Award Restructuring in the Northern Territory Education Industry:

Focus on the Master Teacher Scheme.

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by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis contains no material which has been submitted for examination in any other course or accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person excepting where due reference is made in the text of this thesis.

Jennifer Margaret Elvery

30 October 1994
ABSTRACT

This study describes and analyses the effects of the award restructuring process on aspects of the Northern Territory education industry. The special focus of the study was the Master Teacher scheme which was a major element of the implementation of award restructuring in the Northern Territory education sector. The study attempts to link conceptions of productivity attached to award restructuring with the effects of the Master Teacher scheme, and then to link these effects with any other conceptions of productivity which arise in the research.

The data was collected from documents housed with the Australian Education Union (Northern Territory), twenty-five newly-confirmed master teachers, and six school and system administrators. A case study approach was used to determine the relationship between the aims of the award restructuring process and the effects of the Master Teacher scheme. This was cross-referenced with the views of the administrators, and the Northern Territory background to the implementation award restructuring.

The results indicate that the Master Teacher scheme is generally providing teachers with access to the better careers foreshadowed in the Structural Efficiency Principle. Despite this, there still appear to be problems pertaining to the correlation of those perceived to be 'master teachers' and those who are granted the status. It is likely that this difficulty is also linked with the other significant hindrance to productivity, which is the ways in which the appraisal process and the report which emerges from it can discourage a teacher.

It also is clear that the Master Teacher scheme is neither the sole means of encouraging productivity nor the sole measure of it. Several of the master teachers indicated that they would have performed in the ways they had anyway, regardless of possible rewards. They were also aware of teachers who did not have master teacher status, but who were working in a highly professional and productive way.

The ambiguities of the literature are maintained to a significant degree. Using a selection of possible criteria, a process and a career structure, the Northern Territory Department of Education has sought to measure, reward and encourage productivity in the school system. The findings of this research show that it is not the total picture. Yet it is at least a small picture of how the professional and industrial paradigms of the workplace might join together to recognise the value of productivity in an educational context.
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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND

Introduction

The economic situation which arose in the 1980s prompted a reappraisal of Australia's economic and industrial place in the world. The reconsideration of several aspects of our national economic and industrial health was contextualised in the desire for reform so that Australia's international competitiveness could be enhanced. A national sense of loss prevailed for this situation contrasted sharply with images of Australia's prosperous past. Several politicians and officers of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) invoked the hope of a prosperous future where a leaner and meaner industrial infrastructure would lead to a renewed prosperity.

It has been the role of the Federal Labor government to initiate and oversee the transition in our industrial basis, mounted under the title of 'microeconomic reform'. In some areas, this term has been synonymous with unemployment and reduced functions of the enterprise. John Dawkins, as Minister for Education, Employment and Training (1987-1991) in the Federal Hawke Labor Government, was the minister responsible for most of the restructuring in the higher education sector, which, in turn, influenced the frameworks of other education sectors.

During the 1980s, education became viewed much more as an industry. This period saw the emergence of 'white collar' power in the ACTU, as professional unions were welcomed into the fold. Paradigms of industry and industrial relations were challenged as a result of the changes in the economy and the changing power relations in the peak union organisations. A new policy, based on a new principle was announced in order to take account of the changes, particularly the need for Australian industry to become more productive, and, therefore more competitive:

Education at all levels was to be more directly responsive to the productive requirements of the economy. It had to provide the skills and competencies needed for economic recovery by a restructured, globally competitive, and unprotected private sector (Knight, 1992, p.29).
Award restructuring

The concept of award restructuring is introduced as the means of improving productivity by upgrading the skills of the Australian workforce. This related to the new imperative to develop a highly competent workforce with new competencies or work skills acquired in either the formal education sectors...or on-the-job training (Bluer and Carmichael, 1991, p.24).

Once there was a realisation that macroeconomic reform needed to underpin microeconomic reform, the government introduced a two-tier wages system in 1987. This new system was based on 'pay for productivity', and was supported by the introduction of the Structural Efficiency Principle (SEP) in 1988. This principle was an attempt to prompt real change in the workplace through a look at the [comparatively] large picture of an industry, rather than at different workers within it, and their claim for wage increase. Increases in wages and salaries were tied to the justification that unions which were party to an award formally agreed to co-operate positively in a fundamental review of that award with a view to implementing measures to improve the efficiency of industry to provide workers with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs. Award restructuring was endorsed in the National Wage Case of 1989, and became one of the bases of the government's relationship with industry during the intervening period between 1989 and the time of writing.

The link between productivity and efficiency and award restructuring, was made explicit in the National Wage Case decision of 1988:

Any new wage system introduced should build on the steps already taken to encourage greater productivity and efficiency. Attention must now be directed toward the more fundamental institutionalised elements that operate to reduce the potential for increased productivity and efficiency [Print H4000, 5].

Perhaps it was simplistic on the part of the government and the Industrial Relations Commission to propose that one policy involving one main principle would accommodate all industries. Yet, it was a conscious attempt to avoid the inconsistencies created by industrial determinations being made without reference to common elements. Award restructuring was implemented in the metals industry first, and it was a beguiling possibility that all industries would fit the award restructuring template. This issue will be elaborated in later chapters.
The emergence of a new paradigm for industrial negotiations was explicit in the Structural Efficiency Principle and implicit in award restructuring. There had been a long history in Australia of adversarial behaviour between employer and employee groups. Unions and employers were at loggerheads, and 'agreements' (sic) were forged in a similar atmosphere to wartime treaties: often it was the way that the perceived victor sought to regulate the behaviour of the perceived vanquished, causing resentment and an embittered employer-employee culture. The notion of co-operation towards improvement of the system so that workers within the industry could be part of improved productivity was a movement out of this paradigm into co-operation and consensus. The Industrial Relations Commission invited joint submissions from employer and union groups, demanding that there had been attempts at consensus before granting pay increases.

Education as an industry

Some might consider the words 'education industry' oxymoronic. The framework of 'education as industry' has been used increasingly in recent times, most particularly because award restructuring perceives sectors seeking the deliberations of the Industrial Relations Commission as industries which have the potential to become more productive and efficient.

Knight (1992) traces the development of 'education as an industry' in Australia. While, in 1929, the Federated State School Teachers Association of Australia had their application to the High Court rejected on the grounds that they did not work in an industry, and the 'anti-industrial' bias of the white collar unions and the public service sector kept them apart from mainstream union politics, the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations affiliated with the ACTU in 1978, followed by the Australian Teachers' Federation which became the single largest affiliate of the ACTU in 1979. The higher education and independent schools sectors were recognised as industries in the mid 1980s.

Education institutions are now part of the industrial relations landscape at national and state levels. This is not the only way of understanding what happens in the education sphere: the professional constructs on education are still there, but rather than operating in isolation, they intersect with the industrial relations framework, creating a complex set of problems and possibilities. A central issue, focused in the research and discussion to follow, is whether the industrial relations concepts of productivity and efficiency, rooted in the realm of economics, can relate to the way that productivity and efficiency are experienced in other
educational frameworks. If the industrial relations system is to have meaning as it applies to the education industry, then there needs to be some way of harmonising the realities of the education process and the industrial process.

This problem is relevant to the very significant sector of service industries, where some, like Knight, would contend that 'the tasks are so complex and imprecise, ... the focus is the development of human beings rather than the production of commodities' (Knight 1992, p.37).

Efficiency and Productivity

In economic discourse, efficiency and productivity equate with inputs and outputs: expenditure and income are readily quantifiable for each, respectively. In primary and secondary industry, the inputs are the raw materials, the time of the worker, the seasons, the market, and so on, while the output can be counted in terms of tonnes, barrels or some similar measure. The profits to the industry can be calculated by subtracting the costs of the inputs from the price received for the outputs, whether these are tangible goods, a particular service, or some other product. This economic clarity is at the root of award restructuring.

In the metals industry, which was the origin of these concepts, it was also clear that the barriers to world-competitiveness were the multiplicity of work categories - 364 in all - and this was a major factor in the inefficiency of the industry. These divisions were supported by awards which enshrined the differences. Locked within these divisions, workers did not have the means of moving beyond their area of responsibility, as the work descriptions were so finely tuned. The reconfiguration of these anti-productivity factors through broadbanning and multiskilling became known as award restructuring, which was a self-explanatory term in its original context.

Whether this process can be simply applied to the education industry is open to question. Ashenden (1992) makes the point that the application of measures such as 'broadbanning' and 'multiskilling' to education, may have been antithetical to the needs of teachers. It does seem that there was no rethink of what efficiency and productivity might mean in the service industries, as the model established in the metals industries was assumed to be encouraging of greater efficiency and productivity in the entire economic sphere.
The Industrial Relations Commission's working definitions of efficiency and productivity became related to the origins of award restructuring: efficiency was still related to the minimisation of cost inputs compared with the value of the outputs. Under award restructuring, the main ways in which the costs of the inputs were minimised was through changing the structures of the workplace, so that workers were not locked out of 'more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs'. Added to this was the incorporation of training provisions which gave workers access to better careers. The assumption was that increasing productivity meant making more effective use of resources: 'producing more goods or services with no greater use of resources, or maintaining the same level of production using fewer resources' (Yerbury and Karlsson, 1992, p.275).

The National Wage Case decision of 1989 made a further deliberation about the productivity and efficiency of an enterprise as it related to wage levels of workers:

Wage increases achieved through enterprise bargaining ought, in our view, to be justified by and commensurate with employees' contributions to enterprise efficiency and productivity. In saying this, we are not expressing an opinion that wage earners have no claim to benefit from the growth of productivity due to other causes such as the general advance of technology and the growth of the capital stock. It should be recognised, however, that distribution of all of the benefits of productivity growth at the enterprise level would lead to inequity and, ultimately, to a distorted and unsustainable wage structure. Such a situation is compatible with neither a flexible labour market nor industrial peace (National Wage Case, 1989, p.4).

This allowed some enterprise bargaining on the basis of efficiency and productivity to be used as a supplement to implementation of the Structural Efficiency Principle. Thus, efficiency and productivity were still made the criteria for industrial deliberations, but the process was being continuously fine-tuned to the realities of the workplace.

It is the assumption that the solutions derived from the metals industry should meet the needs of the education industry as it goes through award restructuring that stimulates discussion in this work. The dimensions of efficiency and productivity in education, particularly productivity, defy quantification of the sort so prevalent in primary and secondary industrial sectors. Ashenden (1992) refutes the assumption that these solutions so broadly applied were what was required to reform the education industry toward greater productivity and structural efficiency:

What we need to take from metals is not their solutions but their mind-set, their problem-solving methods, their willingness to look at the 'industry' as a whole and to question it from the ground, from the work process up (1992, p.68).
This challenge is what writers such as Ashenden (1992) and Marginson (1990, 1991, 1992) have been attempting to achieve. This work is an exploration of the same field, but applied to Northern Territory schools.

**Advanced Skills Teacher Classification**

Bluer (1993) claims that the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification 'is the central ... manifestation of award restructuring as it relates to school teachers', and this is because 'the overriding role of the AST is to increase the productivity of the enterprise - the school - by increasing the skills and knowledge levels of the teaching workforce' (Bluer, 1993, p.1). The implementation of the AST classification was one of the strongest initiatives, nationwide, of award restructuring in the education industry. While the AST schemes differ in their operation from state to state (and territory!), there is a template in which are enshrined the typical features of the concept.

The key, linked ideas in the Structural Efficiency Principle, of improving efficiency in industry so that workers would have access to an improved career and job structures, were given expression through the establishment of the AST classification. Bluer (1993) shows how the professional and industrial understandings were linked when he quotes the Executive Summary of the Report of the Inservice Teacher Education Project, entitled, *Teachers Learning: Improving Australian Schools Through Inservice Teacher Training and Development* (1988). The report set forth two tasks - one of which was professional in nature, and one of which pertained to industrial relations. The first was to select, and possibly certify, highly skilled teachers. The second was to develop new career structures and assignments for teachers who are certified to have advanced teaching skills.

Bluer laments that the AST concept was not developed significantly professionally before it became the object of industrial negotiations between unions and employers. The exploration of the classification as a professional one, is taking place through the newly established Australian Teaching Council, and in workplaces as teachers conceive of how the improved career structures can affect the structure of production in the workplace.

This research looks at the industrial aspects of the AST classification (in the Northern Territory, known as the Master Teacher scheme), and attempts to evaluate its effects on the productivity of education in the Northern Territory. At the same time, there will be an investigation of factors affecting productivity in NT schools, and links made between these
and the Master Teacher scheme, and other aspects of award restructuring where appropriate.

Purpose of the Study

Using the framework of award restructuring and its determinations of efficiency and productivity, the research will ascertain the development of award restructuring in the Northern Territory secondary school sector, and will focus specifically on the implementation and development of the Master Teacher scheme in the Northern Territory as one of the major changes wrought through the award restructuring process.

The effects of the Master Teacher scheme have not been examined while the current scheme has been in operation. There was an earlier scheme - a proto-AST program - which ran from the inception of the Commonwealth Teaching Service (CTS) in 1973 and was carried over into the Northern Territory Teaching Service (NTTS) when it was formed in 1980. 'Master Teachers' under the first scheme were assessed by the same document (latterly called a 'Promotion Assessment Report') as those aspiring to promotions positions. Once designated as 'Master Teacher', a teacher did not need to be reassessed, and salary was paid at the Senior Teacher rate. These conferrals were difficult to obtain (Zander, 1992), and afforded the master teachers considerable status within the school as leading teachers.

The reframed Master Teacher scheme came into effect during 1989, superseding the former scheme, but allowing existing master teachers to be reclassified as Master Teacher Level 2 (MT2) or to undergo assessment for Master Teacher Level 3 (MT3) recognition (Zander, 1992). The newer Master Teacher scheme, with three levels offering an allowance which was to be added to the officer's base salary, was created within the policy context of award restructuring, but was able to capitalise on the program which was already in existence, as well as teachers' existing conceptualisation of the program.

Questions raised in this study, in relation to the Master Teacher scheme will be concerning the degree to which the scheme has enabled greater efficiency and productivity in the Northern Territory government school sector. The examination of this scheme will be in the light of the apparent working definitions of efficiency and productivity used by the Industrial Relations Commission and also by dimensions of productivity and efficiency suggested by the literature. The Master Teacher scheme is both a professional accreditation scheme, and an industrial relations measure.
The research will survey the award restructuring process as it has been applied to the education industry, and particularly the way in which it has been applied to the Northern Territory school sector. In order to do this, the documentation pertaining to award restructuring in the Northern Territory will be analysed and evaluated so that there will be a policy context for the more specific focus on the way that the Master Teacher scheme is impacting on the urban secondary public schools in the Northern Territory.

This quest will be to pursue some of the concerns of Ashenden (1992), who questions the applicability of the award restructuring solution to the need for efficiency and productivity in education, and Marginson (1990, 1991, 1992) who questions the relationships being established between education and a productivity concept rooted in the world of neo-classical economics.

This means that the examination will be at more than one level. There will be an a priori assumption that there is a need for Australian industry to become more productive (ACTU/TDC, 1987, and the Australian government's consistent political rhetoric, since 1987). The research will adopt a case study approach in order to evaluate the degree to which efficiency and productivity have been engendered in NT schools through the implementation of the Master Teacher scheme, post 1989. This will be extrapolated to link with an overview of award restructuring in the NT education industry, and also an evaluation of the link assumed in government policy, between award restructuring and educational productivity (i.e. productivity in the education industry).

Research questions

The research will:

- ascertain whether the Master Teacher scheme has led to improved efficiency and productivity in schools,
- ascertain whether the implementation of award restructuring in NT schools has resulted in improved productivity and efficiency, and
• discern the parameters of productivity in NT schools, as service industries, and discover the degree of intersection between the industrial and professional determinations of productivity.

Northern Territory schools

The Northern Territory's relatively small population requires only a small number of schools. In 1993 there were 146 government schools and 26 non-government schools in the Northern Territory. The total number of students was 37 103, 12 627 of whom were Aboriginal (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1994, p.ix).

The secondary schools are located in the main population centres of Darwin and its surrounding rural area, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Nhulunbuy and Alice Springs. In 1993, there were 7 546 secondary students studying in the Northern Territory. This research is a case study of schools where 4 001 (53%) of these students are studying (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1994, p.33). These students are based in secondary schools in the Darwin urban region.

Significance of the research

The May 1990 review of the progress of the SEP and the minimum rates adjustment exercise requested by the ACTU noted that structural efficiency exercises had focused at the award level but the ultimate effects would have to be assessed at the workplace level. While the Industrial Relations Commission and government sectors are looking at the 'big picture', it is the aim of this research to accept the implied invitation of the May 1990 review of the SEP and seek the perceptions of leading teachers in the NT school sector of the education industry.

Zander (1992, p.99) quotes comments made from respondents in the trial of his instrument. Concerns raised were related to a need to review the implementation of the Master Teacher system, the duties required of Master Teacher Level 1s, and the criteria used in the appraisal process whereby some teachers perceived as being highly suitable for Master Teacher Level 1 status missed out. This study seeks to deal with these concerns, and so is of significance to Master Teachers especially.
Limitations of the Research

While it would have been ideal to cover the total number of schools in the Darwin area with semi-structured interviews, it was not possible to do so. It has been necessary to be selective of schools: I have chosen to look at urban secondary schools, which have different student and teacher demographic profiles to schools which might be in more isolated areas of the Northern Territory, and which may differ from primary and tertiary education sectors in regard to the experience of award restructuring, and productivity (Georgiou, 1978). While the research hopes to address the questions as they relate to the education industry in the Northern Territory as a whole, some of the findings may not readily transfer to other sectors. These eventualities may be the bases of further research.

Urban secondary schools were selected because they are large, complex, diverse organisations, employ significant numbers of teachers, and contain a large segment of the Northern Territory's student population. In these schools, it is possible to observe clusters of master teachers undertaking a variety of complex organisational tasks. They have the additional advantage of being readily accessible to the researcher.

Summary

The development of the industrial relations system has been sketched in order to demonstrate the way in which education has become embraced by policies which tie it to other industries in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. The policy of award restructuring has expressed the political and industrial relations system concerns for efficiency and productivity in all industries. This includes the education industry.

Due to the questioning of how efficiency and productivity can be constructed in the service sector, and also how the principles of award restructuring can be applied to the education context, it is relevant to investigate the effects of this policy in workplaces and systems. This study proposes to look at the links made between Australia's need for industrial productivity, the quest for efficiency and productivity in the education industry, and the ways in which we can perceive education to be productive. The policy of award restructuring will be evaluated and then the Master Teacher scheme examined within that context, in order to see whether it has fulfilled the requirements of efficiency and
productivity as defined by the industrial courts, but also as perceived by the literature. It is to that literature that this study now turns.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE SURVEY

Introduction

The literature of educational productivity is plentiful, though it becomes clear that productivity in education is conceived in many different ways. The perception of education as an industry has enabled further exploration with regard to productivity, but has also given rise to some unhelpful and unwarranted assumptions which have not done justice to the essential elements of the education process (Ashenden, 1992).

The consideration of educational productivity is contextualised in Australia within a perception of crisis, occasioned by the economic recession and the need to restructure an Australian industrial base which will be internationally competitive. It is also implied in this understanding of crisis, that Australia will then be able to take its appropriate place in the world once the slide into 'banana republicanism' is stemmed (Farmer, 1986).

Overarching the discussion of educational productivity are political questions which have to do with economics and the nature of education. As Bill Kelty puts it, 'There is an urgent need to develop in Australia a production consciousness and culture, both in industry and in the community' (ACTU/TDC, 1987, p.154, quoted in Kelty 1988, p.66). Kelty goes on to explain that the education process should be the means for this to occur. Boomer (1986) makes a similar connection, which is also alluded to by Caldwell (1993), Burke (1991) and Mason (1988). The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) uses this liaison as the impetus for its work:

The pressure generated by Australia's need to improve its work productivity and economic standing in the Asian region lies at the heart of efforts being made to develop national competency standards for teaching (NPQTL, 1993, p.5).

This link between Australia's need to improve its economic performance in the world trade sphere and the way that education is supposed to enable this, has been reinforced by the industrial relations system (Marginson, 1992b, p.1). This system, particularly through the processes associated with award restructuring, has been seen as a means of monitoring the movement towards improvement in work productivity, and of rewarding those who can
demonstrate productive change with pay increases or other incentives (Macpherson and Riley, 1992).

Some commentators have expressed hesitation about this alliance between economic goals, educational policy and industrial relations, especially in relation to the problems of measurement and what is thereby being assumed about the nature of education (See, for example, Bowen, 1988; Norris, 1991; Blackmore and Kenway, 1988; Cope and Kalantzis, 1989; Bates, 1992; Marginson, 1991, Burckhardt, 1989, DeCourcy, 1993).

What follows is a survey of the different conceptualisations of educational productivity available in the literature, with some comments related to the central issues above. Key questions arising in this context are:

• How can student productivity be measured?
• What criteria can we apply to teacher productivity?
• Is it possible to measure educational productivity?
• What are its indices?
• What are the implications for the industrial relations system?

Hopefully, some responses to these questions will become evident through this exploration.

The question of measurement

Productivity measurement in education hinges on the definitions of productivity in education and, while this chapter ponders many of the possibilities, some of the issues surrounding measurement of productivity in education will be sketched here. Marginson (1991, p.203) states that productivity is best understood as 'output per unit of measured input'. This remains a touchstone for evaluating others' attempts to discover the critical elements in educational productivity. Embraced in Marginson's definition are the concepts of input and output, and the issue of measurement. It is around these three elements that much of the discussion revolves. For productivity to be measured, there needs to be a reliable measurement of input and output. But what constitutes 'reliable measurement' in education is subject to much conjecture. Yerbury and Karlsson (1992, p.275) assert that productivity is 'a measure of production per unit of input', but once again, the way in which input and production are measured is not broached.

DeCourcy (1993) claims that productivity is indeed an unhelpful concept when applied to education, because it masks the possibilities for accountability and measurement. He
discerns fundamental differences between education and business, where productivity as a measure has some applicability. He claims that a more realistic means of measuring the performance of schools is to scrutinise their 'responsiveness' rather than productivity. If schools are community service organisations, and as such are distinct from business and industry then it is 'responsiveness' rather than productivity as a concept, which enables more finely-tuned measurement to take place:

Different things will need to be done in different schools, depending on the needs both of the students and of the school organisation ... Responsiveness implies looking both at the need, and the extent to which it is met. To argue against productivity seems a little like arguing against motherhood, until one has an alternative and more appropriate criterion for improvement (De Courcy, 1993, p.20, emphasis in original).

In putting forward 'responsiveness' as a replacement for the concept of 'productivity', DeCourcy claims that responsiveness is more attuned to what makes educational institutions successful, whereas the understanding of productivity which is applied to business and trade does not appear to fit as well into the education environment. In education, the inputs and the outputs are affected by students, teachers and education institutions as well as process, and these entities become part of the transaction. Outcomes are thus difficult to compute.

Stokes (1993) looks at performance indicators as they can be applied to education as a means of accountability, and reflects that while performance indicators provide a useful means of evaluating educational programs, and thereby making judgements on the products, the descriptive nature of educational indicators is such that they are not always quantifiable. In support of this, she quotes the New South Wales Annual Reports Act (1985) which specifies that qualitative and quantitative measures will be used to show the efficiency and effectiveness of education programs (Stokes, 1993, p.30).

The Statewide Evaluation of Utah's Productivity Project Studies Program noted the continuing redefinitions of educational productivity, and distilled what they construed it to be as, "Productivity" means improving the effectiveness and efficiency of educational programs and/or increasing the equality of access to educational opportunities' (Utah State University, 1990, p.29).
Student Productivity

Some writers focus on student achievement as the means to, and an index of, educational productivity. Johnson and Walberg (1989) point to nine productivity factors in student achievement, measured by grade point average. Their productivity model involved a consideration of the students' aptitude, type of instruction, and the environment of learning, including the home environment (see Walberg, 1984) and the support of peers in the learning process. These factors have been used by other researchers (e.g. Fraser et al. 1987) as the basis for further exploration. Georgiou (1978) draws on Keeves (1972), whose empirical findings suggested that structural variables relating to the home environment had only a small direct effect on achievement, but concludes that their major effect was in regards to their power to affect the attitude of students (Georgiou, 1978, p.35). He also reminds us that students' time needs to be considered as one of the inputs in any input/output equation.

Another means of measuring the effectiveness of the educational process is to adopt a competency based approach to assessing student learning. This is a variation on the use of grade point averages or standardised test scores to measure outcomes. Norris (1991) reflects on the inadequacy of such measures in detecting the degree to which students have mastered the complex, interrelated skills which the competencies purport to denote, and the concept of education which is advocated by many in the face of a more instrumentalist approach:

The precise specification of performance or outcomes rests on and leads to a mistaken view of both education and knowledge. Mistaken because there is a fundamental contradiction between the autonomy needed to act in the face of change and situational uncertainty and the predictability inherent in the specification of outcomes. ... What we have is a concept that has been psychologised and divorced from the cultural context of enactment and valuing (1991, pp.335 and 337).

Mary Kelly (NPQTL, 1993) echoes this concern by assuring teachers that 'We have been keen to see that the intangible, non-quantifiable parts of the teaching process, including competencies underpinned by values and attitudes, are not left out of any draft set of competencies (1993, p.5).' The refocusing of schools on improving student outcomes is connected by Louden and Wallace (1994) with new forms of work organisation for teachers (1994, p.1). This nexus was at the heart of the National Schools Project which was a component of the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning.
At a time when the economic and political necessity is for learners who will be able to master the ability to operate in changing work contexts, we have developed culturally bound and educationally unidimensional means of assessing student success. Our educational institutions are not being as effective as they could be in the 'enactment and valuing' aspects of the educative process, and the competency based approach may not be developing workers who are able to meet the requirements of a changing workplace.

**Teacher Productivity**

Some, such as Murnane, see that the critical element in educational productivity is the teacher, the education worker. Murnane (1981) deflects criticism from the ways that seniority operates in the public school employment of teachers, given the tendency of education bureaucracies to advocate the adoption of a more free market approach to teacher employment contracts. The situation which he analyses is similar to the Australian school situation in the 1990s, where declining student enrolments are set against a changing milieu for industrial relations.

Upon consideration of the role of public schooling in society, particularly in relation to the need for equality, Murnane argues that contracts based on seniority rules and enriched with some incentives such as Advanced Skills Teacher schemes and grants for special projects (the basis for most teacher employment in Australian public schools) can be more effective in promoting productivity than contracts which reward on the basis of supervisor evaluation or estimates of student learning. As he puts it, 'The responses elicited by seniority rules may be less detrimental to the performance of public education than the responses elicited by contracts that reward assessed productivity' (Murnane, 1981, p.27).

Taylor and O'Driscoll (1993) detail the way that assessment of productivity is being related to salary in the private sector in New Zealand. In the private enterprises studied by them, workers' attainment of certain outputs was assigned a percentage and that figure was then applied to the workers' salaries. This makes paying for productivity a simple process, but one which is problematic if applied too simplistically to education. As a counter to this, Marginson (1992b) warns of narrowing the definitions of outputs and efficiency in education so that it would be more possible to pay cash for productivity. He asserts that the variables of the educative process defy narrow conceptions of productivity and therefore of the work of educators.
If the process of teacher appraisal is to be significant in improving the performance of teaching professionals, it must be an honest process. Where there is a link to rewards and punishments, often signified by salary adjustments, there is a tendency to gloss over some of the areas for reflection and evaluation in the anxiety thus created. While automatic progression up an incremental scale is being questioned by education employers, the arbitrating processes envisioned as the means toward applying rewards to those who have demonstrated desirable performance can encourage highly visible but inconsequential activity by those who wish to demonstrate heightened performance. This is a situation where the desire to reward productivity might mitigate against a non-ephemeral form of it, due to the over-simplifying of the conceptualisation of productivity.

Carkhuff (1984) believes that teacher training is the most critical element in shaping our education process in the Age of Productivity. The aim of this training will have the effect that teachers will understand that the Age of Productivity heralds a new way of functioning, different from the Industrial Age, and so education must adapt. While the aim of the Industrial Age was to maximise the inputs of a process, the imperative of the Age of Productivity is to write oneself out of the inputs and to make the outputs infinite. This is a variant of others' perceptions of the need to accept the reality of a shrinking resource base for education, and to ensure that this does not mean a commensurate reduction in the productivity of education (Bowen, 1988, Connors, 1992, and Berenson and Croteau, 1984).

Keeves (1972) and Rosier (1974), referred to in Georgiou (1978), affirm some of these perspectives. While removed from the milieu of New Age language, and economic rationalism, Keeves' work suggests that teacher experience and special training are significant contributors to student performance, and Rosier claims that achievement in science appears to be linked with the availability of ancillary staff, careful planning of courses, preparation of teaching material and dedication of teachers (Georgiou, 1978).

Bluer and Carmichael (1991, p.28) see that it is the development of 'appropriate careers' for teachers which allows for the changes envisaged under the award restructuring process to be 'established and sustained'. While the economic recession has stemmed the leakage of trained teachers to other professions, a high degree of frustration in the teaching ranks has seen the loss of competent teachers from the profession. The Advanced Skills Teacher status has been a significant measure which has sought to address this concern. A satisfactory range of career paths for education workers is conceived of as contributing to educational productivity.
Amidst the invasion of technology and economics into the quest for productivity in education, there is a strong emphasis in the literature on the personal qualities of the teacher and how significant those qualities can be in contributing to the productivity of the educational institution. This is featured in the contributions of Carkhuff (1984), Rocha (1984), Aspy and Roebuck (1984), Griffin (1984), Bates (1982), and Seddon (1990).

This research supports what most people in the general community, and indeed in the teaching community, believe as a tenet of productivity: teacher interpersonal skills, especially empathy, are critical in producing student achievement on some measures. There are limitations to the measurement of the effect, and the measurement of the input. Aspy and Roebuck (1984) found that students' IQ scores rose by 10 points when the teacher had a high level of empathy: high empathy was 34% more productive of IQ point increases than performance from teachers deemed to be low in empathy. Student achievement, measured on standardised tests, increased by 40% with a high empathy teacher. Teachers' empathic understanding was found to relate significantly to gains in IQ, gains in achievement test scores, decreases in absences, decreases in discipline problems and increases in student self-concept. This begs the question of whether empathy can be defined clearly as a variable, but is what one would expect. The researchers see empathy as being able to place oneself in the frame of reference of another, and a significant skill for the educative process. They also found a positive correlation for supervisor empathy and teacher productivity. The valuing of empathy is part of the culture of teaching, and this research is significant for the placing of empathy alongside other moves for increased productivity such as technological improvements, stronger supervision by, and accountability to, parent or bureaucratic bodies, and industrial relations reforms.

**Joint Productivity**

It might be relevant here to affirm that teacher and student productivity are closely related, as they are part of the educational setting which ties students, teachers and their institution together. Marginson (1990b, p.20) urges and examination of 'joint productivity of teacher and student', which would more accurately reflect the collaborative and interactive nature of teaching and learning, especially in the post-compulsory years. One of his conclusions is that 'single or universal measures of output, productivity and efficiency should be discarded and avoided' (1990b, p.29), as they cannot reflect the complexities of the teaching-learning process. Georgiou (1978, p.38) echoes this when he speaks of educational institutions from primary through to tertiary levels as being 'multi-product entities'.
Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1994), Pyle (1986), and Clark, Boyer and Corcoran (1985) also look to the interrelatedness of educational productivity. Pyle has explored this issue using two dimensional interest plots for stakeholders in education, representing productivity values for each interest group. This provides a graphic means for assessing productivity. As Pyle observes, 'Productivity is a function of impact which is itself a function of the factors of availability and quality' (1986, p.77). Clark et al, examined ways that the teacher could interact with the faculty in order to contribute towards institutional productivity. They corroborate the notion that productivity in a faculty is related to mutuality and 'permeable boundaries' between members and their responsibilities. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) have made a strong contribution in this field by putting forward strategies for the development of 'interactive professionalism' in schools, so that there might be an increase in the probability of productivity.

Robson (1990), in his provocative article entitled, Schools Must Change, concurs with Fullan and Hargreaves in relation to the need for making teachers more productive workers:

It is clearly very difficult to keep arguing that parallel classes in the same school, neighbouring schools, or even statewide are so completely different that the more co-operative approach would not cut down on the preparation workload that has been foisted upon teachers (1990, p.11).

Ashenden (1992) has put forward ways in which the structures of schooling can be adjusted to meet criteria for industrial productivity. Part of his solution is to take away the 'one teacher in a classroom of thirty students' mindset and to vary the ways in which we conduct schooling by considering the employment of paraprofessionals such as social workers and administrative officers to assist the teachers on the school site.

**Institutional Productivity**

The institutional focus on productivity brings us full circle. It is here that the industrial relations implications become more obvious and therefore the measurement process becomes more perilous. The award restructuring process has prompted an examination of education as an industry, subject to the same industrial relations mechanisms as the metals industry where award restructuring had its initiation and where productivity has been easier to measure. Ashenden (1992) and Robson (1990) both demand that the education industry
demonstrate the energy and rigour displayed by other industries in the past decade, as they have struggled with the need to become more efficient and productive.

Georgiou (1978) pleads that research in the field of educational productivity should take account of research as an output. Burchardt (1989) elaborates on the concepts of technical efficiency and allocative efficiency with regard to their ability to elucidate the research framework of productivity in educational institutions. He compares and contrasts the productive processes of the business/industrial world and the world of education, crediting a simple input-output analysis because 'the education sector has a long gestation period for the generation of its output' (p5). DeCourcy (1993) draws a similar contrast between instrumental and service productivity - one pertaining more appropriately to the secondary industry/business domain, and one pertaining to education.

As Knight, Lingard and Porter (1992, p.243) conceive it, a focus on productivity rather than principally on efficiency is needed as 'there are no further possibilities for more efficiencies without eating into quality, for in the current context, efficiency is constructed simply as "more for the same" or "more for less"'.

Marginson (1992b) posits the difference between efficiency-driven policies and productivity-driven policies: the emphasis on inputs, referred to above does not take into account ways that the education industry can 'cash-in' on its productivity or expand through it. Governments have been more at home with an efficiency-driven policy machine which has continually narrowed the scope of education and restricted the resource base. The measurement model used can confound an understanding of productivity in the institution or system because 'measurement tends to create its own "truth" about outputs' (Marginson 1992b, p.6).

The evaluative paradigm determines what is measured and its significance. Marginson rails against research models which do not take account of the processes of schooling, which consider the school as, in effect, a 'black box' (1992a, p.12).

It is right for education institutions to acknowledge their accountability, but questions should be raised when accountability is focused on finances, as is often the case. Berenson and Croteau (1984, p.75) assume that productivity cannot be increased without accountability, that administration is the fundamental unit of accountability in education, and that accountability is not possible without clearly specified and measurable outcomes. Ingvarson and Chadbourne (1994, p.39) see accountability as 'what teachers owe the public
in return for the trust the public has invested' but, as indicated above, this accountability is not imposed upon teachers alone - it is a responsibility which is shared among education stakeholders such as government, employers and the teaching profession. While Marginson (1992b) has noted how efficiency-driven policies have resulted in an accountability which has starved the education system of resources, the move towards specified outcomes with regard to productivity might enable accountability to work for the expansion of the resource base, given enlightened policy makers. There are tensions between accountability and flexibility, especially in the fiscal area, but,

In the short run it is likely that increases in efficiency and productivity could be achieved if conditions or incentives which will encourage managers to combine inputs in an optimum way and to improve input-output relationships by introducing appropriate new techniques are built into education systems at a variety of levels (Snell, 1982, p.183).

Goodwin and Young (1978) and Mullin (1982) also declare the fiscal components of productivity and put forward accountability as a means of safeguarding education from decreasing resources. Mullin further asserts that, 'conceptual and empirical estimation of the benefits of education depends upon both measurement and evaluation' (Mullin 1982, p.86).

**Productivity increase**

Who has the power to improve the productivity of education? Governments and other education providers have tried to do this through the adoption of a corporate model of education, which is meant to expose education to all the benefits of the market *(sic)* (Cope and Kalantzis, 1989; Blackmore and Kenway, 1988).

This sort of thinking has been at the vanguard of the movement toward devolution in Australian schools. Based on faith that the market will be the ultimate arbiter of excellence, State authorities have ceded greater responsibility for financial and human resource management within certain parameters, to local school personnel. In this context, the philosophical link between economics and education is made through the notion of the 'market'. Schools become increasingly part of the free enterprise system, where they, too, seek to achieve 'profit' through the acceptance of 'greater responsibility, greater flexibility, and greater accountability' (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1987, p.19).
This realigning of schools within a corporate paradigm has allowed for a minimising of schools' distinctives. The indices of productivity for schools may be different in some respects, even though the necessity for financial viability impinges upon both businesses and schools. Writers such as Murnane (1981), Bates (1982;1992) and Bowen (1988) believe that educational institutions have a social mandate which transcends concerns such as financial success, extra-curricular interests and being featured in rugby league tables of top scoring schools in external exams.

Murnane (1981) and Bates (1992) have hesitations about the validity of a corporate paradigm for schools per se. Beare (1982) takes a more positive view by making some worthwhile observations about the ways in which educational institutions could adopt more effective ways of communicating their productivity results to consumers. Bates maintains the distinction between the processes of the corporation and those of education institutions.

Award restructuring and increasing educational productivity
Award restructuring is the process by which the Australian government has sought to increase the productivity of industry, including the education industry. Involved in the government's thinking was the idea that teaching and learning could be linked to microeconomic reform and national productivity (Gaffney & Crowther, 1993). The main national plank of the policy in education has been the implementation of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification. The National Wage Case decision of 7 August 1989 put forward some measures which could assist in improving the efficiency of industry: the one related to the AST category was that of 'establishing skill-related career paths which provide an incentive for workers to continue to participate in skill formation'. It is primarily on this basis that the AST classification scheme should be evaluated if one is looking at the scheme within the framework of award restructuring.

The aim of the AST classification was to provide teachers with a career path which enabled them to develop and share their pedagogical skills, rather than a career path necessarily involving promotion to administrative positions. The invidious position of most of the nation's teachers was that they were locked into the highest increment of the pay scale, which had been made an Australia-wide benchmark only in recent times, and had little incentive to continue to develop the skills which had the potential both to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools and be the basis for a stronger professionalism within teaching. Two publications about the AST classification unconsciously imitate each other in their exploration of issues surrounding the implementation of AST schemes: one is entitled, Advanced Skills Teaching: A Demonstration of Professionalism or Opportunity
Lost? (Gaffney and Crowther, 1993) and the other is Advanced Skills Teacher-1: Lost Opportunity or Professional Breakthrough (Chadbourne and Ingvarson, 1991). Both titles broach the possibility that the Advanced Skills Teacher classification has broken new ground in recognising teachers' skills, and enhancing the professional standing of teachers, but there is also a nagging doubt as to whether the possibilities inherent in the scheme have been realised. The process of identifying appropriate skills, and then assessing whether particular teachers have those skills, is becoming a vexed area, and some significant research is being done on criteria for selection of Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) (Zander, 1992; Callaghan, 1993, Curry, 1994). Curry, in a study based on some Catholic schools in Western Australia, alludes to what he observes as 'little room for manoeuvrability in AST Level 2 (AST2) and AST Level 3 (AST3).

Once a teacher has demonstrated exemplary practice and skills, thorough knowledge of curriculum, active involvement and leadership and all the other AST Level 1 criteria as described by the CEO, what else can be asked of this person for AST2 and AST3? This matter needs to be addressed quickly (Curry, 1994, p.30).

Bluer (1993, p.3) urges that the AST be seen in the context of improved careers for teachers, 'as an element of award restructuring, not an element tacked on to a deficient career structure - or as another stop on the automatic incremental salary scale'.

Different states and systems within Australia have implemented the classification in different ways: New South Wales for example has applied quotas and the guidelines for the administration of the process have not been clear. Some of these differences are perceived as threatening the integrity of the original concept (Burrow and Gilmore, 1993). In Victoria, AST2 and 3 positions are often tied to administrative positions within a school (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1991). One of the concerns cited by Gaffney and Crowther (1993) in relation to selection issues, is that unsuccessful applicants for AST positions may experience lower morale and have less incentive to take on or continue extra responsibility, and this has the potential to be divisive at the local school level. Thus, lower morale can give rise to lower individual productivity. School and system productivity drop as a consequence. Curry (1994) echoes these findings and adds that the use of staff in the school to appraise other staff was also potentially divisive. While award restructuring has provided impetus for the implementation of the AST classification, its effects in increasing educational productivity are dependent on the context and the structure of the implemented scheme. Whether the AST classification or award restructuring in education in general, have the potential to improve Australia's national [economic] productivity is another, more global consideration!
Zander (1992), who researched the perceptions held by Northern Territory teachers regarding criteria for assessment to Master Teacher 1 (MT1) status (the Northern Territory equivalent of AST1), suggests that, 'A worthy study would be to ascertain if the provision of AST status and accompanying merit pay results in improved teaching performance and a corresponding increase in student performance' (Zander, 1992, p.57). This present study will deal with this sort of issue by providing insights about the productivity effects of the Northern Territory Master Teacher scheme, and ways of understanding productivity in education.

Co-operation and Consensus

There is a strong sense in the literature that co-operative and consensual modes of operation are appropriate and necessary if productivity is to be developed. This has implications for employer and employee groups in the industry. Employer policies need to take account of productivity and the significance of the human processes which take place in the educational institution. Totally instrumentalist notions of education do a great disservice to the processes necessary for productivity to occur.

The instrumental approach results in a narrow definition of what constitutes productivity. It denies a broader conceptualisation of a productive culture which encompasses the cultural and social aspects of human activity, and not merely the material benefits which accrue from labour (Blackmore and Kenway, 1988, p.48).

Employee unions also need to focus on outputs: if the productivity of the education enterprise can be developed, the situation will be better for those working within it. Goodwin and Young (1978, p.29) see the bargaining process as a means of clarifying and legitimating administrative-faculty relationships and underwriting a common definition of productivity, thereby enabling all members of the education institution to be more productive. The National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning has been an attempt to achieve a growth in the productivity of schools, with bipartisan support, and exemplifies the 'win-win' mindset which sets the project apart from the adversarial industrial relations which have typified the education industry in previous years. Perception of a crisis in both the economy and education might be flawed, but it has provided a fertile meeting place for those who are stakeholders in the education industry.

Productivity goals are compatible with - and are considerably advanced by - a co-operative industrial relations environment. Because measurement of educational
outputs is fraught with difficulty and provides scope for potential conflict, there can be little effective monitoring of outputs without co-operative industrial relations. Correspondingly the orientation to outputs provides a strong basis for co-operative production (Marginson, 1991, p.207).

The student, then, has a purposeful environment within which to pursue learning, inasmuch as the factors alluded to by Johnson and Walberg (1989) permit! The Johnson and Walberg model of educational productivity noted nine factors connected with student productivity. These were divided into three categories: Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive. They can be summarised as follows:

**APTITUDE**
1. Prior Achievement - past performance in educational activities.
2. Development - age or stage of maturation.
3. Motivation - willingness to persevere on learning tasks.

**INSTRUCTION**
4. Quantity - amount of time spent in learning situations.
5. Quality - the student's perception of the value of the learning experience. The amount of instructional resources utilised and the effort put forth by instructional personnel in implementing the learning experience.

**ENVIRONMENT**
6. Home - the support of the home for learning experiences.
7. Classroom - the social context of the classroom.
8. Peers - the support of the peer group for learning.

(Johnson and Walberg, 1989, p.51)

While most of these factors are concentrated in the areas which have been identified as 'student productivity' some of them impinge on the areas pertaining to teacher and institution responsibility. These factors remind us again of the interrelatedness of productivity and particularly the areas over which the institution has little control.
Conclusion

The education industry is one which deals with human processing (Marginson 1990a, 260; Carkhuff 1984, 10), and where productivity may be enhanced by human processing. Quantitative measures signal some possible outlines of productivity in the workplace, but they do not tell the whole story. Quantitative measures can be manipulated: larger student/teacher ratios do not necessarily mean that there is greater productivity!

It is defensible to measure the productivity of some outputs without converting these to arbitrary money values. Marginson uses the example of the measurement of the number of higher education graduates at a given standard, as a ratio of the cost of inputs to education. If done over a several years, trends in the productivity of output of graduates can be obtained (Marginson 1992b, p.11). Computations such as this do not move too far away from the nature of the process which they attempt to describe.

Co-operation, accountability, teacher interpersonal skills and operation styles, institutional and government policy and student factors are all linked to educational productivity. Increased educational productivity may have the effect of enabling Australia to compete more strongly in world markets, but it will not be a productivity conceptualised solely in instrumental ways. It is a 'multiple and complex' process (Marginson 1992b, p.19) which complicates our attempts to apply a simple input-output equation. While political rhetoric does not readily accommodate to this reality, those of us in the education industry must remind political protagonists, social planners and ourselves, that, while productivity is imperative, it is multidimensional.
Chapter 3

OVERVIEW OF AWARD RESTRUCTURING IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Link with national initiatives

The principle behind the award restructuring process was the Structural Efficiency Principle, adopted in August 1988 by what is currently known as the Industrial Relations Commission:

Increases in wages and salaries or improvements in conditions allowable under the National Wage Case decision of 12 August 1988, shall be justified if the unions party to an award formally agree to co-operate positively in a fundamental review of that award with a view to implementing measures to improve the efficiency of industry to provide workers with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs (quoted in Bluer and Carmichael, 1991, p.24)

This principle, then, foreshadowed consensual processes between unions and employers, and evaluative processes whereby the award would be evaluated so that measures would be introduced to improve efficiency of the industry. This concept is inextricably linked to the idea of workers having both training opportunities toward better career structures and rewards for increased responsibility. The flexibility of workers and awards would enable industries to overcome the structural inefficiencies alluded to in Chapter 1. The purpose of these changes was to increase productivity in every industry through the upgrading of the skills in the Australian workforce (Bluer and Carmichael, 1991, p.24).

Bluer and Carmichael (1991, p.25) identify three aspects of the award restructuring process. It is a process whereby:

• longer and more varied career structures are developed, which involve continuous on-the-job and off-the-job training and retraining;

• the concept of industrial democracy takes root in relation both to career structures and to processes which allow workers to make a greater and often decisive contribution to work organisation and its transformation, and
• a greater emphasis is placed upon skills evaluation in the workplace and in training institutions, hence a concern with competency testing rather than time-serving testing of skills and development.

These aspects were picked up in the education industry around Australia, with the different state and territory departments of education working with each other and the unions to restructure the industry in each state and territory, but this time in accord with the award restructuring policy and the Structural Efficiency Principle. Some significant concerns to be addressed were the transportability of superannuation, qualifications, registration, and the development of the concept of Advanced Skills Teacher.

The National Project for the Quality of Teaching and Learning, initiated by the Commonwealth government, was a vehicle for discussion of some of these changes. Its purpose was to provide a forum for co-operative work between employing authorities, teacher unions, the ACTU and the Australian government (Bluer and Carmichael, 1991). Its aim was to improve the quality of teaching in Australia, and one of its achievements has been the formation of the Australian Teaching Council.

The Northern Territory Context

The process in Northern Territory education, while part of this general development, was more specifically part of the Structural Efficiency program being run in the Northern Territory Public Service, but it also included more specific processes negotiated between the Northern Territory Department of Education and the Northern Territory Teachers' Federation, later the Australian Teachers' Union (NT). While the Northern Territory Teaching Service was, at that time, distinct from the Northern Territory Public Service, the Teaching Service Commissioner and the Public Service Commissioner were the same person, and the Northern Territory was moving to have less of a distinction between the two entities. The reality was that the teaching service was part of the public sector, though, at that time, there was recognition of the distinctiveness of the education industry within that. This distinction no longer exists. Education is now, officially, part of the public sector.

The Public Service Commissioner of the time has since put forward the view that award restructuring was seen by many as an opportunity and as a framework for the implementation of measures which had been contemplated beforehand (Hawkes, 1994), and
he believes that the award restructuring process is not yet finished, as the process which he prefers to call 'Structural Efficiency' continues to refine the public sector by changing structures and allowing attitudes to work practices to change also. The aims of increasing flexibility, mobility and enhancing career paths were the hallmarks of award restructuring in the Public Service, and as such there was a strong link with the national movement. There were other mechanisms happening at the same time too such as the national agenda on training and education, which were just as important. These brought other reformist processes to play (Hawkes, 1994).

A union official in the early days of award restructuring made the point that it was important for what was happening in NT education through the award restructuring process, to fit the national picture (Bradley, 1994). The national benchmark salary could be seen in this light, bringing the maximum classroom teacher salaries in each state into line with one another. Discussions about the Advanced Skills Teacher concept were affected by the differing views about it in each state - a situation which remains to this day. For example there was a broadly held belief that the AST allowance was to be considered a reward for excellence in teaching, whereas there was a debate in some states, especially New South Wales, as to whether this was just another way of getting over the stumbling block of incremental points in order to gain a salary increase (Bradley, 1994).

The commonality between states in the process was guaranteed by the strong leadership of John Dawkins, the Federal Education Minister. Knight (1992) lists award restructuring and the advanced skills teacher positions in a long list of reforms which he associates with John Dawkins' tenure as Minister for Education, Employment and Training. Under him, Education at all levels was to be more directly responsible to the productive requirements of the economy. It had to provide the skills and competencies needed for economic recovery by a restructured, globally competitive, and unprotected private sector (Knight, 1992, p.29).

The era of award restructuring saw more consultation between state employers and those employers and the unions, and this was brokered by Dawkins. But differences did emerge, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Advanced Skills Teacher concept. A background paper for the Australian Teachers' Union Executive Meeting of 22-23 October 1991, and the industrial officers' meeting of 21 October 1991, reveals that there were strong moves afoot by the employers to have quotas imposed against the Advanced Skills Teacher Level 1 positions. An interim quota had been imposed by the Queensland system, and a restrictive quota applied in New South Wales. Advanced Skills Teacher Level 2 and 3
30 classifications had not yet been determined in most places. In the Northern Territory, there was no quota on successful applicants, whereas in other states there was. In South Australia, the appraisal process was done at one site, and then the teacher needed to apply for a position at some other point. While a teacher in New South Wales, needed to be at the top of the incremental scale to be eligible for Advanced Skills Teacher status, the Northern Territory scheme did not have that requirement. The feeling during the early phases of award restructuring was that the Northern Territory was effectively incorporating the principles and processes of award restructuring into the Public Service and the education sector, in particular, and that the consensus process between the Territory Government and the Department of Education and the union was working well, ensuring benefits to all stakeholders (Bradley, 1994).

Another matter of contention raised at the 1991 meetings cited above was the duties of Advanced Skills Teachers and payment for student teacher supervision. In Victoria there had been an agreement to trade off funding of student teacher supervision for an award restructuring package; the Federal Government was looking to change the nature of the payment to states and territories; there was a lack of effort by the states to work against this change; there were differences in approach between Australian Teachers' Union branches; and employers throughout Australia were claiming that ASTs should take the responsibility for student teacher practice. The outcome was that the Australian Teachers Union gained federal award payments for practice teaching, thus averting a major showdown between unions and employers, though it highlighted the agendas which were being potentially foisted onto ASTs.

An Australian Teachers' Federation background paper dated 16-19 January 1991 includes this comment taken from a transcript of the National Wage Case of August 1989: 'The criteria [for AST] do not impose extra workloads on teachers but certainly do provide incentive to undertake many of the tasks previously undertaken without reward. **Criteria do discriminate but should not debar a committed teacher from achieving AST status**' [my emphasis; 1989 M Print H9100]. This is a touchstone upon which later developments can be judged.

Despite efforts to maintain consistency of nomenclature, the Northern Territory version of the Advanced Skills Teacher scheme was named **The Master Teacher scheme**, perhaps to show some of its links to its antecedent - also known as the Master Teacher scheme, but not part of the award restructuring process. The concept of the new Master Teacher scheme was easily conveyed to teachers the Northern Territory in 1989, because the earlier scheme
had been operating, and the new scheme seemed to be a refinement of it. The earlier scheme, however, had been accessed by only a few teachers over its time of operation, whereas it was envisaged that the newly-initiated scheme would enable more teachers to access it and thus navigate a viable alternative career path which was not the way of promotion through executive teacher ranks.

In South Australia currently, there is only one level of Advanced Skills Teacher (there is no Level 2 or 3). In NSW, AST2 and 3 teachers have specific responsibilities in the implementation of new curriculum, including the statements and profiles for Australian schools. The quota issue and the procedures for placement of ASTs in schools is also something that state systems differ on (Sharpe, 1994).

Another area where the Northern Territory was different from the other states in regard to AST scheme is in allowances. The Northern Territory's comparatively generous allowances for Master Teachers (7.5%, 12% and 20% respectively for Levels 1, 2 and 3) actually got them into a 'Catch 22' situation. The Industrial Relations Commission, in its decisions of 12 June 1991, refused to lift the limit that it had imposed on Master Teacher salaries (so that parity with executive teacher salaries would be maintained) because the allowances were deemed by the Commission to be too generous when compared with other states.

This is the context of award restructuring as it occurred in the Northern Territory education sphere in relation to what was happening in the national arena. It can be noted that the elements of award restructuring included process as well as outcome: the involvement of workers in having a co-operative role in the management of their own work was crucial. Perhaps one of the strongest legacies of award restructuring will be the move to a more consensual approach to industrial relations: while some might baulk at the projection of crises (Angus, 1992), it could have been precisely the perception of crisis which provided the impetus for a changed paradigm in the workplace - from adversarial to consensual.

**Scope of negotiations**

And it was consensual in the Northern Territory context. The Department of Education and the teachers' union placed matters of concern on the agenda and established a process whereby they would be worked through and resolved. In a 1990 document setting out agreements already made and projecting ones to come, the three stages of award restructuring in the NT Teaching Service (NTTS) were set out.
• Stage 1: A 3% increase for all NTTS officers effective the first pay period on or after the 22 May 1990. This increase was based on the current salary structure.

• Stage 2: Interim transition to the new award structure, effective the first pay period on or after 1 July 1990.

• Stage 3: Full transition to the new award including classification of all promotion positions, effective the first pay period on or after 1 January 1991 (Australian Teachers' Union (NT) 1990, p.9).

The major matters raised for negotiation included issues surrounding recruitment, teaching in remote locations, appraisal of teaching performance, hours of duty, classifications of education workers, and the Master Teacher scheme. Some of the subheadings in the index of a document entitled Agreement between the NT Teachers Federation and the NT Teaching Service Commissioner reflect the basic categories within which discussions took place:

• #4 Structural Efficiency Principals [sic]

• #11 Salaries and Award Restructure

• #13 Increasing Flexibility in Career Choice and Planning

• #14 Incentives to Recruit or Retain Teachers in the NT

• #15 Maximising Teaching Time

• #16 Appointment and Redeployment Processes

While this list is not inclusive, it does sketch the range of areas which were of concern to the union and the Department during this time. It was the Master Teacher scheme which was the main topic discussed in section 13 of the agenda. The other was movement from the Teaching Service to the Public Service for teaching staff. It is therefore relevant here to delineate the relationship between the NT Teaching Service and the NT Public Service at this time.
The NT Teaching Service was administered under the Teaching Service Act at that time, so it was left to the Teaching Service to fine tune the measures which were coming through the Public Service. Some aspects of the agenda for discussion between the union and employer were agreed upon efficiently and quickly: the NT allowance, the streamlining of recruitment procedures, and the streamlining of levels in the Teaching Service so that there was no distinction between office-based, Primary or Secondary personnel, were some of the measures which both sides recognised as being suitable for changes, in order to make the processes more efficient, and therefore enabling greater productivity to flow in the education system.

Issues of teacher appraisal have been a sticking point and the issue is being examined again, after a break of some time. The union believed that appraisal should function primarily as a developmental process for teachers and there were concerns that appraisal could be used on a more sinister reward or punishment basis. A related issue was the classification of teaching positions. Administrative officers in the Public Service had their positions evaluated under the Job Evaluation Scheme in 1989 and it had been the Department of Education's desire to continue with the classification of promotion positions within the Teaching Service. Negotiations regarding this process also became protracted, and then were discontinued, but the discussions are now recommencing (Fong, 1994).

One issue which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Department of Education, was pushed and then dropped was the question of working hours for teachers. The negotiation process became protracted as various conceptions of the hours of duty of teachers were proposed (Fong, 1994). The document *Towards the Nineties* (NT Department of Education, 1988), had opened up discussion of a more flexible approach to teachers' hours of duty, posing the possibility of teachers' professional development being held in stand down periods (i.e. times of the school year when teachers were not expected to be at school but were technically not using their six weeks of annual leave), and some schools opening for longer hours, and/or in school vacation periods for special purposes. The union was concerned about an erosion of teachers' conditions, and so compromise was sought. In the end, a concept of a flexible working week was developed, but it was not as definitive as some would have liked (Fong 1994).
Award restructuring initiatives in NT education

The significant directions taken under award restructuring in the NT education industry are listed below.

- the rural incentives scheme
- the streamlining of recruitment processes
- the provision of NT allowance
- the streamlining of classification scales for teachers in the Department
- the Master Teacher scheme

In addition, there was the beginning of discussions about appraisal and the evaluation of professional positions so that specific roles and responsibilities of officers could be signalled in the level of their job classification.

The rural incentives scheme

This scheme was devised so that teachers who were teaching in remote parts of the Northern Territory could apply for study leave after a period of four years. This was a trade-off against the hardships and professional isolation of teaching in one of the many remote areas of the Northern Territory. Study leave for these teachers would enable the teacher to develop professionally through formal study, and also open up more career prospects.

The first cohort of eligible teachers could apply for study leave in 1994, but only 20% of those teachers eligible to apply for the leave took up the opportunity. This has become a conundrum, with some foreseeing the need for the Department to inform people of their right. It is important to the Department of Education's budgeting processes to encourage teachers to take their entitlement when they are eligible (Sharpe, 1994). Others wonder whether it is an appropriate incentive for teachers if not many have applied for the leave (Fong, 1994).

Teachers in remote communities are perceived to be disadvantaged through the current operation of the Master Teacher scheme. Martins, the Principal Education Officer for Performance Appraisal in the Northern Territory Department of Education, concedes that, 'It is a perception that it can be difficult for teachers in that situation to be able to provide evidence which enables them to claim Master Teacher status' (Martins, 1994). As part of the review of the Master Teacher scheme (1994), a remote area teacher was invited to
represent isolated schools. The inclusion of a section entitled *Special Considerations* in the Master Teacher handbook reflects the concern that teachers in a range of educational contexts should be able to demonstrate fulfilment of the requirements. Opportunities afforded to teachers in urban schools may differ from the possible ways in which teachers in remote locations might be able to demonstrate Master Teacher competency. The process of Master Teacher assessment has tried to adapt to the different contexts of teachers. The Special Considerations section of the Master Teacher report can be used by the assessment panel to cite evidence of competencies demonstrated by the teacher, but not invited by the other sections of the report.

*The streamlining of the recruitment process*

In the days before award restructuring negotiations, there had been two main teacher recruiting drives: the major and the minor round. In the major round, most of the promotions positions were advertised and filled, and teaching staff were recruited for vacancies which were foreshadowed at particular schools.

In the days when most of the classroom practitioners came from the southern states, the recruitment process was elaborate and involved recruitment officers visiting southern states to interview applicants for positions within the teaching service.

The minor round tended to be a means of dealing with the fine-tuning of positions - consequential vacancies from filling of promotions positions for example.

The union argued that these processes were time and labour intensive and were inefficient compared with the possibility of advertising for vacancies as they occurred. This also coincided with less leakage of teachers to destinations further south, as the employment situation in southern states tightened. Thus, the infrastructure of the major and minor rounds was disassembled and a more ongoing framework shaped.

*The provision of NT allowance*

This measure was linked to the situation alluded to in the previous section. In past years, there had been a serious loss of teachers at the end of the school year. Many of them returned to southern states from where they had come to take up a teaching position; others were going off to new adventures. However, it was conceded by the union and the employer that this drift was most inefficient, and if it could be hindered, then the regular need to recruit teachers to fill the gaps created by teacher resignation could be avoided.
So, it was decided that teachers who had taught in the Northern Territory for three years or more, would be eligible for a Northern Territory allowance on top of their usual salary. The Industrial Relations Commission's determination read thus:

Two year trained teachers may progress by annual increments through to Teacher Level 7 and may then progress to Teacher Level 8, providing that they have had a minimum of three years' continuous service in the Northern Territory Teaching Service immediately prior to progression to Level 8. [And so on for teachers with longer preservice training.] (Australian Industrial Relations Commission, 3 May 1990)

The driving force behind these award restructuring discussions was the desire by both parties to resolve problems of recruitment and retention of quality teachers. The Northern Territory allowance was paid to eligible teachers as a reward for service already rendered to the Northern Territory Department of Education, but also as an incentive to stay on.

During this period, the numbers of teacher graduates from the Darwin Institute of Technology (later the Northern Territory University) grew, and while some were interstate students, many were local residents who wished to teach in the Northern Territory. These graduates received priority placement. This factor enabled the recruitment process to stabilise, as there was less need for teachers from southern states to staff Northern Territory schools.

As mentioned above, the economic situation in Australia also meant that teachers as well as others were tending to stay in their position rather than taking risks of unemployment if they resigned. This served as a negative encouragement for teachers to stay in the Northern Territory.

Ironically, the Northern Territory allowance was implemented at a time when there were other forces creating greater staffing stability in Northern Territory schools. However, it was a recognition by the system that there were efficiencies in keeping teachers in the Northern Territory through an incentive payment.

The streamlining of classification scales of teachers

Through award restructuring, one new classification scale for teachers was devised. This came about as an amendment to the award on 3 May 1990, which also allowed for a reward for service in the NT. The new scale made no distinction between primary and secondary teachers or office-based or school-based teachers. Years of preservice training and level of
responsibility became the sole determinants of position on the scale. Upgrading of qualifications, Northern Territory allowance and promotion were possible ways in which teachers could accelerate their progression along the scale. The new classification scale made it possible for teachers to move more flexibly within the teaching service. There were eleven incremental points available to teachers who were not interested in promotion positions. This gave them significant scope for progression through the increments.

The advantage of this change was that it made teachers' career pathways more clear, without the confounding elements of different classification and obscure pathways. It brought together teachers from some different contexts, and articulated their relationship to one another.

*Development of the Master Teacher scheme in NT*

As stated in Chapter 1, a Master Teacher scheme existed in the Northern Territory prior to the era of award restructuring, but through the impetus of award restructuring, it was reshaped in order to provide some alternative career pathways for more of the teaching service than it had previously. This was done through establishing three levels of Master Teacher and the framing of benchmarks such that more teachers would be able to demonstrate eligibility for the award.

The Northern Territory scheme provided for more generous financial rewards than the other states, and has had three levels from its inception (Martins, 1994). In fact, it was the generosity of the scheme which provided the pretext for the Industrial Relations Commission to refuse to lift the capping applied to the allowances when the union had objected to master teachers earning more than their 'equivalent' executive teachers. The employer had refused to raise the salaries of executive teachers, and so the union agreed to the Master Teacher allowance being 'capped' pending a rise in executive teacher salaries. When this arose, the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) refused to lift the capping, as the IRC Commissioner argued that the scheme already provided for generous financial rewards to participants (Fong, 1994). The salary for Master Teacher Level 1 was 96% of Executive Teacher 1 salary, Master Teacher 2 salary was the same as Executive Teacher 1 salary, and Master Teacher 3 was the same as Executive Teacher 3 salary. This demonstrates the way that the scheme was meant to reward master teachers by giving them financial parity with officers in the promotion stream.

The NT scheme was discrete from quotas and positions in schools (Martins, 1994). While more teachers are master teachers under the reshaped scheme, it is felt that the scheme's
rigour has been maintained. Victoria, for example, has given Master Teacher Level 1 status to fifty percent of their teachers (Martins, 1994).

Teachers applying for Master Teacher status are measured against some benchmark descriptors: peers nominated by the applicant work as a panel with the applicant; a report addressing the benchmarks is presented to a regional panel, and the panel validates or rejects the standard attained by the applicant (See Appendix A for a proforma of the Report for Master Teacher Level 1).

There has been some fine-tuning of the process since the scheme's inception in 1989. One such adjustment was to remove an anomaly whereby teachers who were Master Teachers under the old scheme would be disadvantaged when moving to the new scheme, due to the way that allowances were calculated (1993). Now (1994), there is more emphasis on how panels and applications can present relevant evidence strongly. The assessment report format (Appendix A) has been adapted so that it points more directly to aspects of performance which highlight Master Teacher status. Some have felt that it was unwise to implement an appraisal of teacher performance such as the Master Teacher scheme, without first looking at the whole area of performance appraisal within the education industry (Hawkes, 1994). This might explain the early problems with the scheme, including inadequately framed descriptors, unclear expectations about the writing of reports, and the belief by some that Level 1 of the scheme would be an automatic pay rise for most teachers (Zander, 1992; Hawkes, 1994).

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the Master Teachers should work to duty statements or not (Stokes, 1994; Sharpe, 1994; Bradley, 1994), with some saying that all Master Teachers are given that status, because of work done in the past. Others believe that Master Teacher Level 1s could be given this freedom from present and future articulated expectations, but the school (and therefore the system) will not be able to exploit the possibilities of the scheme, if MT2 and MT3 personnel do not have clear focuses in the school organisation. At present, this is at the discretion of the principal.

Once a teacher has gained Master Teacher status, he/she must reapply after four years in order for the status to be confirmed. Teachers so confirmed then hold their status for the remainder of their teaching career in the Northern Territory as long as their performance does not falter (Martins, 1994). Teachers may apply for higher levels of the scheme as well as seek confirmation of their present status.
Summary

While there were several aspects to the implementation of award restructuring in government schools in the Northern Territory, the development of the Master Teacher scheme was in fact a refinement of the scheme which had existed before 1989. Award restructuring gave the teacher union and the Department of Education an opportunity to recast it, and introduce other measures which would enable greater efficiencies and also productivity.

This era was marked by a relatively strong consensus between the teacher union and the employer. The Northern Territory Master Teacher scheme became more connected with the Advanced Skills Teacher schemes being discussed in other states, but was the first implemented, was the most generous in its remuneration, and involved three levels from its initial implementation.
Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Amidst the claims about productivity discussed in Chapter 1, the literature on educational productivity surveyed in Chapter 2, and the recount of how award restructuring was implemented by the Northern Territory Department of Education in Chapter 3, there was a need to focus on a small part of this very broad panorama so that the research questions could be investigated effectively. It was imperative that the approach taken ignore that the literature reinforces the meaning of educational productivity as 'multiple and complex' (Marginson, 1992, p.19). It was decided to use a case study approach for this investigation in order to focus in on one element within the award restructuring implementation in Northern Territory education. The case study method appeared to be appropriate to the task as 'the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence - documents, artifacts, interviews and observations' (Yin, 1984, p.20). This was important when the study was to concentrate on such a small part of the whole picture. It was crucial to use a method which would capture the richness of the factors in the Master Teacher context, as an indication of the larger picture. Yin (1984, p.25) also notes that case studies have a distinctive place in evaluation research because they describe the real life context in which the intervention has occurred and they explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes. This approach is appropriate to this study as it attempts to trace the way that an industrial relations intervention has affected the real life contexts of teachers, schools and the system. While the outcomes of award restructuring in industry were sketched in global terms, there were no clear, single set of outcomes derived for the implementation of award restructuring in education, including the Advanced Skills Teacher scheme. While the Structural Efficiency Principle acted as a rule of thumb for many of the reforms, it allows for much scope and does not prescribe finely tuned ways and means.

Louden, in his work on teacher competencies (1993, p.12) also supports the usefulness of case studies 'because they reveal teaching as an essentially human and narrative activity and because they provide a rich source of information to link the generic with the specific'. Award restructuring was, in a way, a generic approach to industrial relations reform and the focus of this study is the way in which this 'solution' has impacted on the perceived problem,
i.e. the need to increase the productivity of education. A qualitative, case study approach is also supported by the literature which questions a purely quantitative approach to educational productivity. Marginson (1990a) is the strongest voice against the assumption that measuring productivity in education is simply a quantitative matter. Even if one conceptualises the educational process in terms of inputs and outputs, it is not valid to assume that the process of schooling is like a black box (Marginson, 1992, p.12) where nothing happens. Intrinsic to the process of schooling may be inputs and outputs which might be ignored by a quantitative approach to measurement. Bowen (1988) argues against the belief that an approach to education which is purely quantitative and rationalist can be effective in assessing the work of values formation. Carkhuff (1984) implies that a purely quantitative approach to educational productivity could at the very least be called 'old fashioned', when visionaries are looking at the quality of the 'human processing' in our educational delivery. DeCourcy (1993) proposes the concept of 'responsiveness' as opposed to 'productivity' because he sees that it more aptly fits the real world of schools which he claims do not produce products in the same way as industries or businesses, and so measurement should not be in the same terms.

A case study of the impact of the Master Teacher scheme in Darwin secondary schools was chosen as a manageable way of looking at the effects of award restructuring in the Northern Territory education industry. The Master Teacher scheme was selected as the major change wrought through the award restructuring process in the education industry of the Northern Territory, and it seemed appropriate that the scheme be examined for the ways in which it had achieved the aims of the award restructuring process. It also gave the greatest possibility for generalising the results to other state contexts, as all states have adopted an Advanced Skills Teacher scheme as part of award restructuring. It was a significant time in the development of the Master Teacher scheme in the Northern Territory, as teachers who had gained Master Teacher status in the year of the scheme's inception (1989) had to be reassessed during 1993 if they wished to be confirmed with Master Teacher status. These people, thirty-five of whom were in the sample, had been assessed at the initial phase of the scheme's life, had worked in schools for four years as Master Teachers, and were going for reassessment. It is their perceptions which are dominant in the case study.
Design of the research

The research had three integrated components: a document survey (supplemented by interviews with school and system administrators), a survey of Master Teachers, and interviews with Master Teachers. There was triangulation in the research if the definition of Nisbet and Watts (1984) quoted in Bell (1994) is applied:

\[ \text{In order to guard against being misled, either in interview or by document, you must check one informant against another, and test what they say against any documents which exist ... This process is called triangulation. The basic principle in data collection for case study is to check your data across a variety of methods and a variety of sources (Bell, 1994, p.94).} \]

The document survey and the interviews with administrators provided a context for the survey and interviews with Master Teachers. The documents related to negotiations between the teacher union(s) and the Industrial Relations Commission and also between the Australian Teachers' Union (NT) and the Northern Territory Department of Education. The interviews with administrators filled in some of the elements of the documents and enabled administrative stakeholders in Northern Territory award restructuring to reflect on its implementation and provide background for the research with Master Teachers. The survey of Master Teachers asked Master Teachers to respond to questions about the Master Teacher scheme. These questions were informed by the literature, the documents and the interviews with administrators. From those Master Teachers who responded, eight agreed to be interviewed so that their responses could be elaborated. Each approach enabled a different angle of the question to be tackled. So, the cross checking of the approaches was achieved but each of the approaches provided another aspect of the context. As Macdonald and Walker (1975) cited by Nailon (1993) suggest:

\[ \text{The case study commands a respected place in the repertoire of theory builders from a wide range of disciplines. [It] can generate a theory as well as test one; instance and abstraction go hand in hand in an iterative process of cumulative growth (Nailon, 1993, p.75).} \]
Formulating the instruments

The survey
The literature concerning Advanced Skills Teachers schemes and award restructuring in education was searched in order to sense what effects the schemes were expected to have on teachers. During this time, some school and system administrators were interviewed about the background of award restructuring's implementation in Northern Territory education. It was from the perceptions of these people about the Master Teacher scheme that the survey questions arose.

Once the survey was in draft form, it was trialled and then refined so that it was clear and focused. See Appendix B for the survey used with respondents. It was sent with a covering letter to each member of the sample by name with a request that it be returned within the week. At the end of the survey was a consent form where respondents were asked to grant permission for the material in the survey to be used in this research study. They were assured that their responses would remain confidential.

Questions 1-5 requested some information about gender, age and length of service as a teacher. This was to gauge whether there were responses linked to these areas which needed further examination. Questions 6 -10 attempted to link the teacher with aspects of productivity recognised either in the literature or in my interviews with administrators. Administrators perceived that Master Teachers were the leaders in professional associations, inservice activities, decision-making and in various special school programs. Questions 6 and 7 asked teachers specifically about professional association membership and membership of Subject Area Committees or other committees within the Department of Education concerned with the oversight of policy and/or curriculum. Question 8 asked a more open question which requested respondents to indicate the main contributions which they were making in their schools. This question was based on the assumption that Master Teachers are teachers who have gained that status because of their contribution to the school, and the assumption that this would be a continuing characteristic of such teachers. This was a strong perception of the administrators. Question 9 linked Master Teacher status with leadership in the school as the administrators believed that the identification of Master Teachers as professional leaders within the school had been an aspect of improved productivity for the school and the system. Question 10 asked whether these Master Teachers are involved in leading professional development. This is tackling the issue of Master Teachers being leaders in the school and system, as well as testing the perception of
administrators that Master Teachers were at the forefront of professional development activities. Teachers were able to indicate whether they were involved at school, professional association or 'other' levels.

Questions 11-17 pertained to the experience of the teacher as someone who has experienced the process of the Master Teacher scheme. The purpose of these questions was to elicit the reflections of these teachers on the scheme and the impact it has had on them, their schools and the system. The literature concerning award restructuring in education informed the questions. Question 11 sought comments about their satisfaction with the extra remuneration attached to Master Teacher status. This was to see whether the Master Teacher allowance was an incentive or an effective reward for excellent teaching. Question 12 sought feedback about the teachers' experience of the Master Teacher appraisal process and whether it had been a positive of negative influence on their professional development. Curry (1994), Gaffney and Crowther (1993) and interviews with the administrators indicated that the appraisal process and its conclusions were significant to the success of the Advanced Skills Teacher program. Question 13 was a more open question which asked respondents to state what sorts of outcomes had been gained through the Master Teacher scheme. This was to give scope for teachers to indicate other outcomes at either the personal, school or system levels which had been achieved through the Master Teacher scheme. Question 14 asked whether there had been any negative (and therefore counter-productive) effects of the scheme for themselves or others. Question 15 took hold of the idea that the Master Teacher scheme was designed to keep more good teachers in the classroom and asked whether that had been achieved in the case of the respondent. Questions 16 and 17 asked respondents to state what they and others saw as the role and responsibility of Master Teachers. This was to see to what extent Master Teachers were aware of how educational productivity was to be expressed through their role as Master Teachers. Question 17 invited them to state whether they thought their perception was one shared by other colleagues, as it had been this researcher's experience that often there was a difference in perception among teachers.

The interview

There were two types of interviews: one for the teachers, based upon the survey, and the other for administrators, which was designed for them to discuss the background to the implementation of award restructuring in the Northern Territory education industry, and the Master Teacher scheme in particular, and also to put forward some of their own comments as to the ongoing evaluation of the program. The issues involved in the two interview structures were similar, but the different types of interviews took account of the different
perspectives available to the researcher. This was an attempt to see how the range of persons involved in the Master Teacher scheme saw productivity in education being developed and recognised through the scheme.

The interviews were semi-structured. The Master Teacher interviews followed the framework of the survey, and the interviews with administrators followed some questions which tried to link the national parameters of award restructuring to the Northern Territory scene. For the Master Teachers, the purpose of the interview was to elucidate and elaborate upon the survey responses and the questions of the survey acted as parameters of discussion, so that the natural flow of discussion was maintained as much as possible, while there was exploration of the issues raised in the survey. Generally, the focus was on responses which were strongly expressed or different from what other respondents had said. This process enabled teachers to speak more personally and specifically about their situation and how they operated within it.

The interview questions were asked against the backdrop of the survey responses. While the interview enabled interviewees to elucidate and elaborate upon their own survey, the interviewer was able to draw out responses in relation to comments which other survey respondents had made. So, while the interview questions were those of the survey, the interviewer was able to ask the questions knowing how the respondents to the survey had commented. This enabled the interviewer to ask questions which were informed by other Master Teachers' comments. This meant that interviews were more focused than the surveys.

The framework used for the interviews with administrators can be found in Appendix C. Interviews with these interviewees varied from the interviews with Master Teachers because each of the administrators had an area of expertise with which they felt confident, and there were parts of the framework about which they did not feel confident to comment. The administrators were chosen so that a range of perspectives would be represented: union, employer, and school principal roles were represented in the six individual interviews conducted. In the case of these interviews, interviewees were contacted and the interviewer's perceptions were checked before documentation of the interviews was finalised.

All of the interviews were taped and then transcribed. Two Master Teacher interviews were done via the telephone. The Master Teacher interviewees were covered by the confidentiality guarantee made in the covering letter to the survey, while administrators
recognised that their comments would be dealt with sensitively and permission would be sought if they were to be published. Interviews took between twenty and forty minutes.

In the case of the Master Teacher interviews, the content was validated by the interviewee's survey, as the interview was an elaboration. The administrators were able to see how their perceptions were being written up in the draft report and validate the perception. In no cases was permission to publish a statement or perception withdrawn.

**Trialling the instruments**

The survey was trialled through giving it to two Master teachers (one from a primary school and one from a secondary school) who were not part of the sample, and asking them to do the draft survey, making comments where they thought it relevant to do so. In addition, the survey was discussed with a Departmental administrator with a strong background in psychology and research, another Departmental administrator who oversees research within the Department of Education, and another Departmental administrator who has had a strong association with the Master Teacher scheme from its inception, when he was an officer with the union. This range of persons pointed out ways of making the survey more meaningful to respondents, and gave advice about the connections between their own experience and the questions being asked.

As part of this feedback, it appeared that the interview could follow the pattern of the survey, but would allow for some telling of stories which would fill in some of the gaps which could arise through the survey. The trialling of the survey led to a refinement of the original instrument and a changed context of the questioning as some of the significant issues became more pronounced. For example, the two Master Teachers who reviewed the survey instrument indicated that the issue of the Master Teacher's status within the school community was a significant one and that direct questions regarding perceptions of Master Teachers needed to be included. Other changes were that the introduction to the survey was included in a covering letter, the categories in Question 2 were simplified to be either 'under 40 years' or 'over 40 years'. Following discussion with the Department of Education's supervisor of research, it was decided to place the names of the survey recipients on the survey, since their names as newly-confirmed Master Teachers were known, and it was a small sample. This was calculated to facilitate retrieval of the survey and follow up. Other questions were made more focused by the provision of some examples.
The interview could be understood to have been trialled through the survey, as the survey formed the basis of the interview. There is also a sense in which each subsequent interview benefited from the previous interview session, as the possibilities and the direction of the interviews themselves became more defined.

The model in both the trialling phase and the implementation phase was recursive, as the three approaches of document analysis, survey and interview informed each other and delineated significances.

Response to instrument

Survey response
Twenty-five surveys were returned out of the number sent to the sample (thirty-five), this being a seventy-one percent return rate. While the original sample for the study may have been relatively small, the significant return of surveys means that internal validity is good.

While some of the teachers had moved to other worksites, including maternity leave (two teachers), there was a spread of response over the five schools represented in the sample. One of the five schools had a 100% response rate while two others had 66% of the sample returning surveys, and the other two had a response rate of 60%. While most of the respondents were female, this reflects the biases of the sample, which in turn reflects the relatively lower numbers of males than females in the teaching service in the Northern Territory and in the other states of Australia. The proportion of females in the sample was 77.14% and of the responses it was 72%.

Interview response
The interviews were done with two different groups, and with overlapping purposes in relation to them. Six administrators were interviewed, including two school principals (one of whom had been a member of the 1989 Master Teacher Working Party in his capacity as a union leader), the current union leader, an administrator closely identified with the supervision of the Master Teacher scheme, the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Department of Education, and the Commissioner for Public Employment. It was intended that interviews with these people would contribute to the understanding of the context of award restructuring for the stakeholders in the education industry of the
Northern Territory, and shed light where possible on aspects of the Master Teacher scheme from a different perspective to the teachers being interviewed about the scheme.

Eight Master Teachers of the twenty-five Master Teachers who had returned surveys were interviewed in order for them to elaborate on the questions and issues raised in the survey, and to raise any other issues which they felt relevant. All of these respondents were female and covered the range of the schools included in the sample. The survey invited volunteers to be interviewed regarding the issues opened up in the survey. All interviewees indicated their willingness to be interviewed. As the main concern was to ensure that the range of the schools in the sample was represented in the interviews, and since this was achieved, no other interviewees were approached.

Summary

The first step in the methodology was to examine the background of award restructuring in the Northern Territory education system. This took place through a document study related to determinations of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, briefing papers used by the union, and correspondence between the Australian Teachers' Union and the employer. In addition to the document study, this researcher conducted interviews with six stakeholders in the process of award restructuring implementation in the Northern Territory education system. This provided a framework for the survey and interviews of Master Teachers who had just been confirmed in that role.

Of the 35 teachers in the sample, 25 teachers responded to the survey and eight of these were interviewed in order to gain a closer sense of the 'flavour' of their views. In the next chapter, the results of these methods will be stated and discussed.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the sample

The sample selected was the total number of reconfirmed Master Teachers in Darwin's government high schools. While there are five other centres in the Northern Territory which could be termed 'urban', only two secondary teachers from these schools had been reconfirmed as Master Teachers. The sample thus amounted to thirty-five teachers who had been reconfirmed as Master teachers at Levels 1 to 3. Another one teacher with one of the schools in the sample was excluded because she had been assessed under a slightly different system and had Master Teacher 3 equivalent. Most of the high schools are to be found in urban areas, depending on the definition of 'urban': with regard to the Northern Territory, the centres of Alice Springs and Darwin could be considered to be urban, while high schools in Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Katherine resemble the single high schools in country towns, where the school is much more linked with the values of a discrete, cohesive, relatively small population. So, one of the limitations of the present study is that it is unknown whether teachers in centres other than Darwin would have claimed the same experiences and perspectives. While an Advanced Skills Teacher scheme had been operating in some of the independent schools of the Northern Territory, it was considered preferable to examine just one discrete scheme. This scheme implemented in government schools was at a crucial stage of its development. It was an apt choice.

It was felt that this sample was high in cohesion, and that this was important in an examination of schools in the Northern Territory, as the pattern of education is affected by the significant geographical separations between main population centres. Differences between regions can be great in terms of the types of secondary schools available, and in the relationship of the school to the community. As to whether the sample was representative of Master Teachers in the Northern Territory, Darwin urban secondary schools contain most of the Master Teachers and so in this study the views of this dominant group are recorded. The study did not include primary schools, some of which are in bush locations, so it is feasible that the findings of the study might not be generalisable to primary and/or non-urban locations. The familiarity of the researcher with the Darwin urban secondary sector meant that she was immersed in the culture of the sample, but it might also be seen as a bias against a 'true' picture of affairs. The validation of the questions and the opportunity
for interviewees to weave their own stories about the questions could be seen to mitigate against such a charge.

Apart from the interview of system, school and union administrators, the focus of the surveys and the interviews was on this sample of Master Teachers who, it was believed, could speak authoritatively about their experience of the scheme, but also, because of their Master Teacher status, could speak authoritatively about aspects of productivity in schools and in the system, as they had been deemed by the system to be the 'leader teachers' and, as such, at the vanguard of any such productivity.

Surveys were sent, by name, to the teachers in the sample. This followed some of the information received during the trialling process. Since the sample was small, the need for a high percentage of response very important so that the findings would not lack significance, and the identity of the sample known through Departmental communication anyway, the advantages of contacting the members of the sample directly outweighed the other reasons for allowing their responses to be quasi anonymous.

The survey

There were twenty-five (25) survey responses: eighteen from females, and seven from males - this being a seventy-one percent return rate. The sample consisted of teachers in the Darwin urban secondary schools who had been confirmed as Master Teacher at the end of 1993. This means that they had entered the Master Teacher scheme at its inception, had reapplied for assessment at the end of the four year term, and had been confirmed as Master Teacher at the appropriate level.

For respondents to the survey, ten years was the average number of years of teaching in the Northern Territory. They have therefore witnessed the transition from one Master Teacher scheme to another. In addition, they have a significant experience of education in the Northern Territory. Fifteen of the twenty-five respondents (60 percent) were over the age of forty. Of the teachers under forty years of age, two had been teaching for from six to ten years, six had been teaching for from eleven to sixteen years, and two had been teaching for from seventeen to twenty-five years.

Twenty-two of the survey respondents were Master Teacher Level 1, with two others being at Level 2, and one other at Level 3.
Initial analysis

The initial analysis provided opportunities to test the congruency of the research with the major points emerging from the literature and identified key issues for exploration through the interview process. The following were among the more significant preliminary findings. The responses from the survey linked with some of the perspectives put forward in a survey of the literature, especially the material related to teacher productivity. There are specific responses to the aims of the Advanced Skills Teacher category instituted as part of award restructuring.

The idea of performance pay came through the responses but not necessarily in a way that previous research would suggest. In a way, although the Master Teacher allowance has at times been reduced to a single digit weekly payment, it is a move to overtly reward teachers for perceived improved performance as described in the Master Teacher document's benchmark descriptors. This process can sometimes be imperilled by the discrepancies between the award of Master Teacher and those who are considered to be worthy of such an award by their peers, and the vicissitudes of the appraisal system, which can be a negative experience for some strong performers. So much can hinge on the procedures of a panel who are charged with finding evidence and then writing it up so that another panel can weigh the evidence against the criteria, and possibly make an award. Once this is made, the small allowance payable seems not commensurate with the rigour of the appraisal process.

Several respondents stressed the importance of the way in which the Master Teacher assessment is written. All of these teachers made reference to the crucial nature of the style and the politics of assessment report writing. The report is crucial in interpreting the performance of the teacher, and so is both a description of possible productivity as well as a means toward Master Teacher status which is then a catalyst towards future productivity. There was a clearly drawn line between those who favoured duty statements for Master Teachers, particularly at Levels 2 and 3, and those who felt that Master Teachers should be free to decide the ways in which they would express their contribution in the school. This also can be linked with beliefs people hold about the ways in which the multiple measures of productivity can be made. Several spoke of the demoralisation effect, noted by Gaffney and Crowther (1993) and Curry (1994), whereby those being unsuccessful in gaining Master Teacher status experienced lower morale and had less incentive to persevere in allegedly productive actions within education. The power of this effect has been an incentive within
the system for inservicing of panels and adaptation of the process so that worthy candidates can be accorded the Master Teacher status.

Mary Kelly (NPQTL, 1993), in discussing the ways that the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning was working to increase the productivity of education, spoke of the way that competencies were underpinned by values and attitudes. The results of the present research pose the question of how this aspect is portrayed in the Master Teacher scheme. The present scheme seems to run the risk of sending mixed messages about the values and attitudes desired by the system, due to the way in which the scheme operates inconsistently at times.

The link between the professional development of teachers and student performance to which Keeves (1972) drew attention, is one to which some of the respondents allude. Teacher experience and special training are recognised as part of the Master Teacher assessment process, and links are made between these elements and student gains by some of the respondents, though not to a significant degree.

The link between student and teacher productivity was implied but not made explicit. As far as teacher productivity was concerned, many of the respondents claimed that they would have demonstrated similar excellent teacher traits, even if the Master Teacher scheme had not existed, but most also agreed that this sort of statement was also hypothetical, as the reality was that they had been able to use the evidence towards the demonstration of eligibility for Master Teacher status. Perhaps it is intrinsic to Master Teachers that they do not see the scheme as a major motivator. Perhaps it is just as likely that it cannot be known how these highly professional people might have performed otherwise.

One respondent in particular noted that the appraisal process for Master Teacher does not involve an explicit request for student feedback about the performance of the teacher. Success with students is implied by the award. In urging that there be no 'single or universal measures of output, productivity and efficiency', Marginson (1990) is recognising that productivity is the result of an interactive process and that the student is an important part of the configuration of productivity in education.

Many of the respondents attest to the of the Master Teacher scheme's success in providing 'appropriate careers' for teachers (Bluer and Carmichael, 1991), although some have experienced a paradoxical effect whereby the award of Master Teacher has enabled them to access some different pathways - usually in the more traditionally tried promotion stream.
This could still be construed as being 'appropriate' for those officers who have been able to use Master Teacher status as a stepping stone to something else. Others claim that they would have remained 'in the classroom' regardless, as it is the context where they know they can make a contribution. Those people would concede that at least they may now be rewarded for this conviction!

One respondent argued that what a Master Teacher can contribute is linked to others with whom the teacher is working. Other teachers implied this idea by their descriptions of how they had been able to apply their skills in their workplaces. The tasks engaged in by Master Teachers such as the mentoring of teachers, the organisation of professional development, and working with other teachers and members of the school community in special projects, all demand a high level of interpersonal skills. When these tasks are being undertaken successfully, there is a strong input of empathy and other personal qualities into the education context. Research quoted in the literature supports the idea that these qualities are crucial in producing student achievement too, and although not stated explicitly in the responses, it may be assumed that teachers demonstrating these skills as part of their Master Teacher role, even if mostly with teachers, will be applying them to their role with students, too. It is not only the application of their expertise to the curriculum, but the expression of their personal qualities.

Most respondents were strong in affirming that the Master Teacher scheme was not merely a disguised added increment on the salary scale for teachers (Bluer, 1993) but was, in fact, a recognition of high performance in teaching which could be recognised and therefore become a more conscious part of the way in which the education system and the school deployed its resources.

Teachers from the range of schools included in the survey were selected to elaborate on the survey responses, as validation of the responses, through clarification and reiteration. This was another opportunity for teachers to tell their own stories in relation to the questions used in the investigation, so that other factors related to productivity in Darwin urban secondary schools could be taken into account. The interviews provided an added context for the survey and a complement to the interviews with the administrators.
The interviews

Eight of the twenty-five respondents were interviewed. The purpose of the interviews was to allow interviewees to elaborate on their survey responses so that more discursive consideration could provide more textured data. For these interviews, the framework of the survey questions was used, and elaborations were sought on all questions. The interviewees came from the range of the schools in the sample, with three schools represented by two teachers, and two schools represented by one teacher only.

Other interviews were of system and school administrators. Of this group of interviewees, five were male and one female. Two were school principals, one was the Public Service Commissioner, one was the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Department of Education, one was the President of the Australian Education Union (Northern Territory), one was a former President of the Northern Territory Teachers' Federation (later the Australian Teachers Union, Northern Territory), and two were members of the 1994 Departmental review of the Master Teacher scheme. The function of these interviews was different in that they provided some historical and contemporary context to the issues surrounding award restructuring in the NT education industry. As such they enabled the researcher to see issues arising in survey and interview responses with the other group from another perspective, as both employer and union administrators were interviewed. From within the group of system and school administrators there was a range of perspectives to be gleaned, as they had a strong identification with school, Departmental and union views.

When the Master Teacher interview transcripts had been completed, the researcher identified the patterns of the discourse. There were seven themes which featured in the interviews. These are included in the results of the research discussed below, with a comment about gender identifying an eighth finding.

Summary of Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research draw on the two layers of empirical evidence - the survey responses and the interviews. They will be discussed, using the following statements as a focus.
• It does appear that the Master Teacher scheme has allowed teachers to have 'better careers'.

• The scheme can work against its own aims: sometimes the desirable correlation between those considered to be leading teachers and those being granted Master Teacher status does not occur.

• There does not seem to be any significant difference in effects of the scheme with respect to different genders, ages, or other factors elicited in the survey and the interviews.

• Organised inputs by Master Teachers into the education system are not motivated specifically by the Master Teacher scheme, but are rewarded by it. The recognition encourages a continuation of excellent service by those teachers.

• One of the ironies of 'enhanced career paths' through the Master Teacher scheme, is that Master Teacher status may allow teachers to attain a promotion position, thus removing them from the Master Teacher pathway.

• Perceptions of the relationship between Master Teachers and non Master Teachers, and Master Teachers and Executive Teachers can affect the outcomes of the Master Teacher scheme.

• Master Teachers are at the forefront of professional development and system policy making.

• While the appraisal process has potentially positive outcomes, there is evidence which indicates that negative experiences of the Master Teacher appraisal process do exist.

**Better careers**

'Better careers' in this context pertains to ways in which teachers can continue to develop in their careers as teachers, rather than taking on the role of 'administrator' and moving through the more traditional promotion career path. This understanding is linked to the award restructuring context where there was a concern that training and career pathways be linked so that workers would have access to fulfilling jobs. The Structural Efficiency Principle articulates this concern.
Eighteen respondents (72 percent) indicated that they believed that the Master Teacher scheme had delivered to them a range of possibilities for development as teachers which did not necessitate movement through the promotion stream. This reality was imaged as 'remaining in the classroom', although the reality was that six of them had worked temporarily in office-based positions, and their system involvement meant that they were absent from school from time to time, for their inputs to be made in policy making bodies. Sixteen of the survey respondents were currently serving on Departmental curriculum policy making bodies, and two of those who were not on these bodies at the time of the survey, had had significant previous involvement.

Survey respondents fell into three main groups: those who found the Master Teacher scheme affirming their desire to develop as classroom teachers; those who saw their being 'in the classroom' as not directly related to the Master Teacher scheme (but affirmed by it), and those for whom the Master Teacher scheme had provided a stepping stone to other roles which they preferred. This third category falls outside the aims of the Master Teacher scheme and requires closer examination.

Seven of the respondents (28%) fell into this group and the following were their responses to the survey question 'Has the Master Teacher scheme encouraged you to "remain in the classroom"?'

- 'Not really - I would love the opportunity to progress beyond the classroom.'
- 'No, I am no longer in the classroom.'
- 'No - become a stepping stone for a promotional position.'
- 'No - has actually given me confidence to try other things.'
- 'No - I would leave for a $50 000+ SEO [Senior Education Officer] or similar if I could break the hold office-based personnel seem to have on such positions.'
- 'However, I feel my MT1 gives the ET1 position [which I am now acting in] real credibility...' 
- 'No. I would be prepared to assume higher administrative duties. Nevertheless, I find the classroom the most interesting, important and enjoyable aspect of teaching.'

For this group, the scheme had provided them with ways of demonstrating competency for other positions, and thus creating alternative career pathways alluded to in the SEP.

Of the six teachers who indicated that the Master Teacher scheme was not an incentive for remaining in the classroom, most fell into the 'I would have done it anyway' category. Three teachers qualified their statement. One Master Teacher chose to pursue Master Teacher status because there was a lack of promotion prospects in his teaching discipline.
Another teacher enjoyed being a classroom practitioner, but would not hesitate to accept an office-based position if she had the opportunity. The third teacher recognised that the Master Teacher scheme is an incentive for the continuing development of skills. For this person, professional development was in the framework of the Master Teacher scheme. It could be argued that if the Master Teacher scheme had not existed, then these six teachers would have had fewer choices, and less recognition of their skills. While these respondents were saying that they would be doing several of the duties which they now undertake anyway, they recognised that Master Teacher status was a reward, and it encouraged teachers to continue to follow that path.

All of the respondents were aware that the Master Teacher scheme provided them with choices about their careers. Mary expressed this potential of the Master Teacher scheme to open up teachers' thinking about career choices:

> It would be an alternative, but I'm not saying it would be my pathway. There are other alternatives that I would still be looking at. But the first step was for me to go for MT1. But I think (and I think this is especially true of women) the fact is that many women never stop to say to themselves, "Well, where am I headed? What are the long term goals of my career?" ... And so I felt that those times when I've sat down and written down a detailed CV, and applied for MT status, was an opportunity for me to really think, "Well, where is all this heading?" ... And that's been a big benefit. If MT has provided that opportunity to think about professional development ... No, it's not necessarily going to be my pathway, to do MT 1, 2 and 3.

Ten respondents (40%), defined the Master Teacher pathway as being opposite to an administrative one; they desired a student focus. Linda confides,

> I really don't want to be an administrator. I really enjoy being with the kids in a mother role, helping others if I can to reach their own potential.

This links with Sue's comments that the focus of the Master Teacher scheme should be students. Her views were so student-oriented that she believed that students should have a central role in the appraisal process. This was the only response which could be linked back specifically to the literature on student productivity as an indicator of educational productivity.

> I think you should be rewarded for being a damn good classroom teacher. Someone who kids value and see, and parents value and see that you can impart knowledge, engender a love of the subject - a respect for your knowledge in that subject, and a desire to continue with it ... Everything you do should, in the long run, benefit the
kids ... Students should be the touchstone. It seems to me that there are actions for MTs to do that border on administrative things which are not relevant to the classroom.

The words 'in the classroom' were used generically, as it was never contested that the phrase signified the interface of teacher and student - whether it be on the sports field, on an excursion, or working one to one.

**Contradictions**

Sometimes productive outcomes of the scheme are not achieved when some teachers receive Master Teacher status but they are not perceived by their colleagues to have satisfied the criteria of the scheme. The reverse situation, where someone who is perceived as a leading teacher is not granted Master Teacher status, has a similar demoralising effect.

The survey questions separated the matter of the appraisal process from the question of the positive and negative effects of the Master Teacher scheme itself, but there could be some overlap in these categories. The importance of the assessment report recurs in teachers' accounts of their perceptions of the Master Teacher scheme in general and the appraisal process in particular.

Only six (24%) of the survey respondents believed that there had been no significant negative effects of the scheme. Of the remaining nineteen teachers who did state some negative effects, three (all male) stated the difficulty of resources: the extra money did not remunerate the teacher for the extra efforts required, and there was an expectation that teachers would do more and more with less resources of time and personnel.

The majority of the respondents noted two factors:

1. there is a lack of correlation between those who are perceived by their peers to deserve or not deserve Master Teacher status, and
2. the writing of the assessment reports can be a significant factor in the creation of this lack of correlation. Since the report is the basis upon which candidates' performance is judged to be worthy of the award of Master Teacher (see Chapter 3), the way in which it highlights relevant evidence is crucial to candidates' success.

Respondents alluded to jealousy of those who did not receive Master Teacher status against those who did, and people being 'totally destroyed' by the experience of rejection. There was a degree of cynicism displayed in comments such as 'Did you pick the right panel and right people to make comments?' Others reflected that there had seemed to be differential
standards from year to year, with 1992 coming in for special mention as a year when not
many apparently worthy candidates had received Master Teacher status.

Linda makes the link between the writing of the assessment report and the problems which
arise when allegedly worthy candidates do not have their worth acknowledged by the
Master Teacher panel.

Especially when you know some of the people and you know the work that they do;
you've seen the results they get from children. You sort of think, "Well, they're
pretty good teachers." Their panel couldn't write the right words, or something or
other. I can imagine that if I were in that position, and I failed, I would put in no
more time than what was demanded from me by the Department, I think. I think I'd
go into a huge sulk.

Sue made essentially the same point, but personalised it.

There are people who I've found on the peer level, never to be anything less than
unco-operative and on the student level to be less than professional, and they were
rewarded by the system. And for so many people, that just blew it away and made it
valueless. And then the following year, you've got people who we went out of our
way to encourage because they were doing such a brilliant job and were working
their butts off, and just achieving fabulous things, and they were knocked back ...
You question your own judgement, and put them at risk of professional and public
denial, basically ... It makes you think, well, shit, why did I get it? Or what was
wrong there? When you put people up to the system, you think, God, did they get
the name right?

Others elaborated about perceived differential standards and the problems of writing reports
which could present excellent candidates effectively. As one survey respondent wrote,
'Candidates should not be dependent on the literacy skills of their panels!' Christine
commented: 'I've never seen a reasonable outline on paper of a bad report versus a good
report. It's all just hearsay.' She had also felt that her attempts to understand the way in
which evidence could be presented effectively had been futile: 'I couldn't get any hard
answers at all on that.'

Other negative factors in the Master Teacher scheme noted in the interviews were the ways
that the capping of the Master Teacher allowances had created anomalies for some teachers
moving from the promotion stream to the Master Teacher stream. These salary anomalies
were later addressed, but distressed some teachers who were victim of the situation because
they had foregone their promotion position on the basis that the MT position would give them salary parity.

**Correlation of perception**

There appeared to be no significant difference in perception of the effects of the Master Teacher scheme with respect to gender, age or other factors elicited in the survey and teacher interviews. This may be due to the relative homogeneity of the sample. The interviews with administrators did not reveal any significant differences in perception beyond those which could be attributed to their different positioning within the Master Teacher scheme. One possible exception is where one administrator believed that teachers had purposely tried to discredit the appraisal process through rumour and innuendo by saying that there were quotas, or that there had been irregularities of procedure in the Master Teacher selection panels.

Zander (1992) found that females interpreted the Master Teacher assessment criterion of student respect for teacher differently from the way in which male panel members assessed it.

On the face of it females expect master Teacher Level Ones to consistently employ practices associated with improved student learning and to be people who are able and willing to share their expertise and knowledge with all who wish to access it. Within the categories of criteria, females collectively gave a higher mean ranking to Professional Background than males (Zander 1992, pp.161-162).

This finding may have relevance to one idea which came through three of the interviews with female teachers. Julia and Sue believed that there could be more scope in the assessment process for the different participation patterns of women in the workforce, Julia seeing that females often need to consider adapting their career pathways to better accommodate family demands. Sue saw it this way:

People criticise you if you're out the door at three o'clock every day because that's the arrangement you've got. They don't see that once you've got the kids to bed, you spend three hours programming. I know people who will stay at school till 4.30-5 o'clock, and they might be sitting around, having coffee and a chat, but they are still seen to be at the workplace.

Claire, a mother of young children who was teaching full-time and studying, experienced frustration in enabling her panel to see why she might have been choosing to do most of her preparation at home rather than at school where it was a less visible process. She felt that the panel was unwilling to examine the outcomes of her work, and that their criteria for
excellence did not take account of the processes which she needed to use in acquitting all of her responsibilities.

**Inputs and outputs**

Organised inputs by Master Teachers into the education system are not motivated specifically by the Master Teacher scheme, but are rewarded by it, and encourage a continuation of inputting by those teachers. Inputs and outputs by Master Teachers can be categorised as those which are at the personal, school and system levels.

Most of the survey respondents were members of relevant professional associations, and various school and professional committees relating to policy and professional development. This concords with the observations of Martins (1994). Only seven of the twenty-five respondents were not current or recent members of a Subject Area Committee, or Subcommittee, where most of the policy and implementation of policy in the NT Department of Education is carried out in relation to curriculum. One survey respondent indicated that he/she now believed that 'the use of teachers for Committee work, without pay is a big con', reflecting an alternative view to the positivity which others had linked with teachers being involved in this way.

Most respondents also believed that they were making a strong contribution to their schools through mentoring of teachers, curriculum development and pastoral care of students. All but five respondents to the survey indicated their involvement in some aspect of curriculum development work in response to the question, 'What do you see as the main contributions you are making to your school?' Two of these mentioned pastoral care to students, and three mentioned mentoring of teachers. While both pastoral care to students and mentoring of teachers were included by other teachers in what they saw as their contribution to the schools, it was always alongside curriculum development, which seems to be the most persistent role taken on by master teachers.

When it comes to linking the Master Teacher scheme with these inputs, there does not seem to be a clear link which teachers perceive. Mary would not be alone in saying,

> The opportunities I've had to develop curriculum started long before I was connected with the MT scheme, and so I believe that from those initial forays into curriculum development that I have been asked or had the opportunity to do further curriculum development. Most of the people I'm doing curriculum development with, most probably don't know that I have MT status.

Marie puts forward another reason for her involvement in committees:
I think because of the length of time I'd been around in the subject and participation in that area is probably the reason I'd been invited onto those.

<Do you see that your participation in those groups actually gives you more evidence for ongoing MT status?>

Most definitely.

Only three survey respondents were not both playing a role in the leadership of the school in some way, and leading professional development at the school, professional association or other level. One cited 'hide-bound administration' as a reason for why he/she was not given leadership opportunities. One survey respondent doubted that there had been any change in leadership responsibilities since Master Teacher conferral. The person resented the necessary administration attached to leading professional development while attached to a school. The third member of this group did not have a response to Question 9 - 'Has your Master Teacher status given you opportunities for curriculum leadership, or other types of leadership, in the school?'

The research showed Master Teachers to be highly motivated teachers who enjoyed being involved in the world of their work, and/or felt a responsibility as professionals to participate in the shaping of their profession. While they did not do this because of the existence of the Master Teacher scheme, they recognised that the scheme did reward this participation through the assessment process, and that encouraged them to persevere in making a professional input at the personal, school and system levels.

Promotion or Master Teacher?

One of the ironies of 'enhanced career paths' through the Master Teacher scheme is that Master Teacher status may allow teachers to attain promotion positions, thus removing them from the Master Teacher pathway. Some survey responses indicated that one of the attractions of the Master Teacher scheme was that it was one way to progress, given the truncation of promotion positions in schools brought about through the various expenditure cuts applied by the NT Department of Education. And yet, the reality of the scheme's operation is that some Master Teachers have found that their Master Teacher status becomes a step toward a promotion position. This can be due to either a policy espoused by a school administration or a de facto recognition of the power of a Master Teacher award in a teacher's curriculum vitae.

Five (20%) of the twenty-five survey respondents were working in Executive Teacher positions at the time of the survey: three were in curriculum development positions of some
kind, and two were in Senior Teacher positions. This demonstrates that the 'enhanced career paths' are not only in the classroom in a literal sense, but have enabled some teachers to use their teaching and curriculum expertise in writing materials for the classroom context. The teachers who were in Executive Teacher 1 positions had moved to a different role within the school, recognising that their Master Teacher status had been a significant stepping stone toward that end. One interviewee, Marie, expressed strong negative feelings about this fluidity:

I totally disagree with it. My mind was thinking, 'Promotional opportunities are fairly limited, therefore, I'll go the MT way.' But what was made abundantly clear by the Assistant Principal, was that if you wished to be in an HDA [Higher Duties Allowance] position, you're going to have to go the MT way, and then the promotional way. And I think that that's the way that quite a lot of people are actually operating. It's not the way it's meant to operate, but that's the practice. People get rewarded for what they're doing, and it has sort of become a stepping stone.

The negativity seems to have been attributed to Marie's perception that Master Teacher status was a *de facto* median rung in the promotion 'ladder', and that this was a stated view from someone who could have strong influence in the school structure.

Information from the Australian Education Union (NT) indicates that there is a tension in some schools regarding the role of Master Teachers in relation to the role of the Executive Teachers, and this impinges on decision making and release time (Sharpe, 1994). The movement of teachers between the Master Teacher and Executive Teacher pathways can further confound the process of delineation of role within a school context, although it is acknowledged by two of the survey respondents and one of the school administrators that teachers may comprise a combination of the relevant skills and could benefit the system even more by moving between these roles (Stokes, 1994). Another five of the survey respondents had moved in and out of classroom teacher roles: one to a support role within a school, and four to office-based positions. It does appear that Master Teacher status might well be conceived as a pathway, more so than as a destination. The enhancement of pathway is also able to be construed in more than one way.

**Master Teacher duties**

There is a difference of opinion among administrators as to whether duty statements or other similar role descriptions should apply to Master Teachers (Stokes, 1994; Bradley, 1994; Sharpe, 1994).
Four of the survey respondents mentioned administrative duties specifically when responding to Questions 16 and 17: 'What do you see as the role and responsibility of Master Teachers?/What do others perceive as the role and responsibility of Master Teachers?' One believed that others perceived that Master Teachers should 'take on admin. work!!' Another teacher referred to the 'fuzzy areas' in the delineation of the role of Master Teacher. She/he specifically precluded 'discipline concerns' from the role of Master Teacher, and declared discipline to be a responsibility of the ET1 teacher. A third teacher believed that part of the role of Master Teachers was to 'concentrate on classroom skills rather than admin'. The fourth insisted that Master Teacher Level One teachers should be encouraged to continue their job as teachers. 'They should not be involved in a lot of extra work within the school. They should not be doing the job of a Senior Teacher or Assistant Principal'.

Another trend in the surveys was the suspicion that others in the education community expected Master Teachers to take on what was variously described as 'extras', 'unpalatable jobs' and 'special projects'. One teacher invoked the issue of Master Teacher duties by writing, 'They get extra money; give them extra duties', as a response to the question of others' perceptions of the Master Teacher role. Teachers decried the ad hoc nature of the way in which these duties were allocated, noting that the duties and mode of deployment of Master Teachers varied from school to school. Linda describes it this way:

Every now and again, a Band 2 [Senior Teacher] around the table will give you a duty and say, "You're a Master Teacher. You can do that," when it will be an administrative task, and I have to say, "Well, I'll do it but not because I'm supposed to do it."

Only one respondent lauded the action of a school administrator in canvassing the aspirations and skills of the Master Teachers in her/his school as a prelude to directing them toward opportunities for involvement. Mary adds, 'And I don't think that the individual can be forced to do a duty because it suits their Band 2 [Senior Teacher]', and pleads for negotiation with Master Teachers.

One respondent protested that Master Teachers were encouraged to become involved in a range of 'across the school' activities. She resisted this involvement because she believed that her Master Teacher status rewarded her strong classroom performance which might not necessarily be extrapolated into the whole school arena. Two of the survey respondents believed that those with Master Teacher status should be used in 'extra ways', although these ways were not specified. Mentoring of teachers, curriculum development and
professional development were mentioned as roles for Master Teachers across the range of responses to the survey. One respondent defined the role in relation to the student.

Two respondents attempted to differentiate between the roles of Master Teacher Level One and those of Levels Two and Three. One indicated that MT 2 and 3 teachers should have a high profile, and the other gave greater specificity to this by specifying the inserviceing of staff for professional development [sic] as a role for MT 2 and 3 teachers. Christine links her perspectives with Mary's when she states that all Master Teachers should negotiate their own areas of interest and development, but she also saw a clear difference between the role of Master Teacher Level One officers and those at Levels Two and Three.

I believe that particularly for MT1, that you should be able to 'pick and choose' and that's why I've still got grave reservations about going onto MT2, because I've always been allowed to do what I want.

Of the process of designing roles, she asserts,

It should be a bottom up scheme where you decide the areas that you're interested in and it's then negotiated within the school framework and they're shared out.

The balance between teachers not having definition of their role and yet having some control over their own choices in the school context appears to be desirable for Master Teachers. Only one administrator was adamant that there should be no expectation of duty attached to Master Teacher status. Marie links the clearer delineation of Master Teacher roles with productivity measures by saying,

To get higher efficiency and productivity, you've got to be able to have clear outlines of what you're supposed to do. If the school or the system doesn't develop those properly, then it's very hard to judge. I think that's a problem. [Some teachers say] "I'm doing the same as 'Joe Bloggs' in the faculty, why shouldn't I be paid at that level as well? In fact, I have more students in my classes." There's that sort of hostility.

**Master Teacher contribution to the system**

Master Teachers are at the forefront of professional development and system policy making, and this is seen positively by most of the Master Teachers surveyed, and also by the administrators. There has been a shift over the past five years so that, now, the bulk of professional development in the NT Department of Education is being conducted by Master Teachers, either through their work as departmental officers, usually on a project basis, or through the work of professional associations (Martins, 1994). While there are some industrial relations implications from the ownership of professional development being
placed on an increasingly voluntary group of teachers, there are anticipated benefits of such an approach with leader teachers conducting professional development activities which are (hopefully) attuned to the needs of classroom practitioners.

Only one survey respondent was negative about this trend: she/he stated that after spending extra hours on committee work and other professional activities over an extended period of time, she/he would now work only for money, as the Master Teacher allowance does not adequately compensate for the extra duress faced by Master Teachers trying to pursue the tasks offered to them.

Other respondents demonstrated a wide range of involvement in professional development and policy making, and an appreciation for the degree of control it gives them over their professional lives. There is also a sense of the contributions being part of being professional. A particular aspect of Master Teachers' system input is panel membership for Master Teacher applicants; half of the teaching service is involved in the Master Teacher appraisal process (Martins, 1994). This involvement is seen to be a means of consolidating a culture of appraisal in the teaching service.

Most of the respondents believed that they were making a significant contribution to themselves, their schools and, less frequently, the system through their role as Master Teacher.

For Question 13 on the survey, 'Which sorts of outcomes (personal, school, system) have been attained through the Master Teacher scheme?', five of the respondents cited financial reward in their response, and nine others indicated that the Master Teacher scheme had contributed significantly to them by increasing their self-esteem, enhancing their job satisfaction, or developing them professionally.

As for broader effects of the Master Teacher scheme, three respondents spoke specifically about the positive outcomes of their involvement in the appraisal process, echoing the view of administrators that appraisal can use the abilities of quality professionals in order to encourage the development of others. Seven respondents believed that the school and system recognition afforded to Master Teachers was a significant outcome, which encouraged them to continue to develop and contribute. Two teachers made a link between the increased personal esteem mentioned above, and the increased confidence of teachers to become involved in leadership tasks. One of these respondents went on to suggest that the Master Teacher scheme has enabled schools to become better structured by 'knowing where
to look for leadership'. Another teacher agreed with this sentiment, but went on to say that the scheme may not have worked as the system expected: 'I don't think it necessarily encourages good practitioners to stay in the classroom', herself being a case in point!

Three teachers did not cite any positive outcomes for the scheme; these are their responses:

- For all three areas [qv] I feel there has been a lot of dissatisfaction with the system - changes in rules etc, not allowing the full percentage on salary.
- Let me know please.
- Minimal really.

**Appraisal**

Most of the participants in the research had had positive experiences of the appraisal process but almost every one could cite instances of teachers who had negative experiences of the process, and this was linked with the sorts of disparities treated above, where apparently worthy teachers had missed out on gaining Master Teacher status, or teachers deemed to be 'unworthy' of Master Teacher conferral were granted MT status. This negative experience of the appraisal process was almost always connected with the process of writing the assessment report.

Six survey respondents had not known of negative effects of the scheme for themselves or for others; two others complained about the demands made on their time by others, while time resources were limited. Fifteen respondents referred to the effects of the appraisal process not vindicating the judgement of the applicant or others in relation to the applicant. Here are some of the more poignant reflections:

- I've seen people not attain MT status and be totally destroyed by the experience - sense of failure, incompetence etc. An 'out to get you' mentality has also been seen.
- People who fail to achieve MT status do not receive enough counselling. Panel members' ability to write clearly and succinctly seems to be a dominating factor.
- Main criteria would be how well you write a report and did you pick right panel and right people to make comments.
- I know of two extremely good teachers who have resigned as a result of MT1 failure. There are five cases I know of where a failure has resulted in a lack of confidence and withdrawal from others.

Eight of the respondents who referred to difficulties in the appraisal process cited the writing of the reports as a strong factor in the process. Marie reflected on her experiences of Master Teacher panels, as both an applicant and a panel member.
As a panel member it's actually quite difficult, because what's been set in place is a process whereby you just write affirming things on the person, and to me, a Master Teacher scheme is meant to provide professional development both positively and negatively, and that I don't think has been the case. I've observed ... some cronyism where perhaps things haven't been checked out as thoroughly as might have happened. Panel writing has been interesting, and in terms of the actual writing itself, because of the changes over the years, it has been challenging, in that although there's a guideline presented in the booklet, when it comes to the guideline, and what the panel actually wants, I think at times [they] can be two separate things.

Christine noted that she had never seen a reasonable outline, on paper, of a bad report versus a good report. 'It's all just hearsay.'

Julia expressed the desire of an applicant for honest feedback: 'I think what's missing is evaluating on the weaker side of stuff - that counselling process of saying "OK, here [is something that you're not good at]."' This picks up on Marie's comments about balance in the content of the assessment report.

There was a recognition implicit in the surveys cited and explicit in four of the teacher interviews, that it was not enough to be a promising applicant for Master Teacher status, but that evidence needed to be crafted into a convincing text by the applicant and the panel. Many times, the criteria for this convincing writing eluded the panel members, causing feelings of confusion and outrage. In some instances the panel's perceptions were different from the applicant's and the negative experiences of the applicant could be attributed to this differential perception rather than a difficulty with translating evidence into a persuasive written report.

One interviewee, Sue, remained consistent in her desire for the Master Teacher scheme to focus more on student outcomes, by suggesting that students should be part of the appraisal process.

From a school principal's perspective, the appraisal process is regarded as productive - 'a renewal process' - even though the writing up of several reports a year can detract from one's productivity in other areas (Stokes, 1994).
Summary

This research demonstrates that the Master Teacher scheme has been generally well-received by those who have been confirmed as Master Teachers. These teachers have been Master Teachers for the duration of the scheme. The Master Teacher scheme has provided them with the 'better careers' sought through award restructuring by enabling them to operate as Master Teachers, either remaining at Level 1 or proceeding towards Level 3. For some this has opened up opportunities in more traditional promotion positions - either as Executive Teachers in schools, or as office-based personnel. Either way, the Master Teacher scheme has made provision for these teachers to be rewarded for their high standard of competence pending their continued role within the school or the wider school system in whatever role might be available to them. The perceived problem with teachers' careers which prompted the development of Advanced Skills Teacher schemes was the disillusionment which teachers felt when it seemed as though they had conquered most of the challenges in their careers, and had received most of the rewards which were accessible to them, with an exit from the classroom as the only means of progressing from there.

This study reveals that involvement as a Master Teacher is enabling most teachers to continue to develop in their careers. Many of the Master Teachers indicate that they would be doing this anyway, but the reality of recognition by peers and the system, and a remuneration does provide an ongoing incentive.

The recognition of Master Teachers has enabled the school system to better use the leadership within teacher ranks. There is a high correlation between those who are shaping education and those who are being recognised as educational leaders. Yet, there is also a strong concern about the contradictions in this correlation. There are going to be flaws in any appraisal system, but it is a significant problem when teachers perceived by their peers to be teachers of excellence, do not receive the recognition accorded through Master Teacher status. It is demoralising for teachers, too, when teachers who are not perceived to be teachers of excellence are given that status.

The power of the assessment report to present candidates honestly and effectively is significant in the problem of a lack of correlation between the calibre of a teacher and the award of Master Teacher. This could be remedied by the continued inservicing of assessment panels in the art of writing appropriate reports, and in the development of a
culture for Master Teacher appraisal whereby the candidate's strengths and weaknesses can be honestly discussed and documented.

Master Teachers are wanting a degree of autonomy in their roles in schools, so that they can operate within their area of competence, using the time resources at their disposal. However, there is also a desire for a role alongside Executive Teachers in schools. Master Teachers can sometimes feel frustrated as leaders because they are not used in a clearly articulated way by the school and the system. They can feel insulted when they are expected to pick up the jobs which nobody else wants. A common expectation from administrators and teachers was that Master Teacher Levels 2 and 3 should have a negotiated and specific role within the organisations in which they worked.

These findings need to be placed against the backdrops of educational productivity and the aims of the Master Teacher scheme (as an AST scheme) explored in the next chapter, in order to ascertain how the experience of these participants has relevance to the ongoing evaluation of the Master Teacher scheme and award restructuring. And what does this have to contribute toward an understanding of educational productivity?
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The findings of this research indicate that the Master Teacher scheme is a valuable feature of the teaching career structure. While it may not in itself have caused teachers to 'remain in the classroom', the scheme has rewarded teachers who have been wanting to continue applying their expertise with students directly rather than going through the promotion stream where the focus of the teacher becomes directed increasingly toward systems and adults.

That is not to say that all Master Teachers remain in the classroom, as some of the sample had left the classroom to take on professional development roles or curriculum development roles. Still, that is seen as improving the quality of education as a whole, because they are the teachers identified by the NT education system as being the teachers with advanced skills who are rewarded for the contribution which they can make and are making.

This study has found that master teachers are hampered in some situations because they are unsure about their roles. The master teachers have been identified but this is only part of the task as Bluer (1993) has shown in citing from a section of the Executive Summary of the Report of the Inservice Teacher Education Project, Teachers Learning: Improving Australian Schools Through Inservice Teacher Training and Development (1988):

The report discussed the state of teaching as a career and its ability to attract and hold its share of the nations' most able young people. The report identifies two tasks: a professional task of selecting, and possibly certifying, highly skilled teachers and an industrial relations task of developing new career structures and assignments for teachers certified as having advanced teaching skills (Bluer, 1993, p.2)

Identifying Master Teachers is a major task, but the designation of assignments is part, arguably the most important part, of the industrial relations task Bluer identified. This could avoid the problems which arise when teachers in promotion positions summarily assign Master Teachers with duties which have no particular bearing on the skills which they were deemed to have when conferred with the status. While schools are free to use senior staff and Master Teachers as they wish, there would be gains for Master Teachers if their roles were negotiated and then assigned, particularly in the case of Master Teacher Levels 2 and
3. This would work against possible tensions between Master Teachers and Executive Teachers. It would also enable teachers to see that there is a corresponding expectation for each level of Master Teacher reached. Curry (1994) and Chadbourne and Ingvarson (1991) have drawn attention to the need to retain the original concept of ASTs by ensuring that these teachers have assignments in their workplaces which correspond to the skills for which they are being rewarded. These assignments need not be formally titled, but should be tasks which are of use to the workplace, without being loaded with the administration which these teachers have sought to avoid.

Master Teachers are making a strong contribution to the Northern Territory education system. While most are prepared to put in this time, there is an issue of time and money here. With half of the teaching service involved in the Master Teacher appraisal process (Martins, 1994) and many teachers involved in the compilation of Promotion Assessment Reports as well as professional committees and professional development activities, there is so much for Master teachers to do. Supervisors need to be wise in their guidance of Master teachers, to ensure that work assignments are reasonable. This is a significant industrial relations issue, considering that Executive Teachers in schools have non-contact time in recognition of their administrative duties.

So far, so good. However the negative effects of the Master Teacher appraisal have been noted and so it is imperative that the conditions giving rise to these are dealt with. This will involve continuing assistance given to assessment panels, so that the evidence can be written up in ways which enable the candidate to demonstrate achievement of the benchmarks. An integral part of the process also should be a broad canvassing of peers of the candidate so that the perceptions of colleagues can be correlated with the evidence presented, as it seems to be a dangerous state of affairs when the deliberations of the school based panels and the regional Master Teacher panels can be at odds with the perceptions of teachers in workplaces and systems.

The appraisal process is not delivering Master Teacher status to teachers perceived by peers to have met the criteria. Zander's study (1992) drew attention to the way in which criteria for assessment of teachers for Master Teacher Level 1 were interpreted differently by gender and position of the assessor. He asks:

Are students' and parents' perceptions considered a valid source of evidence when there appears to be discrepancies on the validity of teachers' perceptions of each other as identified in this research. Should there be formalised observation of
teachers wishing to be considered for the advanced recognition (Zander, 1992, pp.178-179).

There have been adjustments to the appraisal process over the duration of the scheme, but there is evidence to suggest that significant numbers of Master Teachers have hesitations about the process.

The way that evidence is presented in Master Teacher Assessment reports is crucial. Teachers believe that the performance of a teacher can be obscured or misrepresented in the report. Continuing assistance needs to be given to Master Teacher candidates and panel members so that they can master the genre of presenting the candidate so that their best features are highlighted honestly.

The Master Teacher scheme and productivity

Whether Master Teachers remain in a classroom teaching context or move on to an office-based position (temporary or permanent), or they move into the promotion stream, the recognition of their performance by the Department of Education is a significant sign of their productivity, and a motivator of further productivity, when conceived of as performance in a range of professional modes. This sort of productivity is linked to understandings of teacher productivity and institutional productivity, particularly the ideas of rewarding excellence with extra remuneration, acknowledging careful planning of courses, and dedication. Personal qualities of the teacher are also factored into the Master Teacher appraisal process.

The problems associated with the appraisal process show that the measurement of a teacher's productivity is problematic. The Master Teacher assessment does try to look at the broad picture of a teacher's performance, but it is necessary to cite specific projects or instances in the report. Master Teachers are saying that there are elements to being a Master Teacher which might not necessarily fit neatly into a report. We must beware of a narrowing of the definitions of excellent performance as reports are compiled.

The findings of this study concur with the literature about teacher productivity. Murnane's (1981) asserts that teaching contracts based on seniority rules with added incentives (in this case, the Advanced Skills Teacher concept) could be more effective in public education than contracts which grant reward on the basis of supervisor evaluation or estimates of student learning.
The Master Teacher scheme does take account of the teacher's training and experience. Keeves (1972) links these factors to improved student performance and so there is a strong probability that productivity is being achieved for students, through the encouragement and reward of teacher training and experience through the Master Teacher scheme. The scheme also acknowledges the personal qualities of teachers noted by commentators as significant in teacher productivity.

It was not possible to say whether Master Teacher status was correlated with a corresponding increase in student performance.

It is primarily in the area of teachers' career paths that the Master Teacher scheme has made a major contribution. It is argued that a scheme which enables the most competent teachers to be rewarded and retained in the teaching service is a means of enhancing the productivity of the education system.

The issue of accountability comes through, too, with some administrators and teachers desiring a free hand when it comes to the sorts of duties that master teachers might carry out, but others claiming that, particularly for Master Teacher Levels Two and Three, there should be more defined parameters of the duties expected so that there is less ambiguity about their appropriateness.

Co-operation and consensus do occur more obviously in schools and the system because there is a group of identified teachers within the school and system context who are able to take on responsibility. This has the potential to develop workplaces as teachers work in a professional mode with each other and members of the school administration, in order to improve the performance of the school and the system.

**The award restructuring process and efficiency and productivity in Northern Territory schools**

This study focuses on the Master Teacher scheme only, but places it in the context of other Award Restructuring initiatives. The Master Teacher scheme is more a productivity driven policy and less an efficiency driven one because the cost inputs actually rise, as does the time and personnel required to administer the scheme. As such, it avoids problems foreshadowed by Marginson (1990) and Ashenden (1992). Ashenden urges us to 'act smarter'. It is 'smarter' to reward teachers who are performing at a high level of competence and orientate them toward careers which will fulfil them and contribute to the education
system. The streamlined classification scales for teachers created greater structural efficiency.

Other aspects of Award Restructuring in Northern Territory education reflect this same concern. The provision of a Northern Territory allowance and the Rural Incentives scheme both cost money in an ongoing way, but are tailored to develop an experienced teaching force in the Northern Territory. This will save extra inputs in ensuing years, due to the prohibitive costs of around Australia recruitment. The retention of experienced teachers in rural areas will provide improved continuity for remote students, which will, hopefully, contribute to improved student educational outcomes.

**Productivity in Northern Territory schools**

Teachers saw productivity primarily as being able to exercise competence in contexts where they were given a high degree of autonomy but within parameters which were negotiated with the school administration. It is clear that teachers do not see this happening in a vacuum and were aware of their responsibility to students. They also wanted the Education Department to reward their services appropriately and to be reasonable in their expectations of what teachers could do with the resources available.

Teachers appreciated the opportunity to be recognised for a high standard of performance. There is obviously a danger that teachers will become discouraged if the amount of work expected is disproportionate with the rewards offered.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Master Teacher scheme continue undergoing refinements so that teachers with advanced skills are able to access the scheme. The greater the correlation between those teachers deemed to be leaders in their profession and those awarded MT status, the greater will be the confidence of teachers in the system toward the scheme. This is important for teachers who might wish to use the scheme to validate their own skills, as it is for those others in the system who wish to depend on the degree of skill supposed by the award of Master Teacher, as they contract the services of Master Teachers in programs.

This accessing of the scheme will involve training for candidates and panels in the writing of appropriate assessment reports and guidance by principals and other supervisors at the school level so that teachers with appropriate skills are actively encouraged to access the
scheme. The compilation of assessment reports is not a value free process (Zander, 1992) and so there should be a wide canvassing of views so that the candidate's professional colleagues are affirming of the sorts of performance statements made in the assessment report.

It would be helpful for schools to further delineate the roles of Master Teacher Two and Three and the Executive Teachers within the school, as there does seem to be tension for Master Teachers concerning how their work relates to expectations for non Master Teachers, and also Executive Teachers. Some Master Teachers feel pressured to grasp all the jobs offered to them, and it would be helpful for their own sense of what they are expected to do, for there to be some articulation of how their ongoing performance is meant to be integrated into the school. While it was generally not felt necessary to outline the duties of Master Teacher Ones, it was considered important that these teachers have a more focused sense of what was expected of them.

While some Master Teachers are being drawn into promotion positions either temporarily or permanently, the relationship between Master Teachers and Executive Teachers will remain something which needs to be worked out in each school, so that the benefits accruing to a school by having Master Teachers is not lost through their being caught up in tasks which are more appropriately designated to Executive Teachers, though it is acknowledged that there are elements of administration in every teacher's load.

The culture of the Master Teacher appraisal process should also be clarified, so that participants know whether its purpose is primarily professional development or whether it is more a measuring of positive attainment of the outcomes against the benchmark descriptors of the Master Teacher Peer Assessment Handbook. A professional development exercise would enable there to be feedback given to the candidate, and it would be considered appropriate to note areas requiring further development alongside reports of excellent performance. There are still many perceived victims of the process, so much so that some respondents reported that their peers had decided against presenting for assessment as Master Teachers because they did not feel as though they wanted to put themselves through what appeared to be a gruelling and potentially vexing process.

The adoption of these recommendations would remove some of the existing hindrances to productivity of teachers within the Northern Territory's urban secondary schools and enable the excellent teachers within the system to receive the rewards of extra remuneration and recognition.
Further research

It is still unclear whether student educational performance is improved through the Master Teacher scheme. This issue provokes the thorny question of measurement of student performance. The literature suggests that the parameters of student performance are largely connected to the student's home environment (Johnson and Walberg, 1989). The literature does suggest, however, that once the teacher and the institution are working together effectively, then student productivity also increases.

Whereas this study focused on Master Teachers, it would be useful to study the perceptions of those teachers who have been Master Teachers and who have not reapplied. How do their perceptions throw light on the productivity of the Master Teacher scheme?

This research has shown that the Master Teacher scheme has led to improved efficiency and productivity in schools. As part of award restructuring in Northern Territory schools it has made a strong contribution to teacher productivity by way of providing them with enhanced careers. As the Master Teacher scheme is a major component of award restructuring in Northern Territory education, it could also be said that award restructuring has resulted in improved productivity and efficiency in NT schools. The parameters of productivity in NT schools and the degree of intersection of the industrial and professional determinations of productivity awaits to be fully elaborated through further research.
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REPORT:

MASTER TEACHER

LEVEL 1
Appendix III Master Teacher Level 1

REPORT CRITERIA MASTER TEACHER LEVEL 1

A. PROFESSIONAL STANDING:

Demonstrate by providing EVIDENCE of:

- Appropriate professional development, knowledge and expertise.
- Ability and willingness to assist and support colleagues.
- Effectiveness as a teacher as perceived by colleagues.
- Educational leadership.
- Other relevant evidence may be included.
A PROFESSIONAL STANDING:
REPORT CRITERIA MASTER TEACHER LEVEL 1

B. TEACHING:

Demonstrate the quality of performance by providing EVIDENCE of:

1. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:
   
   o Use of a variety of management strategies as appropriate and necessary ie discipline policy, classroom layout, cooperation, constructive approach to learning.
   
   o Effectively catering for the needs of individual students.
   
   o Ability to cope with difficult classroom situations.
   
   o Positive rapport with students and parents.
   
   o Promotion of a culturally appropriate learning environment.

2. TEACHING SKILLS

   o Knowledge and use of current curriculum in classroom and school context.
   
   o A dynamic and innovative approach, including effective use of resources.
   
   o Application of knowledge from inservices.
   
   o Use of a variety of teaching strategies as appropriate.
   
   o Ability to recognise and acknowledge a diversity of student experiences and to incorporate this into teaching and learning strategies.
   
   o Thorough planning, preparation and evaluation.
B. TEACHING:

1. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

2. TEACHING SKILLS
Appendix III Master Teacher Level 1

REPORT CRITERIA MASTER TEACHER LEVEL 1

TEACHING CONTINUED

3. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:
   - Effective assessment and evaluation procedures, including self-evaluation procedures.
   - Ongoing effective communication with students and parents regarding student progress.

4. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
B. TEACHING:

3. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

4. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Appendix III Master Teacher Level 1

REPORT CRITERIA MASTER TEACHER LEVEL 1

C. CONTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO BENCHMARK DESCRIPTION

Provide EVIDENCE regarding the QUALITY of PERFORMANCE with particular reference to the VALUE of the CONTRIBUTION.

- The performance of face-to-face classroom instruction for an appropriate period of time per week, as defined by the Education Department.

- Responsibility for the welfare and security of children while they are in the care of the school.

- Administrative and organisational tasks appropriate to the level as assigned by a senior officer.

- Participation as required in peer assessment programs.

- Application of acquired skills to provide professional support and guidance to colleagues and particularly to neophyte and student teachers through active contribution to professional group meetings and discussions in various school contexts.

- modelling of teaching and classroom management techniques.

- leadership in the development of school-based curriculum.

- assisting in the professional development of colleagues.

Other significant evidence may be included.
C. CONTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO BENCHMARK DESCRIPTION

SIGNATURES

Chairperson _______________________________ Date / / 

Panel Member ______________________________ Date / / 

Panel Member ______________________________ Date / / 

I have been given the opportunity to consider this Report and comment on its contents. I am satisfied that EVIDENCE, as defined in Section 7, has been provided.

Applicant _______________________________ Date / / 

APPENDIX B: SURVEY LETTER AND SURVEY

{Researcher's address}

{Date}

Dear {Master Teacher}

I am writing to you, in order to request a short amount of your time, for the filling out of this survey. I also require some teachers to interview, too, so that the responses of the survey can be elaborated. I have targeted you as part of my research sample, as you are one of the Master Teachers to have been recently confirmed in your MT status. In some ways, you and your colleagues who have been MT's for four years, are in a position to speak with authority about the processes and consequences of the Master Teacher scheme.

Please take the short time to complete this survey, and you will be making a strong contribution to my task of evaluating the system effects of the Master Teacher scheme. On completion of the survey, please either attach a short note or phone me if you are willing to be interviewed.

As I have a small sample, I have taken the liberty of sending this to you by name: this will enable me to follow up return of the survey, and also to be specific in requesting interviews. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to any other organisation or individual. Please also sign the declaration form at the end of the survey, as your confirmation of permission for the use of the material.
As the preamble to the survey indicates, if you would prefer to complete it by phone or in person, please call me and I will arrange to do it that way. Call me, also, if you have any questions pertaining to the survey, or my research. Thanks for your participation.

Yours faithfully

Jenny Elvery
SURVEY:  

Name: ________________

THE MASTER TEACHER SCHEME AND YOU.

This survey will take only ten or fifteen minutes of your time - I promise. I know that people like me, are bothering you all the time, for esoteric pieces of information. However, I beg your indulgence, and your reward can be that you have saved a soul from total despair.

Take ten minutes over a cup of coffee to complete this survey, and place it in the courier to Jenny Elvery, c/-NTSCS. Mark it confidential. If you'd prefer to respond over the telephone, then contact me at school {phone number} or at home {phone number}. Please do it within a week of receiving the survey.

Please circle the appropriate response:

1  M/F

2  Age:

   under 40    over 40

3  Years of teaching:

   0-5 yrs   6-10yrs    11-16yrs   17-25yrs   25yrs or more

4  Years of teaching in the Northern Territory:

   0-5 yrs   6-10yrs    11-16yrs   17-25yrs   25yrs or more

5  Level of Master Teacher gained

   Level 1   Level 2   Level 3
6 Are you a member of a relevant professional association? Y/N
Which association(s)

7 Are you a member of a Subject Area Committee, Sub Sac, or other Departmental policy or curriculum committee? Y/N
Which ones?

8 What do you see as the main contributions you are making to your school?
e.g. curriculum development, pastoral care, mentoring of teachers.

9 Has your Master Teacher status given you opportunities for curriculum leadership, or other types of leadership, in the school? Y/N
If so, please give some examples. If not, please suggest some reasons for this, if you can.

10 Are you involved in leading professional development? Y/N
If so, give some examples.
- school-based:
- professional associations:
- other:
11 Are you satisfied that the Master Teacher allowance rewards your contribution to the education system? Y/N
Please comment.

12 Was the Master Teacher appraisal process a positive or negative influence in your professional development? Please comment.

13 Which sorts of outcomes (personal, school, system) have been attained through the Master teacher scheme?

14 Have there been any negative effects of the Master Teacher scheme for you or others? Y/N Please explain briefly
15 Has the Master Teacher scheme encouraged you to 'remain in the classroom'?
16 What do you see as the role and responsibility of Master teachers?


17 What do others perceive as the role and responsibility of Master teachers?


Thanks for completing the survey. Please send it to me at {my workplace}. 
INTERVIEW/SURVEY PARTICIPANTS' DECLARATION

I hereby give my consent to the information divulged in the interview/survey, being included in the research study, Award Restructuring in the Northern Territory: considerations of efficiency and productivity. I understand that the contents of the interview and the responses to the surveys are to be used only for the purposes of the research study, and that they will otherwise be confidential, and that my contribution is anonymous.

Signed..................................................................

Date..................................................

Thankyou for your participation in this research study. If you wish to view a copy of the completed study, please contact me, and I shall be pleased to assist you. There will be a bound copy shelved in the Northern Territory University library Special Collection, for your perusal also.

If you wish to contact me in relation to the above, or in relation to concerns about the research study, my phone contacts are {phone number} (H), or {phone number} (W), or c/- Faculty of Education, Northern Territory University.

Jennifer Elvery
APPENDIX C: QUESTION FRAMEWORK USED WITH ADMINISTRATORS

1. How were the award restructuring principles and initiatives explored and implemented in the education industry of the Northern Territory?

2. What did the education department most want to gain through the Award Restructuring process?

3. What did the union movement most want to gain through the Award Restructuring process?

4. How were Territory responses to Award restructuring linked with national initiatives and national thinking about industrial relations reform?

5. What was on the negotiating table for implementation of Award Restructuring in education? Which issues proceeded to implementation? Which might still be implemented? How have these measures affected the efficiency and productivity of education?

6. Since a Master Teacher scheme was already running, was the Award Restructuring process the stimulus for reviewing the initial scheme? What were the perceived gains for the Department and teachers?

7. What are the benefits of the Master Teacher scheme for the education system and for teachers? Are there any negative aspects to the scheme as it relates to the system and to teachers?

8. Do you have any other comments about the way that Award Restructuring has affected the Northern Territory education industry, especially through the Master Teacher scheme?
APPENDIX D: REQUEST TO PRINCIPALS FOR DOING RESEARCH WITH THEIR STAFF

{Researcher's address}

{Date}

The Principal
{school}

Dear {Principal}

I am doing some research in connection with my Master of Education degree, and am writing to request permission to survey some Master Teachers. Each survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete, and the respondents will remain anonymous, and their responses confidential. Once I have examined the surveys, I would also like to interview some of the Master Teachers: each interview will take approximately thirty minutes, and once again, confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained.

If your permission is forthcoming, I shall directly contact potential survey respondents and interviewees.

The focus of my study is the impact and effectiveness of the Master Teacher scheme on urban secondary schools in the Northern Territory. I hope that the research can point to ways to understanding how the scheme is, or is not, benefiting the education system. Hopefully, this can be the foundation for future policymaking at the macro and micro levels.

I presume that this request will need to go to the school council, but I shall be contacting you by phone in the next week, in order to confirm this request, and to learn of your initial response. Thankyou for your willingness to spend some time in sharpening my understandings and giving counsel.

Yours faithfully

Jennifer Elvery
INTERVIEW/SURVEY PARTICIPANTS' DECLARATION

I hereby give my consent to the information divulged in the interview/survey, being included in the research study, *Award Restructuring in the Northern Territory: considerations of efficiency and productivity*. I understand that the contents of the interview and the responses to the surveys are to be used only for the purposes of the research study, and that they will otherwise be confidential, and that my contribution is anonymous.

Signed ..................................................................... .
Date.............................................

Thank you for your participation in this research study. If you wish to view a copy of the completed study, please contact me, and I shall be pleased to assist you. There will be a bound copy shelved in the Northern Territory University library Special Collection, for your perusal also.

If you wish to contact me in relation to the above, or in relation to concerns about the research study, my phone contacts are {phone} (H), or {phone} (W), or c/- Faculty of Education, Northern Territory University.

Jennifer Elvery