TRAINEE AND BEGINNING TEACHER ATTITUDE AND VALUE CONFLICT IN THE SOCIALISATION PROCESS

by

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ABSTRACT

The study is concerned with the process of socialisation of teachers in the teaching profession. Drawing on socialisation theory the study sees the process of secondary socialisation in teacher preparation as building skills and enabling personal development. It was predicted that in the transition from the training institution to the first years of teaching, the degree of job satisfaction and commitment to teaching would be related to the degree of conflict experienced and that job satisfaction and commitment would be less for beginning teachers compared with that anticipated by trainees. Conflict was seen as appropriately measured by the difference between personal professional attitudes and occupational values one the one hand and the professional attitudes and occupational values perceived to be held by senior teachers on the other.

Seventy-three final year trainee teachers at the Canberra College of Advanced Education and 47 beginning teachers in their first two years of teaching in Canberra primary and secondary schools, were selected as the sample. Previously validated instruments were used in a questionnaire.

The findings clearly showed the existence of conflict between personal professional attitudes and occupational values and the perceived professional attitudes and occupational values of senior teachers. The difference in conflict between trainees and beginning teachers was small and tended to decrease. However, there was a marked increase in variance of conflict scores for women compared to men. For women also, conflict was highly related to job satisfaction.

The findings suggested that men tend to be more homogeneous in their adaptation to teaching and are more inclined to be satisfied and committed despite holding professional attitudes and occupational values which conflict with those of senior teachers.

The study discusses some of the implications of the findings for the training institution and the importance, particularly for women teachers, of coping with conflict in the teaching situation.

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