The Novice Experience:
Western Australian Primary Deputy Principals' First Year in School Leadership and Management

Doctor of Education
Research Proposal

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Abstract

The proposed study is an examination of the work of primary deputy principals in Western Australian government schools during their first year in the position and the professional socialisation that they undergo. It will adopt an interpretivist approach, using a longitudinal multiple case study design, to generate rich descriptions of the professional socialisation and experience of beginning deputy principals during a 12-month period.

The proposed study intends to use a sample of twelve primary deputy principals in WA government schools that are in their first year in the position in 2006. The sample seeks to address maximum variability in participants' backgrounds and work locations. In doing so, the study will seek to provide a full and rich understanding of the experience of beginning primary deputy principals in WA government schools.

The proposed study will use multiple methods of data collection over a 12-month period. The researcher intends to collect data through in-depth interviews, non-participant workplace observations and reflective journals maintained by participants.

The proposed study will make a contribution to knowledge in various ways. It aims to increase our understanding of the work of novice deputy principals in government primary schools. It aims to further our understanding of practitioners' transitions to school management and leadership positions. It seeks to develop propositions about the initial phases of deputy principal socialisation and identify factors which enhance and inhibit the professional socialisation of deputy principals in primary schools. It also seeks to add to our knowledge about the ways in which primary school administration teams operate.

A. Proposed Study

1.0   Introduction

"The role of the assistant principal is one of the least researched and least discussed topics in professional journals and books focussing on educational leadership" (Weller & Weller, 2002, p.xiii). The role of deputy principal, referred to as deputy headteacher in the United Kingdom and assistant principal in the United States of America, lies somewhere between that of principal and classroom teacher. There is no clearly defined universal role or job description for the position of deputy principal and the role is open to ambiguity and variation. Such variations in the role exist from school to school as a result of school needs and the philosophy

of the principal in the way that they delegate responsibility to others (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995; Marshall, 1992; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis & Ecob, 1989; Weller & Weller, 2002).

Various authors have argued that further research is needed to create a 'critical mass' of knowledge about the work of deputy principals in self-managing schools (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995; Jayne, 1996; Ribbins, 1997; Southworth, 1994; Weller & Weller, 2002). This research seeks to add to current knowledge about the work of deputy principals in self-managing schools, by focussing upon their first year in the position.

2.0   Research Aims

The proposed study aims to develop theory about the novice experience of primary deputy principals. The following research question will guide the proposed study.

> How do novice deputy principals in Western Australian government primary schools deal with their work during their first year in the role?

In doing so, the proposed study aims to investigate the experiences of deputy principals in government primary schools in their first year in the position, investigate the meanings that deputy principals give to those experiences and investigate the ways that deputy principals act according to their perspectives of their experiences. Through making multiple contacts with participants during a 12-month period, the proposed study aims to follow the work lives of deputy principals from the beginning of their first year to the end of their first year. The proposed study will seek to answer this central research question:

3.0   The Research Context

In the past quarter of a century, many school systems throughout the world have undergone 'restructuring'. Restructuring has typically involved a significant decentralisation of decision-making to schools from the system's centre.

In Australia, the term 'devolution' is more commonly used to describe the process of decentralisation that has occurred to various extents in school systems in each state and territory (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). With devolution, there is a transference of authority and decision-making to the local level from the system's 'centre', with a resultant

increase in local independence (Karlsen, 2000). The process of devolution in Australia has resulted in the trend towards self-managing schools (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992).

The devolutionary process and the move towards self-managing schools has resulted in an increased expectation of effective school leadership and a concurrent increase in the amount of work that schools are expected to accomplish (Caldwell, 1998; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998; Wallace, 2002; Wildy & Louden, 2000). In the context of the self-managing school, principals tend to be more dependent upon their colleagues to share the burden of work (Wallace, 2002). Self-management requires the use of more collaborative approaches through the involvement of more school staff in groups such as teams and committees (Harvey, 1994b; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). The school administration team or school management team provides opportunities for distributed forms of leadership. In Western Australia, primary school management teams typically consist of the principal and deputy principals, but may include other senior staff (Harvey, 1994b).

The Department of Education and Training of WA (2005) outlines the scope of the deputy principal's role as consisting of a leadership component and a management component. Broadly, the leadership component of the deputy principal's role may consist of: working collaboratively to develop and promote school vision; using change strategies to develop improved educational service; assisting in the facilitation of staff professional development; assisting in policy development and school development planning; establishing and managing administrative systems to ensure efficient school management; and promoting teaching and learning. Broadly, the management component of the deputy principal's role may consist of: assisting the principal to ensure compliance with relevant policies and procedures that encompass management of financial, human and physical resources. The specific duties of the deputy principal are negotiated within the administrative team.

In government primary schools in WA, the deputy principal's role varies considerably and is reflective of a wide range of contextual school factors including geographical location, socio-economic background of the school community, school size, teaching experience of the staff and various other school needs (Department of Education and Training, 2005).

4.0   Literature Review

Evident in the literature are three conceptual areas of relevance to this study. These are concepts of leadership and management; empirical research into the deputy principalship; and empirical research into professional socialisation. These areas will now be discussed.

4.1   <u>Concepts of Leadership and Management</u>

Leadership is a socially agreed construct with no clear agreed definition. Yukl (2002, p.2) contends that "most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organisation." While ideas about leadership have changed over time with historical, social and cultural changes that have occurred (Avery, 2004), context is generally considered to be important to the meaning that is given to leadership and how it is perceived (Antonacopoulou & Bento, 2004; Mole, 2004; Southworth, 2005; Storey, 2004).

In an educational environment, leadership is context-dependent and different styles of leadership can be successful. Leadership does not necessarily reside in only one person and can be recognised in individuals who may not hold formal leadership positions (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). Leadership makes a difference (Fullan, 2001) and leadership styles in self-managing schools are significant (Leithwood et. al., 1999).

Distinguishing between leadership and management is seen as being contentious and problematic (Fullan, 2001; Glatter, 1977; Storey, 2004; Thrupp & Willmott, 2003). There is overlap between the manager and leader roles and individuals can display varying amounts of leadership and management, depending upon context and circumstance. Authors who attempt to distinguish between leadership and management tend to do so on the basis of the types of work involved (Fidler & Atton, 2004; Storey, 2004; Zaleznik, 1995).

Leadership involves setting direction (Smith, 2004; Southworth, 2005; Zaleznik, 1995), making change (Kotter, 1990; Smith, 2004) and developing people (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Typical leadership activities include encouraging team members to contribute ideas about direction, objectives and strategies; inspiring people to overcome obstacles; motivating people to achieve outstanding results; coaching people to perform effectively; and fostering teamwork (Smith, 2004).

Managerial work is generally characterised as involving a great deal of work that has brevity, variety and fragmentation and that occurs at an unrelenting pace. The work is often specific, nonroutine and reactive (Mintzberg, 1973). Managerial work involves many interactions, generally oral, with peers and outsiders. Planning tends to be informal and adaptive (Yukl, 2002). Typical management activities involve making short term plans; acquiring and allocating resources; ensuring that systems and procedures are observed; monitoring performance; and resolving conflicts (Smith, 2004).

Many authors refer to the broad work of principals and deputy principals as 'management' (Daresh & Male, 2000; Garret & McGeachie, 1999; James & Whiting, 1998; Jones, 1999), while others use the term 'administration' (Bartholemew & Fusarelli, 2003; Harvey & Sheridan, 1995; Porter, 1996). Leadership opportunities often arise from the 'management' or 'administrative' work that practitioners are engaged in (Garret & McGeachie, 1999; Harvey, 1994a; Jayne, 1996).

In a school environment, leadership and management are difficult to separate as individual conceptual tasks. Practitioners generally employ and utilise their leadership and management skills in a wide range of activities that they undertake (Leithwood et. al., 1999; Weller & Weller, 2002). Novice deputy principals' leadership and management skills are likely to differ from the skills of more experienced deputy principals. Novices are often challenged by a lack of situational knowledge and are still developing their self-efficacy and leadership and management skills (Bullock, James & Jamieson, 1995; Oplatka, 2004).

4.2   Empirical Research into the Deputy Principalship
The role of the deputy principal (or deputy headteacher or assistant principal as it is referred to in the UK and USA respectively) originated from the need to designate a teacher to reduce the workload of the principal by undertaking responsibility for a range of less important administrative tasks (Harvey, 1994a).

Exploratory studies by Harvey (1994b) and Wallace (2002) into school management teams found that their existence and operation was dependent upon the principal's preference for a collaborative form of leadership and that principals hold almost exclusive authority over the degree of participation in school activity that their colleagues are permitted. This suggests that

the role of the deputy principal in is dependent upon the philosophy of the principal and the way that the principal delegates responsibility (Hughes & James, 1999; Jayne, 1996; Lawley, 1998). It is possible that tensions may arise if the philosophies of the principals and the deputy principal differ widely.

Recent studies conducted in the UK, USA and Australia indicate that deputy principals continue to have a position in the school which is primarily concerned with maintaining the efficiency of the school's day-to-day operations (Bartholemew & Fusarelli, 2003; Cranston, Tromans & Reugebrink, 2002; Garrett & McGeachie, 1999; Harvey, 1991; Harvey, 1994a; Mertz, 2000; Webb & Vulliamy, 1995). There is evidence to suggest that deputy principals desire greater leadership responsibilities (Harvey, 1991; Harvey, 1994a; Jayne, 1996) and some evidence that deputy principals perceive that they are being delegated greater responsibility (Draper & McMichael, 1998a).

Most principals will be appointed from the pool of deputy principals (Hartzell et. al., 1995), however the literature reveals variations and some conflict in findings regarding the adequacy of deputy principalship as a preparation for principalship (Daresh & Male, 2000; Hausman et. al. 2002; Jayne, 1996; Petzko, Clark, Valentine, Hackmann, Nori & Lucas, 2002; Ribbins, 1997). A number of authors contend that there is no 'real' preparation for the principalship, other than experience in the role (Draper & McMichael, 1998b; Jones, 1999). However, various authors indicate that a wide range of experiences as a deputy principal is valuable preparation for the principalship. A deputy principal's role that includes delegated responsibility for tasks and opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and abilities in areas of leadership and management is likely to be more valuable than a specialised role that involves mostly student management (Draper & McMichael, 1998b; Hausman et. al. 2002; Jayne, 1996; Mertz, 2000).

The teaching component of primary deputy principals' workloads appears to be problematic. Deputy principals believe that it is difficult to combine classroom teaching responsibilities and an administrative workload and achieve success with both (Garret & McGeachie, 1999; Harvey, 1991; Harvey, 1994a; Helps, 1994).

There is a clear paucity in the literature of research into the experiences of deputy principals in their first few years in the role. Hartzell et. al.'s (1995) study in an American secondary school context represents the only major research into the work of assistant principals in their first

year. This proposed study in an Australian primary context seeks to add to existing knowledge in this area.

4.3   Empirical Research into Professional Socialisation

Hart (1993) refers to socialisation as the process of learning social roles through the internalisation of beliefs, values and norms of the groups to which individuals belong. Practitioners new to the deputy principalship are likely to experience socialisation on two levels. Firstly, they will experience professional socialisation (Hart, 1993; Parkay, Currie & Rhodes, 1992; Earley & Weindling, 2004) in which they learn what is necessary to be a deputy principal. Secondly, they will experience organisational socialisation (Hart, 1993; Wanous, 1980; Earley & Weindling, 2004) in which they learn the knowledge, values and behaviours specific to a particular school.

Various studies have examined the professional socialisation of teachers (Fessler, 1995; Huberman, 1995) and principals (Beeson & Matthews, 1992; Day & Bakioğlu, 1996; Parkay et. al., 1992; Earley & Weindling, 2004), however little, if any, research has examined the professional socialisation of deputy principals (Hart, 1993; Hartzell et. al., 1995). In the absence of knowledge about the ways in which deputy principals undergo professional and organisational socialisation, research into the socialisation of teachers and principals may offer insights into the processes that deputy principals undergo.

Common to a number of stage models of organisational socialisation processes (Day & Bakioğlu, 1996; Fessler, 1995; Gabarro, 1987; Huberman, 1995; Parkay et. al., 1992; Wanous, 1980; Earley & Weindling, 2004) is an identified initial, beginning or induction phase of organisational socialisation in which practitioners encounter a new role.

The models of teacher socialisation proposed by Fessler (1995) and Huberman (1995) indicate that a period of induction might last as long as three years, after which teachers reach a phase of stabilisation and confidence. During the induction phase, teachers generally experience discovery, enthusiasm and challenge while simultaneously experiencing day-to-day survival (Fessler, 1995).

Research by Day and Bakioğlu (1996) into the socialisation of principals indicates that during the induction or initiation phase, principals are generally 'learning the ropes' and learning on the job. Studies by Parkay et. al. (1992) and Earley & Weindling (2004) examined the professional socialisation of principals over time following their appointment. Both studies indicate that there are identifiable stages of socialisation through which principals move. Both studies identified similar beginning stages of socialisation. Parkay et. al. (1992) found that principals experience initial phases of survival, control and then stability. Earley & Weindling (2004) named these phases of initial socialisation as 'entry and encounter' and 'taking hold'. Both studies found that principals generally experience initial 'shock', which Louis (1980) refers to as 'surprise'. All individuals who are newcomers to positions in organisations experience the element of 'surprise'. The amount of surprise is related to the amount of difference between an individual's anticipation and experience of the new position (Louis, 1980). Nicholson and West (1998) believe that any 'reality shock' or 'surprise' that occurs in the transition to a new position is a direct consequence of the newcomer's readiness for the movement.

Duke (1987) suggests that educational administration is a separate profession to the teaching profession; however, stage models of socialisation of teachers and principals indicate that both teachers and principals undergo stages of induction or initial socialisation that are characterised by 'surprise' and 'learning the ropes'. Deputy principals may well undergo similar processes of professional socialisation.

This review has covered concepts of leadership and management; empirical research into the deputy principalship; and empirical research into the professional socialisation of school practitioners. The position of deputy principal is often practitioners' first formal position in school leadership and management and represents exposure to a range of leadership and management opportunities.

B. Research Plan
5.0   Theoretical Framework

A constructionist epistemology underpins this proposed study. Constructionism holds that there is no objective truth to be discovered, but that we construct meaning of various phenomena through our engagement with life experiences and situations (Crotty, 1998).

This proposed study intends to use an interpretivist approach, informed by the perspective of symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism acknowledges the importance of social interaction as the process through which people interpret and make meaning of things. The importance of symbolic interactionism as a means of understanding human behaviour is through the emphasis it places on people's interpretations of words, symbols and meanings (Denzin, 1989; Patton, 2002). According to Blumer (1969, p.2), whose ideas were significant in the development of the perspective, symbolic interactionism is based on three premises: the first premise is that "human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them"; the second premise is that "the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows"; and the third premise is that "these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters".

This proposed study's research questions are embedded in the symbolic interactionist perspective.

5.1   Research Questions

This proposed study will seek to answer this central research question:

> How do novice deputy principals in Western Australian government primary schools deal with their work during their first year in the role?

In addition the following guiding questions have been formulated in order to guide the data collection process.

(a)   What perspectives do novice primary deputy principals in Western Australian government schools have about their roles during their first year?

(b)   How are their perspectives of the role influenced by their interactions with other members of the school community?

(c)   What strategies do novice primary deputy principals adopt in order to deal with their role, why do they adopt these strategies and what are their perspectives on the success of these strategies?

(d)   In what ways do novice primary deputy principals' perspectives of their role and the strategies they adopt to deal with their role change during their first year of appointment?

The first guiding question seeks to reflect Blumer's first premise that individuals act toward things, in this case their role, based on the meanings that things have for them. The second guiding question seeks to reflect Blumer's second premise that meaning arises from social interaction that individuals have with others. The third and fourth guiding questions seek to reflect Blumer's third premise that individuals make meaning of situations through interpretation and re-interpretation.

5.2   Research Design

This proposed study intends to use a longitudinal multiple case study design. Merriam (1998) defines the case study as being "an examination of a specific phenomenon" (p.9). Such a phenomenon may be an individual, a group, a program or an event, into which the researcher is interested in gaining insight through interpretation of the case being studied. Stake (2000) refers to a case as being "a specific, unique, bounded system" (p.436) and Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to a case as being a phenomenon in a bounded context that forms the unit of analysis. Multiple case studies or collective case studies (Stake, 2000) focus both within and across cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Punch, 1998). The cross-case analysis then compares the details of a number of cases and examines whether the variables that were important in one case are important in other cases (Babbie, 2001).

In this proposed study, the individual case is defined as 'an individual in their first year in the position of deputy principal in a primary school in the government school system of Western Australia.' Individual cases may or may not have similar themes or characteristics, however the understanding of individual cases is expected to lead to better understandings of the larger collection of cases, which may lead ultimately to generalisability (Stake, 2000). In this proposed study, the researcher is not aiming to make generalisations from the data. The researcher is aiming to identify common themes and point out significant differences that may emerge from the examination of each case and provide thick, rich descriptions of the experiences of primary deputy principals in their first year. In addition, the researcher intends to generate propositions regarding the socialisation of deputy principals in their first year as deputy principal.

5.3   Selection of Participants

This proposed study intends to use purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) to select a sample of twelve participants. Information obtained from the DET Deputy Director-General's office reveals that in 2005 there are 21 'individuals in their first year in the position of deputy principal in a primary school in the government school system of WA'. With knowledge of current selection processes being undertaken by DET, the Deputy Director-General estimates that in 2006 there will be greater than 21 such cases. The proposed sample would represent approximately half of all possible cases. The proposed sample of twelve aims to overcome potential issues of attrition of participants which may arise through the longitudinal nature of the proposed study.

The researcher will seek expressions of interest from all newly appointed primary deputy principals for 2006 to participate in the proposed study. From expressions of interest received, the researcher will select a sample of twelve participants that reflect maximum variation according to the variables of participants' previous work history, school size and geographical location of school. Based on the experience of the researcher, these variables are likely to be more important to this proposed study than other variables.

6.0   Methods

6.1   Data Collection

In this proposed study, the primary source of data collection will be through the use of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Supporting data will be collected through workplace observations in which the researcher acts as a non-participant observer (Punch, 1998) and reflective journals maintained by participants.

6.1.1   Interviews

Interviews allow the researcher access through words to an individual's constructed reality and interpretation of his or her own experience (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1995). In-depth interviews enable the researcher to seek an understanding of participants' perspectives of their experiences or situations through repeated face-to-face encounters (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

This proposed study intends to gather data through in-depth interviews which are semi-structured. The semi-structured interview has specific topic areas that need to be covered

during the course of the interview, however the order of the questions and the exact wording of the questions are left to the discretion of the interviewer (Bryman, 2001; Hessler, 1992). This enables the researcher flexibility to respond immediately to issues raised by participants, ask probing questions and to allow participants to discuss issues considered to be important to them. The interview guide, however, remains focussed on collecting data to ensure that the research questions can be answered (Minichiello et. al., 1995) and seeks to ensure cross-case comparability (Bryman, 2001).

In this proposed study, data will be collected in three cycles according to the following schedule:

February, March 2006:	First interview with each participant.
June, July, August 2006:	Workplace observations and follow up (second) interview with each participant.
November, December 2006:	Third interview with each participant.

The first cycle of interviews will explore the perspectives of participants' initial experiences as deputy principal. This first cycle is planned to align with Earley and Weindling's (2004) principal socialisation stage of 'entry and encounter'.

The second cycle of interviews will explore the perspectives that participants have about critical incidents and other situations that they have experienced during their first six months as deputy principal and explore any changes to perspectives that participants may have experienced since the first interview. This second interview will also explore each participant's perspectives of situations observed by the researcher during workplace observations. The third cycle of interviews will explore participants' perspectives of situations experienced in the latter six months of the year since the workplace observations. This third interview will also enable participants to revisit previous perspectives and reflect upon their experiences throughout the year. The second and third cycle of interviews plan to align with Earley and Weindling's (2004) principal socialisation stage of 'taking hold'.

Interview questions will be provided to each participant several days before each interview to enable each participant to reflect upon his or her experiences and prepare for the interview. Interviews will be approximately 60 minutes in length and will be conducted face-to-face at

each participant's workplace. Permission to tape-record each interview will be sought from each participant. Interview transcripts will be emailed back to each participant for verification.

Pilot interviews will be held in February 2006 with two newly appointed deputy principals who have indicated interest in being part of the proposed study but who have not been selected as part of the sample. The pilot interviews will provide feedback to the researcher regarding the effectiveness of the interview questions prior to the first cycle of interviews and will provide the researcher with experience at interviewing techniques.

The three cycles of interviews will seek to generate data in order to inform all of the propsed study's guiding questions.

6.1.2   Reflective Journals

Prior to the second and third cycle of interviews, participants will be asked to maintain a reflective journal for approximately five days during a two-week period. The reflective journals will include three elements: a factual log of events that have occurred; a list of significant incidents deemed to be important to teach participant; and a personal reflection of events and critical incidents from each participant's perspective (Denscombe, 1998). The reflective journals will provide a source of information that will be discussed during interviews. With consent from participants, journals will be collected as a further source of data. The use of reflective journals will seek to generate data in order to inform the proposed study's guiding questions (b) and (c).

6.1.3   Workplace Observations

To obtain a better understanding of participants' perspectives, to enable the comparison of findings (Mathison, 1998; Merriam, 1998), and specifically to be used as a means of guiding participants to reflect upon their perspectives, the researcher will undertake observation of each participant at their workplace for two days. Observations will occur during June, July and August at a time convenient to each participant. Days of the week when participants have little or no classroom contact will be chosen to enable the researcher to observe each participant engaged in activities associated with their negotiated role as deputy principal.

Field notes will be taken to record observations during workplace visits. A systematic range of approaches to observation will be adopted that include descriptive, focused and selective observations (Spradley, 1980; Werner & Schoepfle, 1987).

Field notes that document descriptive observations of the general workplace context will include information such as school layout, office environment and school climate.

The majority of observations undertaken during workplace visits will be either focused or selective. Field notes of focused observations will document activities undertaken when each participant is working primarily alone.

Field notes of selective observations will document activities in which participants are engaged in interaction with others. The researcher is aware that she may not have access to observing all such interactive activity that participants engage in with others during workplace visits. The researcher will respect the demands for privacy and confidentiality from participants and other school staff.

Workplace observations will seek to generate data in order to inform the proposed study's guiding questions (a) and (c).

6.2   Data Analysis

6.2.1   <u>Interviews</u>

The analysis of each transcribed interview will follow the process of data reduction, data display and the drawing of conclusions outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). This process is shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.
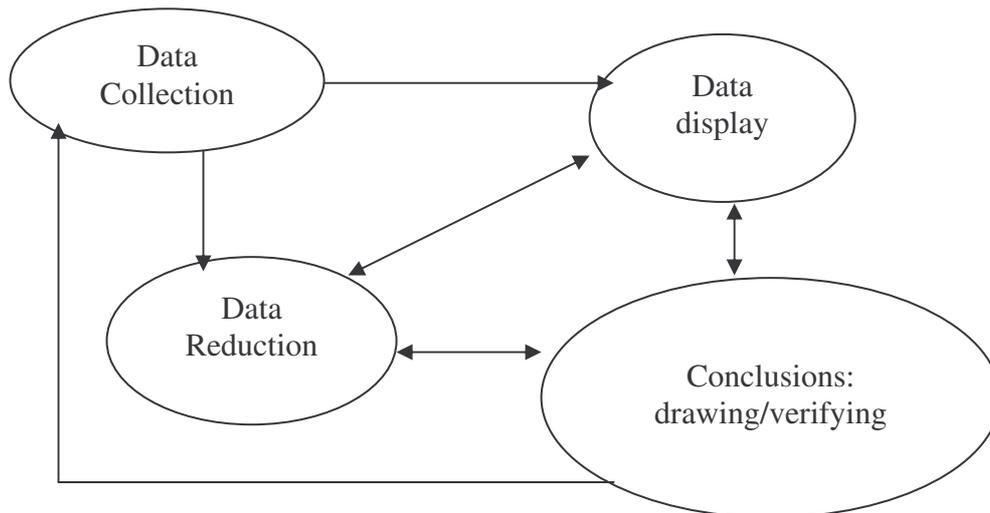
Figure 4: Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model from Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 12)

The phase of data reduction from interview transcripts will seek to simplify and organise the data into more easily manageable components. The process of simplifying the data will involve the use of first-level and second-level coding approaches (Punch, 1998). First-level coding involves examining small, discrete parts of text and identifying concepts contained in what is spoken. In analysing the transcriptions of interviews in this proposed study, each sentence or group of sentences of each interview transcript will be examined and labelled with descriptive names.

The data will be further simplified through the use of second-level coding. This will involve examining the first-level descriptive codes and clustering similarly coded units together into categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). These categories will be given a second-level conceptual label. The researcher will seek to further simplify the data with a third level of coding in which similar conceptual categories are further clustered and given a more abstract third-level conceptual label.

The phase of data display will involve the mapping of second-level categories and third-level categories on a chart into a simplified, compact form. The chart will provide a visual representation of how categories relate to each other and will help to identify the key themes emerging from each interview. Key themes emerging from the analysis of each interview transcript will be mapped onto a further chart to enable comparison across cases to occur.

The phase of conclusion drawing and verification will seek to note themes emerging from the analysis of each interview transcript and seek to note similarities and differences emerging from a comparison across cases. This phase will also seek to offer propositions about emerging themes.

A constant comparative approach to the phases of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing will be employed. Feedback from participants regarding emerging themes, tentative propositions and conclusions will be sought at the end of the entire collection and data analysis process. This will aim to strengthen the findings of the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Punch, 1998).

6.2.2   Reflective Journals

The analysis of participants' reflective journals will follow the process of data reduction, data display and the drawing of conclusions outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and described in section 6.2.1. Due to participants' busy worklives, the researcher is aware that reflective journals may not yield substantial depth.

6.2.3   Field notes from workplace observations

The analysis of field notes from workplace observations will follow the process of data reduction, data display and the drawing of conclusions outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and described in section 6.2.1.

During the initial first-level coding phase of data reduction, descriptive codes and labels will be assigned to phrases and segments of text of recorded observations. During second-level coding, clusters of similarly coded units will be considered to be categories and assigned a more conceptual label. The researcher will aim to undertake a third level of coding of categories if appropriate. Together with coded and categorised tasks, the phase of data reduction will also include the quantification of time spent on various tasks. This information can then be compared with participants' perspectives of issues discussed in interviews.

The phase of data display from workplace observation will involve the mapping of categories, together with time spent on each, on a chart into a simplified, compact form. The chart will provide a visual representation of how categories relate to each other and will help to identify the key aspects of each participant's work at the time of observation by the researcher.

The phase of conclusion drawing and verification will seek to note observations and themes emerging from the analysis of each workplace observation and seek to note similarities and differences emerging from a comparison across cases. Themes emerging from workplace observation analysis will be compared with themes emerging from the analysis of interview transcripts. This phase will continue to seek to offer propositions about emerging themes. The researcher will seek feedback and verification from each participant regarding the themes emerging from workplace observations and themes emerging from interviews when the data collection phase has concluded.

7.0   Significance

This proposed study aims to make a substantial and original contribution to knowledge about school leadership and management in various ways. Firstly, in the absence of a 'critical mass' of research in the literature (Harvey & Sheridan, 1995; Jayne, 1996; Ribbins, 1997; Weller & Weller, 2002), this proposed study aims to add knowledge to understanding better the work of primary deputy principals by examining their practice and roles in self-managing schools. The researcher is aware of Liley's (UWA) research currently being conducted with practising and experienced deputy principals in the Fremantle-Peel district of the Perth metropolitan area. This proposed research is limited to the examination of perspectives that first year deputy principals in 2006 have about their roles.

This proposed study also aims to further our understanding about practitioners' transitions to school management and leadership positions. In particular, it aims to develop propositions about the initial or induction phase of deputy principals' professional socialisation. Stage models of teacher socialisation (Fessler, 1995; Huberman, 1995) and principal socialisation (Parkay et. al., 1992; Earley & Weindling, 2004) propose that practitioners move through a series of phases of socialisation throughout their careers. There is no existing model of career phase development of deputy principals. This proposed study into beginning deputy principals, together with Liley's current research, could seek to develop a stage model of career development for deputy principals, from appointment to retirement. In doing so, it will also seek to identify factors which enhance and inhibit the professional socialisation of deputy principals during the phase of induction and transition to school management and identify factors which enhance and inhibit practitioners' pre-appointment socialisation or anticipatory socialisation (Duke, 1987) and preparedness for the role of deputy principal. In turn, this will

seek to identify processes that effectively prepare deputy principals for the complexity of the role.

8.0   Trustworthiness

This proposed study seeks to enhance its trustworthiness through a number of mechanisms: long-term involvement with participants; triangulation; member checks; peer examination; and the provision of thick, rich descriptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam; 1998).

Long-term involvement and multiple contacts with participants during a single year will enable perspectives to be revisited. Triangulation will be sought through the use of multiple sources of data collection. Member checking and peer examination will be utilised during the phases of data analysis and conclusion drawing to verify the plausibility of emerging findings. Through the use of thick, rich descriptions, the researcher will aim to provide information to ensure that the research findings are consistent with the data collected.

9.0   Consent, Access and Human Participants' Protection

Permission for research to be conducted with employees of DET will be sought from the Director General before the end of 2005.

Following approval from the Director General for research with employees to occur, information regarding new appointments to the deputy principalship for 2006 will be requested from the DET Staffing Directorate during December 2005 and January 2006. This will enable the researcher to make contact with all new appointees as soon as possible prior to the commencement of the 2006 school year in order to seek expressions of interest for participation in the proposed study. Study participants will be selected from those new appointees having expressed interest in being involved in the proposed study. Participants will be assured of confidentiality throughout their participation in the proposed research.
Prior to interviews and workplace observations being conducted in 2006, the researcher will seek approval to do so from the principals of the schools in which the participants work. Principals will be assured of the confidentiality of participants' and schools' identities.

10.0 Scholars

Professor Geoff Southworth	National College for School Leadership, UK
Professor Chris James	University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd, UK
Professor Kenneth Leithwood	University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Professor Mike Wallace	University of Bath, Bath, UK
Emeritus Professor Peter Ribbins	University of Lincoln, UK
Dr Michael Harvey	Edith Cowan University, Perth, WA

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Appendix 1: Timeline

<u>2005</u>

February – September	Conduct literature review
	Preparation of research proposal
October – November	Preparation of semi-structured interview questions
November	Obtain permission from DET to conduct research with requested staff
December	Obtain information from DET of newly appointed deputy principals for 2006
	Contact newly appointed deputy principals to seek willingness to engage in research in 2006

<u>2006</u>

February	Conduct pilot interview
February - March	Conduct first interview with participants
April – May	Analyse data from first round of interviews
July – August	Workplace observations
	Conduct second interview with participants
September – November	Analyse data from second round of interviews
November – December	Conduct third interview with participants

<u>2007</u>

January – February	Analyse data from third round of interviews
February - November	Further literature review
	Preparation of thesis
December	Submission of thesis

Appendix 2: Budget

Tape recording equipment	Nil
Tape cassettes and batteries	~ $80
Travel	~ $800
Total:	~ $880

All research costs will be met by the researcher.