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THE EXCELLENCE REFORM MOVEMENT: SIXTEEN YEARS LATER
TEACHER PERSPECTIVES FROM AN ARIZONA SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

Gregory Alan Wyman

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

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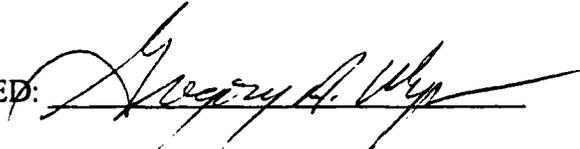
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory A. V. V. V.", written over a horizontal line.

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ABSTRACT

The latest educational reform movement to sweep across the American educational landscape was called the excellence reform movement (Berube, 1994). This reform movement received extensive media and political coverage and has impacted the education system for past 16 years. This movement has been characterized by waves of reforms, each with a specific focus. The end result was a series of reform initiatives that touched all segments of the educational system. There was a question as to the impact of the reform movement in the classroom.

This study sought to gather the perspectives of teachers, from an Arizona school district, on the impact of reform initiatives emanating from the excellence reform movement. The study, framed by the theoretical context of educational change and Etzioni's compliance theory, utilized questionnaire and interview methodologies to collect teacher perspectives. Specifically, the study focused on the impact of reform initiatives on teaching practices in the classroom and factors that influenced teacher decision-making regarding implementation of reform initiatives.

Using a multi-method study, an analysis of the data revealed a limited impact of the reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement in the classrooms in this particular district. Teachers indicated it did not matter whether the impetus for a reform initiative came from the state, locally or external to the system the impact was minimal on their practices. The role of teacher compliance with mandated educational reform was discussed utilizing Etzioni's compliance theory (1975). The study revealed

that teachers' as lower-level participants in the educational organization complied with mandates from various levels within the educational organization. The analysis suggested this study supported previous studies regarding factors that influence teacher acceptance of reform initiatives (Huberman, 1989/1993; Murphy, Evertson, and Radnofsky, 1991). Specifically, teacher ownership in the reform, rewards and sanctions, and the role of the principal were three factors that impacted teacher decision-making regarding the implementation of reforms.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Background

Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world The educational foundations of our society are presently eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur---others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. (National Commission on Excellence in Education [NCEE], 1983, p. 5)

This introduction to the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report, A Nation at Risk, released in 1983, initiated the latest reform movement in American education (Berube, 1994; Buttram & Waters, 1997; Wiggins, 1986). This reform movement, which came to be known as the excellence reform movement (Berube, 1994), was marked by a number of national reports critical of public education. These reports included Action for Excellence (Education Commission of the States, 1983), High School (Boyer, 1983), Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education (National Governors' Association, 1986), and Making the Grade (Twentieth Century Fund, 1983). The focus of the excellence reform movement was on the decline in the American public education system over the past 20 to 30 years (Slavin, 1983). Many felt

that the “golden age” of American public education was over (Hall, 1983; Sobol, 1992). Declines in standardized test scores, general student knowledge in a variety of subjects, and American scores on international tests were some of the evidence used by these reports to support their claims of the decline of America’s public education system (Ornstein, 1992; Toch, 1991). Further, these reports claimed the failure of the American public education system was affecting America’s economic status in the world. America was no longer the economic leader in the world and would not regain this status in the near future. A major reason for this concern was the academic performance of children in countries throughout the world. Children in Japan, South Korea, Sweden, and other nations appeared to be performing better on comparative standardized tests than U.S. children. This discrepancy was utilized to imply that American children were not gaining the skills needed to keep the United States competitive in the global marketplace (Berube, 1994; Finn, 1984; Hall, 1983; Toch, 1991).

The rhetoric of the excellence reform movement struck a chord with the general public, politicians, business leaders, and higher education. The concern about the state of public education in America became front page news. At the same time, the response, in the form of solutions to the problem, came fast and furious from politicians, business leaders, leaders in higher education, and the media. Ironically, throughout this debate on education the one group that remained silent was K-12 educators. The response of the people most directly targeted by the reform effort was minimal. The excellence reform movement was the catalyst for educational change in the latter part of the 20th century.

Given the publicity this reform effort generated regarding public education, it is important to understand its impact upon teachers and their teaching practices. The lack of teacher perspective with respect to the impact of this reform movement in the classroom results in an incomplete understanding of the impact of reform on teachers.

The excellence reform movement was in direct opposition and contrast to the equity reform movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The equity reform movement was centered on providing educational opportunities for the poor and handicapped student (Cookson, 1995). The equity reform movement was the vehicle that allowed all students an opportunity to receive an education. Some (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Slaughter, 1985) argued that the excellence reform movement was the result of the increased educational opportunities afforded previously disenfranchised individuals as a result of the equity reform movement. These increased opportunities, coupled with reports detailing a decline in the standardized test scores of American children, provided those who formed the excellence reform effort with the argument that there was a crisis in education. A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983) and other reports provided the rhetoric to support the existence of this crisis. In response to this perceived crisis resulting from the equity reform movement, the excellence reform movement called for a rededication by educators, the government, industry, and the public to the American public education system to ensure it remained the best in the world. A renewed emphasis on excellence and higher standards and expectations became the focus of recommendations by the various reports (Carlson, 1996; Toch, 1991; Tomlinson, 1986). This emphasis on

excellence and standards covered all curriculum areas, testing, career choice, homework, teacher education, time, and expectations (Cuban, 1990; Toch, 1991; Tomlinson, 1986).

Although constitutionally the federal government has no authority to regulate public education, the excellence reform movement has nevertheless been marked by an increased involvement by the federal government (Berube, 1994; Cookson, 1995). Berliner and Biddle (1995) discussed the role of the federal government during this time period by stating that it was the first time in American history that government leaders led an attack on public education. This attack also helped focus educational issues as a component of political platforms. Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton all made education a top priority in their campaigns and during their administrations. This focus on education at the federal level increased the rhetoric and ideas regarding educational reform. Vouchers, decentralization, privatization, and national standards all became reform efforts championed by one or more of these modern-day presidents.

At the same time, many state governors saw education and school reform as “a ‘winning’ issue, one that politicians would do well to be associated with” (Toch, 1991, p. 18). Although the federal government increased its involvement in education, it was primarily on a rhetorical level. President Reagan was interested in downsizing the federal government and viewed education as a state and local issue (Boyd, 1990; Farrar, 1990). Farrar argued that the vacuum created by the lessening of the federal role in education was partly filled by state governments. Boyd also supported the idea that the governors, particularly the southern governors, helped fill this vacuum. He stated that the governors

realized that education had become a “hot and profitable political issue” (p. 45). This shift in philosophy resulted in increased involvement at the state level and a push for educational reform mandated by the states.

Importance of the Problem

It is important to understand the impact of this reform movement on teaching practices from the perspectives of teachers because the excellence reform movement was a major driving force for educational change during the latter part of the 20th century. Despite the national interest in education and educational reform during the past 16 years, there is a great deal of confusion as to the impact of this reform effort on the educational system. Fullan (1991) stated,

One person claims that schools are being bombarded by change; another observes that there is nothing new under the sun. A policy-maker charges that teachers are resistant to change; a teacher complains that administrators introduce change for their own self-aggrandizement and that they neither know what is needed nor understand the classroom. A parent is bewildered by a new practice in reading and by the relevance of education to future jobs. Some argue that restructuring schools is the only answer, while others decry that this, too, is just a pipedream diverting our attention from the core curriculum changes desperately needed. One university professor is convinced that schools are only a reflection of society and cannot be expected to bring about change; another professor is equally convinced that schools would be all right if only superintendents and principals had more

“vision” as educational leaders, and teachers were more motivated to learn new approaches to improving curriculum. (p. 3)

This confusion prevented the educational system from focusing on and understanding the impact of reform initiatives on teaching practices in the classroom. The educational system spent all its time responding to critics and their calls for reform instead of addressing issues related to the classroom.

The importance of the role reform has played in education is a second reason to understand the impact of the excellence reform movement from the perspectives of teachers. Catherine Cornbleth, in her chapter, *Cries of Crisis* in the book Crisis in Teaching (1989) acknowledged the importance of reform in education when she stated, “The ritual and rhetoric of reform are a way of life in the United States” (p. 10). Altbach, Kelly, & Weis (1985) also supported the idea of the importance of the role of reform in education when they linked educational change historically to a response by education to social change. They described the historical context of change efforts from the 1930s to the 1980s. Cuban (1990) also chronicled the cyclical nature of educational change over the last 100 years in response to national events.

Given the nature of reform in education, the perspective of the teacher was warranted because in order for many of the reform efforts to be effective teachers must support and implement the changes in the classroom. Pogrow (1995) wrote about the history of failure and waste of resources associated with educational reform. Further, he asserted that educators respond to reform as a result of the continual search for answers to

why students fail. Critics from the excellence reform movement claimed American students were failing and the system was failing. This movement placed public pressure on teachers and the system to make changes to help the perceived student who was failing. The question is the extent to which teachers responded to the rhetoric of the excellence reform movement. How have teacher responses changed their practices in the classroom? If teachers did or did not respond to these reform initiatives, what influenced them to implement or fail to implement the initiatives?

General Description of the Problem

The tone of national reports, as part of the excellence reform movement, tended to be negative and promoted an assumption that the system as a whole was failing. Perpetuated by the media, this assumption indicated a general dissatisfaction with the American public education system. William Bennett, in The De-Valuing of America The Fight for our Culture and Our Children (1992), claimed A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983) “gave a voice to the growing public sense of crisis about our children and their schools” (p. 42). At the same time, educators responded that the crisis at hand was not as bad as the reports indicated. This educational debate involved politicians, businessmen, and university professors. Conspicuous by their absence was the voices of teachers. Politicians, businessmen, and members of higher education authored many of the national reports; however, the representation of teachers was minimal. The literature spoke to the invisible voices of education reform during this time period when it reflected on issues such as gender, poverty, and urban schools. Sadker and Sadker (1990) discussed the

missing voice of females, while Elmore (1990) spoke to the lack of discussion in educational reform on the socioeconomic crisis in education.

Another key voice missing in the rhetoric of reform was that of the teacher. Wilson and Rossman (1993) discussed the lack of literature with respect to the impact of the excellence reform movement at the local and school level. Although a number of specific recommendations were applied to teachers, such as certification and education requirements, there was a lack of literature to suggest the perspective of the teacher on the impact of the excellence reform effort. This perspective was significant given the importance of the teacher in educational reform (Fullan, 1991; McLaughlin, 1984; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988).

This heated debate on the state of education has placed education in the limelight, but did it promote educational change in the classroom? The reports associated with the excellence reform movement called for sweeping changes in K-12 education. Was the rhetoric of reform mandated from the top heard in the classrooms? What was the level of compliance or reticence by teachers? Were the reforms a part of the politics of education, and did teachers ignore the rhetoric of reform? If teachers did ignore the reform initiatives, what were the reasons or factors that influenced these decisions?

The problems arising from a lack of understanding of the impact of the excellence reform movement from the perspectives of teachers only helps to confuse the issue of educational change in America. Reform is about change; however, if reform is going to move beyond a rhetorical level, understanding all the perspectives of the reform is

imperative. If there is a lack of congruence between public perceptions of the state of education and the implementation of reform efforts by teachers, this confusion will continue. Three examples of problems that occur as a result of the incomplete picture of the excellence reform movement include the lack of the teacher perspective in educational change, the lack of congruence between expectations and results, and the lack of meaningful change in the educational system.

Lack of Teacher Perspective

Goldman and Conley (1997) addressed the lack of teacher input in reform when they stated,

Policy makers rarely build large-scale reforms based on the perceptions of teachers or principals. In fact, such a phenomenon would be hard to envisage, since teachers and principals (collectively) tend to express desired change in terms of incremental adaptation or intensification of their own current practices. (p. 2)

Further they stated, “The reform program is generally shaped by legislators’ desires to address broader, perhaps more lofty goals, and to respond to various political constituencies that have an interest in schools” (p. 2).

Given this context, Goldman and Conley (1997) addressed the relationship between these reform agents and teachers,

Although legislators and policy implementors often acknowledge rhetorically that school reform depends on teachers’ ability (and willingness) to translate state mandates into practice, rarely has the rhetoric been coupled with a systematic

understanding of what it would take for a program of reforms to move from statehouse to schoolhouse. (p. 2)

Despite this reality of educational change, Fullan (1991) recognized the importance of the teachers in the change process. Fullan remarked, "If educational change is to happen, it will require that teachers understand themselves and be understood by others (p. 117). Sarason (1971) also supported the importance of teachers' perspectives in developing a more complete picture when he stated, "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think---it's as simple and complex as that. It would all be so easy if we could legislate changes in thinking" (p. 193). The missing voice in educational reform is the teacher, and without listening to this voice, a complete understanding of educational change is not possible.

Lack of Congruence

Another problem generated by the reform effort is the lack of congruence between the expectations for solutions and the results. The success of any reform effort is contingent upon action by teachers. Based on the action of teachers, the results may not live up to the expectations. For many, mandates from the national or state level should have translated into improved test scores or better teachers. Not understanding the change process resulted in surprise by some when the results did not meet the expectations. Goldman and Conley (1997) address this concern when they stated,

Is it even possible for state legislation to initiate systematic school reform that works its way into curriculum, instruction, and assessment at the classroom and

building level? Interestingly, no clear answer has emerged, although states continue major educational reform legislation under the implicit assumption that the results will be dramatic in classrooms and the public school system generally. (p. 2)

If, as McLaughlin (1984) suggested, the primary focus for change is on the smallest unit, the teacher, then it would be appropriate to involve teachers prior to the implementation of the educational change. The lack of the teacher voice in reform efforts may result in a lack of congruence between reform expectations and results.

Lack of Understanding of Meaningful Change in Education

A final example of a problem that resulted from a lack of teacher voices in the excellence reform movement was the lack of understanding regarding meaningful change in the educational system. As Fullan (1991) stated,

Change is full of paradoxes. Being deeply committed to a particular change in itself provides no guidelines for attaining the change, and may blind us to the realities of others that would be necessary for transforming and implementing change effectively. Having no vision at all is what makes for educational bandwagons. In the final analysis, either we have to give up and admit that effective educational change is impossible, or we have to take our best knowledge and attempt to improve our efforts. (p. 102)

The excellence reform movement has been about change in all aspects of the educational system. Do Fullan's comments regarding change and bandwagons fit the view of this

reform effort from the perspectives of teachers? The question is whether teachers were deeply committed to these changes proposed by the constituents external to the system. Additionally, did the media and political debate blind everyone to the realities of teachers? Did teachers share the vision resulting from the excellence reform movement? In the final analysis, was the battle for effective educational change ignored or acted upon by teachers?

Statement of the Problem

As the American public education system enters a new century, the debate about the quality of public education in America continues to take center stage. This debate is an essential part of the excellence reform movement and has received extensive media and political coverage. Despite this ongoing debate at the national and state levels, there remains a question as to the impact of the rhetoric and reform effort upon teacher practices in the classroom. The problem that this study sought to address was the impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices in the classroom. This was accomplished by gathering perspectives of teachers from one Arizona school district. The perspectives of these teachers on the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement and the reasons for this impact or lack of impact helped to provide a more complete understanding of reform in education.

An understanding of teacher perspectives on the impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices in the classroom was important because the literature on educational change (Fullan, 1991; McLaughlin, 1984, Murphy, 1990) suggested the

importance of the role of the teacher in educational change. Although beneficial for television soundbites, national rhetoric on reform may not promote authentic educational change at the level of teachers' instruction and curriculum practices. If this is the case, the lack of congruence between public perception and the reality of educational change is likely to continue to fuel the rhetorical debate on the problems in American public education. While the public debate continues, meaningful educational change is likely to be unaffected.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher perspectives on the impact of the excellence reform movement on teacher practices in the classroom. Specifically, the study focused on teachers in an Arizona school district. This impact was analyzed through the framework established by Goldman and Conley (1997). Their framework utilized educational change and social compliance theory to help understand the impact of the state-mandated change on teachers in Oregon. This study utilized the basic framework of an instrument they developed for future research to gather teacher perspectives on reform. The focus of this study was on a population of teachers in Arizona and utilized reform initiatives in Arizona as the basis for the study. This framework was analyzed utilizing a body of research on the role of change in education. Within organizational science, social compliance, a concept developed from social psychology, was the lens employed to analyze the impact of this reform effort from the perspectives of teachers.

Significance of the Study

The study was significant because it provided a qualitative analysis of the perspectives of various teachers regarding the perceived impact of the excellence reform movement in the classroom. The analysis used questionnaire and interview methods to examine and illuminate the impact of the excellence reform movement from the perspectives of teachers. Extensive literature (see, Bacarach, 1990; Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Boyd, 1990; Farrar, 1990; Metz, 1988; Toch, 1991) discussed the success or failure of this reform effort, yet limited discussion from the perspectives of teachers was included. Much of the literature (Firestone, Fuhrman, & Kirst, 1989; Mazzoni, 1994) discussed the reaction at the state level. Lacking was an understanding of the perspectives of the teachers.

Murphy, Evertson, and Radnofsky (1991) addressed this concern when they stated, "We find many reformers speaking for teachers, but few cases of teachers describing their own visions about what the schools of the future should look like" (p. 3). Further, they asked a key question about reform. They wanted to know whether, "fundamental school reform leads to radical changes that deeply affect teachers and students or if changes will stop at the classroom door, leaving the teaching-learning process largely unaltered" (p. 3). They framed their discussion as it related to specific reform efforts; however, the discussion can be applied to all reform efforts. They stated, "We still find the lack of attention to teaching and learning in the school restructuring movement troubling" (p. 3). This lack of attention was not unique to the restructuring

movement and should raise questions about the lack of attention paid to the teacher in all reform efforts.

Significance can also be established if a study provides a different lens for the analysis of a problem. A missing voice in educational reform has been the teacher, and providing this perspective allowed for a different view of the problem. Combined with the theoretical framework of social compliance, this study provided a unique perspective on educational reform and, more specifically, the excellence reform movement.

The significance of the study for educational leaders was a framework for further understanding educational change with respect to teachers. Educational leaders such as superintendents, school boards, principals, and higher education leaders can utilize this framework to understand further how teachers respond to calls for reform. A teacher perspective was important because any change associated with reform would be dependent upon the actions of teachers. An understanding of why teachers did or did not respond to the reform initiatives of the excellence reform movement provided an understanding of the role of teachers in educational change.

The Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. To what extent do teachers believe initiatives from the excellence reform movement influenced changes in their teaching practices?
2. What was the nature of the impact of the excellence reform initiatives on teachers' work days and classroom teaching methods and strategies?

3. What factors influenced teachers' decision-making about whether to implement initiatives from the excellence reform movement?

Definition of Terms

Following are definitions of terms used in the research study.

Excellence: Webster's Dictionary (1988) defined excellence as the fact or condition of excelling; superiority; surpassing goodness, merit, etc.

Excellence Reform Movement: An educational reform movement during the 1980s and 1990s in which the focus was on the need for excellence in all phases of the American public education system.

Social Compliance: Aronson (1988) defined compliance as "the mode of behavior of a person who is motivated by a desire to gain reward or avoid punishment. Typically, the person's behavior is only as long-lived as the promise of reward or the threat of punishment" (p. 34).

Rhetoric: Webster's Dictionary (1988) defined rhetoric as artificial eloquence; language that is showy and elaborate but largely empty of clear ideas or sincere emotion.

Underlying Assumptions

The major focus of this study was the presentation of perceptions of teachers, from an Arizona school district, on the impact on their teaching practices of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement. The major underlying assumption of this study was that this population of teachers was aware and knowledgeable about educational reform. The teachers returning the questionnaire were assumed to understand

and be knowledgeable regarding the specific reform initiatives referenced in the questionnaire. The teachers selected for the interview section of the study were assumed to be aware and knowledgeable about the reform initiatives referenced in the interview. In addition, given their hire date by the district they were present in the district during the time that the reform initiatives played a role in the operations of the district.

Scope and Limitations

The first limitation of this study was the population and more specifically the sample size and selection procedures. This study only involved approximately 70 teachers from a school district in Arizona. A primary reason the population was chosen was because the size of the population was large enough to gather meaningful data. The purpose of the study was to gather teacher perspectives on the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices and this population was large enough to gather meaningful data from a group of teachers. The sample size also allowed for the collection of data from two different samples, within the population, that portrayed teacher perspectives on educational reform. The selection procedures utilized for the samples also ensured that data was gathered that from teachers teaching K-12.

The population also presented limitations with respect to location, population ethnicity, and generalizations of findings. The excellence reform movement impacted the country; however, the study focused on one state, Arizona. In addition, the district selected was located in rural Arizona. The teachers within the study represented two ethnic groups, and the overwhelming ethnic group represented was Caucasian. Although

the size of the population allowed for the gathering of meaningful data it presented limitations with respect to generalizations from the study. Given the limitations of the size of the population the findings from the study cannot be generalized, but rather only provided suggestions based on the perspectives of the teachers in the study. This was a study of one district in Arizona and as such provided information within the context created by the population and methodology limitations.

The teachers interviewed for this study also presented limitations with respect to the demographics of the population. Teachers selected for the interview were selected based on specific criterion, which referenced length of service in the district. As such this sample was not reflective the demographic make-up of the teaching staff within the district.

The second limitation was in the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire instrument. Limitations in the design of the questionnaire instrument resulted in limitations with the data analysis. The assessment scale consisted of forced choice answers; however, as a result of the design limitations participants created a third choice. The analysis of the questionnaire data reflected this design fault.

A third limitation was demand characteristics placed on the interviewees by the researcher. These demand characteristics, both implicit and explicit, may have been factors that created bias in the interviewees. Two demand characteristics were the location of the interviews and the taping of interviews. Interviews conducted in the researcher's office may have impacted interviewees and their responses. Interviewees

were not given a choice of having the interviews tape-recorded. This lack of choice was also a potential factor for bias.

A fourth limitation was related to the researcher, who at the time of the study was the high school principal. Additionally, prior to the interviews, the researcher was named as the new superintendent for the district. Although all efforts were made to ensure directness, honesty, and comfort during the interviews, the assurance of complete candor was jeopardized.

Conclusion

In summary, the latest reform movement impacting public education in America was the excellence reform movement. The rhetoric of the excellence reform movement has impacted the public education system since the early 1980s. One of the major driving forces behind the excellence reform movement was the release of national reports discussing the state of the public education system. These reports called for many reform initiatives which became part of the rhetoric of education in the 1980s and 1990s. Notwithstanding, the factors affecting the performance of the public education system are extremely complex. This complexity makes it difficult to pinpoint specific reasons for success or failure of educational reform in public education.

One example of the impact of reform movements has been the educational response to the reform rhetoric from these movements. The study focused on the questions regarding teacher responses to this reform effort. Research into the nature of educational change suggests that specific conditions must exist for change to take place

and rhetoric alone is not sufficient to promote change. As McLaughlin (1984) wrote at the beginning of the excellence reform movement,

Teachers teaching in classrooms determine the eventual result of reform policies. Consequently, the promise or the limits of any educational reform policy, but most especially the spate of present policies that take direct aim at the competence of the teaching force, must be assessed against the reality of the task. That reality encompasses the context within which teachers teach, the incentives to support professional growth and commitment to a teaching career, and the factors that affect a teacher's ability to respond to incentives, to develop professionally and to aspire to excellence in the classroom practice. (p. 1)

This study provided data that represented teacher perspectives regarding the results of the reform policies from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices in one district in Arizona.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Theoretical Context for the Study

The theoretical context for the study was educational reform at the K-12 level. This educational reform was analyzed in terms of a theory of social compliance to help understand the perspectives of teachers with respect to educational change in general and the excellence reform movement specifically. The excellence reform movement focused attention on the perceived failure of the American public education system. The outcome of this attention included over 700 pieces of state legislation, between 1983 and 1984, aimed at fixing an array of problems by promoting excellence in teaching. (McLaughlin, 1984). This example helped provide some evidence of the impact of this reform movement in America. Despite this high profile status in America, the literature (Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991; Wilson & Rossman, 1993) analyzing the movement suggested the lack of the perspective of the classroom teacher. Teachers were an integral part of the educational system subjected to this educational change movement. The literature (Farrar, 1990; Mazzoni, 1994) spoke to the impact of this reform movement on political entities, industry, and the public, yet the impact of this movement and educational reform had not been extensively studied from the perspective of the teacher. Lortie (1975) summarized this situation when he stated, "Schooling is long on prescription, short on description" (p. vii). He argued,

Although books and articles instructing teachers on how they should behave are legion, empirical studies of teaching work---and the outlook of those who staff the schools---remain rare. Changes are proposed and initiated without sure knowledge of the settings they are presumed to improve. Without a clear picture of school reality, efforts at rationalization can dissolve into faddism and panacean thinking. (pp. vii-viii)

To understand teacher perspectives on educational reform within the contextual framework of this study, a review of both educational change literature and compliance theory was undertaken. An understanding of the role of teachers in educational change provided a foundation for understanding change at the classroom level. The role of teachers in educational change and the characteristic of compliance within organizations created a relationship between the contextual frameworks of the study that merited investigation. Carbone (1990) supported this investigation when he stated, "The key point to be made here, and one which must not escape our attention, is simply that whoever shapes the definition of the problem, also shapes the solutions pursued" (p. 83). If others, such as politicians and businessmen, were defining the problem and shaping the solutions, then it is important to understand teacher perspectives on this external influence. This external influence was a driving force for educational change and impacted teacher compliance or resistance.

An underpinning to the review of the body of research on educational change and compliance theory was leadership theory. Leadership theory is an important aspect of

educational change and a tenet of compliance theory. However, the focus of the study was on teacher perspectives, their perceptions of the impact of the reform initiatives emerging from the excellence reform movement on their work day and teaching methods and strategies, as well as factors that influenced their decisions to implement or not implement specific reform measures. As such, a discussion of leadership was conducted within the frame of the contextual base for the study.

Several authors (Altbach, Kelly, & Weis, 1985; Cuban, 1990; Goodman, 1990) discussed the history of educational change in American public education. In addition, there was extensive discussion of particular change models utilized in education. As a result of the size of the body of research on educational change, the literature review was limited in nature and scope. A primary criterion for the search of the literature on change focused on the role of the teacher in the change process. Specifically, what did the body of literature say with regard to how teachers impact change in the classroom positively or negatively? The secondary focus was on specific factors that influenced whether teachers implemented change in their classrooms.

Aronson (1988) stated that the number of definitions of social psychology was equal to the number of social psychologists. Given this fragmented theoretical framework, the focus of this study narrowed the search of the literature. The focus of the literature search in social psychology was on social compliance theory and especially Etzioni's work on this theory. The literature supported the concept of compliance in organizations (Etzioni, 1975). Teachers are part of educational organizations, and

therefore social compliance theory suggests a degree of compliance by teachers to educational reform. An understanding of compliance theory was undertaken to help frame teacher perspectives on educational reform. Specifically, understanding social compliance sheds light on why teachers do or do not support educational reform and some of the factors affecting the degree of support.

The rationale for the selection of the theoretical context of the study was based on the relationship between change and compliance. The relationship between educational change and social compliance was found in organizations. Change is a characteristic of organizations, and at the same time compliance plays a role in organizations (Etzioni, 1975). If there is a relationship between change and compliance in organizations, then an understanding of this relationship in the educational context was warranted because educational systems are organizations (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hall, 1983). Specifically, Chubb (1988) stated, "Schools are organizations---complex organizations composed of interdependent parts, governed by well-established rules and norms of behavior, and adapted for stability" (p. 29).

The excellence reform movement placed pressure on the educational organization to change. A degree of compliance by the members of the organization was needed for this change to occur. The literature, however, described a lack of compliance by teachers in implementing reform mandated externally. At the same time, the literature described the importance of teachers in the change process. Framed against this confusion was the lack of teacher perspective with respect to the reform initiatives of the excellence reform

movement. The perspective of the teacher within the contextual framework provided a contribution to the literature that was lacking. McLaughlin (1984) commented on a peculiarity of policy resulting from the excellence reform movement, in that it was “perceptions of individuals outside the classroom about the nature of the ‘excellence problem’ and the promise of particular policy ‘solutions,’ rather than the view of classroom teachers” (p. 1).

Given the impact of the teacher on educational change and the need for compliance by the teacher to facilitate change, there was a compelling reason to investigate the role of the teacher within this contextual framework. Teacher perspectives on this relationship, through an analysis of the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on their work day, teaching methods, strategies and factors influencing their decisions to implement or not implement reform initiatives, were the vehicle for this investigation.

The next section of the study provides a historical perspective on the excellence reform movement to help understand the pressure this reform movement has placed on education. This review is followed by a discussion of the specific rationale for the selection of educational change and compliance theory as the contextual bases of this study. The rationale for inclusion of educational change in the study was based on the teacher’s role in the change process and the impact of educational reform in Arizona during this time frame. The rationale for compliance theory was based on the role of

compliance in the organization and the argument about the legitimacy of authority of state governmental entities.

The Excellence Reform Movement

Berube (1994) wrote on the historical role of reform in education. He identified three distinct periods in educational history linked to specific reform efforts. One of these periods was identified as the excellence reform movement. Berube described this movement,

The essence of excellence reform was raising the standards and performance of public school children in the United States. Excellence reform focused on helping the best and brightest to compete in the global market. The assumption of the excellence reformers was that U.S. public schools had failed, and only comprehensive systemic reform was the answer. (p. 93)

The contextual framework of this study was framed against the excellence reform movement. As such, an overview of the excellence reform movement was warranted to understand the pressures being placed on schools and teachers regarding educational change.

The excellence reform movement was characterized by an ocean metaphor. This metaphor was stated in the opening paragraph of A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983) in reference to the educational foundation of the United States; the report noted it was being “eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity” (p. 5). Passow (1990) noted that in May 1984, the U.S. Department of Education referred to this metaphor in describing the effects of the

reports released in 1983. Specifically, the department referred to a “tidal wave of school reform” (p. 11).

This ocean metaphor was also applied to the periods of reform associated with the excellence reform movement. These periods of reform were linked to the content of specific national reports released during the excellence reform movement. Many authors (see, Boyd, 1990; Farrar, 1990; Jacobson, 1990; Kirst, 1990; Mazzoni, 1994; Murphy, 1990) classified the periods of reform during the excellence reform movement as occurring in waves. Murphy (1990) defined the first wave from January 1983 to October 1985 and the second wave from November 1985 to December 1988. Kirst (1990) also supported the notion of waves of reform. Kirst was vague on his timeline for the waves but discussed two distinct waves. Jacobson and Conway (1990) supported the waves of reform as editors of their book, Educational Leadership in an Age of Reform. They stated that the first wave occurred between 1983 and 1986, the second wave was in 1986, and the third wave began in 1987. They linked the start of each wave to a specific report, released at the national level, reviewing the state of public education in America. Essays in Educational Leadership in an Age of Reform by Farrar, Petrie, and Jacobson discussed each of the three distinct waves of reform. Farrar indicated that the first wave was associated with student performance requirements and teacher quality, while Petrie stated the second wave focused on teachers. In the third chapter, Jacobson linked the third wave to administrators.

The pressure this reform movement placed on the educational system can be demonstrated by the impact of A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983), the first national report released. Tomlinson (1986) reflected on the impact of A Nation at Risk when he discussed the number of people who might have received a copy. He stated, “A conservative calculation is that the text of the Report reached the hands of at least four million citizens, and there is no estimating how many more people shared the same copy or read the same newspaper” (p. 4). He indicated that within 10 months the report was in its fifth printing, and over 150,000 copies had been distributed by the U.S. Government Printing Office. Tomlinson stated this level of distribution was mirrored throughout the country and pointed to the Iowa State Department of Education and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) as two examples. In Iowa, the State Department of Education sent the report to 60,000 state residents. The AASA sent the report to its 18,000 members.

The importance of A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983) cannot be overstated. Tomlinson and Walberg (1986) summarized this importance when they stated, “History will probably show that the National Commission on Excellence in Education’s A Nation at Risk ranks among the most important educational reports of this century.” (p. ix). Numerous authors (for example, Apple 1990; Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Farrar 1990; Mazzoni, 1994) affirmed this importance and suggested its role in providing the catalyst for the excellence reform movement. Farrar (1990) described A Nation at Risk as “far and away the most influential” of the reports released and further stated, “It galvanized

public opinion to the need for reform in America's schools" (p. 6). Berliner and Biddle (1995) stated, "In many ways this report was the 'mother of all critiques' of American education" (p. 139). Ornstein (1992) called the report, "the most famous of these reports" (p. 90). Carlson (1996), Farrar (1990), and Toch (1991) even compared A Nation at Risk to the Sputnik crisis. They felt the Sputnik crisis provided the impetus for the equity reform movement.

Several authors (Bacarach, 1988; Boyd, 1990; Futrell, 1989; Petrie, 1990; Jacobson, 1990) have commented on the perceived impact of this reform movement on teachers. These comments discussed at length the impact of the recommendations from reports or action taken by political entities at the state level. For example, Bacarach (1988) discussed the impact and impetus of the first and second waves with respect to teachers. He noted that the first wave of reform "was based on the assumption that standardization would provide a mode of control that would enhance the quality of education" (p. 492). These resulted in reform initiatives that called for increased graduation requirements, increased homework, and tougher teacher evaluations. They also implemented merit pay systems and toughened student assessment measures. The important aspect missing from the discussion was the perception of teachers to this perceived impact. In reality, Bacarach described the pressure this movement placed on education from political and business leaders. His discussion was lacking with respect to any empirical study, which demonstrated that this impact reached the level of the teacher

in the classroom. This impact may have reached teachers with respect to certification issues, but it did not necessarily impact teaching methodologies or strategies.

Futrell (1989) also reflected on this top-down wave of reform and its impact on teachers. She noted that the second wave of reform was the result of the realization that educators, not legislators, must advocate reform. The second wave emphasized reform from the bottom-up not top-down. However, this opinion article did not provide studies to support the impact or effect of this effort in the classroom. Futrell was an advocate for the importance of teachers in the change process yet did not let teachers speak for themselves to describe the impact of this reform movement.

The excellence reform movement touched a nerve with the American public; however, the paradox was it may not have touched anything with educators. The contradiction between the impact of the excellence reform movement on the general public and the research that supported the lack of impact of educational reform in the classroom made it vital to understand the perspective of the teacher on the latest movement of educational change. This understanding made a contribution to the body of research regarding the teacher's role in change and the change process in education.

Rationale for and Discussion of Educational Change

The teacher's role. Understanding the perspectives of teachers was important because, as Goldman and Conley (1997) stated, the most fundamental unit of analysis of educational change is the school building. Within the school building, the most

important unit for change is the teacher. McLaughlin (1984) noted the important role of the teacher with respect to educational change. She stated,

A major lesson of the past decade's educational reform measures and school improvement efforts is that educational change of almost any stripe is a problem of the smallest unit. It is a problem that turns on the incentives, attitudes, abilities and responses of those ultimately responsible for seeing that initiatives for improvement translate into improved educational services for students. Teachers teaching in classrooms is what education is all about. (p. 1)

Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) also reflected on the importance of teachers with respect to educational change.

Affecting the attitudes, skills, and behavior of teachers is what reform is all about, if indeed reformers intend to influence what is taught and how. Understanding the variable results of reform efforts comes down finally to understanding the incentives, constraints, practical problems, and institutional realities of classroom teachers. What teachers do and the institutional context within which they do it set primary conditions for the limits and possibilities of reform. (p. 38)

In addition to the body of research which indicated the importance of teachers in the change process, there was a body of research that described the difficulty of reforms from the national and state level reaching the classroom (see, Berman & McLaughlin, 1973; Goldman & Conley, 1997; McLaughlin, 1990; Wilson & Rossman, 1993).

McLaughlin (1989), in reviewing the results of a study by the Rand Corporation on the effectiveness of federal programs at the local levels, noted,

A general finding of the Change Agent study that has become almost a truism is that it is exceedingly difficult for policy to change practice, especially across levels of government. Contrary to the 1:1 relationship assumed to exist between policy and practice, the Change Agent study demonstrated that the nature, amount and pace of change at the local level was a product of local factors that were largely beyond the control of the higher-level policy makers. (p. 9)

Given the research regarding the role of teachers in the educational change process, this study framed educational change against the impact in the classroom of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement and specific national reports. The impact of this reform movement and specific reports on the general public, politicians, and business leaders created a scenario in which there was a lack of congruence between these groups and educators regarding the impact of this reform movement. Agents outside the K-12 educational system assumed educational reform was sweeping across the land and impacting the classrooms. Although this media blitz created pressure from outside the system for change, it did not necessarily create this pressure for internal change.

Educational change in Arizona. Arizona, like many other states, responded to the rhetoric of the excellence reform movement. Firestone, Fuhrman and Krist (1989) suggested that initial reaction to the push for reform was shaped by the recommendations

from the national report, A Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983). In their study reviewing the response of six states to educational reform, they described the scope of Arizona's reform in the 1980s as incremental. This was in contrast to other states, which pushed reform utilizing a comprehensive reform package of several major initiatives. At the same time they felt Arizona used policy instruments that balanced state mandates with inducements. Specific reform initiatives present in Arizona since the beginning of the excellence reform movement include increased graduation requirements, development of career ladders, increased teacher certification requirements, utilization of standardized testing, development of academic standards, mandated K-8 foreign language, utilization of site-based management (SBM), and choice through charter schools.

Firestone et al. (1989) stated that Arizona increased graduation requirements at the high school level two times during the 1980s. In 1980, Arizona required 16 credits for students to graduate from high school. This number was raised to 18 for the class of 1985 and then to 20 for the class of 1987. They noted that Arizona school districts, like many districts in other states, were already meeting the new requirements prior to 1987.

Arizona also followed the national trend with standardized achievement testing. Firestone et al. (1989) discussed Arizona's requirement that all students be given standardized achievement tests each year starting in 1980. This was later reduced to a sampling of students in grades 2-12. Noble and Smith (1994) noted that the standardized norm-referenced test adopted was the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). In addition to mandated standardized achievement tests, the state also mandated district evaluations of

students. In this case, districts were expected to evaluate 8th and 12th grade students on criterion-referenced tests covering state competencies.

In addition to ITBS testing, which started in 1990, Arizona mandated a new standardized measure, the Arizona Student Assessment Program (ASAP). Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 15-741 went into effect in July 1991 and called for the adoption and implementation of state mandated testing in grades 3, 8 and 12. The legislation also called for districts to submit plans for assessment of essential skills at all grade levels; publish report cards at the student, school, district, and state level; and enforce promotion policies based on achievement on this test (Smith, 1996). Riverside was the testing publisher chosen to develop a test within the content areas of reading, writing, and math. The pilot test was administered in March 1992, with subsequent tests administered in 1993 and 1994. In January 1994, ASAP became part of the graduation requirements as a result of action by the State Board of Education (Smith, 1996).

Lisa Graham Keegan became the Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1994 and within a few months suspended the ASAP testing program. The basis for this suspension was the lack of correlation between two of the testing forms. In May 1995, Keegan announced the transformation of the ASAP program. The new ASAP program now came to mean the Arizona Student Achievement Program. This program established academic standards for the children in the state. These state content standards were or are being developed for all academic subjects. In 1996 the State Board of Education formally adopted the language arts and mathematics standards. As a result of the

standards, the Assessment Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) tests were developed to measure student proficiency on the standards. The AIMS tests in language arts and mathematics are currently being piloted in the state. The class of 2002 is currently targeted as having to pass the AIMS tests to demonstrate proficiency and graduate from Arizona high schools.

The career ladder programs in Arizona were initially established as a result of Senate Bill 1085 in the Spring of 1984. Due to the inability of school districts to meet the criteria established by the bill the following spring, S.B. 1336 was passed, establishing a policy, oversight committee and external evaluation for assessment, monitoring and evaluating progress and effectiveness of the program. Over the next three years, 15 schools were added to the pilot program in three different phases. The general purpose of the Arizona career ladder pilot project was to improve the professional development and effectiveness of teachers and enhance student learning (Packard, 1988).

Site-based management (SBM) was introduced in Arizona public education through a legislative mandate. The purpose of SBM was to provide community input into the operations of the school and decentralize decision-making from the central administration to the school site. SBM also was utilized as a vehicle for restructuring schools in Arizona. Although mandated in the state, SBM took on a variety of forms within various districts in the state.

Arizona has also become a national leader in the charter school movement. Although this reform initiative has played a major role in educational reform in Arizona,

its impact on public school teachers and classroom practices was limited. As such, a discussion of this reform initiative was not warranted in the context of this study.

Rationale for and Discussion of Social Compliance Theory

Social Compliance Theory. Social compliance as a conceptual framework to understand educational change was chosen because of the role of compliance in organizations. Etzioni (1975) stated that compliance exists as a central tenet in all social units. Because the educational system is an organization, compliance within education should be expected. If this were true, the educational system should respond in some fashion to influences from external and internal forces.

From a social psychology standpoint, compliance is closely linked with conformity and social influence (Aronson, 1988). Social compliance is defined by social psychologists as something an individual does in response to coercion of some sort (Goldman & Conley, 1997). Etzioni (1975) defined compliance as “a relationship consisting of the power employed by superiors to control subordinates and the orientation of subordinates to this power” (p. xv). Etzioni described the manipulation of this power through physical, material, and symbolic rewards and deprivations as a method to support the control.

Aronson (1988) identified three types of response to social influence: compliance, identification, and internalization. He argued that people respond to social influences and tend to obey authority. Goldman and Conley (1997) argued that compliance was based on the notion of acceptance from sources of legitimacy. Given the role of the state and

local governmental entities in education and their impact on education, these political entities can be considered legitimate forms of authority. Goldman and Conley argued for this legitimacy from a theoretical perspective and as a result argued that there would be an expectation of compliant behavior to some degree on the part of the teachers.

In defining compliance theory, Etzioni (1975) described power as a key for compliance. He described power positions within organizations as “positions whose incumbents regularly have access to means of power” (p. 5). Within this discussion on power positions, Etzioni identified groups based on a power relationship. Those higher in rank were named as elites or organizational representatives, while those lower in rank were lower participants. He identified three types of power based on the means employed by the individual in power. The means may be physical, material, or symbolic, but all made subjects comply. Table 1 lists and defines the three types of power identified by Etzioni. Etzioni suggested a more eloquent name for normative power would be persuasive, manipulative, or suggestive power.

Etzioni (1975) identified two kinds of normative power, pure normative power and social power. Pure normative power focused on manipulation of esteem, prestige, and ritualistic symbols, while social power focused on acceptance and positive responses to manipulation. Pure normative power tended to be found in vertical relationships within organizations, while social power was found in horizontal relations. He noted that pure normative power was more beneficial in organizations because it can be used within the hierarchy. Etzioni also noted that the use of these types of power in organizations

Table 1

Etzioni's types of power

Type of Power	Definition
Coercive	Uses the application or threat of application of force
Remunerative	Uses control over material resources or rewards
Normative	Uses the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards

was not limited; however, one type of power was generally emphasized by an organization.

Etzioni (1975) also discussed the level of involvement of participants with the organizational power. He used intensity of involvement, ranging from high to low, and direction of involvement, ranging from positive to negative, to frame his thoughts. In building his continuum, he identified three zones of involvement: alienative, moral, and calculative. Alienative involvement was defined as an intense negative orientation. Inmates in a prison would exemplify this level of involvement. Calculative involvement was defined as involvement that was either positive or negative but low in intensity. An example of calculative involvement would be the relationship between business contacts. Moral involvement was defined as positive involvement of high intensity. Church parishioners were an example of this type of involvement.

Etzioni (1975) noted that there are two kinds of moral involvement and that they are similar to the kinds of normative power. Pure moral commitment tended to develop

in vertical relationships and was based on “internalization and identification with authority” (p. 11). One example of this relationship was between a teacher and students. Social moral commitment focused on sensitivity to pressures from primary groups and their members. It tended to develop in horizontal relationships like those found in primary groups.

Etzioni (1975) developed a typology of compliance by applying the power used by organizations to lower participants and the involvement in the organization developed by the lower participants. Kinds of power constituted the side of the typology and kinds of involvement made up the top of the typology. This typology suggested nine types of compliance; however, Etzioni found that three of the types tended to occur more frequently than the remaining six. He felt the reason the three types occurred more often was because of the congruent nature of the relationship. An example of this congruence would be the relationship of inmates in prisons. Inmates are highly alienative from prisons; however, prisons use coercive power, which tends to alienate.

Etzioni’s three main types of congruent relationships are described in table 2. Etzioni (1975) utilized these three main types of compliance patterns to classify organizations. He focused on the predominant compliance pattern in an organization because all organizations utilized all compliance patterns. For the purposes of this study, the discussion focused on normative organization, because Etzioni placed schools within this compliance pattern. Etzioni defined normative organizations as

Organizations in which normative power is the major source of control over most

Table 2

Etzioni's Classification of Organizations by Compliance Patterns

Organization	Congruent Type of Power	Relationship Type of Involvement	Type of Organization
Coercive Compliance	Coercive	Alienative	Prisons
Utilitarian Compliance	Remunerative	Calculative	Business
Normative Compliance	Normative	Moral	Schools, churches

lower participants, whose orientation to the organization is characterized by high commitment. Compliance in normative organizations rests principally on internalization of directives accepted as legitimate. Leadership, rituals, manipulation of social and prestige symbols, and resocialization are among the more important techniques of control used. (p. 40)

Normative organizations were classified into nine different types of organizations (Etzioni, 1975). Educational organizations were characterized by normative controls, with coercion as a secondary source of compliance. Much of Etzioni's discussion centered on the role of the student in the organization. The use of normative controls, such as the manipulation of prestige symbols, helped define the educational organization. In this case, honors, grades, citations, scolding, and personal influence with the teacher were examples of this type of control. This notion of the manipulation prestige symbols could also be applied to teachers. In this case, room assignments, class schedules,

personal influence with an administrator, or evaluations would be examples of normative control.

Etzioni (1964) spoke to the relationship between leadership and control. In this setting, he described the power to control members of the organization as either positional power, persuasive power, or a combination of both. He identified a person with positional power as an official, a person with persuasive power as an informal leader, and a person with both forms of power as a formal leader.

In summary, Etzioni's (1964, 1975) work on social compliance affirmed the theory of compliance in organizations. He identified specific types of compliance based on the type of organization and placed education within this framework. This connection between education and compliance theory suggested that teachers should respond in some fashion to reforms, especially if a level of authority within the organization mandated the reforms.

Role of state governmental entities in education. If, as Goldman and Conley (1997) argued, state governments are legitimate forms of authority in education, then their role must be understood. Goldman and Conley noted that school boards run schools, and, because state governments created school boards, they have a legitimate right to tell schools what to do. In addition, states have a department of education that dictates specific mandates to local school districts. One common area controlled by the state is graduation requirements. Based on this relationship, then, individual schools and teachers can be considered subordinates in the organizational sense to the superiors at the

state level. A more complete understanding of the role of state governmental entities in education is needed to develop the argument for their legitimacy as an authority in educational organizations.

At the state level, the government has a direct role in running public education. The most direct method of control at the state level is the strong tradition of school funding, utilizing locally derived property taxes (Goldman & Conley, 1997). State governments and the departments of education also exert controls over schools by setting specific criteria to which schools must adhere. Included in these requirements are graduation requirements, state testing, and teaching certification requirements.

Boyd (1990) pointed out that education was not even mentioned in the Constitution, and therefore the responsibility for education was placed on the shoulders of the state. Doyle (1991) linked this responsibility to the 10th Amendment, which stated that the powers not specifically enumerated to the federal government were given to the states. The combination of the historical perspective on the role of state governments in public education and the current role state governmental entities take in public education suggested that the state was a legitimate authority in the educational system. The flow of money and regulatory mandates do provide the state government with the ability to levy power against individual schools. This use of power fits the criteria for the definition of compliance with respect to schools and teachers. McLaughlin (1984) noted a characteristic of teaching is a lack of control. She pointed out that government mandates at all levels affect teacher autonomy and decision-making. Based on the role of state

governmental entities as a legitimate authority in the educational organization, compliance by teachers to state mandated educational reform should be an aspect of educational change.

Review of Related Literature

For the purposes of this study, a comprehensive review of the literature was undertaken. This review of the literature involved a computer search of documents utilizing ERIC, EBSCO, Proquest, First Search, and Sociological Abstracts as the primary databases. Descriptors used to focus this portion of the search included terms associated with the major theoretical context of the study. Specifically, educational change, educational reform, and compliance theory were descriptors used to search the literature base for information on the theoretical context of the study. The presentation of this review of the literature was accomplished by describing each aspect of the theoretical context of the study. The literature base for each of the contextual frameworks of the study was reviewed, and the presentation of this review provided an understanding of the framework and the connections between the theoretical frames within the study.

Educational Change

Introduction. The research base for educational change was extensive and required a particular focus to provide an understanding of the issues germane to this study. McLaughlin (1992) discussed a problem inherent with a review of research on reform as it pertains to the school as a workplace. Her feeling was that researchers and policy makers often

look at practice problem from the outside-in, considering teachers and their work within established frames of policy or social science paradigms. The teachers' perspective makes all of these structures and relationships problematic, and considers teaching in terms of the daily communion of students, instruction, and dynamics of the school setting. (p. 3)

She framed this analysis against her analysis of what occurs when researchers utilize teacher perspectives. In this case, she stated, "A teacher's-eye view sees teaching as an integrating activity, intertwined and interdependent with students, subject matter, and features of the immediate workplace environment" (p. 3). For the purposes of this study, the focus of the review of the literature on reform was on the research that emphasized teacher perspectives on the reform process and its impact on the workplace.

Teacher's role in educational change. The body of research regarding the role of teachers in educational change was extensive. This body of research was more limited with respect to teacher perspectives on educational change. Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) suggested that educational reform operates on three levels that are loosely connected. The levels are policy, administration, and practice. There is interdependence among these three levels, and each level has a specific influence on the other levels. They felt the importance of the interdependence of these levels helped determine the success of reforms. Specifically, they felt calls for reform did not take into account this interdependence, and as a result "reform has historically has little effect on teaching and learning in the classroom" (p. v). They felt change with respect to the bureaucracy of

schools has been effective; however, changes in the “fundamental stuff of education---teaching and learning---seem to have weak, transitory and ephemeral effects” (p. v.).

Lortie’s (1975) study on the teacher was a comprehensive one that looked into the life of teachers. This empirical study utilized historical review, national and local surveys, observations, and interviews to take an in-depth look into the lives of teachers. The analysis of data was accomplished using quantitative and qualitative methods. This study provided an avenue for the voices of teachers to be heard. Its scope and breath, however, were limiting factors when it came to educational change. Teachers and their role in change were limited to three pages in a 250-plus page book. The focus of the study was teacher perspectives on all aspects of teacher life.

With respect to change, Lortie (1975) asked two questions that centered on changes teachers felt would help them be more effective and changes that would augment their satisfaction. Teachers’ responses indicated time as a major issue followed by facility issues, curriculum, administration, parents, financial rewards, and autonomy. To summarize his findings on change, Lortie stated,

One can understand how teachers might feel they have not been given the chance to show what they can do. But the “more of the same” description seems largely accurate; the foregoing proposals, for example, do not represent a major shift from pedagogical strategies of the past. The beliefs and preferences expressed suggest individualistic teachers who want more elbowroom to practice their craft. But the state of the craft does not come under review. (P. 184)

Based on Lortie's (1975) findings, his study supported the literature that stated change factors external to the system have a difficult time penetrating to the classroom. Lortie described teacher suggestions for change as "conservative rather than radical, individualistic rather than collectivist, and present---rather than future---orientated" (p. 181). This perspective conflicted with the reform initiatives of the excellence reform movement. Mazzoni (1994) paraphrased Firestone et al. (1991) and Murphy (1990) to describe the purpose of the waves associated with the excellence reform movement. He described the second wave as restructuring at the local level and the third wave as focusing on systemic restructuring of the K-12 system. Others (Boyd, 1990; Farrar, 1990) supported these descriptions of the purposes associated with the reform waves. These descriptions of the purposes of the waves conflicted with Lortie's suggestions regarding the conservative nature of teacher change.

Murphy, Evertson, and Radnofsky (1991), writing an occasional paper for the National Center for Educational Leadership, commented on the lack of teacher perspectives on educational reform. The paper reviewed the results of a qualitative study that utilized in-depth interviews with 14 teachers to gather their perspectives on specific reform initiatives. This paper focused on site-based management, parental choice, and restructuring; however, the message was reflective of educational reform in general during the 1980s. Although limited in scope by the sample size, the study does provide teacher reflections on specific reforms initiated during the excellence reform movement.

This study focused on common themes in the interviews of the teachers. Murphy, Evertson, and Radnofsky (1991) provided rich details in describing the perspectives of teachers on restructuring. The voices of the teachers in this study presented almost a wish list of things that could happen in the new restructured educational model. The teachers discussed at length the things they wished they could see in the classroom. Factors associated with influencing teacher change were discussed with time being the most common theme. Climate, curriculum teacher work, interpersonal dynamics organizing for learning and managing behavior, supporting structure, and student outcomes were all themes discussed in the study. The teachers felt positive about the reform initiative; however, their perceptions lacked reflections on implementation of the initiative. The study was a what-if study, not a result study. This type of teacher perspective was important because it provided an idea of what was important to teachers. As the authors noted, what was missing was any connection to financial constraints. Teachers presented their wish list but ignored the financial realities associated with this list.

A follow-up interview after the implementation of the reform would have been beneficial because teachers would have been able to share their perspectives on what worked and what did not work. They could have also shared why something worked and what influenced their decision making during the reform. The benefits of this post-reform study would be in understanding factors associated with teacher change. The benefit of this knowledge would be a better understanding of the change process, which

would allow educational leaders to make more informed decisions prior to implementation of reforms.

Charting Reform: The Teacher's Turn was a report on the findings of a survey mailed to 12,708 elementary school teachers in Chicago. The purpose of this empirical study was to provide “teachers the opportunity to share their views, experiences, and opinions with the general public, the Chicago Board of Education, and with individual school communities” (Consortium on Chicago School Research, 1991 [CCSR], p. 3). The Chicago School Reform Act was the specific focus of the survey, and 401 schools returned the survey. The survey was mailed to the teachers in the Spring of 1991 and had an overall response rate of 70%. The report provided percentage responses on a scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The study (CCSR, 1991) focused on teacher perceptions IN three broad categories: (1) what teachers thought about school reform; (2) what teachers thought about school communities; and (3) what teachers thought about teaching, instructional change, and professional growth. The questions regarding teacher perspectives on school reform focused on climate issues and specific reforms. Climate issues included teacher perceptions on the state of teaching. More specifically, were things getting better or worse? The study also sought to determine what positive practices had resulted from the reform efforts. The second focus of this section of the study targeted specific reform initiatives implemented in the Chicago school system. Local school councils, professional advisory programs, and school improvement plans were the initiatives

surveyed. In the section on school communities, the focus of the questions WAS on adequacy of facilities, collegiality, mission statements, school leadership, parent involvement, and community relations. The last section focused on teacher expectations and competency, satisfaction, and instructional change.

In analyzing the results of this study (CCSR, 1991), the focus of the questions was not on the impact of reform on teaching methodologies and strategies. The questions did not focus on factors affecting teacher implementation of reform. The questions focused on climate issues. Teachers were asked for their perceptions on the degree of involvement they had in the reform. Questions focused on the degree to which the reform initiatives respected teacher input and the degree to which teachers increased their involvement in decision making at the school. The questions on general reform also concentrated on these climate issues. Questions contained references to working relationships between teachers and administration and teachers and parents. Other questions focused on the condition of the school since the reform initiatives were implemented. Again, the final section focused on climate issues. Questions regarding facilities focused on cleanliness, paint issues, and basic materials. Questions on collegiality, missions, and leadership focused on the relationships within the school and the level of input by teachers. Even the section on teaching, instructional change, and professional growth concentrated on climate. These questions focused on teacher attitudes and feelings about their job or impact on students. Only two questions really addressed instructional change. The first questions focused on the effect of reform in the

classroom. In this case, 57% of the response indicated agreement with the statement.

The second question was on teacher perceptions of the level of change associated with the school improvement plan.

In conclusion, although the survey (CCSR, 1991) to understand teacher perspectives of the Chicago School Reform Act was an empirical study on teacher perspectives, it was limited in nature. The focus of the study was on climate issues and did not provide teacher perspectives on the impact of reform in the classroom, on teaching methodologies or strategies, or on factors affecting teacher compliance or resistance.

Huberman (1989/1993) completed an extensive study on teachers through the use of interviews that were analyzed utilizing qualitative and quantitative methodology. This study included 160 in-depth interviews of teachers in Switzerland. The results of the study were published in the book The Lives of Teachers. The purpose of this study was to understand the professional life cycle of teachers and look for a correlation with the human life cycle. The depth of the study provided, as Hargeaves noted in the forward, “for quantification and systematic comparison, while allowing deeper, sensitive inquiry and exemplification of a more qualitative kind” (p. viii). In addition, Hargeaves stated, the book “sheds new light on the perennial problems of improvement and change” (p. ix).

The focus of the study (Huberman, 1989/1993) was 160 interviews that lasted from three to nine hours. The interviews were conducted in two sittings and consisted of 14 questions that utilized open-ended, semi-directive, and focused questions. Huberman

identified specific stages during a teacher's career. These stages include career entry, the stabilization phase, experimentation and diversification, reassessment, serenity and relational distance, conservative and complaints, and disengagement. For the purposes of this study, these stages in a career were analyzed with respect to change and the teacher's role in change.

Huberman (1989/1993) took two chapters to discuss the relationship of change and innovation in the career of teachers. An initial focus of this change was on the degree of caution used by teachers. The premise for this question was the notion that in the human life cycle as people age, they get more cautious. They feel more strongly that change did not necessarily bring about improvement. The specific question utilized by Huberman was

It is often said that, with age and experience, one becomes more prudent, more cautious. Then again, maybe one doesn't change fundamentally but becomes a bit more skeptical of reforms (for having lived through them), and one puts oneself less often into the question than before. Does this apply to you? (p. 157)

Huberman (1989/1993) analyzed this question with respect to gender, age, and teaching level. He found that there was a tendency to get more cautious with age. He found that there was a level of disillusionment with change but that this disillusion was directed at the institution. It should be noted that because this study took place in Switzerland, the context of reform for many of the teachers centered on institutional change that resulted from events in May, 1968. During this time period, teacher strikes in

France and other European countries resulted in sweeping educational changes. This historical context placed many of the teachers in the study in the center of educational reform. As Huberman noted, the disillusionment centers on the fact that the teachers jumped at the chance for systemic reform, yet when all was done, the system was still controlling. As he stated, "Generally, the stronger and the more idealistic their investment, the greater the disillusion, itself translated into a violent criticism of the school and its structure" (p. 180). Although there was a great deal of disillusionment, Huberman pointed to the contradiction with respect to personal growth. He wrote,

On the other hand, we should underline once more that, in spite of this pessimism concerning institutional reforms, the vast majority of teachers express an authentic enthusiasm for their own personal and professional development, which, they feel, has sustained them over the years. (p. 180)

In another chapter, Huberman (1989/1993) focused on the notion that caution in teaching can be translated into a continuum of activism that ranges from activist to fatalist. To understand the perspectives of teachers, three questions were asked in which the interviewees had to choose between two items that indicated their degree of agreement with the statements. With regard to innovation, the results indicated teachers move from an activist position to fatalist position over time. The average response over time ended up halfway between the ends of the continuum. The teacher comments reflected frustrations that included time constraints, the mandating of reforms externally, and the fact that many innovations were just fads or gimmicks. Huberman found that the

level taught did not play a major role in the feelings of teachers but that gender played a major factor. Men tended to be anti-innovation much more than women.

In conclusion, Huberman's (1989/1993) comprehensive empirical study, which utilized an interview methodology of 160 teachers in Switzerland, provided an in-depth study in which teacher voices were heard. Although the study focused on the life cycle of the teacher, it did add to the literature on how teachers respond to change. The study provided perspectives on the impact of change in the careers of teachers and showed that for the life cycle of teachers, the opportunity for change occurred during the middle of the teaching career. The difficulty with influencing change on an institutional level and the impact of reforms generated from external forces generally leads teachers to move away from change. Teachers withdrew into the classroom as their careers lengthened, and there was a greater degree of disillusionment with change and innovation.

Huberman and Miles (1984) conducted a study of 12 reform programs at schools throughout the country to understand the factors associated with school improvement. This study resulted in extensive case studies of the 12 programs. Huberman and Miles then analyzed the case studies to look for commonalities within the programs. Their review of the school improvement process focused on the organization and not the teacher. Although the study utilized interview methodology and teacher perspectives were incorporated throughout the study, the focus was at the organizational level.

The body of research regarding the effectiveness of change in education based on federal policy was limited. McLaughlin (1989) and Berman and McLaughlin (1973)

discuss the 1973-1978 RAND Corporation Study of the impact of federal programs at the local level. This empirical study identified four federally funded programs and analyzed the effectiveness of the programs in introducing and supporting innovative projects in public schools. McLaughlin summarized the findings of the study and noted that money was important in getting the projects started, but not in ensuring the success of the program. The scope of the project was also important. It had to be significant to garner teacher interest but not so large that it was viewed as overwhelming. The commitment of the district administration and implementation strategies that were aligned with the local level were two important factors in the success of a project.

In reviewing the conclusions of the RAND study, McLaughlin (1989) noted that “It is exceedingly difficult for policy to change practice, especially across levels of government” (p. 8). She also stated “that the nature, amount, and pace of the change at the local level was a product of local factors that were largely beyond the control of higher-level policy makers” (p. 9). Berman and McLaughlin, in their review of the study, noted that “Self-conscious federal efforts to promote innovation in local educational practices have resulted in disappointingly little consistent or identifiable improvement in student outcomes” (p. 1).

Factors influencing teacher change

In a paper prepared for the American Educational Research Association, McLaughlin (1984) pointed to three primary factors as reasons for teacher willingness to change. She felt teacher satisfaction based on student accomplishment was the primary

reason for a willingness to change. This satisfaction was also linked to teacher feelings regarding the relevancy of the change to their curriculum. A second factor affecting teacher willingness to change was a personal assessment by the teacher regarding his/her ability to perform the change competently and the safety associated with participation in the change effort. Finally, teachers exercised a degree of professionalism when deciding to participate in change. Teachers assessed the degree of professional practicality associated with a change and decided if they wanted to participate in the change. Administrative priority, cost, time, and professional reward were all factors associated with this decision.

In another qualitative study Afflerbach, Almasi, Guthrie, and Schafer (1996) examined specific barriers to the implementation of a statewide performance assessment program. The State of Maryland was the focus of the study, which identified five schools throughout the state and interviewed school personnel. The focus of the interviews was on barriers to implementing the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP). The study analyzed the data collected from interviews collected from school personnel over a three-month period.

In analyzing the data from the studies, Afflerbach et al. (1996) identified five categories of barriers. These barriers included (1) the lack of alignment between instruction and the assessment used by the MSPAP and the schools, (2) the lack of alignment between the mandated assessment and instruction and teacher beliefs and practices, (3) the lack of resources to meet the needs of the MSPAP, (4) the nature of the

performance assessment itself, and (5) problems with the quality of communication regarding the MSPAP. This study provided teacher perspectives on factors that influenced teacher decisions about implementation of reform. The study supported the literature regarding the importance of the teacher with respect to change. In addition, the study supported the need for the alignment of educational practices and teacher beliefs in the implementation of reform initiatives. The study also supported teacher concerns regarding the lack of resources, especially time, when it came to initiating reform.

Schweiker and Barksdale-Ladd (1992) presented a paper at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference in which they reported on the results of a study on factors that influenced teachers to become reformers, reviewers, or resisters. In this study, the focus was on the transition from traditional to whole language instruction. Three school sites involved in such a transition were selected, and school personnel were interviewed. The interviews involved three to four teachers, the Chapter 1 teacher, the Chapter 1 director, and the principal at each site. In addition, the researchers collected lesson plans and took photographs of the classroom. The research questions in the study focused on factors that influenced a teacher to adopt or resist the change and the investigation of a continuum from reformers to resisters.

This qualitative study (Schweiker & Barksdale-Ladd, 1992) found there were specific factors that influenced teachers in their decisions regarding the implementation of the reform initiative. The researchers found that of factors influencing teacher change, three were from outside the teacher and three were based on the teacher's

phenomenological framework. Although the researchers identified three external factors, these factors were not external to the school. The three external factors identified were the impact of the Chapter 1 program, school culture, and the principal's influence. Internal factors affecting implementation were teacher knowledge of whole language, attitudes toward change, and orientation to professional development.

The study by Schweiker and Barksdale-Ladd (1992) provided teacher perspectives on reform. Although the study focused on a specific reform initiative, the conclusions supported the literature on factors influencing teacher change and on the impact of the principal and change (Lieberman & Miller, 1981; Thomas, 1978). The authors also noted that the study supported the literature on the impact of school culture on change (Goodlad, 1979).

The comprehensive study by Huberman (1989/1993), discussed previously, also provided information on factors that influenced teachers and educational change. Huberman found that the following factors were important to teachers as they discussed innovation and change: disillusionment, dissatisfaction or disenchantment, time constraints, family and personal interests, and student ability.

Huberman (1989/1993) noted that teachers increasingly dealt with issues of disillusionment, time, and life changes as they aged. These factors helped to make the choice of not getting involved in innovation easier. Disillusionment resulted from the lack of change in relation to the effort expended on the change. An example of this was the teacher perspectives on the creation of the new middle school concept. In

generalizing the feelings of these teachers, he said, "Almost all those interviewed recall their enthusiasm at the start. There was a new structure to be created, and they had the feeling of being architects" (p. 168). He noted that this initial excitement did not last and summarized teacher perspectives through a series of quotes. These quotes reflected the lack of direction of the reform, the lack of congruence between the results and the amount of energy and resources utilized, the amount of time associated with the reforms, and the mandating of the reforms from above.

In analyzing the various factors in more depth, Huberman (1989/1993) noted that teachers were disappointed in large part because they felt the changes were poorly conceived and poorly executed. He indicated factors associated with the disappointment included the lack of reflection prior to the reform implementation and the lack of reflection on results. Teachers also felt that there was a lack of realism by all parties concerning the change. In expressing concern about reforms mandated from above, he quoted a teacher who was concerned that "the reforms are catapulted from the other side of the fence by civil servants paid to sing their praises" (p. 169). Based on this statement, he reflected on the concern by teachers that they were not prepared to carry out the reforms. In summary, he stated, "Above all, our teachers clearly recognize that they let themselves be taken in by winds of change; that, in some ways, they are idealistic and utopian" (p. 169).

Huberman (1989/1993) also analyzed teacher perspectives regarding the impact of the institution and social context of reform efforts. In this case, he discussed teacher

concerns that the reform efforts were not successful because the size and complexity of the institution did not allow for change. One teacher summarized the feelings of the teachers, “ Now I believe less that we can change the world by changing teaching. I realized that most of the reforms ran up against the weight of the institution and the system” (p. 170.) Despite this frustration with the institution, Huberman wrote that teachers did not necessarily stop innovation in the classroom. He discussed the fact that the desire to continue to grow professionally was a factor for many teachers despite their frustration with the institution.

The final point Huberman (1989/1993) addressed with respect to teacher perspectives on change focused on personal reasons for becoming more cautious. The focus of these teachers was more on the fact that as they aged, they had less energy or became lazy with regard to change. Huberman (p. 172) talked of the number of teachers who prefaced statements with, “I no longer believe,” in describing their reasons for falling into a routine. As he stated, “They no longer believe in the potential of the students, in reforms, in changes, in pedagogy. Some don’t believe in teaching anymore” (p. 172). Another factor for many of these teachers was the belief that they had their time in the sun, and now it was time for others to take their turn.

Cusick (1983) conducted a qualitative study of two schools to understand the factors associated with teachers’ decisions regarding the implementation of curriculum. This study utilized interview and participant methodology to gain perspectives from teachers. Although the text revealed rich details of the voices of teachers, the focus was

limited with respect to change regarding curricular innovations. The major theme regarding curricular change in this study focused on teacher interest. In this study, Cusick found that teachers developed and implemented new courses based on their interest level. This study was a follow up to another study, and the contextual setting of the initial study focused on race. This theme was prevalent throughout Cusick's analysis and framed his findings regarding the factors influencing curricular change.

Huberman and Miles (1984) completed an in-depth study of innovative programs throughout the country. Although the primary focus of this study was on school improvement at the organizational level, they did make reference to the primary factor that allowed for successful implementation of the innovation as it related to teachers. In this case, Huberman and Miles felt the most important factor associated with the change impacting the classroom was the level of assistance provided by the organization. This assistance resulted in teachers who viewed themselves as "more instructionally skillful, and better able to diagnose problems and to differentiate instructional treatments" (p. 274).

In conclusion, a search of the body of research on factors influencing teacher decisions regarding the implementation of change revealed numerous studies that supported specific factors associated with teacher decision making regarding change. The literature supported the importance of teacher ownership or buy-in to the change (Cusick, 1983). The literature also revealed the importance of congruence between the value system of the teacher and the change (Afflerbach, Almasi, Guthrie, & Schafer,

1996; McLaughlin, 1984). This concept would also lend support to the concept of ownership in the reform effort. The literature also spoke to the concerns of teachers regarding time constraints in the implementation of reform initiatives (Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991). A concern with the size of the institution was also discussed as an inhibitor to effective change (Huberman, 1989/1993). Frustration with mandates from external sources was also discussed as a factor working against reform reaching the classroom level (Huberman, 1989/1993).

Compliance Theory

The research base for compliance theory was not extensive and even more limited with respect to education. The notion of compliance theory was linked with prisons, and a large portion of this research was empirical studies on prisons or juvenile delinquents. Etzioni (1975) conducted a review of the research base between 1961 and 1975 with respect to compliance theory. The focus of the review was literature that set out to test compliance theory. This review provided 61 studies that focused on multiple aspects of society. The proportion of studies related to education was limited and even more so with respect to K-12. A significant number of the studies were related to higher education.

A search of the Proquest database revealed 16 dissertations since 1983 that utilized compliance theory as a framework. Half of these dissertations related compliance theory to education; however, the focus of the studies was not on the compliance of teachers to reform.

Tuneberg (1996) completed a dissertation and two subsequent articles on compliance theory in education. His study focused on the nature of compliance theory and the use of power by the Ohio Department of Education (ODOE). This study utilized a survey methodology to question superintendents about the influence and control utilized by the ODOE to implement legislative mandates. The research design utilized the Power Perceptions Profile: Perceptions of Others survey to gather superintendent perspectives. This survey was mailed to two sample populations of superintendents and utilized a three point scale on alternative choice pairs to gain an understanding of superintendent perceptions. One survey was mailed to urban superintendents and a second survey mailed to urban, suburban, and rural superintendents. The study compared the seven categories of power on the survey with Etzioni's (1975) Compliance Theory. The study utilized quantitative methods to analyze survey responses. The study found that there was a high degree of agreement between superintendents on power methods utilized by ODOE. Superintendents agreed on the type of power utilized by the ODOE but disagreed on the degree to which the types of power were used. For example, rural and suburban superintendents felt reward power was not used to the same degree that urban superintendents felt it was used. Finally, superintendents felt the ODOE used coercive power, and this was not aligned with the needs of normative organizations.

Tuneberg's (1996) study and supporting articles focused on the relationship between superintendents and the state department. As such, they provided information that supported the notion of compliance within the educational organization. This study,

however, focused on the administrative level and did not provide a discussion with respect to teachers. The focus was also not related to the power used by the state department to mandate change in teaching practices at the classroom level. The focus was on the use of power to influence central administration to comply with legislative mandates.

Goldman and Conley (1997) conducted a longitudinal study on teacher compliance to top-down state mandates. The focus of this four-year study was on Oregon teachers and their perspectives on the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century. Oregon educators compiled data for this study between 1992 and 1995 through a self-administered survey; 92 schools took part in the initial survey. For successive years, fewer schools were sampled. The surveys were distributed to all certified staff in the sample. The individual rate of return was approximately 65%, and the number of surveys distributed annually ranged from 2,260 to 600. The conceptual framework of the study was social compliance theory as operationalized in the form of normative behavior.

Goldman and Conley (1997) found that on the whole, teachers were supportive of reform, but in the later years of the study, this support had waned. Goldman and Conley related this phenomenon to the Hawthorne effect. Within this support of educational reform, the focus of the study was on a specific reform act in Oregon. The survey items focused on teacher perceptions of the vision of the law. In other words, how successful did the teachers feel the law would be in changing the outcomes of the education system? In summary, the teachers felt the law “was largely well-intentioned and that it was

directed to the big issues of fundamental school restructuring and to improving student academic performance” (p. 8).

The study (Goldman & Conley, 1997) addressed the perceptions of the teachers on the potential success of the law in changing the educational system. The questions of the survey were designed to ask teachers what they thought would be the end result of the law. The questions did not ask teachers about the specific impact of the reform on their teaching practices. The analysis of the results from the study addressed the issues of compliance; however, the survey items did not address specifics regarding teacher compliance to mandated reform. The discussion pointed to some techniques that teachers utilized to minimize compliance with the act. Goldman and Conley stated, “In essence, it appears that educators were backing off their initial perceptions that the law was, in fact, fundamental restructuring, and were viewing it much more in terms of incremental adaptation of existing practice” (p. 11).

Goldman and Conley (1997) continued this discussion and touched on the point that teachers felt, over time, the vision of the law became clouded, and they felt they were already doing what was being asked by the law. As a result of this perception, teachers felt they did not have to comply with the law. As Goldman and Conley stated,

A law written to be “visionary” and to serve as a “wake-up call to educators,” as its key sponsor in the legislature described it, lost its capacity to incite teachers, in particular, to consider significant changes in practice. And if broad and challenging goals can be disavowed, the implications for practice can similarly be

blunted. This allows schools (and teachers) to label or repackage current practices in ways that permit them to believe they are already doing much of what the law requires. The law is then translated into a series of procedural responses....Basic practices and assumptions are not questioned or changed significantly. (p. 11)

This analysis provided a basis for avenues of further study to gather more insight into the specific impact of reform initiatives on teaching practices. This study utilized the recommendations of the Goldman and Conley (1997) study and the instrument they developed as a template to address more specifically teacher perspectives on reform initiatives and their impact in the classroom.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a review of the literature base for this study revealed a broad and comprehensive research base on educational reform. In addition, there was a growing literature base on the excellence reform movement and specific reform initiatives. The search revealed a literature base that included empirical studies as well as case studies and opinion articles. Lacking in the literature base were the perceptions and perspectives of teachers with respect to reform initiatives and their impact on teaching practices. Surprisingly, given the extensive media coverage of the state of public education during the past 16 years and the extensive political debate, teachers were conspicuous by their absence.

The literature spoke to the importance of teachers in the change process (Fullan, 1991) and, as a result, provided the impetus for this study. If change were to be

successful and education were going to respond to critics, an understanding of teacher views was paramount. Change agents needed to understand the views and attitudes of teachers regarding educational change.

The search of the literature led to the following reasoning behind the need for a research study on teacher perspectives regarding reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement. These reasons included the impact of this reform effort on various entities in American society, the impact of this reform movement on the expanding role of state governmental entities in educational reform, and the lack of teacher reaction or perspectives to this impact.

Arizona, like many other states, responded to the call for educational reform emanating from the excellence reform movement. Numerous reform initiatives that were a part of the rhetoric of the excellence reform movement were mandated by the Arizona State Legislature. Examples of these reform measures included career ladder, state curriculum guides, state testing, increased graduation requirements, and site-based management. This study gathered teacher perspectives on these and other reform initiatives from teachers in one district in Arizona. The study provided additional information on the teacher perspectives regarding educational change. The lack of teacher voices in educational change (McLaughlin, 1984; Wilson & Rossman, 1993) was contrasted against the importance of teachers in educational change (Fullan, 1991; Goldman & Conley, 1997; Sarason, 1971).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

An Overview of the Methodology

The purpose of this study was to analyze the perspectives of teachers in an Arizona school district regarding the impact of the excellence reform movement in the classroom. Specifically, what were teacher perspectives on reform initiatives and their impact on teacher workday, teaching methods and teaching strategies and factors influencing teacher decisions to implement or not implement reform initiatives? Compliance theory suggested that workers would comply with directives given by legitimate authorities (Goldman & Conley, 1997). State governmental entities can be seen as a form of legitimate authority in public education, and as such teachers should comply with reform efforts emanating from these entities. The reports released during the excellence reform movement received extensive media and political attention, and this attention kept this reform movement in the public eye for the past 16 years. This attention spurred state governmental entities to action at the rhetorical and policy levels.

Given the theoretical basis and the literature regarding educational change, the study sought teacher perspectives on the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform effort in the classroom. Although this reform effort has received vast media attention, the question is based on teacher perspectives, what was the impact of reform initiatives in the classroom? The literature suggested that the impact of reform mandated

outside the classroom was minimal in the classroom (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; McLaughlin, 1984). This conflict between compliance theory and educational change suggested that a more thorough understanding of the perspectives of teachers on the impact of reform initiatives was needed. This understanding was especially warranted given the current level of attention paid to the state of public education in America.

Research Design

Introduction

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) described the data collected in qualitative research as “rich in description of people, places, and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures” (p. 2). They also described one of the five qualities of qualitative research as being concerned with the participant perspective. As they stated when they quoted Psathas (1973), qualitative researchers ask questions of people to discover “what they are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences, and how they themselves structure the social world in which they live” (p. 2). Langenbach, Vaughn, and Aagaard (1994), in their discussion of qualitative and quantitative research, described qualitative research as utilizing the perspective-seeking qualitative traditions. In this form of qualitative research, they stated that the researcher is “interested in an extensive understanding of their participants’ or informants’ world” (p. 92).

A multi-method study design using qualitative and quantitative methodology and emphasizing a questionnaire and in-depth interviewing was selected based on the purpose of the study. The use of a questionnaire and interviews in the research design allowed for

the collection of teacher perspectives from two samples within the population. The first method collected data that was more holistic in nature, while the second method allowed for follow-up and deeper probing into teacher perspectives. The focus of the first method was teacher perspectives from this district on reform initiatives. The emphasis was on all teachers regardless of length of service. This criterion was established because all teachers in the population potentially had views on educational reform and were potentially impacted by a reform initiative. For the second method the focus was on teacher perspectives of specific reform initiatives and their impact on teaching practices. As such, the sample was limited to teachers who had been teaching during the time period in which these specific reform initiatives were impacting this district.

Tuckman (1994) described the value of questionnaires and interviews when he stated,

Questionnaires and interviews are used by researchers to convert into data the information directly given by a person (subject). By providing access to what is “inside a person’s head,” these approaches make it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge and information), what a person likes and dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs) . . .

Questionnaires and interviews are a way of getting data about people by *asking* them rather than by observing and sampling their behavior. (p. 216)

This methodology also ensured that the researcher developed descriptions of teacher views on the impact of the excellence reform movement initiatives in the classroom.

Numerous authors (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991; Patton, 1980; Tuckman, 1994) have described aspects of qualitative research that support the use of this type of study design to understand the perspectives of research participants.

Questionnaire Methodology

Tuckman (1994) described several types of question formats and response modes that could be utilized in questionnaires. Question formats include direct versus indirect questions, specific versus nonspecific questions, and questions versus statements. For the questionnaire utilized in the study, all three of these question formats were utilized. Direct and specific questions were utilized to gather demographic information on the population. Examples of direct and specific questions included questions on gender, years of service, teaching certification, teaching assignment and teaching level. An example of the use of statements in the questionnaire was in the section that gathered teacher perceptions on reform. These statements were general and asked teachers to rate themselves on a scale from high to low for each statement. Indirect and nonspecific questions were utilized for the remainder of the questionnaire. An example of these types of questions were questions that asked teachers to rate the impact of specific reform initiatives on their teaching practices.

For response modes, Tuckman (1994) identified seven different types. These types included unstructured response, tabular response, fill-in response, scaled response, ranking response, checklist response, and categorical response. A scaled-response mode

is defined as “a scale (that is, a series of gradations) on which respondents express endorsement or rejection of an attitude statement or describe some aspect of themselves” (p. 220). This was the primary response mode utilized in the study. The other response mode utilized was the checklist response. This response mode is different from a scaled response in that the choices do not reflect “points on a continuum” (p. 224). The checklist response mode was utilized in the demographic section of the questionnaire.

The selection of the question formats and response modes was based on the desire to get the perspectives of as many teachers in the study population as possible. Time constraints and population size made it impossible to interview all the teachers in the population. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) allowed the researcher to get the perceptions of a larger sample of teachers in the district. The utilization of the interview methodology to supplement the questionnaire ensured a deeper probing of teacher responses from a sample of teachers from the population.

Interview Methodology

The interview format was chosen for this study in part due to the richness in individual perspectives this methodology allows. Patton (1980) described the importance of the interviewing methodology.

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe.... The fact of the matter is that we cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time.... The purpose of interviewing,

then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. The assumption is that that perspective is meaningful, knowable, and able to be explicit. (p. 196)

The qualitative methodology utilized for the interview portion of the study was the standardized open-ended and semi-structured interview approach. The standard open-ended structure was used to gather demographic data on the participants. The semi-structured interview was used for more in-depth probing of teacher perspectives. The characteristics of the semi-structured interview format included determining the basic format of the questions and following a general plan in asking the questions. Tuckman (1994) noted that the strength of this type of interview was the ability to probe and explore the answers of the interviewee. Additionally, there was naturalness and flexibility to the interview, and interviewees could open up more in their answers to the questions. Tuckman (1994) did point out that this format increased the chance that the interviews would not be the same for all interviewees. Additionally, by being flexible, the interviewer may inadvertently miss covering a specific topic.

Specific questions utilized in the interviews included experience/behavior questions, opinion/value questions, and feeling questions. An example of experience/behavior questions were questions that asked for teacher to describe how specific reform initiatives changed their teaching practices. An example of opinion/value questions and feeling questions were questions that asked for teacher opinions on the reasons for the success or failure of specific reform initiatives in this district. Patton

(1980) discussed the utilization of these types of questions and suggested that all these types of questions can be used in interviews.

Utilizing a combination of an interview and questionnaire format helped to ensure the depth of the material covered for the study. This methodology also helped address the validity of the study and ensured a high degree of comparability of responses. This combination of interview techniques provided maximum coverage of the topic and a high degree of reliability of the data collection.

Population

The population supporting this study was comprised of teachers employed in the Snowflake Unified School District during the 1998-99 academic year. The 136 teachers employed by the district were comprised of 84 female teachers and 52 male teachers. Sixty-nine of these teachers taught at one of the four elementary schools, 22 at the junior high, and 45 at the high school. The range of years employed by the district was from 1 to 34 years, with 41% hired by the district since 1990 and another 38% hired between 1980 and 1990. All the teachers held Arizona teaching certification.

The Snowflake-Taylor community is located in the northeastern portion of the state, approximately 180 miles from Phoenix. A North Central Association report (North Central Association Report [NCAR], 1995) described the Snowflake-Taylor community as one that prided itself on its independence and pioneer heritage. The towns were initially established by pioneers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) in 1878. The community is comprised of the two small towns of Snowflake and

Taylor, which are about a mile from each other. The population of the two communities is estimated at about 10,000, consisting primarily of Anglos with a small population of Hispanics and Native Americans. The economic base is forest products, with the state's only pulp and paper mill serving the community. This lumber-based industry also supports a moulding business, trucking, and lumberjacks. Agriculture also plays a role in the local economy, with pork production a mainstay of this industry. Within the past year, a hydroponics plant growing tomatoes has added to the agricultural base, and expansion is predicted in this industry. The school district is the second largest employer in the community.

The Snowflake Unified School District consists of six campuses with a configuration of two K-3 primary schools, two 4-6 intermediate schools, one 7-8 junior high school, and one 9-12 high school. At the lower grades, one K-3 school and one 4-6 school are located in the town of Snowflake, and the other two are located in Taylor. For the purposes of this study, teachers were identified as teaching in elementary schools if they taught at either the primary or intermediate schools. Snowflake Unified School District covers approximately 600 square miles and serves an estimated population of 15,000, with the total district student population approximately 2,500. The district also sponsors five charter schools. These charter schools are located in Globe, Cottonwood, and Phoenix. The main reason the district sponsors these schools is financial. The district receives 3% of the charter school budget and in return provides oversight of the charter schools. Although the district receives a financial benefit for sponsoring these

schools the students in these schools are not associated with the district student population and not part of the district census.

In the district's rich history, it was the original educational center for the White Mountain area. Starting in the early 1900s, the Snowflake School District served as the primary source of education for students in Snowflake, Taylor, Show Low, Holbrook, Pinetop, and the surrounding countryside. Over the years, the geographical area has diminished; however, the district has maintained its role in educating the children of Snowflake and Taylor. Since the early 1970s, the neighboring communities of Show Low and Heber-Overgaard have broken away from the Snowflake Unified School District to form their own districts and build their own high schools.

Sample

There were two samples selected from the population. The criterion for the selection of the samples was based on the research design and the purpose of the study. The focus of the study was the perspectives of teachers from an Arizona school district on educational reform. This focus demanded that the study attempt to collect perspectives from as many of the teachers within the district as possible. Another purpose of the study was to probe deeper into teacher perspectives on educational reform.

Questionnaire Sample

The first sample was comprised of a self-selected sample of teachers from throughout the district. For this sample the researcher sent a questionnaire to all teachers employed by the district. The size of the sample provided the researcher with the ability

to gather teacher perspectives reflective of the district. This sample provided representation of perspectives from teachers throughout the K-12 system. In addition, this self-selected sample provided representation from teachers in all subject areas.

Of the 136 questionnaires distributed to the teaching staff in the Snowflake Unified School District 62 of the questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 46%. Of the 62 questionnaire respondents, 30 (48%) were male, and 32 (52%) were female. These 62 teachers taught at all levels within the district, with 26 (42%) teaching at one of the four elementary schools, 8 (13%) teaching at the middle school, 26 (42%) teaching at the high school, and 3 (5%) failing to answer this question. The age range of the sample was from 22 years to over 56 years. The range of teaching experience and teaching experience in the district was between 1 year and 35 years. All teachers in the sample were certified by the State of Arizona, with 26% holding K-12 certification, 39% holding K-8 certification, and 33% holding 7-12 certification. The teachers taught all subject areas in K-12 including elementary, junior high, Science, English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Foreign Language, Vocational, and Special Education. Thirty-five (57%) of the teachers had received their Master's degrees, 41% held a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree, and 1% failed to complete the data for this question.

Interview Sample

For the interview portion of the study, nine teachers were selected to comprise the sample. Purposeful sampling was used in the study to select the nine teachers because this form of sampling allowed the researcher to select and conduct a more detailed study

that understood the needs, interests, and perceptions of a small number of selected participants (Patton, 1980). The determination of guidelines for the size of a purposeful sample was lacking. Patton (1980) indicated the major criterion for selection was a large enough sample to be credible, yet small enough to permit an in-depth and detailed study. For the interview portion of the study, the major criterion for selection of the nine teachers was length of service in this district. This purposeful sampling provided a pool of teachers that could participate fully in the interview portion because they had been employed by the district during the time frame of the selected reform initiatives. In addition, purposeful sampling provided teachers that taught at the elementary schools, junior high, and high school. All the teachers in the sample knew the researcher for less than one year. The size of the sample provided the researcher with the ability to complete a more detailed study of the individuals in the study. The follow-up interviews allowed deeper probing into the perspectives of teachers regarding educational change.

The participants in the interview portion of the study included three teachers from elementary schools, one from the junior high school, and five from the high school. All nine were certified by the State of Arizona and taught in their certified areas. Six of the teachers were certified 7-12, two were certified K-8, and one was certified K-12. Only three of the nine teachers had a degree beyond a BA or BS. Six of the teachers were male and three were female. The nine teachers selected for the study ranged in age from 44-65 and had been employed in the district between 16 and 35 years.

Unit of Analysis

For the purposes of this study, the unit of analysis was the teacher. The importance of the teacher in the change process was addressed throughout the literature (Fullan, 1991; McLaughlin, 1984; Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991). Because teachers played a pivotal role in the success or failure of reform efforts, the focus of the study centered on their perspectives. In addition, teachers can be viewed as the lower participants in Etzioni's (1975) discussion on compliance theory. As such, Etzioni's compliance theory would indicate that teachers should be compliant to the demands of elites in the organization. These two defining characteristics of teachers played a central role in the contextual framework of this study. As a result, the perspectives of the teachers regarding the impact of the excellence reform movement on their workday were the defining criterion for the study.

Instrumentation

This study utilized a questionnaire and interview methodology to determine the perspectives of teachers on the impact of excellence reform movement initiatives at the school site and in the classroom.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used for this study was a replication of a questionnaire developed by Goldman and Conley (1997) in their empirical study on the impact of state-mandated reform in Oregon. Their questionnaire was developed as an instrument for further research. The instrument was modified to reflect reform initiatives in Arizona;

however, the essence of the instrument remained the same. Shavelson (1988) defined validity in a study as, “the extent to which the interpretations of the results of the study follows from the study itself and the extent to which the results may be generalized to other situations with other people” (p. 19). He identified the former as internal validity and the latter as external validity. For the Goldman and Conley (1997) study the external validity of the study was optimized. The study was a longitudinal study conducted over a four-year period. In addition, the study collected data from a large sample that reflected a cross section of schools. Internal validity for this study was not optimized because of the numerous variables that were present in the population. The external validity of the study provided an instrument that could be utilized for other studies. This presented the major reason for the selection of this instrument for the study.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections (see Appendix A). The first section was designed to collect demographic information. This section used a checklist response mode, which revealed information on age, gender, teaching experience, education, certification, and teaching fields. The last part of the demographic section utilized a scaled-response mode for five statements regarding the teachers, personal views on reform. The answers were based on a five-point scale with a response of 1 indicating low knowledge and 5 indicating high knowledge.

The second section of the questionnaire focused on the impact of reform policy procedures or structures at the school site and in the classroom. This section contained 20 categories, and the responses were a forced choice response of “little” or “lot.” The

categories contained specific reform initiatives or policy supports. In one column, teachers responded to the effect of these categories on the teacher's practice, and in a second column, the teachers commented on the effect of the categories at the school. The purpose of this section was to see how teachers felt about the policy procedure/structure. In essence, did the policy procedure/structure have a "little" effect or a "lot" of effect on the practices of teachers in the classrooms?

The third section of the questionnaire focused on teachers' perceptions about the implementation of specific reform activities or their attitudes regarding reform. The responses were also forced choice responses of "little or "lot." The form asked for information on 20 activities or attitudes. There were three columns to respond to the specific categories. The first column focused on the perspectives of teachers regarding their level of engagement for each category in their own teaching. The second column focused on teacher perceptions on the degree of implementation of the categories at the school site. The final column attempted to determine teacher perspectives on the degree that this compliance with the categories was due to responses for reform from policy.

The fourth section of the questionnaire attempted to understand teacher perspectives regarding specific factors that supported or inhibited reform components in their school. This section contained 18 factors and the responses were scaled. The scale for this section was a four-point scale with a continuum from "strongly support" to "strongly inhibit."

The final section of the questionnaire focused on specific activities teachers engaged in to get the skills needed to accommodate school reform policies. This section had 15 specific activities and also used a scaled response. The scale in this section was a response to the frequency of the activity and the scale was “most”, “medium”, or “least.”

Interviews

The interview methodology used a semi-structured interview of nine teachers. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were based on four standard questions for five specific reform initiatives. These questions on each reform initiative provided the basic framework for the interviews (see Appendix B). Supplemental questions were asked based on the interviewee’s responses. Tuckman (1994) noted that questions could be direct or indirect, specific or nonspecific, fact or opinion, and questions or statements. The development of the questionnaire utilized a combination of these various types of questions. The indirect question, nonspecific question, and opinion question were utilized to explore teacher perspectives regarding educational reform. These types of questions are more likely to “engender frank and open responses” (Tuckman, 1994, p. 217).

The researcher created questions for the interview in order to customize the data collection to target a specific population. In addition, this instrument provided a focus that was designed to complement the questionnaire portion of the study. In developing the questions, the researcher was guided by three major criteria as suggested by Tuckman (1994). These criteria included making sure the question did not influence the

interviewees to respond in a manner that showed themselves in a good light, making sure the interviewees did not anticipate and answer based on what they thought the researcher wanted to find out, and making sure questions were not asked about information that the interviewees may not know about themselves.

Travers (1978) suggested that the design of the questions was crucial and provided specific points in the development of the questions. The questions were written in the simplest terms and were clearly stated. They utilized Standard English and a vocabulary level that was suitable to the participants. The questions were based on information that would have meaning to the participant. Questions were designed to produce responses that reflected the participant's position instead of a uniform, stereotypical response. Travers noted that developing questions that produced a response that presented the firm position of the individual increased the reliability of the question. The questions were not developed around hypothetical conditions, and every attempt was made to develop questions that were not loaded questions, presuming questions, or ones utilizing emotionally loaded terms.

For the purposes of this study, the reform initiatives selected for the questionnaire and the interview reflected reform initiatives associated with the excellence reform movement, the State of Arizona, and the district. A review of the literature supported the selection of reform initiatives associated with the excellence reform movement and the State of Arizona. Reform initiatives representing the district were selected based on the knowledge of the researcher regarding reform initiatives implemented or attempted in the

district during the past 16 years. Upon identifying specific reform initiatives from the three entities, reform initiatives that had a positive correlation in all three categories were selected. Reform initiatives selected for this study were career ladder, block scheduling, mandated foreign language, site-based management, state-mandated curriculum, and state-mandated tests. The block scheduling was a reform initiative specific to the high school and junior high school teachers, while the foreign language mandate was specific to the elementary teachers.

In some instances, a specific title was applied to a reform; however, the concept of the reform was present in all three categories. For example, the literature regarding the excellence reform movement discussed the concept of state-mandated testing (Berube, 1996; Ornstein, 1992). In Arizona, this was present in the form of two types of state-mandated tests, the Arizona Standardized Assessment Proficiency Exam (ASAP) and the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS). The instruments reflected language of the general concept and the specific names of the tests, depending on the questionnaire or interview item.

Procedures

The 1998-99 district faculty list was obtained, and a questionnaire was sent to all teachers on the list. The nine teachers for the interview were selected using purposeful selection. For this sampling technique, teachers who met the criteria for the interview sample were identified. The primary criterion for selection was teachers who had been employed by the district for the entire length of the excellence reform movement. From

the sample of teachers, the researcher chose teachers who were representative of K-12 teachers. Teachers were selected based on their availability for the interviews. A dozen teachers were contacted for interviews, and nine responded indicating they were interested in participating in the interviews.

The interviews were scheduled in 30-minute blocks of time at the convenience of the interviewee. The interviews took place in the faculty member's classroom or the researcher's office. Interviewees were given the choice in selecting the location of the interview. The researcher conducted the interviews, and prior to the interview, the interviewees were assured of the confidential nature of the interview process. The interviewees were notified that the interviews would be taped and transcribed to ensure accurate recording of their perspectives. The interviewees were reminded that the study was about their perspectives on educational change in their classroom and at their schools during the past 16 years. Participants were also assured that the study responses would not reflect upon their performance evaluations. Participants were given the opportunity to not answer any questions they felt were not appropriate and to remove themselves from the study if they desired.

Data Analysis

The analysis of transcriptions followed the qualitative procedures outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984). Miles and Huberman discussed the interactive model of data analysis. In this approach, the data analysis began as soon as the data were collected. In this model, there were three streams of analysis that were continuous and interactive.

The streams identified by Miles and Huberman were data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was defined as “the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the ‘raw’ data that appears [sic] in written-up field notes” (p. 21). The techniques utilized in the reduction of data were continuous throughout the data analysis process. Miles and Huberman defined data display as “an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking” (p. 21). This display can take the form of narrative text, graphs, matrices, networks, or charts. Miles and Huberman defined conclusion drawing/verification as follows.

From the beginning of data collection, the qualitative analyst is beginning to decide what things *mean*, is 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. 22)

The reduction of data in this study utilized counting, summaries, clustering, and teasing out themes to start the analysis to find patterns and meaning from the collected data. For the questionnaire, data counting and clustering were the two main techniques used in data reduction. Miles and Huberman (1984) described all of these techniques as viable methods of data reduction. As they suggested counting is an economical method to manipulate data and allows the researcher to see the general drift of the data. They

noted that clustering “is a tactic that can be applied at many levels to qualitative data.... In all instances, we are trying to understand a phenomenon better by *grouping*, then *conceptualizing* objects that have similar patterns or characteristics.” (p. 220)

The questionnaire utilized in this study asked for teacher impression from three areas. These areas included the impact of reform initiatives on classroom practices, the impact of reform initiatives on school practices and the professional development by teachers to gain the skills for the implementation of the reform initiatives. For the purposes of this analysis and discussion the focus was on teacher impressions of the impact of reform initiatives on their classroom practices. Based on the focus of the study and space limitations an analysis and discussion of all three areas was beyond the scope of this study. Issues regarding the perspectives of a population of teachers on the impact of reform initiatives on schools and professional development needed to be addressed at a future time.

The data display utilized narrative text and matrices to explain the patterns and meanings found in the data. In developing a matrix to view the data from the study, the analysis of the information was presented according to the clustering utilized in the data reduction. The items in each section of the questionnaire were grouped according to one of three categories. The three categories chosen for the questionnaire instruments were state, local, and external. These three categories were chosen because they reflected entities that pushed for specific reform initiatives present in the excellence reform movement.

The clustering of the questionnaire data in these groups allowed for a display of the data that followed the research questions in the study. The state category represented reform initiatives mandated at the state level. Examples in the questionnaire of reform initiatives mandated at the state level include state-mandated curriculum, state-mandated testing, site councils, and increased graduation requirements. The local level represented reform initiatives or activities that occurred at the local level. In many cases specific reform initiatives gained momentum at the national level; however, they were classified as local if they were pushed at this level. For example, block schedules, as a concept was a national level reform initiative. In this particular district teachers and administrators pushed the reform initiative. As a result block schedule was placed in the local category. Other examples of local level reform initiatives or activities included inservicing, implementation of new teaching strategies, the role of the principal and the role of the district. The external level represented reform initiatives or activities that were pushed for outside of the educational system. Examples of the external category included the role of business, parents/guardians, and higher education.

Quantitative methodology was utilized for the data display of the results in the matrices. The qualitative methodology utilized by the researcher involved hand calculations of the percentage of total responses for each category within the matrices. This methodology was chosen to support the qualitative portion of the study. The analysis and discussion of the findings of this study focused on the patterns and meanings from the data.

For the interview instrument, the data display was narrative text of the results of the interviews. This narrative text relied heavily on quotes from the interviews to support patterns from the interviews. The format of this display was to provide a narrative text that mirrored the basic structure of the interviews. The questions were designed to support the research questions in the study. The display of the data followed the format that answered the research questions.

In some cases, portions of the questionnaire were returned incomplete. The portion of the questionnaires completed by the participants was calculated in the data. In the discussion of the data, the total number of responses for each section of the questionnaire was indicated. In addition, only a portion of the data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed due to time constraints and the focus of the study. Miles and Huberman (1984) discussed the fact that often in qualitative analysis, the research questions emerge from the data collected. Instruments used are often not standardized and are loosely structured. They caution that this methodology cannot be too loose or a plethora of data will be collected without any real conclusions being drawn. In the process of developing the study design, the focus of the study became apparent as the data were collected. As such, the focus of the study became clearer, and portions of the questionnaire were deemed unnecessary for this study. The data from the questionnaire items on the impact at the school level and professional development are still valid within the constraints of the population, however, not appropriate for this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study utilized qualitative research, specifically, a questionnaire and interviews, to gather the perspectives of teachers in an Arizona school district on the impact of educational reform in the classroom from the excellence reform movement. The questionnaire collected data from a sample of 62 (46%) teachers within the district. The teachers provided their perceptions on the impact of the excellence reform movement in the classroom. They also responded to items asking about factors that impacted their decisions regarding the implementation of the reforms. Interviews of nine teachers were conducted as a follow-up to the questionnaire. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a more in-depth understanding of teacher perspectives on specific reform initiatives associated with the excellence reform movement. The analysis of the data revealed generalizations that described patterns and meanings to the data collected from the instruments utilized in the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This study gathered data concerning rural Arizona teachers' perspectives of the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on their teaching practices and factors that influenced their decisions in implementing or not implementing reform initiatives. Teacher perspectives were gathered from a self-selected sample of teachers within this district utilizing a questionnaire developed by Goldman and Conley (1997) and adapted for reform efforts in Arizona. In addition, interviews with nine purposely selected teachers provided a deeper understanding of their perspectives on reform. Data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to identify patterns and meanings within the teachers' perspectives.

The presentation of the analysis of data from this study followed from the research questions. The data were analyzed to identify patterns and meanings that resulted from the research questions. For each of the research questions, an analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire was conducted. This analysis was followed by an analysis of the interviews. For the presentation of this analysis, the findings from Research Questions 1 and 2 were combined because of the overlap of items from the questionnaire and the interviews with respect to issues surrounding teaching practices. The patterns and meanings discussed in this chapter reflect the perspectives of the

teachers within this study. This discussion did not presuppose that the data were considered representative of teacher feelings within the district or in a broader context. The findings of this study supported the findings of other studies; however, this analysis should only be viewed as applicable to the perspectives of teachers within the study.

Analysis

The Impact of Initiatives from the Excellence Reform Movement on Teaching Practices, Teacher Work Day, and Teaching Methods and Strategies (Research Questions 1 & 2)

Discussion of the results of the questionnaire. The first two sections of the questionnaire provided data on teacher beliefs about the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices. The analysis of the data from these two sections revealed teacher perceptions that were in conflict. In the first section of the study, teachers indicated initiatives from the excellence reform movement had a strong impact on their teaching practices. However, in the second section of the questionnaire, teachers indicated that specific policy procedure/structure from the excellence reform movement had a minimal effect on teaching practices. These conflicting data may be related to several variables including teacher confusion about the questionnaire instrument, the influence of the researcher on respondents, or teachers' understanding of educational reform initiatives or issues.

For the first section of the questionnaire, five statements were provided to help understand the personal views of teachers regarding educational reform in general. Participants were asked to rate the statements on a scale of one (low) to five (high). The

first statement asked participants to rate their level of understanding of school reform. For this statement, 59 responses were recorded, and 74% (44/59) rated themselves as a three or higher. The majority of these participants (40/44) rated themselves as a three or four. Of the total responses to this statement, over one-third rated themselves as a four.

The second statement asked teachers to rate their level of personal support for the goals of school reform. For this statement, 60 responses were recorded, and 46 (76%) rated themselves as a three or higher. Of these responses, 42 of 46 rated themselves as a three or four, with 38% of the total responses being a four.

Statement 3 asked participants to respond to the degree to which they had changed their classroom practices in response to school reform. Fifty-nine responses were recorded, and, again, the numbers were similar to the first two statements. For this statement, 76% (45/59) of the responses were three or higher, and 40 of 45 were a three or four. Of the total responses to this statement, over one-third rated themselves as a four.

The fourth statement asked participants to rate their willingness to change classroom practices in response to school reform. There were 58 responses, and 83% (48/58) rated themselves three or higher on this statement. In responding to this statement, 43% of the respondents rated themselves as a four, and over 50% of the responses rated themselves as a four or five.

The final statement asked teachers to respond to the following statement, "The activities needed for school reform to improve student learning are beyond my control." This

Table 3

Personal Information/Views on Reform

Statement	n *	Low				High	
		1	2	3	4	5	
I understand the goals of school reform	59	7%	19%	34%	34%	7%	
I support the goals of school reform	60	5%	18%	32%	38%	7%	
I have changed my practices in the classroom in response to school reform	59	8%	15%	34%	34%	8%	
I will change my practices in the classroom in response to school reform	58	5%	12%	31%	43%	9%	
The activities needed for school reform to improve student learning are beyond my control	56	23%	21%	23%	20%	13%	

* n reflected the number of questionnaire responses for each statement.

statement had 56 responses, and 31 (55%) rated themselves as a three or higher. Seven of 31 rated themselves as a five, and the remaining 24 rated themselves as a three or four.

Table 3 summarizes the data from the personal inventory regarding school reform.

In summary, based on the questionnaire, teachers within the Snowflake Unified School District who returned the questionnaire indicated they had changed teaching practices or were willing to change teaching practices in response to school reform. In both of these statements, close to half the teachers rated themselves as a four or higher. Less than 25% of the teachers who returned the questionnaire rated themselves as a one

or two for these questions. In addition to this willingness to change, teachers felt they were knowledgeable about and supportive of reform. Interestingly, despite this level of knowledge and the desire to change to accommodate school reform, the teachers felt they could not control activities needed to improve student learning. Less than half the respondents (44%) felt this way as indicated by their rating of a two or lower.

The next section of the questionnaire focused on the impact of policy procedure/structure on teacher practices in the classroom. The instrument contained a forced choice response of little or lot. In analyzing the data, some of the questionnaire responses were placed in the middle of the forced choice scale and the researcher could not determine whether the questionnaire response was little or lot. As a result, for the display of data, a third category was developed. This category was labeled as “middle” and represented a choice between little and lot. Table 4 summarizes the results from this portion of the questionnaire (see Appendix C for complete results).

Table 4

Policy Procedure/Structure Effect on Teacher Practice

Category	n *	Little	Middle	Lot
State	621	60%	12%	28%
Local	392	47%	16%	37%
External	114	63%	16%	21%

*n reflected the total number of questionnaire responses for all the items placed in each of the three categories of the matrix.

Overall, the teachers in the Snowflake Unified School District who returned the questionnaire felt the impact of policy procedure/structure on teaching practices was minimal. In two of the three categories, state and external, over 60% of the teachers felt the policy procedure/structure had little impact on their classroom practice. In the remaining category, local, close to 50% of the responses indicated that the effect on teacher practice was little.

Change in policy procedure/structure at the state level seemed to have little impact on teachers in the classroom. In 10 of 11 of the questionnaire items in the state category, over 50% of the teachers responded that the impact was little. Teachers only rated the items on state curriculum standards as having an impact on classroom practices a lot. In this case, 67% of the teachers responded that state curriculum standards impacted their classroom practices a lot.

The impact of the state legislature with respect to reform was minimal. On the two questionnaire items directed at the state legislature, teacher response rates of 64% (32/50) and 63% (31/54) indicated little impact on classroom practice. This was a response to items that asked for the impact of pressure from the legislature regarding reform. In Arizona, site councils and state-mandated standardized testing, ASAP and AIMS, were three legislative enactments of reform measures, and, again, they appeared to have a minimal impact on teacher practices. In the questionnaire items aimed at these

reform initiatives, 72%, 76% and 62% of the teachers, respectively, responded that the effect on teacher practice was little.

The reform policy procedure/structure at the local level seemed to have a greater impact on teaching practices; however, only 33% of the teachers felt the impact was a lot on their teaching practices. In analyzing the data closer, of the seven questionnaire items that were categorized within the local category, two items seemed from teacher responses to impact classroom practices a lot. The remaining five mirrored the results of the impact of the state category. The two items with positive responses asked for teacher perspectives on the impact of principal support of reform and the impact of the district support of reform. In both cases, over half of the responses indicated that principal and district support of reform affected their classroom practices. Interestingly, the teachers did not feel the support of reforms by other teachers at their schools affected their classroom practices. Twenty-eight of the 55 responses (51%) indicated that the active support by teachers of school reform had little effect on teacher practices.

External pressure on the system from parents and the business community seemed to have a minimal impact in changing practice in the classroom. For the two items covering these constituents, 63% of the teacher responses indicated that demands from the business community to improve education had little effect on their practice. With regard to parental pressure to initiate reform, 64% of the responses indicated that this pressure had little effect on their practices.

The third section of the questionnaire provided data on the impact of reform initiatives on the teacher workday and the impact on classroom teaching methods and strategies. These data were gathered through questionnaire items that asked for teacher perspectives on their degree of engagement in activities/attitudes in the classroom. A third column in this section of the questionnaire then asked for the degree to which teachers felt this engagement was a response to reform policies. Table 5 provides an overview of the results for teacher perceptions on their degree of engagement in activities/attitudes in the classroom. Table 6 provides the results on the degree teachers felt this engagement was a response to reform policies (see Appendix C for complete results).

Teachers responded that questionnaire items placed in the state category had little impact on their engagement in activities/attitudes in the classroom. For these items 48%

Table 5

Engagement of Activities/Attitudes in the Classroom

Category	n *	Little	Middle	Lot
State	590	48%	14%	38%
Local	365	44%	15%	41%
External	103	71%	9%	20%

* n reflects the total number of questionnaire responses for all the items placed in one of the three categories in the matrix.

Table 6

Degree to which Activities/Attitudes in the Classroom are a Response to Reform Policies

Category	n*	Little	Middle	Lot
State	590	47%	13%	40%
Local	365	52%	14%	34%
External	103	64%	16%	20%

*n reflects the total number of questionnaire responses for all the items placed in one of the three categories in the matrix.

of the respondents felt the impact was little. For the third column of this section of the questionnaire, 47% felt that engagement in specific activities/attitudes was not a response to reform policies. More specifically, of the five questionnaire items placed in the state category, one item seemed to impact teachers the most, that is, the development of new curriculum. In this case, 63% of the responses indicated their engagement in this activity was high. They were split on whether this was a response to reform policies. Of the 54 responses, 46% indicated that the development of curriculum was a positive response to reform policies.

Two of the remaining questionnaire items focused on the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and its impact on teacher attitude regarding reform activities in the classroom. On the questionnaire item concerning materials from the ADE, 66% of the respondents rated this item as having little impact on their engagement. On the questionnaire item asking for the impact of waiting on the ADE for more specific

direction, 53% of the respondents indicated that this had little impact on their engagement in the activity/attitude. In terms of the degree to which teachers viewed their engagement in activities/attitudes associated with the ADE as a response to reform practices, the response was similar. With respect to reading and discussing materials from ADE, 69% rated themselves as impacted little in terms of this as a response to reform policies. Only 48% of the respondents felt the same way on the item that asked about waiting for more specific instruction from the ADE.

Teachers were almost evenly divided on the impact of questionnaire items that were categorized as local. When rating their engagement in activities/attitudes that were identified as local, 44% felt they had little engagement in the activities/attitudes, while 41% felt they had a lot of engagement in the activities/attitudes. Thirteen questionnaire items were placed in this category, and four seemed to have the greatest impact on teachers. In response to the item on integrating curriculum, all 62 teachers responded, and 54% indicated they had a high degree of engagement in this activity. However, 52% of the teachers responded that they felt the degree that this engagement in the activity was in response to reform policies was minimal. Teachers also responded favorably to the questionnaire item on modifying curriculum. In this case, 60% felt they were actively engaged in this activity; however, only 45% rated their engagement as a strong response to reform policy. Teachers also were highly engaged in activities that helped low-achieving students and utilized technology to meet standards. In these two questionnaire items, 55% and 58% of teachers, respectively, rated their engagement at the high end of

the continuum. However, for the item on low-achieving students, only 36% of the teachers felt their engagement in activities/attitudes to help these students was high as a response to reform policies. In the case of technology 56% of the teachers felt their engagement was the result of a response to reform policies.

Three of the questionnaire items in the local category generated responses by over 50% of the teachers that they were engaged in these activities/attitudes to a minimal degree. The highest rated questionnaire item was a response to the item that asked if teachers were engaged in working against reform. For this questionnaire item, 98% of the teachers responded that their engagement in this activity was little. For this item, in terms of the degree to which this activity was a response to reform policies, 73% of the teachers felt it was not. In response to an item about the degree to which teachers learn about new programs from other schools, the questionnaire respondents felt they did not learn about programs in other schools. Fifty-seven percent indicated their engagement in this activity was little and 65% indicated that this engagement was not a response to reform policies.

In response to the impact of the principal and district on activities/attitudes, fewer than 50% of the teachers placed a high emphasis on the impact of these individuals. Only 36% of the responses rated waiting on further direction from the principal as a lot, while 44% rated waiting for further direction from the district as a lot. These percentages were mirrored when participants were asked the degree to which this activity resulted from reform policies.

As with the second section of the questionnaire, teachers felt items categorized as external had little impact on them. In terms of the degree to which they became engaged in activities/attitudes in the classroom as a result of these external forces, 71% reported that these forces had little impact on their workday or teaching methods or strategies. With respect to their perceptions that their engagement was in response to reform policies, 64% reported their response was minimal. For this section, the two items reflected commitment from the business community and research from higher education. In response to the item on higher education, 78% felt additional research studies had little impact on their engagement in activities/attitudes. Sixty-four percent felt a greater commitment from the business community would have little impact on their engagement/attitudes.

Discussion of interviews. In the interviews on teaching practices, the interviewees stated that reform initiatives had little impact on their teaching practices. Specific reform initiatives discussed included career ladder, block scheduling, a foreign language mandate, site-based management, state-mandated curriculum, and state-mandated testing. Of these reform initiatives, only block scheduling, which was never implemented in this district, had no direct impact on teacher practices.

Career ladder. Teachers agreed that the impact of career ladder on teaching practices was minimal. Time was one factor that impacted teacher practices. Two teachers stated that their teaching was impacted because they were taken out of the classroom for activities associated with career ladder. One teacher commented that he

was part of an evaluation team, and this took him out of the classroom. He said, "I hate being out of my class, because I'm the teacher, not the sub. . . . It's detrimental to our kids when the teacher's gone." Another teacher also commented on the time out of the classroom, but this was in response to being the chair of the committee reviewing the program.

Another major impact of the program discussed by the teachers was the increased stress level resulting from teacher perceptions of the intent of the evaluation portion of the career ladder program. The program had an evaluation component that included teams of evaluators. Because all three evaluators came into the classroom for an evaluation, teachers felt increased pressure. One teacher commented that this evaluation system promoted an entrepreneurial mentality and applied stress to the teachers.

It put a little stress on the teacher, I felt, to try to come up with something uniquely different to make them stand out as opposed to come up with something to be shared with others for the betterment of the students. So you were trying to find that little edge that someone else wasn't going to be doing.

The pressure was also felt because, as several teachers commented, the perception of the evaluation was that they were looking for negatives. One teacher commented, "There was too much negative and not enough positive. It seemed that career ladder was looking for negative not positive."

Foreign language mandate. The impact of the reform for foreign language on the teaching practices varied from teacher to teacher. This variance was based on the level of

teacher interest in teaching and speaking Spanish. One teacher indicated he was bilingual and supported the concept of teaching Spanish. He stated, “ I love it! First of all, I’m bilingual . . . So when they voted on the language, they said Spanish so I was not intimidated.” His interests and belief system in the importance of a second language were vital in his commitment to this reform initiative. As he stated, “I worked along with many others to implement the program from the conception of the second language.”

Other teachers commented on their frustration because of their lack of ability to speak the language. They felt this was a real hindrance to teaching the language. One teacher commented, “But if you don’t have any more background than I have, you’re pretty poorly prepared for that. To study a foreign language on my own is not good.” She further stated, “When you have people who don’t really know what they are doing with the language . . . can you really be consistent?”

Another concern that surfaced from teachers was the impact of this program on an already crowded curriculum. The focus of this concern was the negative impact on teaching practices because portions of the curriculum were deleted to accommodate this reform. As one teacher commented,

Yes, it took time. . . Any time you implement something you have to take something else out, and there are parts of the curriculum that I think are more beneficial that have had to be left out because of the language. And it impacted that way, and I really cared about what it pushed out.

Site-based management. In terms of the impact of SBM on teaching practices, eight of the nine teachers interviewed felt that it had little or no impact. One teacher even commented that the reason this reform measure was successful in terms of its length of stay in the district was the result of the lack of impact on teachers. He stated,

Site-based management probably was accepted more so because it didn't involve any people. They didn't see it as change. . . . The other two changes were drastic up front. They saw that and perceived that it was going to be something that was going to blow them away. Total change and everything. Whereas the site-based management was just more input from the community, and most people aren't anti-that. The staff don't mind having community input, and so I think it just has to do with the degree of change that was going to be involved.

Those teachers who perceived an impact on their teaching work day did not change their teaching as a result of the reform measures. They felt they had to make changes based on policy changes coming from the site councils. Two policies that were referenced by the teachers were the attendance policy and final exams. The site councils changed these policies, and teachers felt this had a negative impact on the school. Again, teaching practices did not necessarily change, but there was an impact on the attendance rate at the school. One teacher summed up the comments on the impact on teaching practices when he stated, "Not a lot. Mostly just how the overall organization of the school—discipline, dress code, cafeteria services—overall plant management. Not a lot in the classroom."

State-mandated curriculum. The impact of this mandated curriculum on the teachers' work day was minimal at best. The attitudes of the teachers were best summed up by one teacher who said,

It's changed it a little bit because it forces us to be a little more conscious of certain curriculum areas that may or may not have been covered in the past, but not significantly. As long as you go in knowing these are the areas that you need to cover, then it's just part of your day-to-day planning, and I haven't seen it as being tremendously different.

Another teacher supported this same attitude when he stated,

I don't know if anything new as far as essential skills has changed my work day, because we've always emphasized essential skills. I mean, it's just a fact of life that you have to have your reading, writing, arithmetic, so forth. And I don't know if it's changed or made a big change; I don't think so. It's just a reemphasis or some things have been changed slightly, but I don't know that it's made a major difference.

This thought was followed up by comments that supported the notion that any change by teachers focused on content not methodology. An English teacher commented, It would be content, making sure that we're going to teach parallelism in English, then that's one of the standards so we're going to teach that, as opposed to comma splices that's never brought up, so who cares. Yes, you would look at that and you would alter, make sure you were covering it.

Some teachers commented that the impact was minimal, and in reality the curriculum standards became guides to help in their planning. They also expressed frustration that the standards increased the amount of information to be covered, and this meant that some area of the curriculum would have to suffer.

State-mandated testing. Similar to the mandated curriculum, the teachers did not feel the mandated tests had a major impact on their work day. They felt the new mandated test in Arizona, the AIMS test, could potentially impact them because of the possible repercussions of failing the test. In this case, because students might not graduate if they did not pass the test, it might influence them to change teaching practices. One teacher stated in response to the ASAP test, “No, I never did anything different. A couple days out of the year you just got your kids ready to take a test, and they took it, and they forgot about it.”

Factors Influencing Teacher Decision-Making on the Implementation of Initiatives from the Excellence Reform Movement (Research Question 3)

Discussion of the results of the questionnaire. The fourth section of the questionnaire gathered teacher perspectives on factors that support or inhibit implementation of school reform. Participants were asked to rate responses on a four-point scale from “strongly support” to “strongly inhibit.” Table 7 provides an overview followed by a discussion of the results (see Appendix C for complete results).

For the questionnaire items placed in the state category, 57% of teachers felt that these factors inhibited implementation of reform. These questionnaire items focused on

Table 7

Factors Supporting/Inhibiting Implementation of School Reform at the School

Category	n	Support	Inhibit
State	167	43%	57%
Local	648	65%	35%
External	104	47%	53%

*n represented the total number of questionnaire responses for all items placed in one of the three categories of the matrix.

the availability of resources, direction from the legislature, and college admission requirements. Availability of resources was placed in the state category because ultimately the majority of funding for education comes from the state. Seventy percent of the teachers felt that availability of resources inhibited implementation of reform. In terms of the state legislature, 78% felt direction from the state legislature inhibited implementation of reforms. The only questionnaire item in the state category that supported implementation of reform was college admission requirements. For this questionnaire item, 80% of the teachers indicated this item supported reform implementation.

Teachers perceived items placed in the local category to be more supportive of the implementation of reform in schools. Sixty-five percent of the responses indicated these items supported reform, while 35% felt they inhibited reform. Further analysis of this

category revealed that only 4 of 13 items were felt by teachers to inhibit the implementation of reform. The amount of time available for professional development was rated as an inhibitor of implementation. For this questionnaire item, 65% of teachers felt this was an inhibitor. Of teacher responding, 47% rated the amount of time available for teaching/learning as supportive of the implementation of reform. Teachers also felt the physical plant of the school was an inhibitor. For this questionnaire item, 62% of the teachers responded that the physical plant inhibited reform. A local event impacted the responses to the last questionnaire item. For this item, participants were asked if a particular “critical incident” affected the implementation of reform measures. Of the 10 comments received, five referenced the failure of an override within the district just prior to the questionnaire. The failure of the override, which would have funded teacher salary raises, contributed to low teacher morale. As one teacher wrote, “Low teacher morale makes me sometimes feel, ‘why bother?’”

Of the questionnaire items placed in the local category, the role of the principal was seen as the most important factor in supporting the implementation of reform. For this questionnaire item, 95% of the responses indicated that this factor supported reform. This questionnaire item also had the highest percentage of responses (36%) that were rated as strongly supporting the implementation of reform. The remaining eight questionnaire items, school history, culture, fellow teachers, district leadership, flexibility of the organization, previous school improvement efforts, the ability of students, and the motivation of students were all rated as factors supporting the implementation of reform.

For these eight questionnaire items, the responses ranged from 60% to 86% as being supportive of implementation of reform.

Two questionnaire items were placed in the external category, parental support and community support. Overall, 55% of teachers indicated that parental support was positive in implementing reform, but community support was an inhibitor. Only 18% felt community constituents were supportive of the implementation of reform.

In conclusion, teachers rated local factors as most supportive of the implementation of reform. External factors or factors associated with the state were rated as inhibitors. The role of the principal was rated as the single most important factor in the implementation of reform.

Career ladder. Teachers interviewed discussed several factors that impacted their decision making related to the support or implementation of career ladder. Personal growth, monetary rewards, and involvement in decision making at the district level were all listed as reasons that influenced teachers positively to support this reform initiative. At the same time, several teachers commented on the lack of teacher ownership, the lack of congruence between effort expended and rewards, and the competitive nature of the program as reasons that influenced them not to become involved in the program.

Several teachers felt the benefit of professional growth was a reason to implement this reform measure. One of the teachers said, "Myself, personal growth. . . I consider myself a good teacher, and I wanted to learn more. I wanted to learn more about teaching from others. . . . To me it was very selfish, I wanted to improve myself, period." A high

school teacher linked this personal growth with monetary rewards when he stated, "I was excited about it because I saw the potential to reward the teachers that [sic] were putting in quality time with their classes and doing innovative things and moving along."

Another teacher supported this attitude

I got on it because I thought one of the main faults we have in education right now is there is no incentive for excellence. The teacher who is just putting in a movie and just sitting back and reading the paper while the movie goes gets the same salary as the one who's being creative and innovative.

Being part of the decision-making process in the district was another reason cited by a teacher for supporting the program. It provided an opportunity for input. He felt if he were not involved, he would be "left behind."

A major factor for not supporting career ladder expressed by three of the teachers was that they felt the program did not have teacher ownership. Other teachers felt they supported the program, but on the whole it was not supported by teachers. As one teacher stated, "Again, it didn't have the buy-in of the teachers. It was kind of pushed on us, told this is what we are going to do, and I don't think we ever caught a vision of what it could do." Another teacher commented,

I really believe the administration pretty much just stuffed it down the throats of the teachers. I really don't believe that teachers had much say so in the program itself. I don't believe that they were given a partnership, if you may, ownership.

Another teacher felt the complacency of veteran teachers had killed the program. He used an analogy of crabs in a bucket to explain his feelings. "Like crabs in a bucket, one starts climbing up, and they pull him down."

Another factor in the decision making of teachers regarding their support of the program was the feeling that the benefits of the program did not match the effort expended. This lack of congruence occurred between the amount of work by the teacher in relation to the monetary reward. As one teacher commented, "Initially, it didn't look like much money. Down the road it was supposed to, and so a lot of teachers thought it was a lot of extra to put into it to not get much in return." The same teacher also commented with respect to the amount of work.

People feared that they were going to have to be responsible for tons of extra paper work to prove that they were doing a good job and also because they feared that it meant that the "Good Old Boy" system would prevail, and you would get patted on the back if you were a good old boy, and you would get slapped down if you weren't.

A final concern that impacted teacher decisions regarding support of the program was its competitive nature. Four teachers commented that the program was too competitive. One teacher said, "Fear that we would be rewarding one over another. Fear that people would become less cooperative with one and another because it would become a competition." Another teacher stated, "It was turning teacher against teacher."

A third teacher said, “And one part of the system, it had a tendency to pit teacher against teacher.”

In discussing the factors that influenced teachers to support or not support implementation of block scheduling, teachers focused on the benefits or lack of benefits associated with their teaching, curriculum issues, and community concerns. Much of the discussion of benefits or lack of benefits focused on the impact on teaching practices. None of the teachers interviewed had experience teaching in the block scheduling prior to this experience.

The positive side of the benefits associated with this reform initiative focused on curriculum issues. Two teachers expressed the belief that the longer periods of time would benefit their teaching. An English teacher stated,

I was for it. I liked the intensive 90-minute period. The four-period preparation instead of six was a heavy factor. I thought it was beneficial. Especially when we were only talking a couple of periods. Then we were only talking two preps as opposed to four.

Another teacher commented,

As a science teacher, I thought it was going to be a boon to science. I liked the program because it wasn't straight block for everybody And I thought it was going to be a much better approach because it would allow me to do things that take longer in a science curriculum area.

Although these teachers expressed the positive benefits associated with this reform initiative, others felt the negative aspects of the reform outweighed the positive. One teacher did not believe there was a well-defined vision for this reform. She said, "And also the need to make the change wasn't there. It was just, here is an idea, and let's see what we can do with it . . . There wasn't a rhyme or reason to go there in my opinion." She believed that this lack of vision represented change for change's sake but provided no additional benefit for her classes.

Another concern expressed was the possible negative impact on teaching. One teacher felt this new schedule would negatively impact her ability to cover the necessary content for her class. The concern was with the lack of contact time with students. A 90-minute period was acceptable but only if it took place every day all year. As this teacher commented, "How can you possibly do a full year's work in a half a year's time? And so my concerns were purely academic."

Another factor that worked against this reform was the inability to develop a schedule that met the diverse needs of the curriculum. Specifically, there were two community concerns that played a role. Music plays a very important role in Snowflake and Taylor and has a strong tradition in the educational system. The teachers interviewed expressed concern that the community felt this program would suffer on this schedule. One teacher stated, "They were concerned that if the music classes only met half a year, which half would it be? When you have competitions throughout the whole year, that was a concern."

Another factor coming from the community which impacted the success of the program was religion. Students are provided an opportunity within their schedule to have a period of release time to go off campus for religious studies. Although this program is not affiliated with the school, the district makes accommodations to meet the desires of the community. Teachers commented on the concern that parents did not like the fact that potentially their children would not meet daily throughout the year for religious instruction.

Foreign language mandate. In explaining the reasons for their support or lack of support for the implementation of the foreign language program, teacher interest, curriculum development, and the state mandate were all factors in teacher implementation. The primary factor for implementation was, again, the degree of teacher interest. One teacher commented,

Because I believed in it. I believe all children should venture into another language, especially Spanish in Arizona. So many times I've been in areas in the Southwest that I've used Spanish and it's gotten me out of a jam. To me, [if] these children can use that language – at some point in their lives they are going to use it. We're trying to immerse these children in it, to expose them to it. And I bought into it.

Another teacher said, “Those people that [sic] felt comfortable with the program itself, that [sic] liked the information that was there for them went with it.” Another teacher

stated, "I think the successful part of the program was the curriculum part. It was a good curriculum."

The other factor discussed by teachers that influenced their decisions on the implementation of the program was that it was mandated by the state. In discussing the influence of the state, teachers referred to influences that impacted them to implement the reform or to ignore the reform. As one teacher said, "When people say that I'm supposed to do something, I believe that I'm supposed to do it." Another teacher supported this statement when he said, "Reasons I did it the first year was because it was mandated; they said this is it, do it." However, he then went on to state, "Then the reason I'm not doing it now is just because of the lack of interest from everybody, I guess." A third teacher commented that because implementation was mandated she would teach the language, but if other priorities, based on her own prioritization, became more important she would comply but would "minimize" this compliance.

Site-based management (SBM). Teachers felt the two main reasons to support SBM were that it had little impact on them and it allowed for more input from the community. As one teacher said, "I think that we need to have input from the community, and I believe everybody feels that. I think it's a good thing to have input from the community." Another teacher stated, "I just think that fact that it's community based. We get people involved from the community, and it's good. I think they're the ones that [sic] enjoy going to the meetings and pushing and seeing what's going on."

The acceptance of this reform initiative by teachers resulted from a lack of impact on their teaching. One teacher even linked this lack of impact to a general lack of knowledge about the reform initiative. He felt that because teachers did not know about the reform and it did not impact them on a daily basis, they would support the initiative. One teacher commented that had this reform impacted her teaching, she might not have supported the reform.

State-mandated curriculum. Teachers discussed the impact of the state, resource issues, curriculum benefits, and the impact of the district as factors influencing their decisions to implement this reform. In terms of the state, teachers talked about the impact of the mandate for compliance with this reform. At the same time, teachers discussed the lack of enforcement by the state as a reason for not implementing the reform.

The teachers felt that an important factor in implementing state-mandated curriculum was that it was mandated from the state. However, three of teachers felt that after the initial push for the reform, their interest level was more important in keeping the reform measure going. The teachers felt that they could fit the mandate to their particular needs, and they felt they were the best judge of what was important in the curriculum.

The lack of enforcement also dictated the degree to which they implemented the reform. As one teacher stated,

I think without enforcement it won't be followed. It may be nice to do, but if you've been teaching for any length of time, you kind of get set in your ways, and if nothing forces you to change and says, your students will need these

requirements, and they will have to pass it, or you will be held accountable, then you'll just fall back on those comfortable. . . . And who's supposed to enforce them; sometimes I feel like the school itself says I'm not sure I agree with these either. So until the state comes down or someone comes down and says, you will do these, and we're going to check on you, the options are always there to either do or not do.

Another teacher tied this compliance to a resource issue. He stated that the reason to comply dealt with funding. The teacher said, "It gets to the point where they finally say, yes, funding is dependent upon your kids passing . . . high school with X percentage of success. And if that happens, then yes, it will."

One teacher felt the ability of the mandated curriculum to monitor student progress was a reason to implement curriculum standards. He stated, "To me, it gives me a chronological line as to where children ought to be."

The importance the district placed on this reform also impacted teacher decisions about implementing the reform. Two teachers commented on the level of enforcement by their principal. One said, "Successful would have to be the principal pushing it and keep checking books and keep checking --- reminding you to set goals by it." Another commented on the oversight by the district. He stated, "But I think our school district tries hard to make it successful. . . . I really think they go a little further than they need to."

State-mandated testing. Teachers felt the two reasons associated with their support of state-mandated testing were that the impact on their teaching was minimal and it was mandated by the state. Teacher autonomy with curriculum decisions, time issues, and the lack of enforcement by the state were all reasons that influenced them not to pay attention to this reform initiative.

Four teachers identified the fact that the tests were mandated as the main reason for their support of this reform. A couple of the teachers felt that even though the tests were mandated, their support of this reform was really attributable to the fact that testing was a way of life in education. One teacher talked about passive acceptance of this reform. He felt that the tests were going to part of his yearly schedule, so he accepted this but expended the minimal amount of energy to comply with the reform. Even though two of the teachers attributed their support of the testing to the fact that the tests were an aspect of education, they did not necessarily feel the testing was a successful method to find a student's academic level. Another teacher stated that she followed rules, and because the state mandated it, she would comply.

Teachers felt the biggest problems with state-mandated test were the lack of enforcement from the state and the time associated with the test. This time issue was discussed in reference to the ASAP tests. One teacher felt it took too much time to grade the tests. A couple of other teachers commented on the time needed to administer the test. One teacher described the ASAP test as "an albatross to correct and an impossible task." He also communicated a degree of frustration associated with the accountability of the

grading. He felt the results of the test were not an accurate reflection of the ability level of the students. One teacher also commented that the amount of time the testing took impacted teaching the existing content. The teacher stated,

They kept saying it was supposed to just fit in your curriculum . . . They didn't always fit in with the curriculum, and yet you had six or seven of them to give during the space of the year. So you are constantly holding, pushing this in and stopping and starting.

A second concern raised was the lack of enforcement associated with the tests.

Two of the teachers commented on the greater potential for the AIMS test because it was tied to graduation requirements. The teachers felt as long as they were not held accountable for the results, they would minimize the effect of the test in the classroom. In describing this enforcement, one teacher used an analogy in which he described problems in the classroom with enforcement of expectations. He linked the lack of enforcement of classroom expectations with the lack of enforcement by the state when he said,

They can mandate all they want, but unless they come back and have a check on me, then I don't know that it will be done. You can say what you want to---I want you to read a book---but the only way I have to check is to give them a test or something that shows they have done it. If I just say did you do it and they say yes, its not going to work.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter focused on the presentation of the findings from this study. The presentation of findings followed from the research questions and treated the questionnaire instrument and interviews as separate in the discussion. The first part of the chapter described teacher perspectives on the impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices. The second part presented a discussion of the factors that influenced teachers in their decision-making process regarding the implementation of reform initiatives. The findings of the study suggested that for these two samples of teachers, reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement had a minimal impact on teaching practices. These teaching practices included the teacher work day as well as teaching methodology and strategies. Factors that influenced teachers in their decisions regarding the impact of reform initiatives included the level of teacher interest, the level of enforcement by the state, the level of enforcement by the district, time issues, the impact on the curriculum, and the congruence between effort expended and rewards.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATION AND MEANINGS

Summary of Major Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze the perspectives of teachers in an Arizona school district regarding the impact of the excellence reform movement in the classroom. In the analysis of the data collected in the study, findings emerged that suggested this study supported the literature base on educational change at the K-12 level. Based on these findings, some implications and meanings could be drawn from the study. Although these findings could not be applied beyond the participants within the study, they provided suggestions that could contribute to the literature base. These suggestions provided opportunities to help various constituents in educational organizations further understand the role of the teacher in educational reform. This understanding was important given the current media and political attention that calls for educational reform. Without this understanding the rhetorical battle on the state of public education in America will continue, but meaningful educational reform will likely not reach the classroom.

The first part of this chapter presents an overview of the study. Next, a discussion that summarizes the major findings from the study is presented. This presentation is structured around the research questions. For the presentation of the findings, the discussion on Research Questions 1 and 2 was combined because of the similar context

of the questions. The next part of the chapter presents the conclusions from the study. These conclusions discuss the major findings within the contextual framework of this study. Next, this chapter presents implications of the study for practitioners. Finally, the chapter presents recommendations for further study that would support the findings of this study and further the understanding of the role of reform and teachers in the classroom.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of teachers from an Arizona school district on the impact of the excellence reform movement in the classroom. This impact was analyzed through the framework established by Goldman and Conley (1997). Their framework utilized educational change and social compliance theory to help understand the impact of the state-mandated change on teachers in Oregon. This study utilized an instrument Goldman and Conley developed as part of their recommendations for further research to gather teacher perspectives on the impact of reform in the classroom. The instrument was modified to reflect reform initiatives in Arizona that resulted from the excellence reform movement. The data collected were analyzed utilizing a body of research on the role of change in education. In addition, within organizational science, social compliance, a concept developed from social psychology, was another theoretical frame utilized to analyze the impact of these reform efforts on teaching practices.

A multi-method study design was developed to gather teacher perspectives on the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices.

A questionnaire gathered perspectives on the research questions from a self-selected sample of 62 teachers. In addition, interviews of nine teachers allowed for a deeper probing into their perspectives on the impact of reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement on their teaching practices. The analysis of the data from the questionnaire was completed using quantitative and qualitative methodology, while qualitative methodology was employed for the analysis of the interviews. Patterns and meanings were identified from this analysis of the data. These patterns and meanings suggested findings reflecting the perspectives of the teachers within the study.

The following questions guided this study:

1. To what extent do teachers believe initiatives from the excellence reform movement influenced changes in their teaching practices?
2. What was the nature of the impact of the excellence reform initiatives on teachers' work days and classroom teaching methods and strategies?
3. What factors influenced teachers' decision making about whether to implement initiatives from the excellence reform movement?

The Impact of Initiatives from the Excellence Reform Movement on Teaching Practices, Teacher Work Day, and Teaching Methods and Strategies (Research Question 1 & 2)

Introduction. A search of the literature revealed the difficulty of educational reform reaching the classroom, especially reform emanating from forces external to the system (see Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Goldman & Conley, 1997; McLaughlin, 1990; Wilson & Rossman, 1993). Based on the questionnaire and interviews, educational change had a difficult time reaching the classroom in this district. The findings from this

study suggested teacher perspectives supported this literature base. Specifically, findings from the study related to teaching practices suggested the reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement had a minimal impact on teaching practices. This finding was interesting in light of data from the questionnaire that suggested teachers in this study were supportive of educational reform and had changed or were willing to change teaching practices for school reform. Other findings from this study included the of impact of state, local, and external forces on educational reform and teaching practices and the role of teacher compliance with educational mandates.

Impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices. The major finding of the study with respect to the first two research questions dealt with the lack of impact of reform measures from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices. For teachers in the Snowflake Unified School District, who participated in the study, the impact of reform measures from the excellence reform movement on their teaching practices has been minimal.

Teacher responses to questionnaire items indicated they felt reform initiatives on the whole had little impact on their teaching. In response to all the items on the questionnaire that asked for teacher perceptions of the impact of reform measures on teaching practices and the impact on teaching methodologies, 52% of the responses were that the impact was little. Teachers answering the questionnaire felt that policy procedure/structure had little impact on their teaching. Sixty percent of the teachers rated the policy items coming from the state as having little impact. For those items classified as external, 63% of the teachers felt the impact was little, while teachers felt 47% of the

items classified as local had little impact on their teaching. In terms of teacher engagement in the classroom with reform activities/attitudes, again, teachers in this study felt the impact was minimal. For the items placed in the state category, 48% of the teachers felt the impact was little, while only 38% felt the impact was a lot. In the local category, the ratio was 44% to 41%, while for external forces the ratio was 71% to 21%.

Teachers interviewed for this study also indicated that the reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement had a minimal impact on their teaching practices. Individual teachers supported specific reform initiatives, but this did not necessarily mean that the reform initiatives had a widespread impact on teaching practices. All nine teachers interviewed indicated that any changes in their teaching practices as a result of a specific reform initiative were minimal. Career ladder and block scheduling were two reform initiatives that were attempted in the district but were not implemented due to teacher resistance. Teachers referenced the importance of their professional opinion with respect to reform. They felt they could support those reform initiatives over which they had ownership in the reform. For other reform measures, they spoke of adopting a wait-and-see attitude. This attitude was adopted because of their perceptions of the nature of rewards and sanctions associated with educational reform.

The one area that teachers felt impacted them was changes in the curriculum; however, this impact did not necessarily affect teaching practices. Curriculum issues involved the “what” of teaching, not the “how.” Teachers who were interviewed for this study voiced a sense of frustration regarding curricular changes because they were forced to infuse more content into the curriculum or delete content they felt was important. This

frustration did not significantly change their methods of teaching. It impacted their sense of autonomy in the classroom in terms of curricular choice but did not impact their teaching style.

Teacher knowledge level and support of reform. An interesting contradiction in the data collected from the questionnaire was the results of teacher reflections on their level of knowledge regarding educational reform. Teachers in the study felt they were knowledgeable about school reform. In addition, they indicated they supported school reform. This statement was supported by data, with 72% of the teachers responding to the questionnaire rating themselves as a three or higher on a five-point scale on the statement asking if they had changed teaching practices as a result of school reform. This included 25 of 58 respondents (43%) who rated themselves a four or five as compared to 14 of 58 respondents (24%) who rated themselves as a one or two. In a separate statement, 83% of the teachers indicated they would be willing to change teaching practices in the future in response to school reform. This represented 10 of 57 (18%) who rated themselves as a one or two, compared with 30 of 57 (53%) who rated themselves as a four or five.

In this section of the study, teachers indicated that educational reform had an impact on their teaching, yet in the next three sections of the questionnaire, the teachers indicated educational reform had little impact on their teaching. Design issues with the questionnaire instrument or the clarity of the questions within the instrument were two variables that could have contributed to the conflicting data from the questionnaire. Another variable impacting teacher responses could be the definition of reform used in

the questionnaire. For the first part of the questionnaire, the only term used was school reform. For this section of the questionnaire, reform was presented in a holistic sense. In later sections of the questionnaire, items dealt with specific reform measures. This narrow focus may have affected the way teachers responded to the items.

Impact of the state, local, and external forces. Teacher responses in this study indicated that regardless of who initiated the reform, they felt it had a minimal impact on their teaching practices. In the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire, items were classified according to one of three categories, state, local, or external. Three sections on the questionnaire asked for teacher perspectives on the impact of reform initiatives on teaching practices. For the items placed in the state category, teacher ratings ranged from 47% to 60% who indicated the impact on their teaching was little. This was compared to a range of 28% to 40% for those teachers who indicated the impact on their teaching practices was a lot. For the local category the little range was from 44% to 52%, while the lot range was from 34% to 41%. With respect to external forces, the little range was 63% to 71%, while the lot range was 20% to 21%. Locally driven reforms seemed to have a greater impact in the classroom. This statement supported the findings of McLaughlin (1984) in the RAND Study. Her results indicated that local factors influenced the success of programs more than any other.

Teacher compliance with educational mandates. Teachers in the Snowflake Unified School District who were interviewed in the study did comply with state mandates that they perceived to be legitimate. The data from these teachers conflicted with the data from the self-selected sample who responded to the questionnaire. The

results from the questionnaire indicated that teachers felt the state had little impact on teaching practices. However, in the interviews, it became clear that teachers were complying with mandates from the state. This compliance suggested that the state might have had a greater impact on teaching practices in this district than suggested by the questionnaire data. An example of their compliance was involvement in mandates from the state level, such as state-mandated curriculum, state-mandated testing, and the foreign language mandate.

Factors Influencing Teacher Decisions on Educational Reform (Research Question 3)

Introduction. A search of the literature revealed several factors that influenced teacher acceptance of reform initiatives (Huberman & Miles, 1984; Lortie, 1975; McLaughlin, 1989; Murphy, Evertson, & Radnofsky, 1991). The literature spoke of time, disillusionment, planning and execution, teacher interest, the role of the principal, resources, alignment of reform to instruction, and teacher practices and assistance provided by the organization as factors important to teachers in accepting and implementing reform measures. The conclusions from this study suggested that several of these factors were important to the teachers in this study when they decided whether to support reforms. The findings from this study suggested three areas of importance including teacher ownership, rewards and sanctions, and the role of the principal.

Teacher ownership. For teachers in the Snowflake Unified School District, the most important factor in deciding whether to implement reform initiatives was teacher ownership in the reform. This finding suggested additional support for the importance of the relationship between the most basic unit in education and educational change.

Teacher interest in the specific reform was the key factor in getting teachers to change teaching practices. This ownership issue was individual, and the support of specific reform initiatives by other teachers within the building or the district did not guarantee the success of the reform initiative.

During the interviews the teachers' best demonstrated this ownership issue when they were asked for examples of reform measures that impacted their teaching practices. Four of the teachers gave examples of specific reform measures they had instituted. One teacher described his efforts in developing an interdisciplinary class as a project he believed was needed to meet the needs of the students. A second teacher discussed his development of a drama course. A third teacher spoke with pride of the reward system he developed for his school. The theme of ownership and teacher autonomy in curriculum decision making in terms of what is best for their students was supported in the literature. McLaughlin (1992) discussed the fact that teachers made decisions on what they felt was best for their students. The decision was a complex one in which teachers took into account, among other factors, school goals, their professional judgment of their students, and societal goals. The theme that teachers implemented reform in the classroom as a response to what they believed the students needed to be successful supported the literature.

Rewards and sanctions. The conflict between rewards and sanctions was another important factor for teachers in deciding whether to implement reform initiatives. In the interviews conducted during the study, six of the nine teachers discussed this issue. One teacher commented at length about the importance of rewards and consequences

associated with state-mandated reforms. She described her distrust of the state and indicated she based her decisions on the implementation of state-mandated reforms on her interpretation of the consequences for not complying. A second teacher indicated that his involvement in the foreign language mandate had waned as the result of the lack of enforcement. A third teacher also talked about the issue of enforcement. He stated enforcement of reform mandates was important for him to comply with the mandates. He indicated that if someone were not watching over him, then he would decide on the importance of the reform initiative. If, in his professional judgment, he did not feel the reform initiative was important, he would not implement the measure.

Four teachers discussed the notion of rewards when talking about funding issues relative to mandates and reform initiatives. For the discussion on career ladder, the teachers spoke of the monetary compensation for the effort expended. For two of these teachers, the monetary reward did not outweigh the effort expended. For two other teachers, the financial rewards and the professional growth of the program outweighed the effort expended.

Another teacher addressed this issue in terms of curricular decisions. In this case, she felt that her professional judgment was important in making curricular decisions. She used her professional judgment to implement new curriculum based on the perceived benefits for her students. In this case, the rewards in terms of curricular issues for her students were judged against the negatives associated with removal of specific content from the curriculum.

Role of the principal. The results of the study also suggested the importance of the principal in educational reform. The importance of the principal was addressed in the questionnaire and the interviews. During the interviews, one teacher spoke of the impact of his principal's monitoring the implementation of state-mandated curriculum. Three teachers also commented on the importance of the role of the high school principal in block scheduling. On the questionnaire, teachers indicated that the role of the principal was important in the success of reform initiatives. For a questionnaire item on the importance of the support of the principal in impacting teaching practices, 60% of the respondents indicated the effect on their classroom teaching practices was a lot.

In reality, the support of the principal did not always guarantee the success of specific reform initiatives. In this district, the support of a principal for block scheduling was not enough to implement this reform in the district. At the same time, several teachers commented on the importance of the principal in their compliance with state-mandated reform initiatives. These findings may be an indication that the principal's support of reform initiatives might be weighed against the teachers' perception of the importance of the reform. Teachers may have valued the importance of the support of the principal; however, this support was not necessarily stronger than the decisions made by the teacher with regard to their support of the reform initiative.

Conclusions

Several conclusions were suggested from the findings of this study. These conclusions were discussed within the contextual framework of the study. As such, they provided suggestions for connections between the results of this study and the literature

base. The findings of the study did not presuppose that they could be applied beyond the scope of the research participants; however, the findings suggested the beliefs expressed by the research participants were similar to beliefs shared by populations in other studies. These conclusions included the impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices; the impact of state, local and external forces; teacher compliance with educational mandates; teacher ownership; rewards and sanctions; and the role of the principal. The discussion of these conclusions was framed against the impact of reform initiatives on teaching practices.

The Impact of Initiatives from the Excellence Reform Movement on Teaching Practices, Teacher Work Day, and Teaching Methods and Strategies (Research Questions 1 & 2)

Impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices. The lack of impact of the excellence reform movement on teaching practices of the teachers in this study suggested this conclusion supported the literature on the role of the teacher in educational change (Fullan, 1991; Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; McLaughlin, 1984). As McLaughlin (1984) stated, “Teachers teaching in classrooms is what education is all about” (p. 1). Data collected from the questionnaire and interviews suggested the importance of the teacher in allowing reforms to reach the classroom and change teaching practices.

The data from the questionnaire and interviews also suggested that the lack of impact of these reform initiatives supported the literature that spoke to the difficulty of reform mandated from outside the local level reaching the classroom (Goldman & Conley, 1991; McLaughlin, 1984). The importance of the relationship between the

teacher and the teaching process was addressed in the literature (Elmore & McLaughlin, 1988; McLaughlin, 1984). The importance of this relationship and the importance of teacher ownership in the implementation of reforms suggested that the reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement would have difficulty reaching the classroom. The responses to the call for educational change emanating from the excellence reform movement failed to take into account the perspectives of teachers (Wilson & Rossman, 1993). The failure to include the teacher in the educational reforms and mandating reforms from the top-down (Futrell, 1989) would suggest that many of the reform initiatives from the excellence reform movement would not reach the classroom. The data from this study suggest that in this particular district this was the end result.

Impact of the state, local, and external forces. Data collected from the questionnaires and interviews indicated that reform measures initiated at the local level had the most impact on the teachers in this study. Teachers who were interviewed consistently expressed the importance of their input into the reform measures. They felt they would be more receptive to reforms that they bought into or had input into. They also commented on their ability to participate in decision making at the local level on issues involving reform. One teacher commented, "Well, if it was [sic] implemented at the local level, I should have a say in what happens. If I have a say in how it is set up and how it happened, then I would want to see it happen." At the same time, they placed the role of administrators at the local level as very high with regard to change in the classroom.

There were conflicting data on the impact of external influences on reform initiatives in the classroom. Again, the questionnaire revealed teacher perceptions that the community had little impact with respect to reform initiatives. However, for two of the reform initiatives discussed in the interviews, the teachers indicated the community played an important role in the final outcome. In the case of block scheduling, the concerns of the community seemed to be a driving force in inhibiting the implementation of reform. The community concerns regarding the impact of this type of schedule on music classes and the opportunity for religious instruction played a pivotal role in stopping this reform measure from being implemented. Additional factors were associated with the lack of success of this reform measure; however, all the teachers interviewed commented on the role of these two factors. In addition the role of the community on site councils was viewed favorably by all the teachers interviewed. They thought input from the community was important.

Although the data that reflected teacher perspectives on the impact of external forces on educational reform were contrary to the results of specific reform initiatives in this study, the data suggested that this conclusion supported the literature (Berman & McLaughlin, 1973; McLaughlin, 1989). The literature spoke to the importance of local factors in the success of reform initiatives. In this case, local factors did play an important role in the success of programs external to the district. The school is an extension of the community and as such reflects the value system of the community. These factors affected the success of reform initiatives. The interviews revealed the impact of local factors and the design and self-selected sample of the questionnaire may

have contributed to these conflicting data. The self-selected sample for the questionnaire may have included the views of teachers not familiar with the specific reform initiatives addressed in the interview.

Teacher compliance with educational mandates. The data collected from this study revealed conclusions that suggested the results of the study supported several points in Etzioni's (1975) compliance theory. The first conclusion suggested that for this study state political entities could be seen as elites in the educational organization. A second conclusion suggested that this study supported Etzioni's definition of power for this particular educational organization. In addition, the data suggested that this district fit Etzioni's definition of a normative organization.

In defining compliance theory, Etzioni (1975) described power as a key for compliance. He described power positions within organizations as "positions whose incumbents regularly have access to means of power" (p. 5). Etzioni further defined compliance as "a relationship consisting of the power employed by superiors to control subordinates and the orientation of subordinates to this power" (p. xv). He described the manipulation of this power through physical, material, and symbolic rewards and deprivations as a method to support the control. One conclusion from this study suggested the data supported this concept of compliance and power. One teacher interviewed discussed the use of funding as a reward or punishment that would influence his decision to comply with directives from the ADE. A second teacher also discussed the notion of the benefits of compliance in relationship to the effort expended for the mandate. She felt that teachers weighed the benefits of making the change with the

rewards or punishments associated with noncompliance. Another teacher spoke of the degree of enforcement associated with any reform. This notion of enforcement implied that the deprivation of material or symbolic rewards would impact his compliance with the reforms. Other teachers commented on the fact that the lack of monetary rewards resulted in the failure of the career ladder system in this district.

Teacher responses suggested the study supported the classification of state and local leaders as elites in the organization. These responses also suggested support of the notion that within this organization the teachers were lower participants. While supporting this relationship within this educational organization, the ability of teachers in this district to minimize compliance with educational reforms mandated by the elites raised interesting questions. McLaughlin (1984) discussed the uniqueness in education that contributes to the compliance/resistance issue. She talked about the looseness in the relationship between entities within the educational organization. She stated,

Consequently, at the district level, there is no consistent relationship among units within the school system, line authority is limited, and practice is segmented.

Thus despite the bureaucratic structures of school districts, education practitioners generally are not subject to hierarchical control in their work and uniformity in practice cannot be commanded. (p. 2)

Because state and local leaders were identified as elites within this study, the data suggested that this definition could also be applied to relationships between teachers and policymakers at the state level and between teachers and administrators at the school level.

Etzioni (1975) classified educational organizations as normative organizations and noted that “compliance in normative organizations rests principally on internalization of directives accepted as legitimate” (p. 40). The findings of this study suggested support of the classification of this district as normative. In addition, the findings suggested support of the notion that lower participants within the organization supported directives accepted as legitimate. The findings demonstrated teacher support of directives from the various elites within the organization. The support of these directives suggested affirmation of the legitimacy of these entities as elites. A specific example was the Department of Education and its role in educational organizations. The notion that there were various levels of elites within education required further study of the relationships of these levels. The degree of resistance and the methods of resistance utilized by lower participants were interesting contradictions that would further illuminate teacher responses to educational change.

Factors Influencing Teacher Decisions on Educational Reform (Research Question 3)

Teacher ownership. Another factor that influenced teacher decisions to implement reform that emerged from the data was the importance of teacher ownership in the reform initiative. Teachers spoke of ownership or teacher interest in reform initiatives as a major factor in the success of the reform. Teachers referred to their ability and autonomy in making curricular decisions as very important. In the interviews the teachers commented on the importance of reform efforts being driven by teachers and the importance of their individual input into reforms. Teachers felt that if they had a sense of empowerment with regard to reform efforts, they would be more supportive of the

change. Several teachers spoke of changes in their teaching that were driven by changes on a personal level. They implemented the reform measures based on their interest in the reform effort. One teacher spoke of the development of a positive reward system and stated, "I'm kind of creative --- try to make something better." Another teacher in describing his development of an interdisciplinary course said,

Sanity! I got tired of the same old same old. As we talked about the needs of kids and education in general, we felt like there was too much cookbook learning going on....As a teacher, I was getting tired of that and felt like kids had been for a long time.

McLaughlin (1984) discussed the motivation of teachers to change and the importance of ownership in this change. McLaughlin approached the discussion from the perspective of teacher resistance to change. She felt external mandates were not the solutions and that the perception that teachers were lazy and unwilling to change was a misinterpretation of data. McLaughlin then focused on the importance of teacher ownership especially as it applies to students. As she stated, "Because teachers' sense of satisfaction and efficacy is grounded in student accomplishment, their willingness to engage in learning about new practices depends above all on their assessment of the consequence of a proposed change for students" (p. 7). The teacher who developed an interdisciplinary course supported this notion. The main focus of his work was on the needs of the students. He felt the "cookbook" approach to teaching his students was not meeting their needs. Another teacher commented on the state-mandated curriculum and how it impacted her decision regarding what was important for her students. Her

decisions regarding this mandate hinged on her professional views of what was important for her students. Two other teachers also commented on the professional decision-making process in determining the importance of specific reforms. How the reform fit into their current practices was most important in their decisions.

The influence of teacher interest or ownership in the success of reform initiatives can also be demonstrated by reform initiatives that failed in the Snowflake Unified School District. In describing why the block schedule and career ladder failed several teachers indicated that the lack of support or buy-in by the teachers resulted in the failure of the reforms. One teacher described the power of older teachers who did not believe in the reforms as important in keeping the reforms from being implemented. Another teacher referred to the top-down implementation of reforms as not getting teacher ownership in the reform. The end result was that the reforms were not implemented within the district.

Rewards and sanctions. Goldman and Conley (1997) addressed the contradiction between rewards and sanctions, and the results of the study suggested teachers in this study also struggled with this contradiction. Goldman and Conley felt that teachers in their study on the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century were supportive of the ideas regarding reform in the law. At the same time, because of the lack of sanctions or rewards associated with the law, teachers did not have a strong reason for compliance. As they stated, "Educators saw few rewards or punishments that would result from the changes they chose to make or not make based on the law" (p. 20). As a result of these feeling, Goldman and Conley made the following inference about the practices of

teachers. They stated, “Educators, then, scan the environment to determine the tradeoffs involved in complying with the policy framework that implies great change. They withhold compliance until they receive relatively unambiguous signals from a wide range of sources ” (p. 25).

Teachers interviewed for this study also referred to the theme of rewards and sanctions. The impressions of the teachers were that they philosophically supported the concepts of the reforms, but because of the lack of rewards or sanctions if this support wavered, they minimized their compliance with the reform initiative. Several teachers commented that they were waiting for evidence of sanctions or rewards. In response to the new state-mandated testing, several teachers commented on the fact that the sanctions associated with graduation rates may in fact be the push that they needed to comply with the reform initiative.

This notion of tradeoffs was discussed by four of the teachers interviewed for the study. One teacher stated she analyzed the rewards and consequences associated with mandates from the state. At this point, she felt the consequences for noncompliance were not great enough for her to comply with state mandates. Two other teachers commented on funding as part of the notion of tradeoffs. In this case, they felt if funding were tied to the results of reforms, they would comply. This tradeoff was also addressed regarding the state-mandated tests. Two teachers commented on the new graduation requirements associated with the state testing. This consequence in their view was significant and would result in their compliance with the mandated tests.

Another aspect of this tradeoff was the level of trust associated with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). One teacher, during the interviews, stated that in many cases, the level of distrust with the ADE was so high teachers ignored reform initiatives from the state regardless of whether they were perceived to be good or bad. As this teacher stated,

We have all become sort of disillusioned about what we get from the state department . . . some things are very good and some things are very poor and so the poor things influence us to not pay attention to the good things. What I'm getting at is ASAP burned us way out. You know just burned us big, and we are having a hard time buying into the new set of standards.

At the same time, several teachers indicated they viewed the State Department of Education or the state legislature as a legitimate authority. Teachers recognize these political entities as having power to mandate reform. During the interviews, a common theme dealt with the degree of reward or penalty as a mitigating force regarding compliance with state mandates. One teacher commented on the funding attached to state reforms as a key to the decision regarding implementation of reforms. He stated, "If they are mandated and funds are tied to them, then we have to do it in order to get funds."

The role of the principal. Data from the questionnaire supported the importance of the role of the principal in educational reform and the importance of the reform coming from the local level. Schweiker and Barksdale-Ladd (1992) discussed the role of the principal in the educational change process in relation to the impact of "outside change agents" (p. 4). The data suggested that this study supported the importance of the

principal in comparison to change agents that were external to the system. Questionnaire items revealed that the principal had a greater impact on teaching practices than other change agents attempting to implement reforms. Even on questionnaire items in which the principal was rated as having little impact on teacher engagement in activities/attitudes, the principals had a greater impact than other change agents.

In the interviews, the teachers spoke of the importance of the principal in the various reform initiatives discussed. One teacher commented on the leadership role of the principal in block scheduling. Even though this teacher opposed block scheduling she reflected on the role of the principal in this reform initiative and other reform initiatives. The principal was commended on his efforts to introduce reform initiatives that were beneficial to the school. Two other teachers commented on the importance of the principal in the implementation of state-mandated curriculum. They felt that the ownership by the principal in this reform initiative was important for their involvement in the reform.

Implications of the Study for Practitioners

The presentation of findings in this study offered several implications for educational leaders within the school community. These implications provided a better understanding of the relationship between educational reform and teaching practices. This understanding allowed educational leaders at the school level, district level, and state level to make decisions regarding educational reform that could increase the opportunity for reform initiatives to impact teaching practices. An increase in the impact of reform on teaching practices was important because, as Elmore and McLaughlin

(1988) stated, “The history of American education is, in large part, the history of recurring cycles of reform...Reform has historically had little effect on teaching and learning in the classrooms” (p. 6). This chapter presented implications for principals, local policymakers, and state policymakers.

The implication of this study for practitioners was important given the discussion of Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) regarding the three levels of educational reform. They described the inherent conflict between these three levels. Elmore and McLaughlin stated, “Conflict among policy, administration, and practice are endemic to educational reform” (p. 16). In order for this conflict to be minimized, practitioners must understand the perspectives of teachers regarding educational reform.

Implications for Principals

Principals must understand the perspectives of the teachers with regard to educational change as it impacts teaching practices. Cuban (1994) discussed the nature of reform in education and traced the relationship between educational reform and the American public education system historically. Given this relationship, it is important for principals to understand the perspective of teachers. This historical perspective of reform suggests reform in education will likely be constant. Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) described the danger of the relationship between the constancy of educational reform and the lack of the impact of this reform. They stated,

In this pessimistic sense, educational reform is “steady work.” That is, the rewards are puny, measured by substantial changes in what is taught and how; but the work is steady, because there is a limitless supply of new ideas for how

schools should be changed and no shortage of political and social pressure to force those ideas onto the political agenda. (p.12)

If educational reform is going to become more than “steady work,” principals must recognize what teachers feel are the most important factors that influence their decision-making process with respect to reform and changing teaching practices.

Principals must also understand the perspectives of teachers with respect to organizational compliance in education. An understanding of why and how teachers comply with mandated reform from all levels of the educational organization can help increase the success of the implementation of reform measures at the classroom level. Lipsky (1980), in describing lower-level participants or, as he called them, street-level bureaucrats, discussed their coping mechanisms to change. The level of congruence between the belief system of the lower-level participant and the policy objectives from the higher levels of the organization was key. A lack of congruence suggested these lower-level participants would exercise the degree of discretion inherent in their jobs to minimize the change. Principals must understand the degree of discretion associated with teachers and then plan accordingly when implementing reform initiatives.

Lipsky (1980) discussed this level of discretion and the importance of discretion in relation to the level of compliance within organizations. In describing teachers, Lipsky noted, “Contemporary views of education mitigate against detailed instructions to teachers on how and what to teach, since the philosophy prevails that to a point every child requires a response appropriate to the specific learning context” (p. 15). Lipsky noted that given this level of discretion, teachers, as street-level bureaucrats, still “for the

most part accept the legitimacy of the formal structure of authority, and they are not in the position to dissent successfully” (p. 16). Principals must understand this relationship in the implementation of reforms. Lipsky discussed the notion that as a result of this level of discretion, lower-level participants have a “desire to maintain and expand their autonomy” (p. 19). Principals must understand the desires of teachers and the aspects of their job that they view as important. By understanding this relationship, principals can begin to understand how to get teacher ownership in reform initiatives. This ownership is key for the success of the reform.

The importance of the teacher in the implementation of reforms that actually reach the classroom makes it imperative for principals to understand what is important to teachers. If principals do not understand teachers and educational change, they will continue to be trapped by the teacher adage, “The more things change the more they stay the same.” The end result will be more of Elmore and McLaughlin’s (1988) notion of the “steady work” of reform in education.

Implications for Local Policymakers

Superintendents and school boards must also understand the role of educational change and compliance from the perspectives of teachers. The political nature of leadership at the local level means in many cases the leadership reacts to the concerns of special interest groups, especially those groups that are most vocal. The reaction to these groups often results in mandated reforms. However, if the local policymakers do not understand the role of the teacher in the implementation of reforms, they will continue to promote reform initiatives that do not impact children in the classroom. This lack of

impact will continue to lead to frustrations over the perceived impact of reforms. Often in education, decisions at the site level are made, and the most important constituent left out of the process is the child. This same concept applies to decision making regarding educational reform measures. Local policymakers must ask for the input of the most important constituent in the reform process, the teacher.

Implications for State Policymakers

State political leaders must also start to understand the role of educational change and compliance from the perspectives of the teachers. State political entities need to understand the ideas associated with trust, ownership, and enforcement as aspects of educational change that are important to teachers. Several teachers in this study commented on their distrust of the ADE and the resulting noncompliance or minimal compliance with state mandates. As one teacher said, "I've gone through how many school superintendents here in Arizona, and every one of them has had a different outlook on what education ought to be." Teachers seem to be willing to wait out the change in the State Department. They are waiting to see if the reform measures will really be enforced. Political rhetoric is not enough to get meaningful educational change into the classroom.

Recommendations for Further Study

The paradox of the importance of the teacher in the educational change process and the lack of importance paid to the perspectives of teachers in the change process provided a gap in the literature base. Given the importance of the role of teachers in allowing the change process to reach the classroom, continued exploration of compliance

and resistance issues in educational change is warranted. The contradictions in the perspectives of teachers with regard to the impact of educational change in the classroom suggested several avenues of further study. The lack of teacher perspectives in the body of research on schools also supported further study that utilizes qualitative methodologies to understand the teacher within the educational change setting.

Given the importance of the degree of compliance or resistance by teachers to educational change, a continued area of study would be specific strategies employed by teachers with respect to resistance to educational change. The use of qualitative methodology, such as interviews, would provide a more complete understanding of teacher perspectives on this topic.

Lipsky's (1980) discussion of teachers as street-level bureaucrats also provided an avenue with which to study teacher techniques of compliance or resistance to educational change further. The role of rewards and sanctions, autonomy in decision making, and professional empowerment are all areas that must be understood more completely to help get meaningful educational change into the classroom. Several teachers interviewed for this study commented on the notion of rewards and sanctions. In some cases, the teachers spoke of rewards and sanctions as reasons for their decisions to implement or not implement reform initiatives. In other cases, the notion of sanctions and rewards was discussed relative to the continuation of the implementation of the reform measures. Teacher autonomy with respect to decision making was also a key for teachers in the study. The impact of decision making from outside the classroom that impacted the

classroom was an important factor in teacher compliance with or resistance to reform initiatives.

An understanding of the relationship between the impact of educational change at the school level and in the classroom is another area for further study. An understanding of teacher perceptions regarding reform at the school level may shed light on compliance and resistance issues regarding educational reform at the school level. Insight into techniques used by teachers at the school level to comply with or resist reforms could be compared with techniques used at the classroom level. The importance of the role of the principal might be better understood at this level. This discussion is relevant with respect to Etzioni's (1975) compliance theory. The relationship between teacher and principal is direct and may not be subject to barriers associated with relationships between the teacher and the district or state level. A more complete understanding of these relationships would provide a better understanding of the role of principals in the change process.

Conclusion

As the American education system moves into the 21st century, the national debate on the quality of public education continues to occupy the country. This debate has occupied the educational scene for the past 16 years and resulted in numerous calls for reforms that would repair the educational system. These calls for educational reform have come from politicians, parents, the media, higher education, and the public education system. In helping to organize the players in this debate, Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) discussed the notion that educational reform operates on three

loosely connected levels. The three levels within educational reform are policy, administration, and practice. In their discussion, they defined policy as occurring at the federal, state, and local levels. They discussed and described the various methods utilized by these entities to shape policy that affects education. In discussing the administration in this relationship, they talked about administration at the district or site level. When they described educational practice they stated, "The world of educational practice is mainly the world of the classroom teacher" (p. 14).

Elmore and McLaughlin's (1988) discussion on educational reform places teachers as one point in the triangle. In the course of this debate, the country must recognize the importance of the teacher in affecting educational reform. If the general public, media, and politicians are going to impact the system and bring about reform that reaches the classroom level, they must start to understand and support the importance of teachers. Elmore and McLaughlin summarized the current role of the teacher in educational reform when they stated, "Teachers are often the last to be heard from on the effects of reform policies and the first to be criticized when reform fails" (p. 17). The blame game must stop, and Americans must recognize the impact of society on education. Understanding teachers and understanding the social context under which education operates would allow for discussions on meaningful educational change.

The purpose of this study was to gather teacher perspectives on the impact of reform efforts from the excellence reform movement on teaching practices in the classroom. The study utilized the framework from Goldman and Conley (1997) to gather teacher perceptions on specific aspects of educational reform. In addition, the

development of an interview instrument provided a deeper understanding of teacher perspectives regarding reform and teaching practices. Although limited by the constraints of population size and study methodology, the findings of this study suggest the beliefs of the teachers in the study support the literature base on the importance of the role of the teacher in educational change K-12.

Given the importance of the teacher in the reform process and the cyclical nature of reform in American education, an understanding of teacher perspectives is paramount. As one teacher in the study stated in response to reform, "I as a teacher cannot be held hostage to reform." He further stated in response to the impact of state-mandated reform, "Once a teacher, always a teacher. You can't really be sure if there is accountability here in my classroom. I think my principal would speak for me that I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. They can't stop my success with my kids---they can hinder it."

The excellence reform movement has been characterized by the increased role of politics and the media in educational change. Lost in the rhetoric of these groups has been the voice of the teacher. For educational change to reach the classroom, the perspectives of teachers must be heard. Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) reminded us of the new role of the teacher in educational reform when they stated, "In some sense, these reforms must originate in the practices of teaching rather than in expert advice and external standards as have past reforms" (p. 13).

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT

April 7, 1999

Dear Teacher,

I am currently enrolled in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership at The University of Arizona. One of the requirements of the program is the completion of a dissertation. The focus of my dissertation is teacher perspectives regarding educational reform and the impact of this reform at the school site and in the classroom. Specifically, I am curious about teacher perspectives on the reasons for success or lack of success in implementing reforms in the classroom.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you for your participation in my study. Participation in the study is voluntary and will involve approximately 15 minutes of your time to complete the attached survey. Confidentiality of answers is assured. All participants will be coded, and data analysis will reflect this coding system.

Please complete the attached survey and return it to me no later than Friday, April 23, 1999.

Thank you for your consideration and for your help in allowing me to complete this study as part of my doctoral program. Any participants interested in the results of the study will be provided a copy upon request.

Sincerely,

Gregory A. Wyman

Demographic Information

1. Gender
Male Female
2. Age
20-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 46-50 51-55 56+
3. Years Teaching
1 yr.-5 yrs. 6yrs-10 yrs. 11yrs-15yrs. 16yrs-20yrs. 21yrs-25yrs. 26yrs-30yrs. 31yrs-35yrs.
4. Years Teaching in Snowflake
1 yr.-5 yrs. 6yrs-10 yrs. 11yrs-15yrs. 16yrs-20yrs. 21yrs-25yrs. 26yrs-30yrs. 31yrs-35yrs.
5. Level of certification
K-12 K-8 7/12
6. Certification subject area
Elementary Science Mathematics Foreign Language
Middle School English Social Studies Vocational
7. Current teaching level
Elementary Junior High School High School
8. Highest degree obtained
Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science Masters Doctorate
9. Personal information/views on reform

Statement	Scale				
	Low				High
	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the goals of school reform					
I support the goals of school reform					
I have changed my practices in the classroom in response to school reform					
I will change my practices in the classroom in response to school reform					
The activities needed for school reform to improve student learning are beyond my control					

Policy Procedure/Structure	Effect on your practices		Effect on your school		Your perception of the policy	
	Little	Lot	Little	Lot	Good	Bad
1. Site Councils						
2. Grants to schools (e.g Goals 2000)						
3. ASAP Testing						
4. AIMS Testing						
5. State curriculum standards						
6. Increased University requirements						
7. Accountability requirements (e.g Arizona Report Card)						
8. Prospect of recognition by the state (e.g A+ Program)						
9. Communication from ADE						
10. Work of pilot sites elsewhere in the district or state						
11. Concern with meeting new ADE requirements						
12. Teachers in your school actively supporting school reform						
13. Meetings you've attended where you've learned about reform requirements and teaching methods to achieve reform goals						
14. Grants from state to do improvement projects						
15. Demand from the business community to improve education						
16. Pressure from parents to initiate reform						
17. Pressure from the legislature to initiate reform						
18. Principal's support of reform						
19. District's support of reform						
20. Legislative support of reform						

Activity/Attitude	Your engagement in the activities/attitudes listed:		Prevalence of the activities/attitudes in your school:		Degree to which activities/attitudes are responses to reform policies	
	Little	Lot	Little	Lot	Little	Lot
1. Engaging in collaborative planning						
2. Integrating curriculum						
3. Developing new curriculum						
4. Modifying curriculum						
5. Holding special needs students to high standards						
6. Developing new strategies for low-Achieving students						
7. Using technology to help students meet standards						
8. Reading articles, discussing new programs with peers						
9. Reading, discussing materials from the State Department of Education						
10. Participating in inservice training related to reform						
11. Learning about programs in other schools						
12. Developing grant proposals/school improvement plans						
13. Incorporating career awareness activities into classes, or developing school-to-work programs						
14. Working against reform being implemented						
15. Waiting for more specific direction from the State Department of Education						
16. Waiting for more specific direction from the district						
17. Waiting for more specific direction from the principal						
18. Waiting for more evidence of commitment from legislature						
19. Waiting for more specific commitment from the business community						
20. Waiting for more research studies from higher education						

Factors supporting/inhibiting implementation of school reform components in your school	Strongly Support	Support	Inhibit	Strongly Inhibit
1. History of the school				
2. Culture of the school				
3. Role of the principal				
4. Leadership in the district				
5. Other teachers in the building				
6. Availability of resources				
7. Flexibility of the organization				
8. Direction from the legislature				
9. Previous school improvement efforts				
10. Inherent ability of the kids in the school				
11. Effort/motivation of the kids in the school				
12. Parental support				
13. Community support				
14. College admission requirements				
15. School's physical plant				
16. Amount of time available for professional development				
17. Amount of time available for teaching/learning				
18. A particular "critical incident" Please explain:				

If you are changing your practice to accommodate school reform policies, where are you getting the skills to do so?

Activity	Frequency of activity:		
	Most	Medium	Least
1. District inservice			
2. Early release days scheduled by school			
3. State inservice days			
4. Summer contract days			
5. Summer work without pay or credit			
6. College or university course			
7. Observing a colleague			
8. Discussing with a colleague			
9. Reading materials from the ADE			
10. Receiving information at a faculty meeting			
11. State conferences sponsored by a subject area organization			
12. Statewide or regional meetings sponsored by ADE or other state-level agency			
13. Consultants who work for the district			
14. On my own			
15. Other: (Please explain)			

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Interview Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this study. Without your help, the completion of this study as part of my dissertation would be impossible. I want to assure you of the confidentiality of your responses to this questionnaire.

The purpose of this study is to understand the perspectives of teachers regarding the impact of reform efforts at the school site and in the classroom. Your answers to the following questions will help to explain teacher perspectives on the impact of reforms on their work day, teaching methods, and teaching strategies. Your cooperation and thoughtful descriptions are greatly appreciated.

Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male	Female
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2. Age

20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55
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3. Years Teaching

1 yr.-5 yrs.	6yrs-10 yrs.	11yrs-15 yrs.	16yrs-20 yrs.	21yrs-25 yrs.	26yrs-30 yrs.	31yrs-35 yrs.
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4. Years Teaching in Snowflake

1 yr.-5 yrs.	6yrs-10 yrs.	11yrs-15 yrs.	16yrs-20 yrs.	21yrs-25 yrs.	26yrs-30 yrs.	31yrs-35 yrs.
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5. Level of certification

K-12	K-8	7/12
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6. Certification subject area

Elementary	Science	Mathematics	Foreign Language
Middle School	English	Social Studies	Vocational
7. Current teaching level

Elementary	Junior High School	High School
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8. Highest degree obtained

Bachelor of Arts	Bachelor of Science	Masters	Doctorate
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9. The following reform initiatives have been implemented or were attempted in the Snowflake Unified School District. Please answer the following series of questions on each reform initiative.

A. Career Ladder

- i. What or who do you believe was the impetus for this reform measure?
- ii. How has this reform measure impacted your work day? (probe if necessary on daily routines, planning of teaching methods, and planning of teaching strategies)
- iii. What factors do you believe influenced the success or lack of success of this reform measure in your teaching experience? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)
- iv. What factors influenced you to implement or not implement this reform measure? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

B. Block Scheduling

- i. What or who do you believe was the impetus for this reform measure?
- ii. How has this reform measure impacted your work day? (probe if necessary on daily routines, planning of teaching methods, and planning of teaching strategies)
- iii. What factors do you believe influenced the success or lack of success of this reform measure in your teaching experience? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)
- iv. What factors influenced you to implement or not implement this reform measure? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

C. Site-Based Management

- i. What or who do you believe was the impetus for this reform measure?
- ii. How has this reform measure impacted your work day? (probe if necessary on daily routines, planning of teaching methods, and planning of teaching strategies)
- iii. What factors do you believe influenced the success or lack of success of this reform measure in your teaching experience? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

- iv. What factors influenced you to implement or not implement this reform measure? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

D. State-Mandated Curriculum (Essential Skills)

- i. What or who do you believe was the impetus for this reform measure?
- ii. How has this reform measure impacted your work day? (probe if necessary on daily routines, planning of teaching methods, and planning of teaching strategies)
- iii. What factors do you believe influenced the success or lack of success of this reform measure in your teaching experience? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)
- iv. What factors influenced you to implement or not implement this reform measure? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

E. Mandated State Tests (ASAP)

- i. What or who do you believe was the impetus for this reform measure?
- ii. How has this reform measure impacted daily work day? (probe if necessary on daily routines, planning of teaching methods, and planning of teaching strategies)
- iii. What factors do you believe influenced the success or lack of success of this reform measure in your teaching experience? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)
- iv. What factors influenced you to implement or not implement this reform measure? (probe if necessary on authority, time, skill level, technical assistance, and alignment with school goals)

10. If reforms were mandated from the federal government, how would this influence your decision regarding the implementation of the reform?

11. If reforms were mandated at the state level, how would this influence your decision regarding the implementation of the reform?

12. If reforms were mandated at the local level, how would this influence your decision regarding the implementation of the reform?

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male= 30 Female =32 Total =62

2. Age

20-25=1 26-30=3 31-35=10 36-40=9 41-45=11 46-50=12 51-55=10 56+=6

3. Years Teaching

1 yr.-5 yrs.	6yrs-10 yrs.	11yrs-15 yrs.	16yrs-20yrs.	21yrs-25 yrs.	26yrs-30yrs.	31yrs-35yrs.
12	13	12	9	8	5	3

4. Years Teaching in Snowflake

1 yr.-5 yrs.	6yrs-10 yrs.	11yrs-15 yrs.	16yrs-20yrs.	21yrs-25 yrs.	26yrs-30yrs.	31yrs-35yrs.
19	13	14	6	5	2	3

5. Level of certification

K-12=16 K-8=25 7-12=20 DNA=1

6. Certification subject area

Elementary	33	Science	2	Mathematics	4	Foreign Language	1
Special Ed	1	English	10	Social Studies	3	Vocational	7

7. Current teaching level

Elementary 25 Junior High 8 High School 25 DNA=2

8. Highest degree obtained

Bachelor of Arts=8 Bachelor of Science=18 Masters=35 Doctorate=0 DNA=1

9. Personal information/views on reform

Statement	Scale				
	Low		High		
	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the goals of school reform (n = 59)	4 6.78%	11 18.64%	20 33.90%	20 33.90%	4 6.78%
I support the goals of school reform (n = 60)	3 5.00%	11 18.33%	19 31.67%	23 38.33%	4 6.67%
I have changed my practices in the Classroom in response to school reform (n = 59)	5 8.47%	9 15.25%	20 33.90%	20 33.90%	5 8.47%
I will change my practices in the classroom in response to school reform (n = 58)	3 5.17%	7 12.07%	18 31.03%	25 43.10%	5 8.62%
The activities needed for school reform to improve student learning are beyond my control (n = 56)	13 23.21%	12 21.43%	13 23.21%	11 19.64%	7 12.50%

Policy Procedure/Structure	Effect on your practices			Effect on your school			Your perception of the policy	
	Little		Lot	Little		Lot	Good	Bad
1. Site Councils	43	9	7	27	8	22	(n=60/59)	
2. Grants to schools (e.g Goals 2000)	29	5	25	9	6	44	(n=59)	
3. ASAP Testing	43	3	11	35	7	15	(n=57)	
4. AIMS Testing	35	6	16	27	8	21	(n=57/56)	
5. State curriculum standards	15	4	40	13	4	41	(n=59/58)	
6. Increased University requirements	30	8	22	29	4	26	(n=60/59)	
7. Accountability requirements (e.g Arizona Report Card)	33	12	13	25	10	20	(n=58/55)	
8. Prospect of recognition by the state (e.g A+ Program)	40	11	4	35	11	9	(n=55)	
9. Communication from ADE	40	2	13	30	4	19	(n=55/53)	
10. Work of pilot sites elsewhere in the district or state	43	8	4	35	11	6	(n=55/52)	
11. Concern with meeting new ADE requirements	24	6	24	19	9	26	(n=54)	
12. Teachers in your school actively supporting school reform	28	12	17	26	7	24	(n=57)	
13. Meetings you've attended where you've learned about reform requirements and teaching methods to achieve reform goals	33	8	13	34	9	11	(n=54)	
14. Grants from state to do improvement projects	30	5	18	21	6	26	(n=53)	
15. Demand from the business community to improve education	37	7	15	32	6	16	(n=53/54)	
16. Pressure from parents to initiate reform	35	11	9	31	7	15	(n=55/53)	
17. Pressure from the legislature to initiate reform	33	9	10	24	5	23	(n=52)	
18. Principal's support of reform	12	10	34	10	3	39	(n=56/52)	
19. District's support of reform	16	12	29	16	5	30	(n=57/51)	
20. Legislative support of reform	33	6	17	26	7	21	(n=56/54)	

Activity/Attitude	Your engagement in the activities/attitudes listed:			Prevalence of the activities/attitudes in your school			Degree to which activities/attitudes are responses to reform policies		
	Little	Lot	Lot	Little	Lot	Lot	Little	Lot	Lot
1. Engaging in collaborative planning	29	10	21	26	10	21	32	7	15
2. Integrating curriculum	15	13	32	17	11	30	28	7	20
3. Developing new curriculum	12	10	37	20	13	27	23	6	25
4. Modifying curriculum	7	13	37	14	12	18	20	8	24
5. Holding special needs students to high Standards	23	10	28	31	7	18	31	8	14
6. Developing new strategies for low-Achieving students	19	8	32	21	12	23	24	11	19
7. Using technology to help students meet standards	16	9	34	11	6	38	17	7	28
8. Reading articles, discussing new programs with peers	29	5	24	32	6	16	38	3	11
9. Reading, discussing materials from the State Department of Education	38	9	11	36	9	10	37	6	11
10. Participating in inservice training related to reform	22	11	25	19	8	27	21	12	20
11. Learning about programs in other Schools	36	6	16	35	8	27	36	7	12
12. Developing grant proposals/school improvement plans	36	8	14	21	7	27	19	6	27
13. Incorporating career awareness activities into classes, or developing school-to-work programs	33	9	18	24	7	25	31	1	23
14. Working against reform being Implemented	55	0	1	44	4	3	35	4	9
15. Waiting for more specific direction from the State Department of Education	31	8	19	24	11	19	25	10	17
16. Waiting for more specific direction from the district	24	9	25	18	19	21	21	9	22
17. Waiting for more specific direction from the principal	28	10	20	23	12	19	24	9	19
18. Waiting for more evidence of commitment from legislature	22	6	28	16	8	30	19	5	25
19. Waiting for more specific commitment from the business community	38	6	15	24	12	17	30	7	15
20. Waiting for more research studies from higher education	44	5	8	39	9	7	36	9	6

Factors supporting/inhibiting implementation of	Strongly Support	Support	Inhibit	Strongly Inhibit
school reform components in your school				
1. History of the school	5	32	15	4
2. Culture of the school	3	31	19	4
3. Role of the principal	21	35	3	0
4. Leadership in the district	15	27	15	2
5. Other teachers in the building	14	36	9	0
6. Availability of resources	9	9	27	15
7. Flexibility of the organization	8	26	14	6
8. Direction from the legislature	1	12	29	16
9. Previous school improvement efforts	1	35	13	6
10. Inherent ability of the kids in the school	9	40	7	1
11. Effort/motivation of the kids in the school	9	34	14	1
12. Parental support	5	27	20	6
13. Community support	4	18	23	12
14. College admission requirements	7	37	9	2
15. School's physical plant	4	18	27	10
16. Amount of time available for professional Development	6	15	26	12
17. Amount of time available for teaching/learning	4	23	22	9
18. A particular "critical incident"	2	1	1	6
N=988	127	456	293	112

Professional Development	Frequency of activity:		
	Most	Medium	Least
1. District inservice	14	22	21
2. Early release days scheduled by school	11	34	11
3. State inservice days	4	6	43
4. Summer contract days	10	8	33
5. Summer work without pay or credit	12	15	26
6. College or university course	19	28	8
7. Observing a colleague	10	26	18
8. Discussing with a colleague	22	28	3
9. Reading materials from the ADE	3	17	32
10. Receiving information at a faculty meeting	15	33	9
11. State conferences sponsored by a subject area organization	14	12	25
12. Statewide or regional meetings sponsored by ADE or other state-level agency	7	13	31
13. Consultants who work for the district	6	8	37
14. On my own	36	16	3
15. Other: (Please explain)	0	0	0
Total	183	266	300
N= 749	24.43%	35.51%	40.05%

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