-Tweed (including Tamworth, Armidale & Moree)
- ◯ North Western(including Dubbo & Cobar)
- ◯ Far West
- ◯ Murray (including Wentwoth & Balranald)
- ◯ Murrumbidgee (including Wagga Wagga & Griffith)
- ◯ South-Eastern (including Bega, Cooma, Batemans Bay & Goulburn)
- ◯ Central West (including Cowra, Orange & Forbes)
- ◯ Illawarra (including Shoalhaven & the Southern Highlands)

Other (please specify)

4. Gender

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

5. Your current school is:

- ◯ Primary
- ◯ Secondary
- ◯ Central

6. Your employing authority is:

- ◯ NSWDET
- ◯ Catholic Education

7. Decision to retire: what is likely to be your MAIN reason to retire at the time indicated above?

- ◯ Nearing superannuation retirement age (go to Q.8)
- ◯ Reaching superannuation retirement age (go to Q.8)
- ◯ Personal health reasons (go to Q.9)
- ◯ Family reasons (go to Q.9)
- ◯ Professional reasons (go to Q.9)
- ◯ None of the above (go to Q.9)

Other (please specify)

8. Decision to retire: Superannuation implications (tick all applicable options).

If superannuation rules allowed (without financial penalty), would you consider staying-on past your retirement age to:

- ☐ Work in the same school and draw superannuation later?
- ☐ Draw superannuation when your scheme maximizes but continue in the same school?
- ☐ Work in a different school and draw superannuation later?
- ☐ Draw superannuation when your scheme maximizes but move to work in a different school?
- ☐ Job-share (part-time co-principalship) in the same school?
- ☐ Job-share (part-time co-principalship) in another school?
- ☐ I would not delay my retirement for any of the above reasons (go to Question 10)

Other (please specify)

9. Decision NOT to retire (tick all applicable options).

If you ticked any options to stay past retirement age (Q.8 above), what reasons might you have for "staying-on"(tick all applicable options):

- [ ] Financial
- [ ] Intellectual challenge
- [ ] Social interaction (with a school community of students, parents & staff)
- [ ] Feeling too young to retire
- [ ] Wishing to leave a deeper legacy
- [ ] None of the above

Other (please specify)

10. Decision to work in retirement: (tick all applicable options).

- [ ] I would like to work in retirement
- [ ] I expect to work in retirement
- [ ] I have made plans to work in retirement
- [ ] I will actively seek work once I have retired
- [ ] I will wait to be approached to work in retirement
- [ ] I would like an opportunity to register interest in post-retirement work (at a principal level)with my employer
- [ ] I do not wish to work in retirement (if you ticked here,then move to question 16)
- [ ] None of the above

Other (please specify)

11. Decision to work in retirement: work field (tick all applicable options)

- [ ] I would seek to work in an education-related field
- [ ] I would seek to work in a non education-related field
- [ ] I would expect to need new/additional training
- [ ] None of the above

Other (please specify)

12. Decision to work in retirement: type of work in retirement: (tick all applicable options).

If you undertake work in retirement, would you wish it to be:

- [ ] Full-time
- [ ] Regular part-time
- [ ] Occasional part-time
- [ ] Casual
- [ ] Salaried employee
- [ ] Self-employed
- [ ] Voluntary
- [ ] None of the above

Other (please specify)

13. Decision to work in retirement: reasons for working in retirement.

Prioritize your reasons from 1 (the main reason) to 5 (the least reason).

Financial	
Intellectual engagement	
Sharing of professional experience and expertise	
Social interaction	
Community service	

14. Decision to work in retirement: family situation (tick all applicable options).

At present

- [ ] I have children who require significant financial support from me (e.g. with studies)
- [ ] I have aged parent(s)/ family member(s) who require significant financial support from me
- [ ] Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

15. Decision to work in retirement: voluntary work (tick all applicaable options)

Are you planning to do any voluntary work in:

- [ ] The educational community
- [ ] The wider community
- [ ] Neither of the above

16. Late-career principalship: effectiveness.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship, how would you rate your effectiveness in this late-career phase?

- ◯ Highly effective
- ◯ Strongly effective
- ◯ Moderately effective
- ◯ Marginally effective

Other (please specify)

17. Late-career principalship: motivation.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship,how would you rate your motivational levels in this late-career phase?

- ◯ Highly motivated
- ◯ Strongly motivated
- ◯ Moderately motivated
- ◯ Marginally motivated

Other (please specify)

18. Late-career principalship: satisfaction.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship, how would you rate your satisfaction level in this late-career?

- ◯ Highly satisfied
- ◯ Strongly satisfied
- ◯ Moderately satisfied
- ◯ Marginally satisfied

Other (please specify)

19. Late-career principaship: professional development.

In comparison to other sources (programs, courses, conferences), how would you rate the leadership development you have received "along the way" from late-career principals:

- ◯ More effective
- ◯ Equally effective
- ◯ Less effective

20. Late-career principalship: professional development (tick all applicable options)

In this late-career phase of your principalship, have you:

- ☐ used high level consultancy skills (mentoring, coaching and facilitation)with leadership aspirants
- ☐ delivered leadership preparation sessions to leadership aspirants (outside your own school)
- ☐ Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

21. Late-career principalship: professional development(tick all applicaable options)

In this late-career phase of your principalship, would you like to be offered:

- ☐ professional development in high level consultancy skills (mentoring, coaching and facilitation)
- ☐ an opportunity to be involved with the leadership preparation of aspiring leaders (outside your own school)
- ☐ Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

22. Leadership: which of the following leadership theories best describes your style?

- ◯ Distibutive leadership
- ◯ Instructional leadership
- ◯ Transformational leadership
- ◯ None of the above

Other (please specify)

23. Leadership: rank these leadership theories starting with "1" for the theory which you know most about:

Distributive leadership ☐

Instructional leadership ☐

Transformational leadership ☐

24. Leadership: how would you best describe your knowledge of these three leadership theories:

◯ Deep knowledge

◯ Working knowledge

◯ Little knowledge

25. Leadership: late-career principals involved in leadership preparation programs need to be conversant with current leadership theories (e.g. Distributive Leadership; Instructional Leadership; Transformational Leadership):

◯ Strongly agree

◯ Agree

◯ Disagree

26. Preparation for retirement: how well do you believe you are preparing for retirement?

◯ Extremely well

◯ Moderately well

◯ Not very well

Other (please specify)

27. In retirement: preferred activities.

List in preferred order three activities you plan to do in retirement?

1.

2.

3.

28. In retirement: difficulties.

List in order what you anticipate might be the three most difficult things about retirement?

1.

2.

3.

29. In retirement: satisfaction. Do you expect retirement to be?

- ◯ Extremely satisfying
- ◯ Strongly satisfying
- ◯ Moderately satisfying
- ◯ Unsatisfying

Other (please specify)

Appendix 3.14

Recently-retired questionnaire

(Page 279 – 286)

1. The recently-retired principals

1. Personal information

Name (optional)

Date of birth

Country of birth

2. Personal Profile

The number of years in the teaching profession

The first year appointed as a substantive principal

The number of years as a substantive principal

The number of years in your last school as principal

The year you retired

Your academic qualifications

3. Geographic location in retirement

- Sydney (including the Blue Mountains,the Central Coast & Sutherland Shire)
- Hunter (including Forster)
- Mid-North Coast (including Port Macquarie & Coffs Harbour)
- Richmond-Tweed (including Tamworth, Armidale & Moree)
- North Western(including Dubbo & Cobar)
- Far West
- Murray (including Wentwoth & Balranald)
- Murrumbidgee (including Wagga Wagga & Griffith)
- South-Eastern (including Bega, Cooma, Batemans Bay & Goulburn)
- Central West (including Cowra, Orange & Forbes)
- Illawarra (including Shoalhaven & the Southern Highlands)

Other (please specify)

4. Gender

- Male
- Female

5. Your final school as principal was:

- Primary
- Secondary
- Central

6. Your employing authority was:

◯ NSWDET

◯ Catholic Education

7. Decision to retire: what was your MAIN reason to retire at the time indicated above?

◯ Nearing superannuation retirement age (go to Q.8)

◯ Reaching superannuation retirement age (go to Q.8)

◯ Personal health reasons (go to Q.9)

◯ Family reasons (go to Q.9)

◯ Professional reasons (go to Q.9)

◯ None of the above (go to Q.9)

Other (please specify)

8. Decision to retire: Superannuation implications (tick all applicable options).

If superannuation rules allowed (without financial penalty), would you have consider staying-on past your retirement to:

☐ Work in the same school and draw superannuation later?

☐ Draw superannuation when your scheme maximized but continue in the same school?

☐ Work in a different school and draw superannuation later?

☐ Draw superannuation when your scheme maximized but move to work in a different school?

☐ Job-share (part-time co-principalship) in the same school?

☐ Job-share (part-time co-principalship) in another school?

☐ I would not have delayed my retirement for any of the above reasons (go to Question 10)

Other (please specify)

9. Decision NOT to retire (tick all applicable options).

If you ticked any options to stay past retirement age (Q.8 above), what reasons might you have had for "staying-on":

- ☐ Financial
- ☐ Intellectual challenge
- ☐ Social interaction (with a school community of students, parents & staff)
- ☐ Feeling too young to retire
- ☐ Wishing to leave a deeper legacy
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

10. Decision to work in retirement: (tick all applicable options).

- ☐ I wanted to work in retirement
- ☐ I expected to work in retirement
- ☐ I made plans to work in retirement
- ☐ I actively sought work once I have retired
- ☐ I was approached to work in retirement
- ☐ I would have liked an opportunity to register interest in post-retirement work (at a principal level)with my employer
- ☐ I did not wish to work in retirement (if you ticked here,then move to question 16)
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

11. Decision to work in retirement: work field (tick all applicable options)

- ☐ I sought work in an education-related field
- ☐ I sought work in a non education-related field
- ☐ I needed new/additional training
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

12. Decision to work in retirement: type of work in retirement: (tick all applicable options).

Have you undertaken any of the following types of work in retirement:

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Regular part-time
- ☐ Occasional part-time
- ☐ Casual
- ☐ Salaried employee
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Voluntary
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

13. Decision to work in retirement: reasons for working in retirement.

Prioritize your reasons from 1 (the main reason) to 5 (the least reason).

- Financial ☐
- Intellectual engagement ☐
- Sharing of professional experience and expertise ☐
- Social interaction ☐
- Community service ☐

14. Decision to work in retirement: family situation (tick all applicable options).

At present

- ☐ I have children who require significant financial support from me (e.g. with studies)
- ☐ I have aged parent(s)/ family member(s) who require significant financial support from me
- ☐ Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

15. Decision to work in retirement: voluntary work.

Have you undertaken any voluntary work in:

- ◯ The educational community
- ◯ The wider community
- ◯ Neither of the above

16. Late-career principalship: effectiveness.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship, how would you rate your effectiveness in your late-career phase?

- ◯ Highly effective
- ◯ Strongly effective
- ◯ Moderately effective
- ◯ Marginally effective

Other (please specify)

17. Late-career principalship: motivation.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship,how would you rate your motivational levels in your late-career phase?

- ◯ Highly motivated
- ◯ Strongly motivated
- ◯ Moderately motivated
- ◯ Marginally motivated

Other (please specify)

18. Late-career principalship: satisfaction.

Compared to earlier times in your principalship, how would you rate your satisfaction level in your late-career?

- ◯ Highly satisfied
- ◯ Strongly satisfied
- ◯ Moderately satisfied
- ◯ Marginally satisfied

Other (please specify)

19. Late-career principaship: professional development.

In comparison to other sources (programs, courses, conferences), how would you rate the leadership development you received "along the way" from late-career principals:

- ○ More effective
- ○ Equally effective
- ○ Less effective

20. Late-career principalship: professional development.

In the late-career phase of your principalship, did you:

- ☐ use high level consultancy skills (mentoring, coaching and facilitation)with leadership aspirants
- ☐ deliver leadership preparation sessions to leadership aspirants (outside your own school)
- ☐ Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

21. Late-career principalship: professional development.

In the late-career phase of your principalship, would you have liked to have been offered:

- ☐ professional development in high level consultancy skills (mentoring, coaching and facilitation)
- ☐ an opportunity to be involved with the leadership preparation of aspiring leaders (outside your own school)
- ☐ Neither of the above

Other (please specify)

22. Leadership: which of the following leadership theories best described your style?

- ○ Distributive Leadership
- ○ Instuctional Leadership
- ○ Transformational Leadership
- ○ None of the above

23. Leadership:rank these leadership theories starting with "1' for the theory which you know most about:

Distributive Leadership

Instructional Leadership

Transformational Leadership

24. Leadership: how would you best desribe your knowledge of these three leadership theories:

- ◯ Deep knowledge
- ◯ Working knowledge
- ◯ Lille knowledge

25. Leadership: recently-retired principals involved in leadership preparation programs need to be conversant with current leadership theories (e.g. Distributive Leadership; Instructional Leadership; Transformational Leadership):

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Disagree

26. Preparation for retirement: on reflection, how well did you prepare for retirement?

- ◯ Extremely well
- ◯ Moderately well
- ◯ Not very well

Other (please specify)

27. In retirement: preferred activities.

List in order the three activities you have preferred to do in retirement?

1.
2.
3.

28. In retirement: difficulties.

List in order what you have found be the three most difficult things about retirement?

1.
2.
3.

29. In retirement: satisfaction. How would you rate your satisfaction with retirement?:

- ◯ Extremely satisfying
- ◯ Strongly satisfying
- ◯ Moderately satisfying
- ◯ Unsatisfying

Other (please specify)

30. In retirement: experiences. How would you rate your experiences of retirement in comparison to your expectations:

- ◯ Better than expected
- ◯ The same as expected
- ◯ More disappointing than expected
- ◯ None of the above

Appendix 3.15

Late-career questionnaire email

From: Marks, Warren
Sent: Sunday, 30 November 2008 5:19 PM
Subject: Research Survey

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in the research about retired principals. Phase 1 (the survey) is now distributed for your participation. Please find below the link to the survey.

Here are some instructions to look over first which will assist when completing the survey:

Question 1: "*Your name*" is optional.

- If you have indicated that you are willing to be involved in either Phase 2 (individual interviews) or Phase 3 (focus groups) you should fill in your name
- If you wish your responses to be **anonymous** do not fill in your name

Errors: You can change any answer at any time by just clicking again on the response you wish to erase; and then complete that question again.

Review and Change: You can go back to any response at any time and change the answer.

Comments: Many questions have an *"Other"* section at the end. Here you can type in any additional information you wish to add. Such responses may prove very beneficial to the research.

When finished: Click on *"Done"* and the survey will automatically be returned to me.

To commence: Click on the link below to access the survey.

Return date: It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by 31st December, 2008.

Enquiries: If you have any questions please send me a reply email or phone on 0412049637 (M) or 4889 8696 (H)

Thank you for being involved in this research project. I will keep everyone informed of the results as they become available.

Cheers,
Warren
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zck0Gh6lN9fOiWxNN1qh3g_3d_3d

Appendix 3.16

Recently-retired questionnaire email

From: Marks, Warren
Sent: Sunday, 30 November 2008 5:09 PM
Subject: Research Survey

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in the research about retired principals. Phase 1 (the survey) is now distributed for your participation. Please find below the link to the survey.

Here are some instructions to look over first which will assist when completing the survey:

Question 1: "*Your name*" is optional.

- If you have indicated that you are willing to be involved in either Phase 2 (individual interviews) or Phase 3 (focus groups) you should fill in your name
- If you wish your responses to be **anonymous** do not fill in your name

Errors: You can change any answer at any time by just clicking again on the response you wish to erase; and then complete that question again.

Review and Change: You can go back to any response at any time and change the answer.

Comments: Many questions have an *"Other"* section at the end. Here you can type in any additional information you wish to add. Such responses may prove very beneficial to the research.

When finished: Click on *"Done"* and the survey will automatically be returned to me.

To commence: Click on the link below to access the survey.

Return date: It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by 31st December, 2008.

Enquiries: If you have any questions please send me a reply email or phone on 0412049637 (M) or 4889 8696 (H)

Thank you for being involved in this research project. I will keep everyone informed of the results as they become available.

Cheers,
Warren

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=mCxjxJfk8pnUC_2bnLyjd7Bg_3d_3d

Appendix 3.17

Questionnaire statistical analysis

The following sets of data are stored on separate file named Appendix 3.17:

- Sample Group A (late-career principals) Questionnaire Response Count
- Sample Group B (recently-retired principals) Questionnaire Response Count
- Sample Group A (late-career principals) Questionnaire Statistical Analysis (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)
- Sample Group B (recently-retired principals) Questionnaire Statistical Analysis (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)

Appendix 3.18

Late-career principal interview sampling (selection) process

Dimension 1: personal variables

To maintain a consistent ratio of the variables (geographical location, gender and school level) for Sample Group A (N=100) who completed the questionnaire, the following ratio of late-career principals was utilized to form the interview cohort:

Geographical Location (Item 3): 16 rural and 12 metropolitan principals;

Gender (Item 4): 18 males and 10 females; and

School Level (Item 5): 20 primary and 8 secondary principals.

This created a late-career interview cohort of twenty-eight (N=28). Attention was then given to the three Phase 1 questionnaire dimensions which had been chosen for deeper exploration (Dimensions 2, 4 and 6).

Dimension 2: retirement

Questionnaire item 8 (Options not to retire) registered 72.7% support. To explore this high response rate the selection of respondents to be interviewed included eight (8) respondents who opted not to stay-on for any reason; nine (9) respondents who opted to stay-on but not in a shared/ co-principalship model; and eleven (11) who favoured staying-on in a shared/co-principalship model (the most favoured response). The twenty (20) respondents to be interviewed who favoured staying-on (in some form) represented 71.4% of the late-career interview cohort (N=28). These numbers/ percentages reflected the response to “staying-on” registered in the Phase 1 questionnaires

Dimension 4: leadership

Questionnaire item 16 (Effectiveness in late-career) indicated that 90.8 % of respondents saw themselves as *highly/strongly effective* whilst only 9.2% saw themselves as *moderately/marginally effective*; item 17 (Motivation in late-career) indicated that 83.0 % saw themselves as *highly/ strongly motivated* whilst only 17.0% saw themselves as *moderately/marginally motivated*; but in item 18 (Satisfaction in late-career) just 65.9 % saw themselves as *highly/ strongly satisfied*; whilst 34.1% saw themselves as *moderately/marginally satisfied*. In order to more deeply explore this significantly lower rating for “satisfaction in late-career ”, nineteen (l9) respondents (representing 67.9% of the interview cohort) from the *highly/ strongly satisfied* cohort and nine (9) respondents (representing 32.1% of the interview cohort) from the *moderately/marginally satisfied* groups were included in the late-career interview cohort (N=28).

Dimension 6: projection into retirement

Questionnaire item 28 (Perceived difficulties in retirement) indentified the greatest potential difficulties in retirement as being the emotional issues of: (1) social and professional isolation 21.8%; loss of purpose and identity 20.4%; and loss of intellectual stimulation 18.2%. Together these three sub-sections accounted for 60.4% of the responses. In order to explore this response more deeply sixteen (16) respondents (60.7% of the interview cohort) who identified these emotional issues as their major concerns (and eight who did not) were included in the late-career interview cohort (N=28). These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for this item in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

The final late-career interview cohort (N=28) met *all* the criteria outlined.

Appendix 3.19

Recently-retired principal interviews sampling (selection) process

Dimension 1: personal variables

To maintain a consistent ratio of the variables (geographical location, gender and school level) for Sample Group B (N=108) who completed the questionnaire, the following ratio of recently-retired principals was utilized in the interview cohort (N=26):

Geographical Location (Item 3): 12 rural and 14 metropolitan principals;

Gender (Item 4): 14 males and 12 females; and

School Level (Item 5): 19 primary and 7 secondary principals.

Using this as a basis for compiling the recently-retired interview cohort, attention was then given to the three Phase 1 questionnaire dimensions which had been chosen for deeper exploration (Dimensions 2, 3 and 6).

Dimension 2: retirement

Questionnaire item 8 (Options not to retire) registered 79.3 % support. To explore this high response more deeply the selection of respondents to be interviewed included five (5) respondents who opted not to stay-on for any reason; ten (10) respondents who opted to stay-on but not in a shared/ co-principalship model; and eleven (11) who favoured staying-on in a shared/co-principalship model (the most favoured response). The twenty-one (21) respondents to be interviewed who favoured staying-on represented 80.7 % of the recently-retired interview cohort (N=26). These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for this item in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

Dimension 3: work in retirement (refocusing)

Questionnaire item 10 (Decision to work: or not) identified that 97.3% of recently-retired principals wished to work in some capacity with only 2.7% indicating that they didn't wish to be involved in any type of work. Item 11 (Decision to work: work field) indicated that 80.4% of respondents wished to work in education-related fields whilst 19.6% wished to work in non-education related fields. Item 12 (Decision to work: work type) indicated that the majority (57.3%) favoured some form of part-time work; voluntary work appealed to 18.5% of respondents; whilst both being self-employed and working full-time each attracted 11.5% support. To explore this high response more deeply the selection of respondents to be interviewed included fourteen (14) who favoured part-time work; six (6) who opted for voluntary work; three (3) who opted for being self-employed; and three (3) who opted for full-time work. These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for these items in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

Dimension 6: reflection on retirement

Questionnaire Item 28 (Perceived difficulties in retirement) indentified the greatest potential difficulties in retirement as being the emotional issues of: (1) social and professional isolation 31.2 %; loss of purpose and identity 20.0%; and loss of intellectual stimulation 10.5%. Together these sub-sections accounted for 61.7% of the responses. In order to explore this response more deeply sixteen (16) respondents (61.5 % of the interview cohort) who identified these emotional issues as their major concerns (and 10 who did not) were included in the recently-retired interview cohort (N=26). These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for this item in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

Questionnaire Item 29 (Satisfaction with retirement) identified that 49.1 % of respondents were *extremely satisfied;* 42.6 % were *strongly satisfied;* and 8.3 % were *moderately satisfied.* In order to explore this response more deeply thirteen (13) respondents (50.0%) who identified as being *extremely satisfied;* eleven (11) respondents (42.3 %) who identified as being *strongly satisfied;* and two (2) respondents (7.7%) who identified as being *moderately satisfied* were included in the recently-retired interview cohort (N=26). These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for this item in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

Questionnaire Item 30 (Experiences in retirement compared to expectations about retirement) identified that 54.6% of respondents found retirement to be *better than expected*; 35.2% identified retirement as being the *same as expected;* whilst 8.3% found retirement to be *more disappointing than expected*. In order to explore this response more deeply fourteen (14) who identified retirement as being *better than expected*; ten (10) who judged retirement to be the *same as expected*; and two (2) who found retirement to be *more disappointing* than expected were included in the recently-retired interview cohort (N=26).These numbers/percentages reflected the response registered for this item in the Phase 1 questionnaires.

The final recently-retired interview cohort (N=26) met *all* the criteria outlined.

Appendix 3.20

Late-career Interview Questions

DIMENSION 1

Name: ____________________________________

Level: _____________________________________

Location: __________________________________

Gender: ___________________________________

Date: _____________________________________

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT FROM PRINCIPALSHIP

Category 1: Opening question (non questionnaire item)

Q.1.What are your feelings about your approaching retirement?

Category 2: Options to retire or to stay-on (Item 8)

Q.2. From our research so far, principals have expressed interest in co-principalship (i.e. some form of job-sharing as a principal):

2.1 Do you believe that co-principalship (and/or staying-on) can benefit the school and student outcomes? If so how?

Category 3: Personal interest in co-principalship (Item 8)

2.2 Under what conditions might co-principalship interest you?

DIMENSION 4: LATE-CAREER LEADERSHIP

Category 4: Effectiveness (Item 16); Motivation (Item 17); and Satisfaction levels (Item 18)

Q.3.From our research so far, principals are indicating a very high level of *effectiveness* in, and *motivation* for the role of principal. However, the principals are indicating a much lower level of *satisfaction* with the role.

What factors/influences do you believe are leading to this variation?

DIMENSION 6: PROJECTION INTO RETIREMENT (INCLUDING DIMENSION 3: WORK IN RETIREMENT)

Category 5: Social Isolation (Item 28)

Q.4.1 From our research so far, *social isolation (in retirement)* present as problems. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?

Category 6: Professional Isolation (Item 28)

Q.4.2 From our research so far, *professional isolation (in retirement)* present as problems. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?

Category 7: Intellectual Stimulation (Item 28)

Q.5. From our research so far, *lack of intellectual stimulation and boredom (in retirement)* present as problems. Might this be an issue for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?

Category 8: Loss of Identity/ Purpose (Item 28)

Q.6. From our research so far, *loss of purpose; loss of identity and loss of esteem (in retirement)* present as problems. Might these be issues for you? If so how do you plan to safeguard against this?

Category 9: Projection (Item 27)

Q.7.What is your “perfect picture” of life in five years time?

Category 10: Preparation/Readiness (Item 26 plus 29)

Q.8. How would you describe your “readiness to retire” (physically, professionally, intellectually, financially & emotionally)?

Appendix 3.21

Recently-retired Interview questions

DIMENSION 1

Name:____________________________________

Level:_____________________________________

Location:__________________________________

Gender:___________________________________

Date:______________________________________

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT FROM PRINCIPALSHIP

Category 1: Opening question (non questionnaire item)

Q.1.What are your feelings about your retirement?

Category 2: Options to retire or to stay-on (Item 8)

Q.2.1. Do you now think you retired too early? Would you have liked to have stay-on?

Q.2.2. Do you believe that co-principalship (and/or staying-on) can benefit the school and student outcomes? If so how?

Category 3: Interest in co-principalship ((Item 8)

Q.3. Under what conditions might co-principalship/ job-sharing have interested you?

DIMENSION 3: WORK IN RETIREMENT

Category 4: Decision to work (Items 10 and 12)

Q.4.If you have worked in retirement can you explain the type of work and how that came about?

DIMENSION 6: REFLECTIONS ON RETIREMENT (INCLUDING DIMENSION 4: LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALSHIP)

Category 5: Social Isolation (Item 28)

Q.5. From our research so far, *social and professional (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?

Category 6: Intellectual Stimulation (Item 28)

Q.6. From our research so far, *lack of intellectual stimulation and boredom (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?

Category 7: Loss of Identity/ Purpose (Item 28)

Q.7. From our research so far, *loss of purpose; loss of identity and loss of esteem (in retirement)* present as problems. Has this be an issue for you? If so how did you deal with it?

Category 8: Retirement life-style (Items 26-30)

Q.8.What are the components of your “retired” life-style?

Q.9.What changes would you like to make to your current life-style?

Category 9 (Item 29)

Q.10. On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate your “satisfaction” with retirement?

Category 10 (Item 30)

Q.11. On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate your “real experiences of retirement” matched with your previous “expectations of retirement”?

Category 11 (Item 26)

Q.12. On reflection, how “ready to retire” were you (physically, professionally, intellectually, financially & emotionally)?

Category 12 (Item 26)

Q.13. On reflection, how “prepared for retirement” were you (physically, professionally, financial, intellectually & emotionally)?

Appendix 3.22

Coding list for late-career interviews

Coding system

P=Primary (N=22)

S=Secondary (including Central School =8)

M=Male (N=18)

F=female (N=12)

M=metropolitan (N= 12)

R= Rural & non-Metropolitan (N=18): according to gender colour

Names withdrawn	Code	Comment
	LC:PMR 1	1
	LC:PMR 2	2
	LC:PMR 3	3
	LC:PMR 4	4
	LC:PMR 5	5
	LC:PMR 6	6
	LC:PMR 7	7
	LC:PMR 8	8
	LC:PFM1	9
	LC:PFR 2	10
	LC:PFR 3	11
	LC:PFR 4	12
	LC:PFR 5	13
	LC:PMM 1	14
	LC:PMM 2	15
	LC:PMM 3	16
	LC:PMM 4	17
	LC:PMM 5	18
	LC:PFM 1	19
	LC:PFM 2	20
	LC:PFM 3	21
	LC:PFM 4	22
	LC:SMR 1	23
	LC:SMR 2	24
	LC:SMR 3	25
	LC:SMR 4	26
	LC:SMM 5	27
	LC:SFR 1	28
	LC:SFR 2	29
	LC:SFM 1	30

Appendix 3.23

Coding list for recently-retired interviews

Coding system

P=Primary (N=19)

S=Secondary (including Central School =7)

M=Male (N=14)

F=female (N=12)

M=Metropolitan (N= 12)

R=Rural (N=14)

R= Rural /non-Metropolitan (N=14): according to gender colour

Names withdrawn	Code	Comment
	RR:PMR 1	1
	RR:PMR 2	2
	RR:PMR 3	3
	RR:PMR 4	4
	RR:PMR 5	5
	RR:PMR 6	6
	RR:PMR 7	7
	RR:PMR 8	8
	RR:PMR 9	9
	RR:PFR1	10
	RR:PFR 2	11
	RR:PFR 3	12
	RR:PMM 1	13
	RR:PMM 2	14
	RR:PMM 3	15
	RR:PFM 1	16
	RR:PFM 2	17
	RR:PFM 3	18
	RR:PFM 4	19
	RR:SMR 1	20
	RR:SMM 1	21
	RR:SFR 1	22
	RR:SFM 1	23
	RR:SFM 2	24
	RR:SFM3	25
	RR:SFM4	26

Appendix 3.24
Late-career Interview Responses

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT (+ DIMENSION 3: WORK IN RETIREMENT)

CATEGORY 1 (Q.1.): FEELINGS ABOUT RETIREMENT

Negative: anxious and fearful of unknown; plus boredom

Positive: but also anxious.

Anxious: positive but fearful of unknown and loss of purpose

Positive: because of a difficult and negative staff (escape)

Positive: with caution about spouse relationship in retirement

Negative: fearful about loss of work and purpose

Positive: with fear of going too long in other's eyes

Anxious: dubious about loss of work

Positive: with a nervous anxiety about my life's next phase

Positive: with concerns about loss of work habit

Negative: trepidation and resistance to the idea

Anxious: Fear and resistance of unknown; positive about my hobbies

Anxious: positive but fearful about retirement in small country town

Positive: but anxious about become bored and depressed

Positive: looking forward to less stress and better health

Positive: following anxiety breakdown I'm preparing for retirement

Negative: a deep fear of not being useful or wanted

Positive: at 50 I set up a retirement plan to fund my passion (boating)

Anxious: boredom with the role is primary motivator to retire

Negative: exhausted, bored but not ready to retire & lose being part of "their team"

Negative: nervous and anxious yet always thought I'd be keen and excited

Negative: expecting an unsettled time but change will be good

Anxious: looking forward to hobbies but concerned about boredom & health

Unsure: won't know till it happens

Anxious: excited about having time; anxious about boredom/ loss of purpose

Anxious: sense of grief and loss; and sense of excitement and anticipation

Anxious: fear of loss of intellectual capacity in retirement

Positive: but not ready yet

Positive: excited about new ventures

Ambivalent: if I didn't have other work already arranged I wouldn't retire

CATEGORY 2 (ITEM 8; Q.2.1): OPTIONS TO RETIRE OR STAY-ON IN JOB-SHARE

Supportive: enormous benefits if shared/ common beliefs and values

Supportive: if right people involved; freedom to be educational leader

Opposed: there can only ever be one boss.

Supportive: especially if **Transitional Model**

Opposed: due to lack of **consistency**

Supportive: brilliant especially **Transition Model**

Supportive: if consistent values and beliefs; **consistency** would be difficult

Opposed: no real value given the problems

Supportive: **Transitional Model** would be brilliant; community support essential

Supportive: especially if **Transitional Model**

Supportive: but doubts whether common it would accept the scheme

Supportive: a way of capturing the expertise before it "walks out the door"

Opposed: no real benefits

Supportive: compatibility essential and **Transitional Model** a good concept

Supportive: two sets of skills and energy

Opposed: only one person can "hold the keys"

Supportive: but only to share responsibility; not authority. **Transition Mode**l supported

Supportive: significant benefits to school culture

Opposed: cannot share the "head knowledge" of situations which principal carries

Opposed: too many variables in personality and practices

Supportive: multitude of benefits but communities would not support the concept

Supportive: great **Transition Model;** stops the baby boomer expertise wastage

Supportive: students would ultimately benefit

Supportive: but could be very confusing as to "who is running the show"

Supportive: would alleviate loss of corporate knowledge

Supportive: far better utilization of expertise and skills

Opposed: traditional belief that there can only ever be one head

Opposed: there can only ever be one "boss"; and **consistency** would be impossible

Opposed: no real benefits; and **consistency** would be impossible

Opposed: cannot see any great benefits

CATEGORY 3 (ITEM 8; Q.2.2): INTERESTED IN CO-PRINCIPALSHIP

Interested: under **Transitional Model,** with involvement in **selection process**

Interested: under **Transitional Model** using PTLWOP

Only-interested: if **District Principal Mentor Model**

Interested: under **Transition al Model** or **District Principal Mentor Model**

Interested: under **Transitional Model**

Interested: under **Transitional Model**

Interested: under **Transitional Model** which would work brilliantly

Interested: under **Transitional Model** which would address poor candidates

Only-interested: if I was involved in the **selection proces**s **for compatibility**

Interested: if I was significantly involved in the **selection process for compatibility**

Interested: I would need to be involved in **selection process** for **compatibility**

Interested: in **Transitional Model**; **District Principal Mentor**; and involvement in **selection**

Only-interested: if **District Principal Mentor Model**

Interested: in **Transitional Model**; **District Principal Mentor**; and **involvement in selection**

Interested: in **Transitional Model** which would be excellent leadership preparation

Only-interested: if **District Principal Mentor** role (mainly small schools)

Interested: if **Transitional Model** or **District Mentor Model**

Interested: if **Transitional Model**

Interested: if **Transitional Model** with another female

Not interested: Transitional Model wouldn't work as senior partner would dominate

Only-interested: if total compatibility otherwise lack of **consistency**

Interested: if total compatibility; **involved in selection process** and a **sunset clause**

Interested: if **Transitional Model**

Only-interested: if **District Principal Mentor Model**

Interested: if **involved in selection process to ensure compatibility**

Interested: if **involved in selection process to ensure compatibility**

Interested: If **Transition Model** allowing great PD and delivers 2 principals' expertise

Not-interested: it would never work for me or in this context

Not-interested: it would never work in Secondary but might work in Primary

Interested: if **Transitional Model** and if **involved in selection process**

DIMENSION 4: LATE-CAREER LEADERSHIP

CATEGORY 4 (ITEMS 16-18; Q.3.): FACTORS CAUSING LOWER SATISFACTION RATES

Consultation/ communication: poor or non-existent; opinions not valued. **Exit surveys** would help

Baby boomer "perfection madness" ; never satisfied

Personal modeling: I model enthusiasm and so satisfaction will be if I'm doing it right

Staffing (no control); outrageous **paper work**; and **site manager role** a distraction

Personal career-path: staying too long in one place

Consultation/ communication: poor or non-existent; opinions not valued. **Exit surveys** would help

Staffing (no control); outrageous **admin/paper work**; and **site manager role** a distraction

Political interference/ agenda; **hostile parents/community members**

Administration blow-out; **inflexible "one-size-fits all" bureaucracy**; **principals failing to reflect & self-praise**

Administration responsibilities (OH&S); **lack of line supervisor support**

Administration responsibilities (OH&S) **dealing with mental health issue**

Personal motivation: unfulfilled idealism reduces satisfaction

Personal motivation: **staffing (no control)**; and **hostile parents/community members**

Lack of system support; **political interference; administrative role**; **welfare/mental health cases**

Email driven administration agenda; **political interference/agenda**

Personal well-being: impacts significantly on satisfaction

Personal responsibility: just like "happiness"

Political interference/ agenda; **one-size-fits all bureaucracy**; **staffing (no control)***

Communication: lack of recognition; **unrealistic system/administrative demands**

Lack of system support/ respect; **constant politically-driven change**; **micro-management**

Administrative, accountability-driven demands; fun has been taken out of schools

Administrative-driven quick decisions; **constant politically-driven change**

Desk-driven administrative agendas; **politically driven agendas**; **site-management role****

Personal: staying too long; **staffing (no control)**; **excessive administration**

Political agendas/ interference; **staffing/ finances (lack of control)**; **excessive administration**

Site-manager (not educator); **political agendas**; **communication lack of recognition/ gratitude**

Personal: natural phenomena of experience; **staffing (lack of control)**

Constant politically driven change; **site-based management**; **staffing (no control)**; technology

Communication: lack of decision-making time; **politically driven agenda change**

Communication: rapid response time resulting in poor decisions; **constant political change**;

centralization

DIMENSION 6: PROJECTION INTO RETIREMENT

CATEGORY 5 (ITEM 28; Q.4.): SOCIAL ISOLATION

Huge problem. **Not born here and so no networks**. Will need to rely on artificiality of **community groups** to avoid social isolation

No problem. I have many social outlets, groups and activities already

Big problem which is a natural consequence of retirement. I'm feeling excluded already.

No problem. I think I'll be alright here as **I have friends and activities**

Not a problem. I have groups and activities. **My whole life was not the job**

A problem. I haven't given this enough attention but I'll find something to do.

A big problem. **Social networks in a small town are very difficult**. **Work masks this problem**.

A big problem. If you give your **"heart & soul" to the job** and don't cultivate social networks before retirement this could be a big trap.

Not a problem. **I have a wide circle of friends**. But if I allowed **school to be "my life"** this would have created a huge social isolation problem.

Not a problem. **I have friendship groups already**. Enough **financial comfort** to socialize does worry me; and being "seen" as "passed-it"

A big problem is isolation: **gender** ; **special schools** ; **spouse/ family** ; **geographic**

A problem. **Professional isolation** (a natural consequence of retirement) leads to social isolation.

A big problem. Although I have crafts/ hobbies I could easily become reclusive.

Not a problem. **I already have a wide circle of friends and interests.**

Not a problem. However geographic location can be a danger to social activity in retirement.

Not a problem. Following my breakdown I've taken stock and will be ready.

A huge problem. **Social interactions connected to work will evapourate overnight**. I will be relying on **volunteer community activities**.

A big problem. I have taken deliberate actions: new ventures, learning and plans with my spouse.

A big problem. **I'm concerned about how I replace the everyday social contacts through work**.

A huge problem. **Grief & loss like a divorce. Loss of social contact is dangerous for me.**

A problem. We are planning to relocate (a tree-change) and I'm fearful of social isolation.

Not a problem. I'm looking to community groups to fill that gap.

A big problem. The demands of the job mean that we are working when we should be out socializing. It's a real catch 22 situation

A huge problem. We are new to area; not good at making friends. Principal's job is lonely; retirement might be lonelier

Not a problem.

A problem. As big as you let it be but we are scarred for retirement by the demands of the role.

A big problem. Interactions define us. Interactions shrink & unhealthy social isolation results

Not a problem.

Not a problem.

Not a problem.

CATEGORY 7 (ITEM 28; Q.5.) : INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION

An issue: I'm worried that I might stagnate without realizing (like others I know). **I need work**

My greatest concern. I need a plan for **further study; new learning;** and I need **to walk the talk**.

Not a problem. I like **learning new stuff** but I have to be disciplines and **walk the talk.**

Don't see this as a problem. **I'm a reader** and have **intellectually challenging outside roles.**

Should be OK. Theoretical people might have a problem. I challenge myself to **read** o/s comfort zone

An issue. **Will take time to find something** to do **to replace work.**

Not a problem. Just **a relief**. I have hobbies to keep me mentally active.

An issue. The answer is to have continuous **social networks** and mechanisms (e.g. crosswords)

Not a problem. I'm looking to engage in **new learning** and deeper intellectual stimulation.

A problem. I need to find **new learning** and **reading**. Mostly I need the **will power/discipline**

Not a problem. I enjoy theatre, **reading** and plan to become involved in administrative **work** at a state/national level

An issue. I need new learning like **new study or new languages**. I'd also like some **part-time work.**

A definite problem. I need to keep an active mind so plan **new university study**.

An issue. **I need to find something** to engage me and then I'll be intellectually challenged.

A real problem. I look to **travel, research and technology**. I need to find **purpose and meaning.**

A real problem. I was lucky as the scare I had last year means that I'm more prepared.

A real problem. We need **social networks** and a **new learning plan**. **This is a personal**

responsibility.

A real problem. I've taken a conscious decision to become **a reader** and **learner**.

A real problem. I'll need more than **socializing**. I'll need **new learning**. Physical fitness stuff is a trap.

A real problem. I need some way to contribute. Probably **I need to work.**

A problem. It will depend on successful re-location & **socialization** leading to intellectual stimulation.

A real problem. I've been looking to new interests, **new learning**, **part-time & community work.**

A big issue. I need **purposeful and meaningful** stimulation. **Part-time work** *and* **new learning**

An issue. **Reading** and **part-time work** may solve the problem.

A major issue. I'll need involvement in **environmental groups, SPC** & physical activity

A major issue: It's up to each individual to be prepared and handle this.

A major issue: **It's up to each individual to be prepared and handle this**. Professional Associations can/might help.

Not a problem.

An issue. I plan to be **marriage celebrant;** do **new learning (language)**; and **run a business.**

A major problem. I plan to do **community work & part-time work; reading; internet skills** & travel.

CATEGORY 9 (ITEM 27 PLUS NON-ITEM; Q.7.) PERFECT PICTURE IN RETIREMENT

Contribution to community (voluntary); home renovations

Contribution to community (voluntary); **family**; **sport**; and **new learning**

Connected to education (altruistic mentoring/coaching); **Family**; **travel**; **socialization;** and **start a small business**

Contribution to community; **family grandchildren)**; **sport**; **travel**; **socialization;**

Connected to education (altruistic mentoring/coaching); family; **travel**; **socialization**

leisure and hobbies

Connected to education (altruistic); **family**; **travel**; **socialization; new learning & mental stimulation**; and **health and fitness**.

Contribution to community; **family**; **travel; socialization; health/fitness**; **financially secure**

Family (grandchildren); **travel**; **socialization; financial security; home renovations**

Family; **travel; socialization; new learning**; **part-time work (challenging)**

Contribution to community (voluntary); family (grandchildren); travel; socialization; financial security; health/fitness

Contribution to community (organisations); family; travel; socialization; health/fitness; new learning;

home/garden

Contribution to community (voluntary); family (grandchildren); travel; socialization; sport/fitness; new learning

I don't know

Family; travel; socialization; sport; part-time work (challenging)

Contribution to community (voluntary); connected to education (altruistic mentoring & coaching);

family; travel

Connected to education mentoring/coaching); sport; new learning; gardening/landscaping

Contribution to community (how do I make the world a better place?): part-time work (What do I do for a living?)

Part-time work; family; travel; socialization; sport/fitness; new learning

Contribution to community (voluntary); family; travel; socialization; sport/fitness; new l earning (e.g. languages)

Contribution to community (voluntary); travel; socialization; sport/fitness; new learning; part-time work

Contribution to community; travel; socialization; health/fitness; financial security

Slower, more varied. More control and greater independence.

Family; socialization; fit/healthy; travel; part-time work

Family (grandchildren); travel; sport/fitness; part-time work

Contribution to community (voluntary); connected to education (mentoring/coaching); family; travel; socialization; health/fitness; freedom

Connected to education(altruistic mentoring/coaching); family; travel; new learning & reading

Connected to educational leadership (advocacy and projects; mentoring/coaching);

Contribution to community (voluntary); connected to education (mentoring/coaching); family; travel; reading/new learning

Connected to education; part-time work; family (grandchildren); travel; health/fitness; leisure.

Contribution to community (voluntary); connected to education (part-time work); family (grandchildren); travel; sport & fitness; new learning; we must "earn" retirement.

CATEGORY 10 (ITMES 26 AND 29; Q. 8.) READINESS FOR RETIREMENT

Not ready. Unsure of how to become ready

Not ready as I'm enjoying the job. If superannuation more flexible I would stay-on.

Not ready professionally or intellectually. Ready financially. It just seems the thing to do.

Not ready professionally (unfinished business)

I'm 80% ready.

Not ready emotionally and professionally. Unsure how to be ready and make next phase of my life happen.

I'm ready but not prepared (no social networks)

Not ready emotionally, professionally or intellectually. I'm ready physically and financially.

I'm confused.

Not ready yet. When I'm 60 I will be.

Ready financially and emotionally. Some days not ready professionally as I'll miss it.

Not ready on any criteria except financial. I'm avoiding as you cannot speak against retirement.

60% ready. Not ready intellectually or professionally. Retirement is expected

Not ready: emotionally, intellectually and professionally. I'm unsure and it scares me.

Ready in most ways except professional. I need to find what I'm going to do in retirement.

Ready physically, financially and emotionally. Not professionally or intellectually. It's like a "surrender"

Not ready. If it wasn't for superannuation loss I wouldn't retire at all.

Not ready: as I'm still searching for an intellectual pathway in retirement.

I will be ready because I'm working to a plan. Professionally I'm still not ready.

Not ready emotionally, professionally, intellectually or socially as I fear I will miss my colleagues.

Not ready physically, emotionally and professionally. Why I'm doing this other than everyone says I should?

Not ready. This is being forced upon me. I may be prepared; but I'm not ready

There is no system support; no exit surveys/ interviews. No deduction (just walk out)

Not ready intellectually, emotionally or professionally. I'm retiring too soon and may lose intellectual capacity.

Not ready at all.

Not ready. I'm financially prepared but that's all.

Not ready. I want to leave with grace and dignity but I'm unsure about how this will happen

Not ready. I'm prepared but not willing.

Not quite ready (but preparing the way). I'm in no great hurry.

I'm ready on all criteria except professionally: I have a few more mountains to climb.

I'm ready in that I've been preparing the ground. I'm ready if I can do it on my terms.

Appendix 3.25

Recently-retired Interview Responses

DIMENSION 2: RETIREMENT

CATEGORY 1 (NON-ITEM NUMBER; Q.1.): FEELINGS ABOUT RETIREMENT

Positive. Initially **lost (i.e. a Neville Nobody) and unsure** if I made the right decision. **A few years on it's brilliant**.

Positive. Delightful and fulfilling. I was tired; health was an issue; and bored with **repetitive nature** of role.

Positive. Concentration on being **fit** so I can do all I want to.

Positive. **Initially lost and unsure. Phases: need for sense of purpose (family history; voluntary work; paid work)**

Positive. **Initially loss of purpose and identity phase**; new phase is good. New **relationship** with spouse also an issue

Positive. Initially I hated it: lost, bored and loss of identity. Now I have a totally different attitude.

Positive. This is the best job I've ever had but I do **miss the social inter-actions** and didn't build those before I finished.

Negative (but improving). At first lost, de-valued with a loss of purpose/ self-esteem. Felt system didn't care or value

Positive. I was **anxious** but it is working out well.

Negative. Although I love the freedom and the family time **I feel inadequate as a contributor to society. I'm nobody.**

Mixed. **Positive** and **frightened**: **I'm alone** and that creates a problem.

Positive. Balanced; secure (OLD Super); flexible with part-time work.

Mixed. I enjoy the family and community groups. But I do **miss the people** and **the professional interactions**

Positive. No regrets and no problems.

Mixed. **It's another phase of life. Now that we travel and I work it's OK.**

Positive. Plenty of time and no pressure.

Positive. Time to follow my interests, my passions and indulge my family.

Positive. I just love retirement

Negative. **Brain dead and cabin fever for 18 months (phase)**. **Very limited social life** as I relied on school. **New relationship** has saved me.

Positive. I have space, time to follow passions and accept opportunities (work)

Positive. Good now but very difficult leading up to and actually retiring: **lost and unsure of myself.**

Positive. Very enjoyable: choice, flexibility; work and real family time.

Positive. I love the lack of pressure and stress.

Positive. I was fearful of boredom so I've been able to be fully engaged.

Positive. I have been retired 5 years (**phase**). **I was frightened about boredom and sitting at home growing old**. In reality I didn't let that happen

Negative. **I am frustrated and bored**. I thought I would be able to and work but that hasn't happened; **no valuing of my experience or expertise.**

CATEGORY 2 (ITEM 8; Q.2.1.): RETIREMENT TIMING

Too early. **I was on top of my game**. I retired for **superannuation reasons**

Just right. I retired for **health reasons**; wanting to finish while **still on top of my game**.

Just right. I left before there were any **health problems**.

Just right. At the time I thought **"too early"**: but work was impacting on **my health** so it was right time.

Too early. I was talked into it by **dubious financial advisers and peers**. I was on the **top of my game.**

Too early. But forced upon me by **my health (heart attack). I felt cheated.**

Too early. My **health problem (heart attack) was the cause. I felt robbed.**

Too early. I went into a vacuum as a nobody. **Lulled into it by financial advice but I was on top of my game**

Just right. I was **worn out (health -wise)** and angry at NSWDET for devaluing teachers and schools.

Just right: to be able to support my family (children and grandchildren)

Too early. But forced upon me **by my health.**

Just right (family reasons). Professionally at the **top of my game** but the **personal reasons** were more important

Too early. Accepted **financial / peer advice that I was "working for nothing"** but that ignored so **many personal** and **professional reasons**

Just right.

Just right. Time to start something new.

Just right, but I would have **stayed on if part-time was available.**

Too early. My husband was retired so **I felt guilty** plus I had a bad year at school. **I was on top**

of my game.

Just right.

Too early. I believed that for superannuation reasons I should retire. I was performing well and should have sought promotion.

Just right. I had a health scare.

Just right. However the last year was terrible; I was like a plate spinning on one spot.

Just right.

Just right: personal reasons (my husband's health) and professional reasons (unethical collegial behaviour and lack of system support)

Just right: personal reasons (relationship breakdown) and financial reasons.

Too early. Professionally I had much more to give.

CATEGORY 3 (ITEM 8; Q.2.2): OPTIONS TO RETIRE OR STAY-ON IN JOB-SHARE (CO-PRINCIPALSHIP)

Support. Two sets of expertise; higher energy levels. I particularly support the Transitional Model

Opposed. The relationship between principal and community is not divisible.

Uncommitted. Totally situational and must benefit all players.

Opposed. It could work but I see more problems than benefits.

Opposed. Leadership cannot be shared. It's not divisible.

Opposed. Leadership cannot be divided. However I like the Transition Model and believe that it could work

Support. Two leaders would produce more energy, enthusiasm and effectiveness.

Support. It can blend experience, enthusiasm and energy. This would be great modeling for the staff.

Opposed. Very unsettling.

Support. It would bring greater energy, enthusiasm and expertise which would benefit udents.

Opposed. Sounds good but great possibility of breaking down as tricky to have same values & beliefs

Support. I especially like the Transitional Model.

Support. In the right context it will benefit all stakeholders.

Opposed. There can only ever be one "boss".

Support. It has worked well in other countries for many years.

Support. It can benefit staff and students. However there must be high trust, acceptance and credibility.

Support. It would bring high levels of **passion, energy** and expertise for staff and student outcomes.

Support. The **energy and enthusiasm** would greatly benefit school.

Support. It would bring great **enthusiasm, energy and freshness**.

Opposed. Leadership **cannot be divided**. It has to be learnt "on the job".

Opposed.

Opposed. I have grave doubts.

Opposed. I don't see any great benefits.

Support. I think it can work. I don't like the **Transitional Model** because of the power imbalance.

Support. I particularly like the shared **"turn-around"** principal model.

Support. The sum of two is greater than two. A lot of work would need to be done with school community.

CATEGORY 4 (ITEM 8; Q.3.): INTERESTED IN CO-PRINCIPALSHIP

Interested. Compatibility and **indivisibility** would need to exist; plus **excellent communications**

Not interested. It would need **total compatibility** and **perfect communication** so it's not practicable.

Interested. But there must be **total compatibility** and **no chance to play one off against the other**.

Only interested: **if total compatibility** and the **Transitional Model (leadership preparation).**

Not interested: you can have division of roles and responsibilities but only ever one leader.

Not interested. I build a team based on deep personal relationships.

Not interested. I'm poor at delegating and sharing

Interested. I like the **Transitional Model** and tried unsuccessfully to get it accepted when I was retiring.

Only interested: **if it was the Transitional Model (leadership preparation)**

Interested. If it had been available I would have done it. Needs **high compatibility and excellent communications**

Interested. **Total compatibility** and **excellent communications.** I'd like to see a pilot program.

Interested. It would depend on **total compatibility.**

Interested. **Involved in selection process** and would look for **total compatibility** and **excellent communications**

Not interested.

Interested. Would need **total compatibility** and preferably younger.

Interested. Would need **total compatibility** and full community support and involvement.

Interested. Would need **total compatibility** and I would need to be **involved in the selection process.**

Only interested: **if Transitional Model (leadership preparation)**. This I believe in and I would have stayed if it had been available.

Interested. I would need **total compatibility**; complementary skills and clearly defined roles.

Not interested. I'm too meddlesome and have to be involved in everything.

Only interested: **if Transitional Model**. Would have worked brilliantly for me and my school community.

Interested: Very supportive of **Transitional Model or Principal Induction Model (leadership preparation)**

Only interested: **if Transitional Model (leadership preparation)**

Only interested: if no power imbalance; managerial roles divided but leadership must be shared.

Only interested: **if a turn-around situation**

Interested. It would need **total compatibility;** and I especially favour the **Transitional Model (leadership preparation)**

DIMENSION 3: REFOCUSING

CATEGORY 5 (ITEMS 10-12; Q.4.) WORK IN RETIREMENT

Yes: **Paid work (known to local university** for 3 years: **voluntary work** (Make a Wish Foundation)

Yes: Paid work (networks to practicum supervision) and **DET interviewing (EOI**) which **was very important**; **voluntary work** (school gardening project)

Yes: Paid work (known to local university) for 18 months which **I enjoyed and was very fortunate.**

Yes: Paid work (network to local university) which has improved things for me; **voluntary community work** with church

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET Leadership Directorate)

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET as part-time counselor). **This has meant a great deal to me**.

No: I'm denied DET work because of **medical retirement**. **If I was offered casual work I'd jump at it.**

Yes: Paid work (networks to local university); **networks to DET**; **advertised position**. **Essential in my return to health following grief/loss of retirement.**

Yes: Paid work (known through local arts community); and **voluntary work (known through local arts community)**.

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET casual teaching in local schools)

Yes: I do voluntary work (through networks with local mentoring groups)

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET) and (Networks to UWS). I'm intellectually engaged with new learning and thriving.

No: I was led to believe that there would be DET work. It has never materialized and that has **negatively coloured my view of my employer**

Yes: Paid work (networks to DET Graduate Recruitment). No transparency or consistency which **creates personal collegial problems.**

Yes: Paid work (networks with local university). Two years full-time/two-years part-0time **which has helped me emotionally.**

Yes: Paid work (networks with NSWDET) and (networks to universities); it's all word-of-mouth.

Yes: Paid work (application to Institute of Teachers and DET Suitability interviews); and **voluntary work with sporting groups and governmental agencies.**

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET programs) and self-funded Coach training. I loved the work, but now it's time to play.

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET) and (networks to retail shop work) which is good financially and socially but **doesn't "turn me on"**

Yes: Paid work (outside of NSWDET for which I was approached); I also do voluntary work in schools and local community.

Yes: Paid work (through networks established prior to retirement)

Yes: Paid work (through networks to local university). I feel valued, energized and love it!

Yes: Paid work (networks in NSWDET)

Yes: **Paid work (networks in NSWDET)**

Yes: **Paid work (networks and merit selection with NSWDET)**

Yes: Paid work (networks to NSWDET) but have also unsuccessfully sought other NSWDET work; this "rejection" really hurts!

DIMENSION 6: EXPERIENCES IN RETIREMENT

CATEGORY 6 (ITEM 28; Q.5.) SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ISOLATION

Not a problem. **I've been in the community a long time**; **I am very sociable and have lots of friends**

Not a problem. Professional networks have faded; that's OK. Social networks are strong. **I've lived here a long time** and **I worked at this before retirement.**

Not a problem. **I've lived here a long time**. **My social networks are strong. I worked at these networks before retirement.**

Not a problem. I had good social networks which I developed whilst still working. Loss of professional networks will be important if you are not ready to retire.

Not a problem. I have good social networks. Because I still work I have professional networks too.

A huge problem: because work was my life. Now I attend U3A; woodwork classes; we travel; we visit family; we socialize…all to build networks I didn't have

A huge problem. I've been in the area a long time and have good social networks. If work consumes too much of your life social networks suffer.

A problem. Especially as work is your life. Professional isolation was my issue.

Not a problem. I'm an outgoing person and have lots of social contacts

A huge problem. I've become quite unsettled.

Not a problem. I have good friends and spend a lot of time with my family.

Not a problem. I developed good social networks whilst working and through my current work.

A problem: Professional isolation is a huge problem and I don't like it. Social isolation not a problem but I did work hard at this before I retired.

A problem. Retirement can be a very isolating social trap.

A huge problem. You have to plan while you are still working if you want to avoid social isolation.

A huge problem. The solution is to realize the dangers and to work at those social networks before you retire.

A huge problem. People must work and organize social networks before they retire, otherwise there will be professional and social isolation

A huge problem. With encouragement I got involved in Coaching. There is a real possibility of becoming isolated and board.

A huge problem. I was socially/professionally isolated. I tried community groups but drowned in their "ageism". My new relationship saved an ugly situation.

Not a problem.

A huge problem: both social and professional isolation. I felt lost.

A huge problem. Principals need to be aware that they should take direct action whist still working otherwise they will be professionally and socially isolated.

A huge problem: a fact of retirement to be aware of and actively work to avoid. For women lunches, golf and grandchildren will not satisfy your intellectual needs.

A huge problem: not fully appreciated by working principals.

A huge problem. There is a consistent message that people feel bored, isolated and useless in retirement.

This has to be set up for success during work.

A huge problem. This lack of interaction and social contact has led me into deep depression.

CATEGORY 7 (ITEM 28; Q.6.): INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION

A problem at first. Once I got involved with the university work, I started to read, learn & use internet

Not a problem. **This is the time for new learning and new skills**. **Through reading** and **social interaction**

Not a problem. Very personal responsibility. **Learning that time is flexible** and **new learning is possible.**

A problem at first. **Once I had university work the problem disappeared; and new learning was there.**

Not a problem. I have **on-going work** and there is stimulation available but **it's up to the individual**

A real problem at first. I have now overcome this **through part-time work** and **new learning: woodwork, welding and art**

A problem. It is our **personal responsibility that if you are not working to become a life-long learner.**

A real problem at first. **I became quite depressed until I found part-time work**

Not a problem. **You chose your own ending: it's a personal responsibility.**

A real problem. **My brain cells are dying I don't want to rust our but to wear out**. **I'm considering a university course**

A real problem. **I have undertaken lots of new learning to guard against this (reading; book clubs; TAFE programs)**

A real problem. **High interest even if low pay**: **new learning.**

A real problem. The lack of work (and professional isolation)is leading to lack of intellectual stimulation.

A real problem. **Intellectual stimulation requires good social networks.**

Not a problem. **Work (at university) provided stimulation and new learning (including technological)**

A real problem. **Part-time work has solved it for me**. **It's a personal responsibility to find a solution.**

Not a problem. I'm now getting wider intellectual stimulation through **new learning**, **reading and travel**

A real problem. It depends on **self-motivation**, **social networks** and **new learning**

A real problem. After 12 months (depression) I started TAFE courses for new learning and part-time work

A problem: but it's up to individual responsibility. I found work and new learning through that work.

A real problem. Initially thought of university course but have gained work through professional association.

A problem: but it's up to the individual. I love new learning so university work plus a law course meets my passions

A real problem. So I pursued work and new learning.

A real problem. I was fortunate in finding work which has led to new learning and skill development

A real problem. Many people retire too young "intellectually". I have pursued other work and new learning.

A real problem. I need this and as it wasn't happening I became seriously depressed.

CATEGORY 8 (ITEM 28; Q.7.): LOSS OF PURPOSE/ IDENTITY/SELF-ESTEEM

A very real issue. I had this lost (at home alone Neville Nobody feeling) until I started work at university.

Not a problem: but could be a real ego trap which principals need to be wary about. Exit interviews would help.

A very real problem. You need to accept that you are no longer important; and that that is no longer important.

A very real problem. You must not allow the job to become your identity; and you must not drift into a so-called 'promised land"

A real issue: For those who are into status or live in a small country town, it could be a big issue.

A very real issue. I descended into depression due to loss of purpose/identity. Gaining a sense of purpose through my family saved me.

Not an issue. My job never defined me.

A huge issue. I went into deep depression as I lost my sense of purpose and importance.

A huge problem. I lost all identity (it's attached to the role) and I wasn't prepared

A huge issue. I want and need to feel a purpose. There's none at present. Retirement can be a real trap.

An issue. I have to keep myself busy or this really effects me.

Not an issue. Might be more an issue for males and role identity.

A very real issue. We have status thrust upon and without a substitute which values our expertise we suffer loss of purpose .

A real issue. We need a balance in our life and that has to be developed before we retire.

An issue. But not for me.

An issue. It wasn't for me but for many who are attached to the status they need to be warned and prepared.

A very real issue. I suffered. The role which brought you recognition and respect has disappeared in retirement.

A very real issue. Overnight you become nobody; invisible. My work in coaching saved me.

A very real issue. I went from someone of importance to a nobody and I wasn't ready (depression). Finding work after 12 months has saved me

Not an issue.

Not an issue. I was fortunate in gaining part-time purposeful work to add to my family "status"

A real issue. I suffered for a while until I found work. The secret is to reframe retirement as an opening (not closing) door.

A real issue. I wasn't prepared because I didn't realize I had status till it was gone.

A real issue. I was lost for six months till part-time work came my way.

A real issue. It's the result of poor social networks and lack of purpose; and can easily lead into depression.

A huge issue. My career has always defined me. Suddenly I was stripped naked. My success had always driven my status

CATEGORY 9 (ITEMS 26-30; Q.8.): WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF YOUR "RETIRED" LIFE-STYLE?

Large Portfolio : Family; paid work; voluntary community work; travel; socialize; sport/fitness; new learning; home improvements; reader; hobbies

Large Portfolio : minus paid work; plus hobbies

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio full

Large Portfolio : plus hobbies

Smaller Portfolio: minus paid work; minus new learning

Smaller Portfolio : new learning; voluntary community work

Large Portfolio

Limited Portfolio: family dominated with minding grandchildren

Smaller Portfolio: family; socialize; new learning

Large Portfolio

Smaller Portfolio: minus paid work; minus voluntary community work; minus new learning

Smaller Portfolio: minus paid work; minus new learning

Smaller Portfolio: minus paid work; minus new learning; minus voluntary community work

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Limited Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Large Portfolio

Limited Portfolio

CATEGORY 9 (ITEM 29; Q.10): RETIREMENT SATISTACTION RATING 1-10

(with 10 being the highest satisfaction)

Individual satisfaction ratings: 9; 9; 10; 8; 8; 10; 8; 6.5; 9; 3; 8; 10; 6; 10; 10; 9; 9; 10; 6; 9.5; 9; 9.5; 9; 10; 9; 2.

Average satisfaction rating: 8.3

CATEGORY 10 (ITEM 29; Q. 9.): WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE TO YOUR "LIFE-STYLE"?

Move to full retirement.

None

More holidays and greater fitness

None (now)

More direction (where is all this taking me; what skills do I need)

Move to full retirement (maybe there is a second phase following the need to ramp-off for

self-worth and sense of purpose)

More opportunity to contribute (part-time work)

More opportunity to contribute (part-time work; especially mentoring new principals)

Move to full retirement (with more time for me; for leisure; and with my wife)

More intellectual stimulation and challenge (is desperately needed)

More travel and more study (languages)

More exercise/fitness and more involved in house renovations

More opportunity to contribute to education (leadership preparation) as I feel under-valued.

More involved professionally in some mentoring scheme for new/beginning principals

Move to slower life; less work and less involvement (maybe another phase)

None

More computer literate

More education and new learning

More time to myself (and not servicing everyone's else's needs)

Move to being less busy (full retirement)

More new learning

None

More fitness activities; more new learning; and more social networks.

None

More focus on art

CATEGORY 11 (ITEM 30; Q.11.): REALITY V EXPECTATION RETIREMENT RATING

Difficult at first and that was my fear/ expectation. Now it's good, so alignment isn't high

Good and much better than I expected, so alignment isn't high

I thought I'd have more personal time, so alignment isn't that high

Difficult at first, but now what I expected so alignment high.

Hugely different (and better) than what I had imagined (especially work) so alignment not high.

Good and much better than I expected, so alignment is not high.

Because of medical retirement I never gave it much thought, so alignment is not high

Difficult (isolated, lonely and depressed) and nothing like I thought, so alignment is very low.

Difficult at first but now much better than I expected, so alignment isn't high

I knew I was retiring to support my children so alignment is fairly high.

I was very fearful, but it better than I thought so alignment isn't high

Very different and much better than I thought (especially work) so alignment isn’t high

Very difficult as I thought I would be working, so alignment isn't high.

Very good and just what I expected so alignment is very high

Much better than I expected with work and stimulation, so alignment isn’t very high

Exactly what I thought it would be (great) so alignment is very high

Much different (and better) than I expected as I'm very active and involved so alignment isn't high

Initially isolated/ lack of purpose (so high alignment) but with work (coaching) much better than expected so alignment isn't high.

I was never ready for how lonely and soul-destroying it would be initially so alignment isn't high

Infinitely different and better than expected so alignment very low

Much better than all my fears and expectations so alignment isn't high

Much better than I ever expected especially with the work so alignment isn’t high

Not really what I expected work wise so alignment isn't high

I expected loneliness and purposelessness but it has been much better and more rewarding so alignment isn't high

I had great anxieties but this is a wonderful life so alignment isn't high

I had grave fears and they have been realizes (detachment and dislocation) but even worse so alignment is quite high

CATEGORY 12 (ITEM 26; Q.12): READINESS FOR RETIREMENT

Physically	Professionally	Intellectually	Emotionally	Financially
Ready	Not (at peak)	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Ready	Not (at peak)	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Ready	Almost ready	Almost ready	Almost ready	Ready
Ready (or tired)	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Ready (medical)	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not (medical)	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Ready (tired)	Not ready	Not ready	Ready (tired)	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready (medical)	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Ready	Ready	Not ready	Ready	Ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready (tired)	Not ready	Not ready	Ready ((tired)	Not ready
Ready (tired)	Not ready	Not ready	Ready (tired)	Not ready
Ready (tired)	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Ready (medical)	Ready	Ready	Ready (bored)	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready (bored)	Not ready
Ready	Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready (tired)	Ready	Ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
17 Ready: 9 Not	7 Ready: 19 Not	5 Ready: 21 Not	13 Ready: 13 Not	11 Ready: 15 Not

CATEGORY 13 (ITEM 26; Q.13): PREPARATION FOR RETIREMENT

Physically	Professionally	Intellectually	Emotionally	Financially
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Not ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready
Not ready	Not ready	Ready	Ready	Not ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Not ready	Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready	Ready
Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Not ready	Ready
10 Ready: 16 Not	8 Ready: 12 Not	6 Ready: 20 Not	7 Ready: 19 Not	16 Ready: 10 Not

Appendix 4.1

Late-career principals' questionnaire

Dimension 1: Item 4 (Gender)

One variable which needed close examination was the gender variable within the late-career cohort. This variable initially showed this cohort as being 61% male and 39% female. NSWDET figures for incumbent principals in 2008 indicate that 52.6 % were male and 47.4 % were female. Therefore it initially appeared that the late-career females (in this study) were underrepresented by 8.4 % (and males were overrepresented by 8.4%). However deeper examination of NSWDET figures indicated that for all NSWDET principals who were born between 1950 and 1959 (i.e. are baby boomers and would be the principals in this research's cohort groups), 42.4% were female and 57.6% were male. This meant that for the sample group, late-career female principals were actually under-represented by 3.4% (not 8.4%) and males were over-represented by 3.4% (not 8.4 %).

Appendix 7.1

Participant group questionnaire

(Page 327 – 329)

Principals Focus Groups

1. Principals Focus Groups

1. Personal information

Name (optional)

2. Gender

- Male
- Female

3. Your school level is:

- Primary
- Secondary/Central

4. Principals indicated that when faced with the prospect of retirement they feel a mixture of anticipation and anxiety. From your experiences interacting with principal colleagues would you:

- 1. Agree
- 2. Disagree

Other (please specify)

5. Principals feel that the greatest difficulties in retirement will be the emotional issues (e.g. the fear of social and professional isolation; the fear of loss of purpose and status; and the lack of intellectual stimulation). From your discussions with principal colleagues would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

Principals Focus Groups

6. Principals indicated that when faced with the prospect of retirement the emotional issues (as outlined in Question 5 above) were of greater concern than financial security.From your discussions with principal colleagues, would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

7. Principals indicated that when faced with the prospect of retirement the emotional issues (as outlined in Question 5 above) were of more immediate concern than health issues. From your discussions with principal colleagues,would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

8. Principals indicated that at/near retirement age, they would be interested in some form of co-principalship/job-sharing/part-time role so as to "ramp off" gradually rather than stop suddenly. From your interactions with principal colleagues would this seem to be a common feeling:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

Principals Focus Groups

9. Principals indicated that in retirement they would be extremely interested in mentoring/coaching aspiring or newly appointed principals. From your interactions with principal colleagues, would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

10. Principals indicated that in late-career they rated themselves as highly effective; highly motivated but not so highly satisfied. Four reasons were given for the lower level of satisfaction. From your discussions with principal colleagues, tick each reason which would seem accurate:

- Loss of control of the "educational agenda" to politicians
- Increasing centralization of decision making
- Inappropriate rapid response times limiting the prospect of reflective and effective decision making
- Increasing deflection away from the core-business as the educational leader of teaching and learning, to being a site-manager for buildings and maintenance supervision

Other (please specify)

11. Principals indicated that if they opted to "stay-on" (past retirement age) or to "re-focus" (back into the workforce following retirement) they would do so more for emotional reasons (social contact; making a contribution to education and/or society; maintaining a sense of purpose/self-worth) rather than for financial reasons. From your interactions with principal colleagues would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

Appendix 7.2

Peer-review group questionnaire

(Page 331 – 333)

Principals Focus Groups 2

1. Principals Focus Groups

1. Personal information

Name (optional)

2. Gender

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

3. Your school level is:

- ◯ Primary
- ◯ Secondary/Central

4. One theme indicates that when approaching retirement principals may feel a mixture of anticipation and anxiety. From your experiences interacting with principal colleagues would you:

- ◯ 1. Agree
- ◯ 2. Disagree

Other (please specify)

5. Another theme indicates that emotional issues (e.g. the fear of social and professional isolation; the fear of loss of purpose and status; and the lack of intellectual stimulation) pose a significant concern for principals approaching retirement. From your discussions with principal colleagues would this seem accurate:

- ◯ 1. Yes
- ◯ 2. No

Other (please specify)

Principals Focus Groups 2

6. Another theme indicates that when faced with the prospect of retirement the emotional issues (as outlined in Question 5 above) were of greater concern than financial security.From your discussions with principal colleagues, would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

7. Another emerging theme indicates that when faced with the prospect of retirement the emotional issues (as outlined in Question 5 above) were of more immediate concern than health issues. From your discussions with principal colleagues,would this seem accurate:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

8. Some principals indicated that at/near retirement age, they would be interested in some form of co-principalship/job-sharing/part-time role so as to "ramp off" gradually rather than stop suddenly. From your interactions with principal colleagues would this seem to be a common feeling:

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

Principals Focus Groups 2

9. One theme indicated indicated that in retirement principals would be interested in mentoring/coaching aspiring or newly appointed principals. From your interactions with principal colleagues, would this seem accurate:

- ◯ 1. Yes
- ◯ 2. No

Other (please specify)

10. Principals indicated that in late-career they rated themselves as highly effective; highly motivated but not so highly satisfied. Four reasons were given for the lower level of satisfaction. From your discussions with principal colleagues, tick each reason which would seem accurate:

- ☐ Loss of control of the "educational agenda" to politicians
- ☐ Increasing centralization of decision making
- ☐ Inappropriate rapid response times limiting the prospect of reflective and effective decision making
- ☐ Increasing deflection away from the core-business as the educational leader of teaching and learning, to being a site-manager for buildings and maintenance supervision

Other (please specify)

11. One theme indicated that if principals opted to "stay-on" (past retirement age) or to "re-focus" (back into the workforce following retirement) they would do so more for emotional reasons (social contact; making a contribution to education and/or society; maintaining a sense of purpose/self-worth) rather than for financial reasons. From your interactions with principal colleagues would this seem accurate:

- ◯ 1. Yes
- ◯ 2. No

Other (please specify)

Appendix 7.3

Participant group email

Dear colleagues,

It is almost 2 years since you first generously agreed to be involved in this research about **principals and retirement**. Since then things have moved significantly.

- The **first phase** (the on-line survey) was distributed to you in November, 2008. There were 110 late-career principals and 108 recently-retired principals who returned that survey. That was a wonderful response.

- The **second phase** (the follow-up interviews with 60 late-career and recently-retired principals) took place in 2009.

The interest which has been generated by "your" research has been dramatic and has far surpassed anything I had imagined:

- The most significant advancements for practicing principals have been that NSWDET is in the process of streamlining the retirement processes; is piloting an EOI for retiring principals who might be interested in working for NSWDET in the future; and NSWDET is supporting a 2-day Transition To Retirement program which is being made available to principals across the state. These changes are a direct result of your participation in this research.

- On the wider scene: in July 2009 The International Confederation of Principals Annual Convention (in Singapore) invited me to present some initial survey findings; and in July 2010 The 2nd Conference on Economy, Society and Education (in Paris) invited me to present the findings including the interview data.

Now I seek your involvement in the **third (& final) phase** of the research: **focus group feedback** (about a 10 minute short on-line survey)

I would like to gather your reactions to the **major themes** which have developed from the research. What I'm really asking is **not** for your opinion about these themes **but** whether you feel that the themes are **accurate** in relation to your experiences, interactions and discussions with principal colleagues over the years. **That is**: from your experiences do these **major themes** accurately represent what principals are feeling and/or saying?

Here are the **instructions** to complete the attached survey:

1. **To commence:** Click on the link below to access the survey.
2. **When finished:** Click on *"Done"* and the survey will automatically be returned to me.
3. **Comments**: Please feel free to add your thoughts in the comments (other) box below each question. Your comments will be highly significant for the final outcomes.
4. **Return date:** It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by **Friday 10th September.**
5. **Enquiries**: If you have any questions please send me a reply email or phone on 0412049637 (M) or 4889 8696 (H)

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CFZSF9G

I do hope that you will be able to continue to support this research into the principalship by completing this final phase. On behalf of your colleagues who are (& will) benefit from this research, I thank you most sincerely: **improvements for principals by principals!**

Cheers,

Warren

Appendix 7.4

Peer-review group email

Principal Focus Groups from Transition to Retirement programs)

Dear colleagues,

During the past 12 months you were involved in **The Transition To Retirement for Principals Program** (either in Sydney Region; South Western Sydney Region; Northern Sydney Region; or Western Region). During that program we did a session where I reported on the research with principal colleagues across NSW. You engaged with some sections of the on-line survey (in hard copy) whilst we examined the responses from the state-wide survey. If you were one of the original participants in the research please disregard this email as you would have already received something very similar. However if you were not in the original research group and you are able to contribute to this final stage, that would be greatly appreciated. Phase 1 (**the survey**) and Phase 2 (**the interviews**) of the research have been completed and we have now reached Phase 3 (final phase): **Focus Group Feedback**.

I seek your involvement in this **third (& final) phase** by way of a short (about a 10 minute) on-line survey. Your participation is of course totally **voluntary**. If you are able to assist your feedback is totally **confidential** (only ever available to me); and can be **anonymous** if you chose not to put your name on the survey.

What I would like to do here is to gather your reactions to the **major themes** which have developed from the research. What I'm really asking is **not** for your opinion about these themes **but** whether you feel that the themes are **accurate** in relation to your experiences, interactions and discussions with principal colleagues over the years. **That is**: from your experiences do these **major themes** accurately reflect what principals are feeling and/or saying? The process is:

1. **To commence:** Click on the link below to access the survey.
2. **When finished:** Click on *"Done"* and the survey will automatically be returned to me.
3. **Comments**: Please feel free to add your thoughts in the comments (other) box below each question. Your comments will be highly significant for the final outcomes.
4. **Return date:** It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by **Friday 10th September.**
5. **Enquiries**: If you have any questions please send me a reply email or phone on 0412049637 (M) or 4889 8696 (H)

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WR89JH5

Warren

Appendix 7.5

Phases in retirement: specific Phase 2 Interview comments which drew attention to the concept of "phases in retirement"

Secondary female

I'm almost 5 years retired and I'm excited about this phase of my life. However immediately before retirement I was very anxious. I thought that I might be sitting at home doing nothing; getting bored' growing old. In reality sitting at home was never really an option. My husband noticed my anxiety and brought it out in the open. I was very fortunate. I wasn't really "ready" to retire if that meant the traditional model of retirement. However, in my family there were models to follow: both my mother and grandmother were academic and both stayed actively involved into the senior years. They passed onto to me the sense of responsibility to give something back to society.

Primary male

Initially I hated being retired. Because it was a medical retirement I wasn't ready or prepared. I would frantically do stuff around the house every morning (to give some purpose to my life) and then feel totally lost and disorientated all afternoon. I felt I was a failure. I felt am emptiness. I felt I was wasting time. I just couldn't settle. After 2 years we moved to support our family by caring for the grandchildren on a daily basis as their mother worked and their father was working overseas. This was the turning point for me. This gave me a purpose in life. Through this experience I regained my sense of self-worth. We moved back home with a totally different attitude and now my retired life is just full and wonderful!

Primary male

I have gone through different phases. Firstly because I didn't have any routines or commitments I was feeling very lost and stressed. The second phase was when I started into working on my family history. This gave me a sense of purpose and direction for a while. Now that is finished I'm moving into the third phase where I'm starting to find meaningful things to do through some paid and voluntary work. I really missed the students and staff.

Primary female

However, I found that I soon became brain dead and experienced "cabin fever". This was of a great concern to me. This lasted about 18 months and I knew I had to do something about it. In retirement I realized that I had a very limited social life. I was only mixing with staff members from my previous two schools. I was not making new networks and they would soon move beyond me. I have started a new relationship. This has been my savior. Without this new and exciting purpose in life it would have been a horrible downward spiral.

Primary male

I'm much better this year. I'm much more relaxed. But last year was very difficult. I went from feeling valued and important to "what am I going to do today? I had no direction; no purpose; and felt that "no one loved me!" I was led to believe by senior NSWDET officers that there would be lots of casual work available as a retired principal. However, that was not the case. No offers came my way. I felt (and still do to some extent) that NSWDET didn't care and didn't value my expertise and experience gained over 40 years with that employer. I missed the stimulation; I missed the daily buzz; and of course my wife was still working so I was "alone".

Primary male

It's great now. It's just wonderful. However, for the first 3 months I had misgivings. I wondered if I had done the right thing as I was feeling lost. I was wondering if I had become a "Neville nobody". But now, a few years down the track it's brilliant. I don't miss school but to be honest I still miss the contact with the children.

Primary male

We have pictures in our head, usually supplied by peers, but these proved to be quite untrue and in accurate. It feels good now with full life and fulfilling life. However there was a period straight after retirement when I had real questions about retirement. I felt quite lost and was certainly suffering a loss of identity. I had handed the badge in and no longer had the identity and status which is attached to that badge. We also had to adjust to a new relationship (my wife and I). We were now together much more than we had ever been in our whole married life…this was a new experience. I thought we might go off caravanning. My wife liked the trial trip but that was enough for her.

Appendix 7.6

Phases of Retirement email and responses

Email sent 13th September to cohort B (Recently-retired principals)

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for your responses to the last survey in relation to our research about principals and retirement. For the entire research I'm continually seeking your ideas/ opinions. It's what retired principals know and believe which will form the basis of the findings. I now seek your support with your ideas on one other area of retirement.

From all the feedback so far I'm gleaning that many retired principals are finding that there may be different **phases** in the retirement process. For example:

- some principals are saying that the first period of retirement (say 6-12 months) seems to be a period of **re-adjustment** to a new life style
- Some principals indicated during that first adjustment period, there was **a slightly difficult time** until they found what it was in life they wished to do (the new life style)
- some principals are saying that if they **worked** in retirement, and enjoyed the process, that after a few years they felt ready to move away from work and towards being "fully" retired
- other principals felt that across the first 5 years of retirement were not as they expected before retirement, and that they went through a series of different **phases** in finding their own balance.

I would appreciate your ideas from your own experiences about whether there may be **phases in the retirement process across the first 5 years.** This is not a survey. If you could simply hit "reply" and type in your ideas about/ reactions to this concept of **PHASES** of retirement, it would be greatly appreciated.

Phase of retirement: email responses

Phases: 37 responses (108 in cohort; 12 bounced back; 37 returns from 96=38.5%)

Responses

I guess I'm in the group where principals are enjoying working and will one day be "fully retired" Although I am now in my 70's, I have been engaged by 2 different school systems to analyze and report on assessment data and also to work in schools with teachers.
(Primary female)

Yes I do agree with other Principals who indicated that there may be "phases" in retirement (Secondary female)

In my own particular case I was a bit "uneasy" with retirement in the first six months being at a bit of a "loose end" and doing mundane things etc. and missing the friendship of teaching colleagues and ancillary staff. Out of the blue in June/July came a phone call from the local Grammar School desperately needing a Chemistry teacher for their Y12 and Y11 classes when the regular teacher was off with pneumonia coming up to the Trial HSC exams. All they had been able to employ were baby-sitter type teachers from Art/Music etc and someone must have known about me. So I took one week there helped them out and in a way gave myself a boost in the process. I did have some junior classes as well to make up my teaching load but they were kind enough to relieve me of playground duty and sport in order to attract me to take the work there. This was the ONLY stint I have ever done back in any school since retirement. It was just as if I needed ONE more "last puff" at what was my teaching area. I have never wanted to go back since and I am enjoying total retirement (Secondary male)

You have hit me at a suitable time for a response as I have just finished a fairly full on time with the Federal Election. I had a contract with the Dept for some course writing etc but because it wasn't processed before the end of the financial year, it fell through (sounds familiar) so I put up my hand for some election work again which led to over a month with the Aus Electoral Commission. I am still facilitating an online course which finishes this week and doing a bit of support for another course, which I helped write, on Action Research. So you can see I am nearly retired again. As a consequence, I am now in reflection mode. I still look at applying for permanent jobs but really I think I like the flexibility of short term employment. I'm not sure though if anything is likely to come up again (Primary male)

In my case there were certainly regrets about going a bit early even though it has all worked out pretty well for me. The 'what do I do now? Phase continues for me each time something comes up. Regarding phases since retirement, I think I have had only one phase: work. I am now more prepared for full-time retirement than I was in the past. (Primary male)

We are now in Newcastle due to a new grandchild. We are renting here and renting out our house in Cordeaux Heights. The move has meant I can still pursue interests. Learning the ukulele (banjo next hopefully), outrigger training, sea kayaking etc. I have also taken up dance lessons again (persistence might pay off) I love the excitement of ocean racing but recovery from training is becoming longer. (There was more scope for social paddling n Wollongong) Giving this up will be a real challenge. I plan to get back into some voluntary work also, now that things are more settled (Primary male)

Initially I was very unsettled. That's true for me and was expected to a large extent. I kept thinking "the holidays must be about to finish soon" for about the first 6 months (Secondary female)

I have been satisfied with the nature and level of my "work" for the past six years since retirement (consultancy for Principals' groups) but I can probably envisage a time when this will be true(Secondary female).

As for me, there were only a couple of stages, probably because from day 1 of my retirement I was busy, busy, busy and this has continued for each of the 7 years since I began this stage of my life. Apart from being fully immersed in family (both children are married and live in adjoining suburbs with the grandchildren), as you know I am Treasurer of the(****) and Director of my Golf Club and play at least twice per week and was for three years a Board member of a charity *organisation. All this in addition to the house and garden, three cars (one of which I am restoring), wife and the family dog. Yes, I am kept very busy and have only ever had half a dozen days of boredom, not for the lack of something to do but because I didn't fancy doing what there was to do. I can see no sense at all in retiring to spend your life looking at a TV screen 24/7 (Primary male)*

I do confess to one stage of feeling less than professionally fulfilled when after a couple of years I seemed to be yesterday's man as far as the Department was concerned...no longer invited to do recruitment interviewing and with very little progress made on opening up schools to mentoring which I was happy to be involved in. What a waste of expertise such distrust of us has been. (Secondary male)

*My experience was certainly atypical and not what my mantra was to retirement i.e.no work with lots of golf and sport, travel, family and community work. Flying out to Abu Dhabi the day after my retirement dinner certainly changed all that to the point that **w**ork did become a sixth pillar of retirement**.** This was partly driven by the different nature of the work than as my previous role as a HS principal of a large school, and the attraction of additional funds to use to finance the other 5 pillars. Indeed what I thought was "silly money" being offered to remain in the workforce saw me accepting job offers - BER, Equity programs, OHS contracts, etc. that I had not contemplated or even imagined when going into retirement. And the money has been an influence as it provides bonus funds for travel and family, especially as the SSS pension is already generous in time of the GFC (secondary male).*

Another factor has been my acknowledgement that I have a "use-by" date and that the job offers (got another one last week from Head Office - turned it down as it clashed with work I was doing in a school under an Equity program!) will dry up and so I need to make the best of the present situation where I still know the "who does what and how". Interestingly I am already seeing signs of this as UAI becomes ATAR and EARS joins up with TARS and PARS. It seems that as new acronyms appear I am getting further away from the relevance of my knowledge and knowhow. On this point I was at a primary school this morning working as a principal mentor. My task was to assist her to analyse the NAPLAN data. Much to my chagrin the way the data is presented by EMSAD has changed and I was back on a learning curve to extract the data and findings for the school (Secondary female)

Ever since retirement I've been working. After just on 2 and half years of retirement I am starting to near the date and feel 2011 should see me out with the work side of things. By that time I am sure that I will have had enough (Primary female)

I like the concept of different phases of retirement. My first phase (12 months) was really rest and recuperation, plus time to enjoy things I hadn't previously had time for. I'm currently in the second phase (12 months to 4-5 years) where. I'm working and enjoying it. The GFC also provided an incentive to go back to work as my super dropped significantly (Secondary female).

Beyond 5 years - I don't imagine I'll be continuing part-time work indefinitely. I think I'll gradually ease back to full-time retirement (Primary female)
I agree that my attitude to retirement has gone through phases; first a great desire to still make a worthwhile contribution and feel needed, followed by acceptance that age does slow you down and then a feeling of satisfaction with all the leisure activities that I am now able to participate in. I still do a minimal amount of casual teaching but mostly have to turn the work down because I have other plans for the day. However, I do feel that people in good health can easily work to sixty-five and offer wise advice. If you expect to work longer then you mentally prepare yourself to do so (Primary female)

I went through a series of different phases in finding my own balance. It may have been different if my wife and I had retired at the same time. In hindsight I probably should have gone on for another few years until she was closer to retiring age (Primary male)

I am certain there are stages of retirement. I do not feel retired as yet. I am still yearning for the time when I can get out of bed and do just what I want to do. However it seems to me that your life is always subject to the demands of other people, be they family, friends or community. I am still feeling a sense of having to "just do this" and I will be able to retire. I guess it is always a good idea to have goals and to have projects. I am hoping to fulfill my commitment to the community by taking on the role of President in Lions and I am also hoping to do a little secondary English teaching, just because that is where my career started and I really did not teach for long. The program I took on to get me to the second stage of retirement is not giving me the same sense of excitement and satisfaction now, so I will be "fully" retiring from that this year. I do absolutely love the caravan lifestyle and apart from the guilt of being lazy do not find that a hard lifestyle to take on. I think educators always think they can make a difference and they have something to offer and like to impose their knowledge on others. I am probably a couple of years away from the next stage which will be totally self indulgent. (Primary female)

This email really hit a chord with me. When my first retirement hit in November 2007 I wasn't really ready and felt a little lost just facing the sudden end. You are working so hard for such long hours with such a strong goal focus that the sudden end seemed hard. I overcame this by continuing on for just over two years as a result of delaying the decision and then making a successful merit application 3 months after retiring. The feelings didn't really change. I was ready to accept the reality of retirement but not looking forward to it when my contract ended on ANZAC day 2010. This has now changed and I thought that it was important to share the nature of this change. My new position is a casual one….implementing the national partnerships at a state level. It is demanding and has taken me out of my comfort zone because it combines professional learning (my area of expertise) with an understanding of laptop pedagogy and significant technology skills. I have loved the challenge especially in regards to up skilling myself really quickly (Secondary female)

The new position is only 3 or 4 days a week and that is very significant. I am having every Monday off plus extra breaks to have holidays with my husband. When I come to Sunday night I am relaxed and I'm not getting organised for the week. Recently when my retired girl friends went out to the movies I took the day off and went with them. For the first time I feel retired. I am happy about that. This position has been my transition. If it stopped tomorrow I would be entirely ready (Primary female).

I am quite excited about the options open to me now. I am doing some voluntary work, have joined a film club and a social group. As soon as my work finishes I can't wait to increase my voluntary hours and enrol in an art course…I paint now but want to get into sculpture (Secondary female)

Yes. It seems to me there are stages or phases. I have been lucky that I had options that allowed me to move through these phases. Not all principals have these options open to them under our current system. I have also seen a little resentment in a few folk who have felt that some people have had preferential treatment when it has come to accessing work. There is still the option of applying for permanent school based positions. However, I have seen the other options declining over the last 12 months and I expect this may continue (Primary male).

From a personal perspective I found retirement very difficult to accept. I felt lost and ill prepared. Fortunately a former Principal asked me to act as a relieving deputy in her school and the following year I acted as a stand in Principal for a term when both the Principal and Deputy were *on leave. Still in the same school, I was employed as a mentor for beginning teachers (they made up 25% of the staff) which I found most rewarding. I worked when I liked (Secondary female)*

Part-time work initially provided a buffer for me and at the same time I became a board member and am now chairperson of the board of a company that delivers services to over 250 clients and a staff of 150 in the disability sector. This is voluntary. I have found the skills I developed as a school leader invaluable in this most rewarding role (Secondary female).

I would categorize my response I into group 3: i.e. I worked, enjoyed it, and now probably feel ready to move to a time of being "fully" retired (Primary male)

The different thing for me about retirement to what I had expected was the number of opportunities which opened immediately upon retirement which had not sought nor prepared myself for. In a way I was "headhunted" by …to be their education officer. This opportunity came about through a parent connection who had liked what I had done as a Principal. Over the period 2005-2008 I earned about $80 000 from this employment. My educational consultancy business came via a recommendation of me by a former Director. Over the period 2005 -2010 I have earned about $70 000 in this employment. This employment has increased in 2009-2010 and I find it challenging and rewarding. For the first time ever in my life I charge what I think my work is worth, and get paid without question. My other major income stream has been through Youth Justice Conferencing which I was doing before I retired and now do more extensively. Annually I have earned about $15000 -$25 000 from this employment, and although not well paid the feeling of using significant skills for the benefit of the community is intrinsically rewarding. In each of the financial years since my retirement my "take home" pay has been greater than in my final year as a Principal. The critical factors in this have been, i)the value of my "old system" super package under the new laws where it is not taxed at all, and additional income starts at zero $; ii)not having to pay a home mortgage; iii) not having to pay the rate of super I did in my final years as a Principal (Secondary male)

I think there may be phases if you continue to work after retirement. First 6-12 months I think you are anxious and have lost self esteem. However I am currently tutoring at UWS in teacher education 2 days a week and feel valued and worthwhile. I don't want to work forever but I am enjoying this stage (Secondary female)

In the first five years there is a need to ease yourself into retirement ideally by continuing in some form of part time employment with schools, other principals and/or "the system" or in some other field where the skills you acquire as a principal can be employed and developed. It also depends on your partner's situation and the resources you have at your disposal as to how long it takes to settle into retirement (Primary female)

Just sitting here at 900 metres above sea level looking out at what will be wonderful sunset having marked 30 Angus calves feeling pretty buggered. I agree there comes a time when education plays a less prominent part in your life but I think it probably depends greatly on interests you pursue before retirement. I still do a little practicum supervision for MU and ACU and that seems to satisfy my needs of school contact (primary male)

Upon reflection the thoughts about phases generally reflect my experience but I would look at it slightly differently. At different points in time my reflections indicate that definite phases/period would seem apparent. However with further time the demarcations around phases/periods often merge and are replaced by broader less defined phases/periods and it seems too early to define any phases/periods at this point in time. Currently the term "retirement" itself is conjecturable, in that in having experienced a permanent/career focused lifestyle I have just continued, without a *great deal of angst, a lifestyle/work balance that is managed within a different set of determinants, which in my case are now personally/interest focused rather than family/career focused. Having relative financial security (superannuation/mortgage free etc) is possibly a defining difference and greatly accommodates my current lifestyle/work balances, it would be interesting to undertake this exercise without such. However the need to contribute, to be valued and to develop and use my skill base need to be satisfied and play a similar role as in earlier lifestyle/work motivations. My phases/periods would seem to be shaped by how I seek and engage with a new set of interest based networks as I try to meet the needs listed above. And whilst I accept the inevitability of looking back and identifying the phases/periods of my life I am much happier trying to identify directions for the future. I guess what I am trying to say is that the concepts of "retirement", "phases", etc is very much a mindset that may to some extent inform, enrich and shape our lives but on the other hand has the potential to limit the richness of possibilities that lie within a continuum of life rather than its partitions. Obviously I have responded as one who enjoys "refocusing" (Primary male)*

In the first 5 years (after 60) I found doing some part time work (doesn't have to be, but mine was with DET) quite rewarding. I think mentally it helps you adjust to retirement, gives you time to set yourself up for the social aspects such as golf etc. It also had some tax advantages as it was really my only taxable income (super not taxed) and as DET started me up on compulsory super again I was able to personally contribute $1,000 and get the Federal Government's $1,000 (was $1,500) contribution. This all helped to build up a small bank for a holiday or renovations to the house (Primary male).

Having just been through yet another "phase" I would have to agree that there are definitely stages that one can go through. This would probably be truer for those of us who did not have explicit plans in mind for the future. The sense of relief one feels to leave many of the stresses behind often coloured my view of reality and I think it is ironic that I am back working in schools when the one thing I was so sure of was that I never wanted to work in a school again!!
It is my love of teaching and children that dragged me back (just had to go the long way round to realize it!!) and to be honest I am very happy. I think too that if you are surrounded by others who are also retired and that you share common interests with them then this also influences how you feel. I wasn't (Primary female)

Since going back to work I can honestly say I retired much too soon. I feel with guidance as to what can occur in those first few years of retirement and with the option of being able to gradually retire rather than here one day gone the next I might have felt differently. I realize that it is not easy for the DET to provide part time work for principals but if they made available a list of options that we might pursue and how we can equitably access them it would be helpful (Primary female).

The first six months were a period in which I thought there would be several 'systemic' opportunities for work with state level sections of DET but they gradually faded within 18 months and I adjusted to a more local, school and regional focused opportunities for work, based on my credibility as an experienced principal with expertise in school based leadership development (Secondary male)

The Australian Partnership funding has given my school based work a considerable boost in years 4 & 5 but I can see that running a natural course until the end of next year. After that ... I feel more ready to move away from it all and perhaps meet my need for intellectual challenge etc through interesting voluntary work. By then I will be just turning 63 and finishing my 6th year away from fulltime work (Primary female)

But I really needed this period of transition - it would have been devastating to have gone 'cold turkey' at the age of 57(Secondary female)

I have continued to work on contract as a consultant to DET and other organizations since "Separation". I do not consider myself retired (nor do my family and friends!) I have now worked for 6 years and figure I may continue for another few years yet. However, I can feel that I am becoming more drawn to the idea of not working, so it is a very gradual process for me and I am loving these interim years as a chance to really complete my professional life in a fuller, more self-actualized sense than I would have if I can continued as a serial number with the Department (Primary female)

Appendix 7.7

One recently-retired principal's personal journey

In 2003, at the age of 57, I (reluctantly) took medical retirement and I hated it for the best part of the next twelve to eighteen months. I was bored. While I was very, very busy the things I was doing seemed mundane and meaningless. Anyone who lives in a house knows that the list of chores and repairs and maintenance is never ending. After I retired I made a list of all the things I could think of that needed doing around the house. My wife genuinely thinking she was being helpful keeping me busy, added to the list. I attacked this list with vigour. When people asked me how things were going I gave them the usual response about how I didn't know how I had had time to go to work. What I really felt was that the only things that I had to do were chores. There was no challenge. I missed the thrust and parry of managing a large school.

I was lonely. My wife was still working. The few friends I had made in the district since moving to the coast were still working. I had not had the time or found any need to really get to know any of the neighbours when I was working. I knew a few by name and would exchange waves but that was about it. I went for weeks without talking with anybody. I was depressed. I certainly didn't acknowledge this at the time but in hindsight can clearly identify the symptoms.

Before I could even start to enjoy the "retirement phase" of my life I had to learn three crucial lessons. I feel that most people learn these lessons in the years and months they spend, before retiring, thinking and planning. It is not rocket science but I was not prepared.

I had to learn

1. "Importance" is relative. Things, and people, are not as important as what they appear to be at the time.

2. Retirement is not an extension of the work phase of life. In retirement we do not have to find a work substitute.

3. Time is relative. In retirement "time management" means you can go slower.

In 2001, at the age of 55 I had a heart attack. It was a very frightening experience but after treatment at St Vincent's Private Hospital, in Sydney, and a comprehensive rehabilitation program I felt better than I had for years. I thought about taking medical retirement, for about ten seconds, and returned to work "completely" rejuvenated after my stint of R&R.

I loved the job. There was nothing else that I wanted to do. I was doing so many “important” things and I had plans to do so many more “important” things. As a consequence of these very “important” things that I was doing, I was “important”.

It didn’t take me long to slip back into the old habits. Most days I was at work before 7.00 am and I regularly put in a twelve hour day. As a concession to the heart attack I had decided that I would not take work home so, when something “very important” had to be done I stayed back at work until 8.00 or 9.00 o’clock to get it finished.

One Friday, in August 2003, the inevitable happened. I had been feeling a little unwell for a couple of weeks but didn’t think it was serious. I was just tired and run down. My shoulders and neck ached and my arms were feeling heavy. My wife had been urging me to go and see the doctor so, I went to work as usual and when school commenced I walked across the road to the doctor’s surgery to see if I could get an appointment. Fortunately the receptionist was a lot smarter than me and, after asking a few simple questions, she got the doctor to see me straight away. After a quick examination he called an ambulance and sent me to the hospital in. That evening I had my second heart attack.

After more treatment and rehabilitation at St Vincent’s I came home feeling fit and well after this stint of R&R ready to go back to work. Fortunately I took the advice of several colleagues and friends and decided to retire.

Compared to the “importance” of the stuff I had been doing at work the chores I started doing at home paled into insignificance. I had to come to terms with this and it took many months to realise that “importance” is relative. To get this into perspective I asked myself this question. How “important” are the things that my predecessor was doing, as principal , and, how important was he, as the principal, after I took over as the principal. How “important” was I? I had to stop living in the past and find something else to feed my, at that time, fragile ego.

The second lesson I had to learn was that retirement is not an extension of the work phase of life and so does not involve finding a work substitute. It is not so much what you do in retirement but how you do it that is crucial.

I was feeling fit and healthy when I retired. The rehabilitation program had reassured me that a heart attack was not a life-sentence. Each morning I would get up, have breakfast and go for a walk on the beach for an hour or so. All well and good but then I would make sure that I was home in time to start “work” by 7.00 o’clock. If I hadn’t started my chores by 7.00 o’clock I thought I was wasting time and “bludging”. I would have a fifteen minute break for morning tea at 11.00 o’clock and then get back into it. Retirement, to me at the time, meant that I had the luxury of a lunch break. My other concession to retirement was that I would stop “work” at 4.00 o’clock and, if the tide was right, go fishing. If the tide was not right I would have a quiet ale or three and “relax”.

I had simply substituted one “work” routine for another. While my routine is an extreme example of substitution there are many examples of ways retirees make this mistake.

A close friend of mine is a keen golfer. He planned his retirement for many years and his dream was to play golf as many times a week as he could. Playing golf is not a problem. Even playing seven days a week is not a problem. What is the problem is the compulsion to play golf. My friend would not do anything else. He could not travel because he had to play golf. He could not help do the shopping because he had to play golf. He could not go out to dinner with friends because he had to get up early to play golf. He had substituted golf for work.

A neighbour substituted gardening for work when he retired. He spent virtually every minute of every day in the garden weeding and pruning and planting. He mowed the grass three times a week and spent hours weeding and fertilizing it. The depth of his compulsion became obvious when his grandchildren came to stay over the Christmas break and he wouldn’t let them play on the lawn.

I still have my list of chores and repairs and maintenance but they are no longer a compulsion.

The third lesson means that when you retire it doesn’t matter if you take three days to do a half day job. I still have a work ethic and when I do something I still do it to the best of my ability but I have learnt that the clock is superfluous in retirement. My list of chores is actually longer now than when I first made it but who really cares! They never finish painting the harbour bridge so who am I to think I should be able to get to the end of my list of chores. When I learnt this lesson I learnt how to live.

When I learnt the third lesson it meant I could go fishing if the tide was right at 11.00 o’clock in the morning. I didn’t have to wait until 4.00 o’clock. I could go whenever I felt like going.

When I learnt the third lesson it meant I could take an hour, if a wanted, for morning tea and that I wasn’t wasting my time if I read the paper or a magazine while I had a cup of coffee.

Best of all, however, learning the third lesson meant I could spend as long as I liked playing in my shed. When I first retired I bought a second hand wood lathe and tried to teach myself how to turn. The problem of being a compulsive chore doer was that I didn’t have time. By 4 o’clock I was physically tired and didn’t feel like applying myself and concentrating on what can be a quite dangerous activity. When I learnt the third lesson it meant that I could manage my chores by doing a bit at a time and spend most of each day doing just what I wanted to do. I also had time and energy to join the local woodwork club. I have met a new group of people and made some good friends with a common interest other than education. My woodwork skills have improved greatly and I have been able to expand my interests beyond turning to include fine joinery.

By learning these three crucial lessons and integrating them into how I think I have been able to enjoy my retirement and share that enjoyment with my wife, and best friend, of forty odd years. We have travelled both overseas and within Australia. We rented our house by the beach and moved for two years to help with the grandchildren when my son, a Naval Officer, was posted back to sea. We have taken up new hobbies and we have become involved with the local U3A. We even have time to do the chores.

The big problem with learning these three lessons is that we do stuff and stuff costs money. At one stage in my work career I was a school counsellor and so, after I started to come to terms with my retirement, I applied for a casual number and let it be known that I would be prepared to do some part time work in this field. I have been working two days a week in primary schools since and could work five. I have found that I enjoy working with primary teachers who are trying to help children with learning difficulties. I also enjoy working on a systems level with principals to implement behaviour management strategies.

This work has helped in many ways. My brain is active and I am doing “important” stuff and as a consequence I am “important” but not in the same way as in the work phase of my life. Importance is relative and I have learnt that nothing and nobody is as important as they may appear at the time. I work simply because it gives me extra money to do stuff and while I enjoy the work and I enjoy the challenge there is no way I would do it without being paid. I have too many other things I genuinely want to do.

I have also learnt that retirement does not involve finding a work substitute. One of the basic rules I set when I accept each offer of work is that I will be taking time off, at irregular and sometimes frequent intervals, to do stuff. I make it very clear that I am working to buy toys for our hobbies and to travel. They are so short of counsellors that they agree.

I have also learnt that it doesn’t matter if I don’t finish all the tasks that are given to me on that day. This can be quite frustrating for those people working in our schools that are driven by the clock and by the expectations of others but it is keeping me sane. I still have a high work ethic and I give very good value for money when I am in the school but I am not interested in another career.

I am well and truly entrenched in the retirement phase of my life. Bring it on!

Appendix 7.8

Staying-on principals' questionnaire

(Page 351 – 355)

Principals Staying-on: Focus Groups

1. Principals Feedback: Focus Groups

1. Personal information

Name (optional)

2. Gender

- Male
- Female

3. Your school level is/was:

- Primary
- Secondary/Central

4. Did you chose to stay-on past your pre-nominated superannuation retirement date?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Other (please specify)

5. Which superannuation scheme was your primary scheme at the time when you decided to stay-on (past your pre-nominated retirement date)?

- 1. State Superannuation Scheme (SSS: the "old scheme")
- 2. State Authorities Superannuation Scheme (SASS)
- 3. First State

Other (please specify)

Principals Staying-on: Focus Groups

6. What was/were the reason/s for your decision to stay-on past your pre-nominated retirement age? (Tick one or more appropriate boxes)

	First choice	Second choice	Third choice	Fourth choice
1. Professional stimulation (not ready to retire)	○	○	○	○
2. Financial	○	○	○	○
3. Social interaction	○	○	○	○
4. Intellectual stimulation	○	○	○	○
5. Personal/emotional (sense of purpose and identity)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

7. How pleased are you with your decision to stay-on?

○ 1. Extemely pleased

○ 2. Quite pleased

○ 3. Regretful

Other (please specify)

8. Would you advise other principals to consider staying-on?

○ 1. Yes

○ 2. Unsure

○ 3. No

Other (please specify)

Principals Staying-on: Focus Groups

9. Compared with your previous time as principal, how would you assess your current level of effectiveness?

- 1. Higher
- 2. Similar
- 3. Lower

Other (please specify)

10. Compared with your previous time as principal, how would you assess your current level of motivation?

- 1. Higher
- 2. Similar
- 3. Lower

Other (please specify)

11. Compared with your previous time as principal, how would you assess your current level of satisfaction?

- 1. Higher
- 2. Similar
- 3. Lower

Other (please specify)

Principals Staying-on: Focus Groups

12. What has been the reaction of your colleagues to your decision to stay-on? (tick any appropriate boxes)

- [ ] 1. Supportive
- [ ] 2. Interested
- [ ] 3. Disinterested
- [ ] 4. Opposed

Other (please specify)

13. What has been the reaction of others (e.g. family, friends, community) to your decision to stay-on? (tick any appropriate boxes)

- [ ] 1. Supportive
- [ ] 2. Interested
- [ ] 3. Disinterested
- [ ] 4. Opposed

Other (please specify)

14. What have you found to be the benefits to staying-on? (tick any appropriate boxes)

- [ ] 1. Professional interaction
- [ ] 2. Financial
- [ ] 3. Social interaction
- [ ] 4. Intellectual stimulation
- [ ] 5. Personal/ emotional (sense of purpose and identity)

Other (please specify)

Principals Staying-on: Focus Groups

15. Do youb see yourself moving from full-time work to part-time work?

- 1.Yes
- 2.Unsure
- 3.No

Other (please specify)

16. Do you believe that you will be better prepared for the retirement phase of your life after this staying-on experience?

- 1. Yes
- 2. Unsure
- 3. No

Other (please specify)

17. Are there any other comments you would like to make about your staying-on experience:

Appendix 7.9

Staying-on principals' interviews

Coding:

#1: Secondary female

#2: Secondary male

#3: Primary female

#4: Primary female

#5: Secondary female

#6: Secondary female

#7: Secondary female

#8: Secondary female

#9: Primary male

#10: Secondary female

#11: Primary female

QUESTION 1:

At you superannuation retirement date would you have opted for part-time work (in a principal-type role) rather than continuing in a full-time capacity had that option been available?

1. **No:** part-time work in the principal's role is very problematic. I had experience of a return to work program (after a shoulder injury) where I was required to work from 10.00 am-2.00 pm. It's a very untidy and disruptive structure so I'm not in favour of part-time principals. Therefore I opted to continue full-time
2. **No:** I was not interested in part-time. I had made my decision at 57 to move past 60 with full-time work
3. **No**: At that point only full-time available. Since then I would consider part-time but only if I could have stayed in my current school
4. **Yes:** I would have done part-time principal if that had been available, but I doubt if I would have lasted long given the increasing difficulties of the role
5. **Yes:** This is what I wanted & I virtually had it lined up but the superannuation consequences forced me to give the idea away

6. **Yes:** If this had been available I would have opted for this in preference. That's what I wanted
7. **No:** At the time I would have opted for full-time only. However my experiences with part-time work over the last 5 years have shown me that part-time can work. I have a different perspective. The role can be one which creates a superior leadership by: shadowing; sharing talents; succession planning; transition planning; and being creative...not just splitting up jobs.
8. **No:** I do not support part-time principals. It cannot work so I would not have taken part-time staying-on...only full-time staying-on
9. **No:** I was different. I had retired and was bored. I had done the world trip; I had landscaped the new garden; and now I "hit the wall". I was intellectually and professionally dying. I decided to seek a full-time principalship through Merit selection which only became available in May, 2005
10. **Yes (probably): if** it could have been the TCM with the Deputy (whom I had the highest regard for) filling the job-share then I would have phased out using part-time
11. **No:** I would have stayed full-time staying-on for 5 years; then **YES** I would have changed to part-time job-share under TCM

QUESTION 2

Do you see yourself as moving from this full-time work to part-time work ("ramping-off") or to full-time retirement?

1. **No, I'm not going to retire**. I may move to part-time work or some other full-time work. I'm motivated by intellectual stimulation and a sense of doing something challenging, worthwhile and satisfying (not some administrative and boring clerical role simply to stay connected: BER/ DER). Through my passion for social justice issues (especially with refugees) I may well follow that path next when it's time for a change. I'm 67 now.
2. **Yes:** I'm interested in moving to part-time. I'm 67 now & look forward to moving into something interesting as a "ramping-off" model. My locality operates against me as I'm not Sydney based. If this doesn't happen I'm relaxed about full-time retirement
3. **Yes:** But I doubt if I will actually ramp-off because I'm only interested in staying at my current school. Staying-on has kept me vital, active & able to make a continuing contribution.
4. **Yes:** Ramping-of through part-time is the most attractive option as I'm not ready to retire. I can still travel and have family time; I don't have to be fully retired to do those things.

5. **Yes:** I'll be moving to part-0time work in education. I just love this life
6. **Yes:** I'll be ramping-off through part-time as long as it's worthwhile; something in training and using my skills
7. **Yes:** I'll be ramping-off to part-time but this time it'll be in Voluntary Organizations
8. **No, I'm not going to retire:** I see myself as staying full-time. I love my work. Money is not an issue. I live close to where I work (that's a huge incentive). My work gives me a sense of purpose and identity. I turn 65 soon and then I'll have the best of all worlds: super + salary
9. **No:** I'm 67 and my wife will retire at the end of 2012. I'll retire full-time then also (Peter)
10. **Yes:** I see myself moving to other part-time work next (probably 3 days/week). However it would need to be in an area that I was interested in and passionate about (teacher PD) and not just any old "administrivia"
11. **Yes:** if it is interesting and part of my passion. There must be an intellectual challenge to attract me otherwise I'll stay with what I'm doing and then "retire

QUESTION 3

Do you have any regrets about your decision to stay-on past your superannuation retirement date?

1. **Absolutely not.** This has been the best decision of my career (so far). I'm now 68. I could have retired at 55. I am now operating more effectively than ever. On reflection across these 13 years has I have brought together all the skills and knowledge that I have acquired so far and I'm able to operate at a higher level than ever (and there is no reason for this to stop). Many people retire between 55 and 60 because they feel they are "entitled" to. That sense of entitlement is paraded like a badge of honour but I wonder if it's really a trap. It seems to be used as a self-fulfilling "right" to retire (on a generous superannuation) and do nothing when they could actually be utilising their considerable talents, expertise and intelligence for the good of themselves and the community. I have also disproven "the myth" that you earn the same for working as for not working: untrue. I get $300 more in my pay than in my superannuation. If you were to take my situation and apply it across the whole system that is an enormous waste of skills, knowledge and wisdom. Systems need to encourage and retain this experience and expertise...but first systems need to value that experience and expertise. That is not the current situation with NSWDEC
2. **No:** Not for a day! Absolutely no regrets
3. **No:** Not at all
4. **No:**

5. **No:** Absolutely not. This was the right decision at the right time. I was tired & exhausted. I'm now activated, energetic and lover this life
6. **No:** The role is intellectually challenging and I believe that I'm making a contribution to the profession
7. **No:** Had I finished at 55 I would have felt flat, lost and unfulfilled. This is the best thing I've ever done. I'm now at the top of my skills...this may go on improving. I have choice which is a huge issue. Previously I did not have any power, rights or authority...I now have all these and it makes a difference to satisfaction levels
8. **No:** No regrets. This decision has given me "life" as I want it. I'm not caught "babysitting: the grandchildren whilst my kids engage in the workforce. I have no "fear" or restrictions about voicing my opinions. I have control over what I do and don't do. I'm "sharper" than I've ever been because of : greater reflection time; more relaxed in the role; loving the continuous learning (I cannot get enough); freedom and control; more able to be guided by my values and beliefs; more effective and motivated because it's my choice
9. **No:** I love what I'm doing. I get great satisfaction and enjoyment. I love the intellectual challenge. This has stopped me from dying intellectually and professionally 9and probably socially also). My solution was not in "leisure"...that is not satisfying for me. This has been
10. The best decision even though I had to "eat humble pie'; and be put through demeaning and unfair processes i knew what I wanted and set out to achieve it.
11. **No:** I just absolutely love what I do. I love my life and the balance I NOW have.