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THE TRANSITION YEAR:
A CASE STUDY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

Vol. 2

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Alice and Robbie Deane, in honour of their love and support, their belief in the importance of education and their continuing zest for life.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methodology

Research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data.[304]

4.1 Introduction

The first chapter of this study drew on the literature of change and implementing innovation, highlighting a number of issues and concerns particularly regarding the roles of those involved in school based curriculum development and the process of implementing a new programme in a school. Chapters two and three are the result of preliminary research into the implementation of Transition Year programmes over a period of almost twenty years, 1974 - 1993, with focus on the context in which the programmes were implemented, the outcome of the strategies used and the apparent shortcomings of the processes. The first section of chapter two describes the initial phase of implementation of the programme, beginning in 1974, the second section concentrating on the next phase of implementation which began in 1986. Chapter three brings the study up to date, detailing the strategies used to implement the programme nationally, beginning in 1993. The salient issues emerging from this preliminary research are explored in the primary research part of this study, the study of the implementation of the Transition Year Programme locally in schools and perceptions of the national implementation strategy. This chapter outlines the methodology employed in gathering the preliminary information and in undertaking the primary research component of this study.

4.2 Aims

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[304]G.J. Mouly, (1978), *Educational Research: the art and Science of Investigation*, quoted by Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion, (1980), *Research Methods in Education*, p.29.

The purpose of the primary research in this study is to analyse the process of implementing a new programme in schools and the factors affecting implementation, particularly where there is a large element of school based curriculum development involved. To this end, the Transition Year Programme is used as a case study in the implementation of curriculum change as it involves both a large scale national implementation process and has a school based curriculum development focus due to the curricular freedom granted to teachers in planning the programme.

Preliminary research into the earlier phases of implementation of the programme was undertaken in order to determine any differences or developments in implementation strategy over a number of years and to highlight concerns and potential pitfalls regarding implementation which can be applied to the current implementation process and to the implementation of other new initiatives at school level.

The primary research study aims to examine both national and local implementation procedures. It is hoped that the data collected will give insight into issues of current concern regarding national implementation of programmes in schools and local implementation procedures, particularly where school based curriculum development is involved.

4.3 Objectives

The objectives of the preliminary research which derive from the foregoing aims are as follows:

1. To describe and analyse the process involved in the national implementation of the Transition Year Project when it was first introduced in 1974 and in the years following, with a view to suggesting why the implementation process was unsuccessful in sustaining the programme to the extent that the programme was reintroduced in 1986.

2. To explore and analyse the implementation process occurring at school level in this period, similarly suggesting why the implementation process was

unsuccessful in sustaining the programme, through consideration of teachers' perceptions of the implementation process at local and national level.

3. To study the implementation of the programme from 1986 onwards in a similar way, again exploring the way in which the programme was disseminated nationally and the reactions of teachers to curricular freedom. The process is analysed with suggestions emerging regarding the shortcomings of the implementation process which led to the programme being reintroduced for the third time in 1993.

4. To study the implementation and co-ordination of the programme at local level in this period, with a view to suggesting school based factors affecting the long term success of the programme.

5. To examine the current phase of implementation of the programme to date, 1993-1997, the dissemination strategies and inservice methods, the support, development and evaluation of the programme at national level.

6. To review the literature on the implementation of change in schools, distilling the rich and varied literature on curriculum change, school improvement and innovation and drawing from it the salient points in relation to this study.

Aims 1-6 involve a study of macro and micro factors affecting the implementation processes and the identity of the programme itself in the 1970s and 1980s, suggesting successful strategies and highlighting pitfalls for the implementation process occurring now. The primary research involved in this study concentrates on the current phase of implementation of the Transition Year Programme in schools. The aims of the primary research are as follows:

7. To determine the perceptions of those teachers involved in the Transition Year Programme regarding the implementation of the programme at school level, how schools are coping with the freedom to introduce and develop a new course to suit the needs of their students and to investigate involvement in

planning, decision making, developing curricula and co-ordinating the programme.

8. To investigate the impact of career cycle effects on the implementation of the programme in schools and to investigate the possibility that schools which implement a number of new programmes become more favourably disposed towards change and have different perspectives regarding the factors necessary for the successful implementation of a new programme.

9. To ascertain the perceptions of those teachers involved in the Transition Year Programme regarding the national implementation strategies such as inservice training and other forms of Department of Education support for the programme.

10. To establish the perceptions of principals and Transition Year co-ordinators in the six schools regarding the national implementation of the Transition Year Programme and their concerns regarding the implementation of new programmes in their schools. Information from principals and co-ordinators is collected in order to augment the data collected from teachers - on whom the study is focused.

4.4 Research Procedure

4.4.1 The Research Framework:

The research framework employed in this study is similar to that suggested by Eileen Kane.[305] It involves starting with a research idea and then defining the specific area of interest. Following this, a research outline is developed, decisions about the gathering of information are made and preliminary research is undertaken. The literature review

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[305]Eileen Kane, (1984), *Doing Your Own Research: how to do basic descriptive research in the social sciences and humanities*, p.13.

can be regarded as part of the preliminary research in that it too helps to clarify the aims and objectives of the study.

In this study the area of interest is the change process regarding the implementation of a new programme in schools. This general area was narrowed to become, more specifically, the implementation of one particular programme - the Transition Year Programme - and the focus was narrowed to the investigation of teachers' perceptions of the implementation process involved in reintroducing this programme and the factors which help or inhibit the implementation of new programmes. The research framework continues with decisions regarding the type of information required and the selection of information gathering techniques. This study involved information concerning both the preliminary and the primary research parts of the study.

For this study, primary research involved designing a research instrument and deciding on analysis techniques before information was gathered. The collection of information was followed by a systematic recording of data, followed by analysis which led to the formulation of issues emerging and conclusions.

4.4.2 Research Mode:

In general, the research philosophy of this study was interactionist rather than positivistic. Interactionist approaches tend to look at the meanings of situations and actions for people, conceived as something not fixed and determinate but negotiated from moment to moment. Positivistic approaches take the world as being relatively unproblematic and seek to explain it by measurement of the parts.[306] The positivistic approach usually implies quantitative methods, the interactionist - qualitative or interpretive methods. Miles and Hubermann describe the main task of qualitative research as follows:

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[306]Roger Sapsford and Victor Jupp, (Eds.), (1996), *Data Collection and Analysis*, p.1.

> to explicate the way people in particular settings come to understand, account for, take action and otherwise manage their day-to-day situations.[307]

This study is qualitative in that it complies with the following features of qualitative studies:

- design is emergent: in this study, the preliminary research informed the primary study

- there are no hypotheses or specific questions to answer at the outset of the study

- the purpose is discovery not verification: in this study, no preconceived ideas of the

  implementation process were tested for verification

- the researcher is a student, discovering the insider's view

- the design of qualitative interpretive research is based on theoretical assumptions

  about meanings and processes of human understandings; these in turn inform the

  procedures and techniques used in the collection of data and the manner in which

  they are analysed, i.e. inductive analysis.[308]

4.4.3 Research Method:

Study designers must consider some key issues when deciding on research methods: the complementary differences across methods and the purposes for using them, the phenomena being studied and the status of the qualitative and quantitative elements of the study and whether they are interactive or separate. Other important issues include the genralisability, reliability and validity implied by certain modes and methods. Quantitative and qualitative methods are not mutually exclusive. Judith Bell comments that "different styles, traditions or approaches use different methods of collecting data, but no approach prescribes nor automatically rejects any particular method."[309]

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[307]Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.7.
[308]James Callan, (1996), "Interpretative Research Characteristics", *Research Methodology Module Handout*, p.6.
[309]Judith Bell, (1987), *Doing Your Research Project*, p.6.

Characteristics of qualitative research include the researcher as the key instrument and the collection of data in the form of words rather than numbers.[310] Within the time frame of the fulfilment of this project participant observation and the collection of information in this manner was not possible. It is also said that qualitative research is concerned with the processes rather than outcomes of processes, that data is analysed inductively, without trying to prove or disprove an existing hypothesis and that interest lies in participants' perspectives.[311] Through quantitative methods of data collection in the form of questionnaires, the process of implementation, its meanings for those involved and the perceptions and attitudes of those involved was studied. Quantitative methods are employed in so far as they can be used to collect information on the understandings, perceptions and attitudes of those involved in the study in the short space of time available. Quantitative methods are also useful in analysing and presenting the findings of certain types of research in a clear and coherent manner. Roy Preece refers to a similar method as "investigating qualitative characteristics in a quantitative manner."[312]

In this study statistical analysis is used purely to illustrate clearly the findings of research and their possible practical significance. Quantitative methods are employed to illustrate the attitudes and perceptions of teachers and the meanings applied by teachers to the implementation process, the support of the programme externally and the complexity of internal implementation. Statistics are not presented in a manner in which they are detached from the wording used in the questionnaires which prompted the statistical ratings applied. This important feature is suggested by Miles and Hubermann in relation to their study of the degree of pressure teachers felt to adopt an innovation, their satisfaction with the assistance they had received or the "roughness" or "smoothness" of the implementation. They make the point that in the displays and

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[310]Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, (1982), *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*, p.27.
[311]Ibid.
[312]Roy Preece, 1994, *Starting Research*, p.42.

analysis of data they aimed to keep "numbers" such as those drawn from scales closely associated with the words from which the judgements were drawn and to keep the words associated with the context.[313] In this study, the statements rated by respondents and the factors suggested as important by respondents in both the open and closed questions are kept as a central focus and effort is made to ensure that they are not reduced to numbers to the extent that one loses sight of the substantive issues. In using a combination of statistical and descriptive methods in this research, the aim was to undertake a systematic approach to understanding the interaction of variables in a complex environment. Salomon points out that the issue is whether we are taking an "analytical" approach to understanding a few controlled variables or a "systemic" approach to understanding the interaction of variables in a complex environment.[314] This study takes a systemic approach to studying the interaction of a number of variables on the implementation process including the attitudes and perceptions of teachers and the external support for the programme.

4.4.4 The Literature Review:

Borg and Gall argue that:

> A well organised review of the literature followed by an insightful interpretation is not only of great value to the reader, but its preparation greatly helps the research worker to develop his own understanding of the field.[315]

The literature review includes an up to date, critical discussion of the research which has already been done on the dissertation topic and also, other material written on the

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[313]Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.42.

[314]G. Salomon, (1991), "Transcending the qualitative-quantitative debate: The analytic and systemic approaches to educational research", *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 20, No.6, 1991, pp.10-18, quoted by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.41.

[315]Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall, (1983), *Educational Research: An Introduction, 4th ed.*, p.865.

area of interest. It is regarded as "a preparatory stage to gathering data and serves to acquaint the researcher with previous research on the topic he himself is studying."[316] The literature review can also be used to clarify definitions and to gather information to support or refute arguments.

In this study the literature review is be divided into two sections:

1. A review of research previously carried out on the Transition Year programmes and articles written on the implementation of the programmes in schools in the 1970s and 1980s. This included studies done in the 1970s by Egan and O'Reilly and a study done by the ASTI in 1987. Also included in this section are Lewis and McMahon's study of the Transition Year In-career Development Programme in 1996 and the Department of Education Evaluation Report also published in 1996. While there is relatively little material in educational journals regarding the Transition Year programmes, there are a small number of articles which give insight into the operation of the programme at school level in the 1970s and early 1980s. In order to supplement this information records were obtained from one of the schools involved in the programme since its introduction in 1974.

2. The second part of the literature review involved a review of the literature of change in education and the implementation of innovation nationally and at school level. There is a rich and varied literature available on this subject and related subjects such as school improvement. The seminal work of authors such as Fullan, MacDonald and Walker, Stoll and Fink, Mortimore, Crooks and McKernan, Shipman and Skilbeck is studied. Specific projects which show parallels with the Transition Year Programme as regards implementation were also studied. These included the work of those involved in implementing transition education projects and the Junior Certificate programme in Ireland, the Nuffield Integrated Science Project and the Humanities

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[316]Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion, (1980), *Research Methods in Education*, p.40.

Curriculum Project in Britain and of those involved in similar American studies. Projects which have a school based curriculum focus were of particular interest as were sources of literature on related topics such as staff development and school culture.

Material for the literature review was gathered using several methods. These included visiting the libraries of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Trinity College, Dublin and UCD and using their card catalogues and computerised library databases. The ERIC database and the World Wide Web were also used as sources of information. Journal articles were found by perusing the contents of educational journals including *Compass, Irish Educational Studies, Oideas, The Journal of Curriculum Studies* and other publications such as copies of *The Secondary Teacher*.

Information from the literature review is incorporated throughout this dissertation but is concentrated in chapters one and two which outline the history of the implementation of Transition Year programmes and in chapter three, which discusses the change process and curriculum development.

4.4.5 Preliminary research:

Preliminary research involved collating information regarding the first two phases of implementation of the programme. Research into the implementation of the programme in 1974 was achieved through tracing documents from the period, such as Minister Burke's speech initially introducing the idea of the programme in April 1974. Articles from journals detailing the experiences of schools in these early years were gathered as were extracts from books, newspapers and documentation from schools involved in this period, such as correspondence with parents and with the Department of Education. Work carried out in the late 1970s by Egan and O'Reilly was studied at the Educational Research Centre in Drumcondra, Dublin.

Similar steps were taken in studying the reintroduction of the programme in 1986. As less written information is available on this period, an interview with a special advisor

to Minister Gemma Hussey was also employed to give insight into the reintroduction of the programme.

The relaunch of the programme in 1993 was also studied through Department of Education circulars and other government publications. Further documentation was gathered through correspondence with the NCCA. Contact with the Transition Year Support Team yielded further information as did interviews with two people involved in the "train the trainers" inservice programme as trainers. A member of the Transition Year Support Team was also interviewed. Documentation used during the inservice programme was obtained through contact with a "trainer" and Lewis and McMahon's work on the inservice provision was studied at the Educational Research Centre in Drumcondra, Dublin. A more recent study by the CDVEC CDU was also reviewed.

The figures detailing participation rates were gathered from statistical reports and through visiting the Department of Education in Hawkin's House, Dublin. Most recent figures were obtained from the Department of Education Statistics Section Database in Athlone. Documentation issued by the Department of Education, including CEB documents was studied by collecting the necessary government publications and Department of Education circulars.

4.5 Primary Research

The focus of the primary research was based on three questionnaires:

1. A questionnaire for Transition Year teachers.

2. A questionnaire for Transition Year co-ordinators.

3. A questionnaire for principals.

Three separate questionnaires were used so that specific questions pertaining to a person's particular role in implementation could be asked. General information regarding the school itself, such as pupil numbers appeared only on the principals'

questionnaire. This meant that the teacher and co-ordinator questionnaires could concentrate on questions actually pertaining to the study. Co-ordinators who were also teaching Transition Year classes were not asked to fill two questionnaires as it was felt that the similarity between the two may be irritating for the respondent.

The questionnaires were administered in a random sample of six schools in the Dublin area. The schools were randomly selected from a list of schools in the "Liffey Region" obtained from the Transition Year Support Team. The Liffey Region was chosen as an area of study for ease of access during school hours due to geographical location of the researcher.

4.5.1 The Research Instrument - The Questionnaire:

> Frequently, the postal questionnaire is the best form of survey in carrying out an educational enquiry.[317]

The use of the questionnaire as a research instrument was appropriate in this case as it allowed specific information to be collected in a relatively short space of time. Ideally all respondents would be interviewed in person and observation at school level would take place but this was not possible due to time constraints and work commitments. Ease of data collection is vital when one person is acting as researcher, statistician, analyst and reporter. The questionnaire as a tool is flexible in form and can be designed to meet the needs of a particular study. Burroughs remarks that "the questionnaire provides the easiest known way of assembling a mass of information."[318] Questionnaires allow information to be collected in a wide geographical area, relatively cheaply. Nachmias and Nachmias maintain that the use of questionnaires "reduces biasing errors that might result from the personal characteristics of interviewers and variabilities in their skills."[319] Questionnaires are also useful when questions require a

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[317]Ibid., p.84.
[318]G.E.R. Burroughs, (1971), *Design and Analysis in Educational Research*, p.106.
[319]David Nachmias and Chava Nachmias, (1976), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, p.107.

considered, rather than an immediate, response and afford greater anonymity to the respondent so that they may express their opinions more freely.

There are also limitations to the use of questionnaires as a research tool. There is no opportunity to probe beyond the given response or to clarify the meaning of a written answer. For this reason, careful design of the questionnaire is essential. Many authors agree that "the most difficult problem in conducting a questionnaire study is to get a sufficient percentage of responses."[320] Nachmias and Nachmias maintain that the response rate for mail questionnaires is "between 20 and 40 percent"[321] and that it is impossible to estimate the effect non-respondents may have on the findings.

In order to alleviate problems caused by lack of clarity of questioning and in order to motivate respondents to complete the questionnaire, the design of the questionnaire is crucially important.

4.5.2 Questionnaire Construction:

Constructing a questionnaire requires specifying the primary objective of the survey and then identifying and itemising subsidiary topics that relate to its central purpose. It is also important that proposed methods of data analysis that apply to the completed questionnaires are decided on early in the process and are kept in mind when drawing up the document.

For this study, the questionnaires were compiled with reference to a number of areas:

- The outcomes from preliminary research into the implementation of the Transition Year programmes from 1974 and 1993.

- The outcomes from a review of the literature on change in schools and programme implementation.

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[320]Walter R. Borg, (1987), Applying Educational Research: a practical guide for teachers, p.110.
[321]David Nachmias and Chava Nachmias, (1976), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, p.108.

- Interviews conducted with those involved in the programme and personal contact with colleagues.

Questions may be either in the closed form, in which the question permits only certain responses, or the open form, in which the respondent may use his/her own words. Closed questions are undoubtedly easier to quantify and analyse but open ended questions can lead to richer and more comprehensive replies.

Due to the wide range of types of information required from the questionnaires in this study, several types of question were included in the document. The use of structured or closed questions includes list, category and scale type questions and open ended questions were also used to elicit responses on particular issues. The measurement of attitudes or perceptions requires specific question types. Attitudes are measured using a number of attitude statements as attitudes cannot be measured with one question.[322] An essential requirement of attitude scales is that the attitude statements should be scaled. In this study, Likert type scales were employed to ascertain the personal opinions of teachers regarding the teaching of the Transition Year Programme. Graphical, numerical scales, in which respondents are asked to rate a particular factor or variable by marking a number on a continuum are used to ascertain teachers' perceptions of the dissemination of the programme, Department of Education support for the programme, inservice training and factors affecting the implementation of new programmes in schools. Other question types involve ordinal and nominal data such as that used to build profiles of respondents and schools.

In each of the three questionnaires, the structure was divided into three parts. In both the teacher and co-ordinator questionnaires, part one involved collecting information in relation to the personal details of the respondent. In the case of the principals' questionnaire part one also collected information pertaining to the school itself. On all

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[322]Ibid., p.110.

three questionnaires, part two collected information regarding the perceptions of respondents in relation to the national implementation of the programme, their views on the actual implementation of the programme and on those factors important in the implementation of programmes nationally. Part three elicited information regarding the implementation of the programme at school level, the perceptions of the respondents regarding the implementation of the programme in their school, the factors they deem important in the implementation of new programmes at school level and the attitudes of respondents towards the involvement of teachers and other members of staff in decision making and curriculum development.

In most cases the subject matter of the questions on each questionnaire was the same and questions were adapted depending on the position of the respondent in the school. For example, Transition Year co-ordinators were better equipped to answer some of the questions pertaining to the operation of a Transition Year core team in the school than were other Transition Year teachers. Omitting questions which would be outside the realm of responsibility of particular respondents meant that the length of the questionnaires could be kept to a minimum and that respondents would be motivated to complete them.

4.5.3 The Interview:

Borg and Gall describe both advantages and disadvantages of the interview as a research technique. Interviews potentially permit greater depth than other methods of collecting data enabling the interviewer to delve more deeply and clarify issues as they arise. Under favourable conditions, interviews are also said to be likely to yield more complete data and also more information when open ended questions pertaining to negative aspects of the self need to be asked.[323] The nature of this study meant that

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[323]Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall, (1983), *Educational Research: An Introduction, 4th ed.*, p.437.

the information collected at the interviews pertained, not to the interviewee but to events in which the interviewee was involved of which there is little written record.

The flexibility, adaptability and human interaction that are the unique strengths of the interview also allow subjectivity and possible bias that in some research situations are its greatest weakness.[324] Inaccuracies arise through factors known as "response effects" which is the term applied to the difference between the answer given by the respondent and the true answer.

Interviews were used early in the study and where it was felt that a questionnaire alone would not yield the required information. Those interviewed included:

- Two teachers who participated in the "Train the Trainers" in service programme as trainers.

- A member of the Transition Year Support Team.

- A special advisor to Minister Gemma Hussey at the time of the introduction of the Transition Year Option in 1986.

- The principal of the school involved in the pilot study.

Interviews with the "trainers", the Transition Year Support Team member and the Special Advisor were semi-structured interviews in which the researcher had pre-planned questions but also allowed scope for discussion on other issues which emerged in the course of the interview. The semi structured interview is regarded as "generally most appropriate for interview studies in education."[325]

In all cases the interviewee was supplied in advance not with the actual questions but with a list of the areas to be discussed. It was felt that this enriched the interviews as the areas specified acted as a skeleton around which other issues arose, facilitating both the interviewer and interviewee. The interviews lasted on average approximately

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[324]Ibid., p.438.
[325]Ibid., p.442.

fifty minutes. The first interview was taped. Although it was agreed that the interview would be taped on the condition that a typed transcript of the interview would be supplied to the interviewee, it was felt by the researcher that taping the interview made the interviewee more guarded in his answers. This finding is supported by Borg and Gall who recognise that:

> the principal disadvantage of the use of the tape recorder with the interview is that the presence of the tape recorder changes the interview situation to some degree....in interviews not aiming primarily at the collection of research data, it is seldom necessary to record the results.[326]

Subsequent interviews were not taped. Proceedings were recorded on specially designed sheets requiring as little writing during the interview as possible which enabled the interviewer to attend to the interview while recording the proceedings. Neither of these procedures represents an ideal situation. Ideally, a trust would build between the interviewer and interviewee over time through a number of interviews. This was not possible within the timescale involved in this research project but it was felt that much valuable information was gleaned through the interviews.

4.6 Analysis

The descriptive element of educational research is important. Descriptive research is aimed at describing the characteristics of subjects. Borg maintains that:

> much of the early work in a new science is descriptive, since it is necessary to know something about the characteristics of our subjects before trying to study more complex research questions.[327]

Because human beings are much more complex than the subjects studied in other sciences and because education and the related sciences are relatively new when

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[326]Ibid., p.446.
[327]Walter R. Borg, (1987), *Applying Educational Research: a practical guide for teachers*, p.154.

compared to biology or the physical sciences, descriptive research is particularly important in education. In education most descriptive research can be classified as either survey or observational research. In this study, survey research was employed.

As described in section 4.5.2, several types of question were used in the questionnaires in order to elicit different types of information. Both open ended and closed questions were employed. Closed questions consisted of list, category and scale type questions, the scale questions appearing as grids or tables in which several factors or statements were to be rated together on the same scale. As scale questions were used a number of times in the questionnaires, the different types of scales used are described below.

4.6.1 The Use of Scales:

Rating scales are perhaps the most popular methods of attitude measurement and are often used in the field of research. In this study several types of scales were used depending on the type information they were designed to collect. All were five point scales. While larger scales can be used, increasing the size of the scale beyond seven points has not been proven to improve the accuracy of a scale's measurement.

Scales which have adjectives marked at particular numbers, are a special type of numerical scale. Where words or phrases which describe varying degrees of liking or approval are used in place of numbers, these are called specimen specific category scales[328] or just "category scales". While the selection of adjectives becomes more difficult if more than five points are used for the scale, it is felt that labelling the points with adjectives increases the reliability of the scale. For the collection of information regarding respondents' opinions of the materials produced for the dissemination of the programme, and of the inservice training provided, this type of numerical scale was used. These scales are also known as "adjectival checklists" and they provide some

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[328]Krech and Crutchfield, (1948), quoted by Nigel Lemon, (1973), *Attitudes and Their Measurement,* p.87.

quantitative information either by the frequencies with which words are selected or by their order or ranking if required.

Numerical scales were also used for questions inquiring as to the importance of particular factors in the implementation of the programme nationally and at school level. On these scales, only the ends of the continuum were marked with adjectives and respondents were asked to check a number to express their ratings. It was felt that including adjectives at each point on the scale for these questions would unduly influence respondents' answers as the selection of available adjectives for these questions would have meant that the intervals along the continuum were uneven. For such questions only the ends of the scale were marked - with "unimportant" and "very important".

Personal attitudes towards teaching the Transition Year Programme were ascertained using a five point Likert scale. This scale had "agree" and "disagree" at either end and is also known as a "semantic differential" scale. Ten statements were rated on the five point scale. It is recommended that Likert attitude scales have an equal number of positive and negative statements to increase reliability, as is the case with this scale. As there were seventy respondents the maximum score for each statement is 350. For the construction of tables, in order to aid clarity, the statements are ranked in descending order starting with the statement which rated most highly on the agreement scale. Because there were seventy respondents, the highest rating for each statement was 350. The minimum rating is seventy as each respondent had to give at least one mark to each statement.

When adjectives are applied to this semantic differential scale, the following are generally used by researchers:

1 = strongly disagree   4 = agree

2 = disagree   5 = strongly agree

3 = neither agree nor disagree (or neutral)

Using these adjectives, the statements can be divided into those with which respondents showed some agreement and those with which the tendency was towards

disagreement. As a rating of three is recognised as the neutral point between the positive and negative replies, the statements are divided at this point

It is a common misconception that attitude can be measured using one indicator. Attitudes are intangible and multi-dimensional and can be discerned only by their outward effects. For this reason, several measures of attitude and perception were built into the questionnaires.

4.6.2 Analysis:

Because different types of questions were used, different types of analysis are also employed. Analysing data involves categorising information, trying to see patterns and relationships, discarding the irrelevant, summarising and drawing conclusions.[329] Often correlation analysis can be used to obtain additional insights into descriptive research data. In analysis of questionnaires both descriptive and statistical methods are employed.

The respondent profile information is analysed using univariate analysis or frequency distribution analysis. This type of analysis is used to determine the distribution of each variable and deals with one variable at a time. Other list and category questions such as those relating to time required to carry out co-ordinator duties, information regarding contact with other schools and the organisation of the Transition Year core team in the school were also analysed using univariate analysis. This preliminary form of analysis was also done on the remainder of the questionnaire responses before they were analysed further.

Prior to analysis all information from the questionnaires was coded and filled into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. This enabled the use of statistical functions such as the summation function during preliminary and secondary analysis.

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[329]Eileen Kane, (1984), *Doing Your Own Research: how to do basic descriptive research in the social sciences and humanities*, p.151.

Scale type questions were analysed in a number of ways. For each question involving a scale, a table is used to show the number of respondents assigning each rating on the five point scale to each item in the question. Apart form this preliminary review of responses, which illustrates how each item was rated by respondents, responses were also totalled for each factor or statement using the Microsoft Excel statistics package. These totals illustrate how the items were rated collectively by respondents. This type of summation is important on scales which have adjectives at either end such as the scale which measures the importance of a set of factors in the implementation process. While a rating of five would indicate that a respondent regards the factor as very important, a rating of four also indicates that the factor has some significance. Similar logic can be applied to attitude scales.

A measure of the mean mark for each item is also included. Means are widely used and understood in statistical analysis and are useful for purposes of comparison especially where the groups of respondents are composed of different numbers. For consistency, in all cases, mean values were calculated to two places of decimals. For smaller numbers of respondents, for example, six principals and five co-ordinators, mean values worked out more evenly, to values such as 4.80, 2.60 etc. When these were typed into tables, the computer programme used removed the zeros at the end and the values appear as 4.8 and 2.6 etc., even though they were calculated to two places of decimals.

Often researchers wish to examine the differences between two mean values. This type of bivariate analysis is employed in questions where it was deemed useful such as in the comparison of teachers with one or two years experience teaching Transition Year classes and teachers who had three or more years experience. The question addressed is whether the difference between the two means could have arisen by chance, or is a "real" - that is, statistically significant - difference. One standard way of testing whether the difference between two means is significant or not is through the use of either the z-test or the Students' t-test. The z-test is used for samples over thirty and

the t-test for samples where at least one of the groups to be compared has less than thirty respondents. The following formulae are used to calculate z and t values.

z-test

$$z = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

where

$\bar{x}_1$ is the sample mean of group 1;
$\bar{x}_2$ is the sample mean of group 2;
s_1^2 is the sample variance of group 1;
s_2^2 is the sample variance of group 2;
n_1 is the sample size of group 1;
n_2 is the sample size of group 2;

t-test

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}\right)\left(\frac{n_1 + n_2}{n_1 n_2}\right)}}$$

with $(n_1 + n_2 - 2)$ df.

The z-test is so called because the difference between the mean is measured in standard deviation units from the mean, a quantity also known as z scores. In practice, with large samples, there are no differences between the z and t distributions. To use the t statistic degrees of freedom are taken into account as its value is affected by sample size. The significance of t values is determined using t-tables found in statistical texts.

In order to reduce the amount of explanatory statistical information and statistical calculations included in chapter five the value d is used to denote significance values arising from either the z or t tests. It is given that the z-test formula was used where sample sizes were over thirty and the t-test was used where sample sizes fall below

thirty, the result represented as the value d. This value represents units of standard deviation from the mean and is used by statisticians in other fields.

It is possible to apply different levels of significance to data calculations. These tests of association measure how likely it is that the distributions observed are due merely to chance. Statisticians have set certain levels of significance or probability levels. The lowest of such levels is usually 0.05 or 5%. The significance of z values is calculated at the 5% level - that is there is a 5% chance that the results would occur randomly. Because in the social sciences data are sometimes "sloppy" - people lie or are mistaken - the 5% level is usually accepted.[330] The value of d is significant at the 5% level when the absolute value of d is greater than 1.96.[331] The standard deviation of difference or variance, s, and the mean values were calculated using the Microsoft Excel statistics function VAR.

The use of statistical quantification in qualitative research has been the subject of much debate. Jennifer Mason maintains that:

> qualitative research is grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly 'interpretivist' in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced....based on methods of analysis and explanation building which involves understanding of complexity, detail and context. Qualitative research does use some form of quantification but statistical forms of analysis are not seen as central.[332]

Bogdan and Biklen suggest that quantitative data can have conventional use in qualitative research: "It can suggest trends in a setting....it can also provide descriptive information about the population....quantitative data is often included in qualitative

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[330]Ibid., p.164.

[331]Detailed descriptions of statistical calculations regarding the comparison of means can be found in many pure statistics books and also in Roger Sapsford and Victor Jupp, (Eds.), (1996), *Data Collection and Analysis*, Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall, (1983), *Educational Research: An Introduction,* and Nachmias and Nachmias, (1976), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences.*

[332]Jennifer Mason, (1996), *Qualitative Researching*, p.4.

writing in the form of descriptive statistics."[333] Besides their use in description of the respondent population, in this study quantitative methods are used to highlight such features as relationships between factors, perceptions of external support and possible differences in attitudes and perceptions from group to group.

Miles and Hubermann maintain that "we have to face the fact that numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world" and suggest that "during *analysis* quantitative data can help by showing generality of specific observations....and verifying or casting new light on qualitative findings."[334] They quote Kaplan: "quantities are *of* qualities and a measured quality has just the same magnitude expressed in its measure."[335] Weinstein and Tamur see quantification not as an end in itself but rather "as a means of making available techniques which add power and sensitivity to individual judgements when one attempts to detect and describe *patterning* in a set of observations...."[336]

Accordingly, the component of statistical value analysis in chapter five, is used to cast light on qualitative data. The inductive nature of the study allows conclusions to arise from the data itself. In order to conclude with "the factors most influential in implementing new programmes" it is necessary to ensure that there is a significant statistical difference in the importance of the factors rated most highly by respondents.

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[333]Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, (1982), *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*, p.112.

[334]Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.41.

[335]A. Kaplan, (1964), *The Conduct of Inquiry*, p.207, quoted by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.40.

[336]E. A. Weinstein and J.M. Tamur, (1978), Meanings, purposes and structural resources in social interaction, p.140. In J.G.Manis and B.N. Meltzer, (Eds.), *Symbolic Interaction*, quoted by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Hubermann, (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*, p.41.

4.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability both refer to the technical adequacy of the methods used to carry out the research. Assessments of validity and reliability of a measurement instrument help to determine the amount of faith people should place in its results. Validity and reliability refer to different aspects of a measure's credibility.

4.7.1 Validity:

Judgements of validity answer the question: "Is the instrument appropriate for what needs to be measured?" Validity indicates how worthwhile a measure is likely to be for telling the researcher what he/she needs to know. Litwin describes validity as a determination of how well an instrument measures what it sets out to measure[337] and Bell maintains that validity "tells us whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe."[338]

Validity in the Qualitative Mode:

Most validation methods can be grouped under three headings:

- Confirmation or disconfirmation of findings through contact with participants,
  multiple research methods, independent observations or additional samples.

- Strategies which involve deliberate attempts to rule out specific sources of invalidity,

- Efforts to establish research conditions under which it is most likely that valid
  information will be collected such as establishment of trust or spending sufficient time
  at the research setting.[339]

Of these three, confirmation is the most direct strategy for learning about the validity of research and is the one which lends itself most readily to a study of this type in the time allowed. Confirmation can be achieved in a number of ways. Douglas developed

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[337]Mark S. Litwin, (1995), *How to Measure Survey Reliability and Validity*, p.33.
[338]Judith Bell, (1987), *Doing Your Research Project*, p.65.
[339]Judith A Dawson, mimeograph from the author.

an approach which he calls "investigative social research."[340] It assumes that conflict pervades social life and that people are evasive or dishonest with researchers. One of the major research strategies of Douglas' approach is "testing out" which consists of comparing a supposed fact or account with the most reliable ideas and generally patterned facts the researcher has from prior experience and comparing one's own ideas and inferences with the observed facts in a setting.[341] For this study, this type of validity check was possible as the researcher was in a position to make an accurate comparison of research findings and personal experiences. In addition, another method of validity was employed. This method involves asking participants in the setting to react to the researchers' perceptions and interpretations of the findings, confirming or disconfirming them. For this purpose colleagues involved as "judges" in determining the validity of the research instrument were consulted again as to the confirmation of findings. This ensures that confirmation is not confined to the opinion of the researcher and reduces bias. Apart from these methods of ensuring validity, Jennifer Mason also suggests adherence to "validity of data generation methods."[342] For this reason, a discussion of the validity of the main research instrument - the questionnaire is necessary.

Validity of the Research Instrument:

Litwin lists the types of validity as face validity, content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. Face validity involves showing the survey to untrained individuals. This is a casual measure and is not considered a true measure of validity by many researchers. For this reason face validity was not employed in this study. Criterion validity is a measure of how well an instrument stands against another recognised instrument or predictor which measures the same thing. As the instrument used in this

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[340]Jack D. Douglas, (1976), *Investigative Social Research: Individual and Team Field Research*, quoted by Judith A Dawson.
[341]Ibid.
[342]Jennifer Mason, (1996), *Qualitative Researching*, p.147.

study was developed specifically for this study and contained highly specific questions, it was felt that criterion validity could not be used as there was no "gold standard" instrument against which to assess the survey instrument. Construct validity was not used primarily because it involves measures of how well the instrument performs in a multitude of settings and populations over a number of years. Time constraints make the use of this type of validity measure impossible. Content validity appeared to be the most suitable measure of validity for this study. Content validity is a "subjective measure of how appropriate the items seem to a set of reviewers who have some knowledge of the subject matter."[343] It involves an organised review of the survey contents. It is not qualified with statistics but is presented as an overall opinion of a group of trained judges. Litwin suggests that "it provides a good foundation on which to build a methodologically rigorous assessment of a survey instrument's validity."[344] In this study the survey was reviewed by a number of people regarded as "trained judges" prior to the pilot study. Those consulted included one principal, one Transition Year co-ordinator and four Transition Year teachers, two of whom had previously carried out primary research in other fields. After minor adjustments and inclusions, the instrument was deemed suitable for its intended purpose.

4.7.2 Reliability:

Conventional measures of reliability are more comfortably associated with purely quantitative research, where standardised research instruments are used, than they are with qualitative research. Reliability is conceptualised in terms of how reliable, accurate and precise the research tools or instruments are. This is premised on the assumption that methods of data generation can be conceptualised as tools and can be standardised, neutral and non-biased. This is usually a problem with which qualitative researchers would take issue, given the non-standardisation of many methods for

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[343]Mark S. Litwin, (1995), *How to Measure Survey Reliability and Validity*, p.35.
[344]Ibid.

generating qualitative data.[345] In this study, information was collected by means of a standardised questionnaire, lending it the reliability associated with the particular questionnaire as a research instrument. This type of reliability is discussed here.

Judgements of reliability answer the question: "Does the instrument yield consistent results?" Reliability is usually concerned with the level of internal consistency of the measure, or its stability over time. Bell describes validity as "the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions."[346] Litwin describes three methods of assessing reliability: test-retest, alternate-form and internal consistency. Test-retest reliability is measured by having the same set of respondents complete the same survey at two different points in time. This type of reliability measure was not suitable for this study due to the logistics involved in having over one hundred anonymous respondents complete the same survey twice in the short space of time available. The measure of internal consistency is applied to groups of items that are thought to measure different aspects of the same concept. Alternate-form reliability can involve either using differently worded items to measure the same attribute or using equivalent versions of the same items in the sense that parallel forms of a test are given and their scores correlated. Most measures of validity require computation of a correlation coefficient between two sets of similar measurements. This computation is, in itself, not difficult and can be carried out by all computer statistics packages. The difficulty is in obtaining two sets of measurements.

In this study, alternate-form reliability was employed in that a number of identical questions were included in both the principal and co-ordinator questionnaires and in the co-ordinator and teacher questionnaires. While questions involving the opinions of respondents do not lend themselves to this type of reliability check, the answers to other factual questions such as those regarding the organisation of the Transition Year Programme in the school were studied and the answers compared. The answers

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[345]Jennifer Mason, (1996), *Qualitative Researching*, p.146.
[346]Judith Bell, (1987), *Doing Your Research Project*, p.64.

showed consistency, suggesting that the questionnaires were reliable in regard to these questions. A type of internal consistency was also built into the questionnaire in that items were included which essentially asked the same question. An example of this is the inclusion of a question regarding the importance of types of support from the Department of Education in two parts of the questionnaire. Again, initial questionnaires showed consistencies in the answers to both questions.

While reliability refers to consistency, consistency does not guarantee truthfulness. For this reason attention to both reliability and validity is necessary in order to produce an adequate research instrument.

4.8 The Pilot Study

Michael Wilson describes a pilot investigation as "a small scale trial before the main investigation, intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and of the instruments to be used for data collection."[347] Pretesting or piloting questionnaires is essential for several reasons. Borg and Gall maintain that in addition to serving all the purposes of the usual try out such as improving data collection routines, trying scoring techniques, revising locally developed measures and checking the appropriateness of standard measures, the pilot study also provides additional knowledge that leads to improved research.[348]

Piloting allows the researcher to explore a number of areas:

- Do the respondents understand the question as initially phrased? Has appropriate language been used?

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[347]Michael Wilson, (1996), "Asking Questions", in Roger Sapsford and Victor Jupp, (Eds.), (1996), *Data Collection and Analysis*, p.103.
[348]Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall, (1983), *Educational Research: An Introduction, 4th ed.*, p.100.

- Do respondents need examples in order to understand and answer particular questions?

- Are there any leading questions? Are there any offensive or annoying questions?

- Are the respondents likely to have the information requested?

- Is the questionnaire too long? Are respondents showing signs of impatience?

- Do the questions appear in a logical order?

- Will there be any problems in coding or analysing the information?

In this study, the questionnaires were initially piloted in a school in the same region as the sample, but excluded from the study. An additional principal and Transition Year co-ordinator from another school were also surveyed. A number of changes were made to the questionnaires. In one question, regarding the factors affecting implementation, it was felt by respondents that almost all of the factors could be rated either "4" or "5" on the importance scale. It was feared that this would distort answering on the small number of factors on the same list which could be deemed less important. Additional factors were added to give some balance. Instructions were clarified in regard to two questions and an example was included in one question to aid clarity. By using open ended questions in the pilot questionnaires it was possible to formulate better closed questions for the final document. After the initial revisions, the questionnaires were piloted again with a small group of respondents who gave verbal feedback on a small number of points which led to two more slight revisions.

Information obtained through the pilot study proved invaluable in relation to revisions in the questionnaire and in improving analysis methods. The final document proved to be both respondent and researcher friendly.

4.9 The Sample

It is rarely financially or physically possible for researchers to survey the entire population in which they are interested. To this end, Borg and Gall maintain that

"among the most crucial decisions that confront researchers is the selection of a sample of subjects who are representative of population to which they wish to generalise research findings."[349]

The first step in sampling is to define the target population. In this study, the target population was teachers of Transition Year classes. As it is not generally possible to survey the entire population, the next step involves defining an "experimentally accessible population."[350] Similarly, as it was not possible to survey all teachers who have ever had experience of teaching a Transition Year class, it was decided to narrow the study to those teaching Transition Year classes in the school year 1996/97. In order to obtain an experimentally accessible population it was decided to narrow the population further to include only those teachers teaching in the "Liffey Region" of the Transition Year Support Team. The next step involved drawing a sample from this accessible population. From this smaller population a sample of six schools was randomly selected from a list of schools obtained from the Transition Year Support Team.

There are sixty-two schools in the Liffey Region. Despite its name, this region includes schools in Wicklow, Meath and Kildare as well as Dublin. As the researcher intended to visit each school in person, those schools falling outside a certain radius were eliminated by the researcher due to their location, prior to the random selection of the six schools from the list. The number of schools remaining on the list was forty-four.

Principals were contacted initially by letter. A follow-up phone call was made to each school and in each case the researcher spoke either to the principal or to the Transition Year co-ordinator. This allowed further explanation of the aims of the study and what participation would involve for co-operating schools. Five of the six schools originally chosen agreed to take part in the study. The sixth school was replaced by another school randomly selected from the list.

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[349]Ibid., p.237.
[350]Ibid., p.241.

In advance of delivery of the questionnaires, an estimate of the number of Transition Year teachers was made based on the number of Transition Year classes in the school this year. The number of questionnaires delivered to each school was noted. Questionnaires were delivered to the schools by the researcher and were distributed to Transition Year teachers by the principal in the case of four of the schools and by the Transition Year co-ordinator in the other two cases. Those questionnaires not distributed remained in the box, allowing the number of teachers actually surveyed to be calculated. This method of establishing personal contact and delivering the questionnaires to schools was chosen due to the low return rate for postal questionnaires. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter and an envelope into which the completed questionnaire was to be sealed on completion. It was felt that this would ensure confidentiality and would encourage respondents to be more honest in their replies. Questionnaires were returned to the box which was left in either the principal's office or the main office and were collected by the researcher a little over two weeks later. A phone call was made to each school two days before the arranged collection date to remind co-operating personnel that questionnaires would be collected. A follow-up letter was sent to each school, thanking respondents for their time. A large stamped addressed envelope was also sent to the contact person in each school in case any further questionnaires were returned. A letter and a second copy of the questionnaire were sent to one principal, whose completed questionnaire was not in the box when it was collected. This was duly completed and returned.

It is important to note that the study was designed to collate the opinions of *teachers* as they are the primary agents of change in implementing a new programme at school level. Principals, and teachers in the position of co-ordinator where surveyed in order to give extra information pertaining to the school which would have an effect on the teacher and implementation. Such a small number of principals and co-ordinators would not suffice in a study designed to collect information on the perceptions of

principals and co-ordinators specifically. In this study Transition Year teachers are the primary focus.

4.10 The Limitations of the study

It must be clearly stated that the limitations of time and the geographical constraints imposed on the initial population and on the sample size mean that the sample would not be representative of the whole population of Transition Year teachers in Irish schools. While the sample was based on a simple random sampling method and valid results were obtained, no attempt is made to establish generalisations based on the results from the sample population.

Chapter Five

Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of the Survey Results

> The current flurry of educational change....offers an
> excellent opportunity to study problems of planned
> change in social systems....we need to know why a
> particular innovation spreads rapidly or slowly, what
> the causes of resistance to change are in educational
> systems, and why particular strategies of change chosen
> by innovators succeed or fail.[351]

5.1 Introduction

The introduction, implementation and management of a curricular initiative such as the

Transition Year Programme has considerable implications for schools. Change in the

curriculum requires alterations in both practice in the classroom and in the

organisation and culture of the school. This study aims to explore the process of

dissemination and the methods of implementation of the Transition Year Programme

nationally and at school level. The perceptions of those involved in the processes of

implementing curriculum change and how they relate to and are influenced by internal

and external factors are explored.

The central focus of this study is not *whether* the programme was implemented but

how the programme was implemented. The core of the study is concerned with how

the programme was formulated and disseminated from where it was centrally devised

at the Department of Education, how the programme was received and developed at

school level and what patterns may be discerned that govern the ways educators as a

group accept or reject the new responsibilities involved in an innovation such as the

Transition Year Programme.

The purpose of this chapter is the presentation and analysis of results obtained from

the primary research in this study. Data analysis involves the identification of patterns

and the illumination of structures or processes. In this study, data analysis includes an

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[351]Matthew Miles, (1964), *Innovation in Education*, p.2.

analysis of the perceptions of those involved in the implementation process and the isolation of the most significant factors in the implementation of a new programme at school level. Analysis is divided into two parts:

1. National implementation - dissemination, inservice training and Department of Education support.

2. Implementation at school level - planning and co-ordination, decision making, personal attitudes to teaching Transition Year classes, factors affecting implementation, extra help and resources required, problems encountered in implementation, most beneficial forms of support and advice to schools introducing a Transition Year Programme.

Key areas in the implementation of a new programme have been identified by the literature. These include issues regarding the national implementation strategy - dissemination of the programme and central support for the programme, the need for inservice training - an issue which spans both local and national implementation plans - and the internal and external, personal and institutional factors which affect the implementation process at school level. Following from this, matters to be investigated include:

- The perceptions of teachers regarding the dissemination of the Transition Year Programme, the inservice provision and the support of the Department of Education.
- The co-ordination of the programme at school level and teacher involvement in decision making.
- The personal attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of the programme.
- The perceptions of teachers regarding the factors which affect the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level.

Specific issues arising in the implementation of new programmes in schools were studied in drawing up the questionnaires. In particular, information from the literature

review on the change process contained in chapter one and information from preliminary research pertaining to the implementation of the Transition Year programmes in the 1970s and 1980s was used.

The results are presented and analysed under a number of headings:

- Perceptions of the implementation of the Transition Year Programme nationally 1993-1997.
- Perceptions of the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school/local level 1993-1997.

Again, it is important to note that Transition Year teachers are the focus of the primary research. The survey was designed to collate information regarding the opinions of teachers teaching Transition Year classes on the factors leading to successful implementation of a new programme at school level. Co-ordinators and principals were surveyed primarily in order that information regarding the organisation of the Transition Year Programme in each of the schools would be collected from all participants in the process. This allows study of the differences in perception of the different groups and individuals involved in implementation. The information from principals and co-ordinators is used to augment the findings from the teacher questionnaires. To this end some of the information contained in the principal and co-ordinator questionnaires is used to provide the school profiles. The remainder is included in order to illustrate that the concerns of principals and co-ordinators regarding implementation do not necessarily mirror those of the Transition Year teachers. Where there is the suggestion that differences in perceptions will affect the implementation process at school level, information on the responses of principals and co-ordinators is given. Details of the responses of principals and co-ordinators in tabular form is found in appendix six.

In addition to a preliminary analysis of results, further analysis is carried out involving several aspects of the study. Comparisons are made between the responses of teachers, co-ordinators and principals on issues such as dissemination, inservice, Department of Education support and factors affecting the implementation of the Transition Year Programme. Further analysis is also applied to aspects involving the career cycles of teachers. Research suggests that factors such as age and teaching experience may affect teacher attitudes to change and innovation. The responses of teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket are compared with the responses of those teachers in the over 45 years age bracket. In addition, the responses of those teachers who were in their first or second year teaching the Transition Year Programme are compared with those of teachers who had been teaching the programme for three or more years. The responses of those teachers in schools in which several new programmes have been implemented are compared with those of teachers in a school which has not implemented new programmes in recent years.

The results of the surveys are presented with some graphic representation in order to aid clarity. The questionnaires appear in appendix five. Issues emerging and conclusions are discussed in chapter six.

5.2 Response Rate

On collecting the boxes of completed questionnaires, fifty-one of the 101 teacher questionnaires administered had been returned. The initial response rate was 50.5%. When the boxes were collected, it was agreed that a large, stamped, addressed envelope would be sent to each school and that the contact person - either the principal or the Transition Year co-ordinator - would forward any questionnaires that were subsequently completed. This yielded a further nineteen questionnaires, giving a total of seventy returned teacher questionnaires. A third letter was sent to one school, as neither the principal nor co-ordinator questionnaires had been returned. There was

sufficient overlap between these two questionnaires to allow all relevant information regarding the school itself and the organisation of the Transition Year Programme to be collected from either questionnaire, in case a school had no Transition Year co-ordinator. Having neither questionnaire would have meant that vital information regarding the school was missing. On writing to the school in question, enclosing second copies of both questionnaires, both were completed and returned. Overall, the final response rate was 69.3 %. The average response rate for a school was 68.03%

Table 5.1 shows the number of teachers surveyed in each of the six schools, the number of surveys returned and the percentage response rates for each school.

Table 5.1

Response Rate

School	No. of teachers surveyed	No. of surveys returned	Response rate (%)
A	20	11	55
B	21	15	71.4
C	10	7	70
D	14	11	78.6
E	13	6	46.2
F	23	20	87
Totals	101	70	

Using this "personal contact" method of distributing surveys, where the researcher liaises either with the co-ordinator or the principal undoubtedly raised the response rate in schools B,C,D and F. The return rate from these schools is higher than would be expected from postal questionnaires according to recent literature. As noted in chapter four, Nachmias and Nachmias maintain that the response rate for mail questionnaires is "between 20 and 40 percent"[352] while Cohen and Mannion suggest

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[352]Nachmias and Nachmias, (1976), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, p.108.

that a well planned postal questionnaire should obtain at least a 40% response rate.[353] Schools A and E had response rates more in line with what would be expected from postal questionnaires.

Return rates for the principal and co-ordinator questionnaires was one hundred percent. All six principals returned questionnaires. Five of the six schools had a Transition Year co-ordinator. The sixth school had a post designated to a "curriculum officer" who was responsible just for setting up new programmes which came into the school. While he had been involved in setting up the programme, he is now involved in another programme and is not regarded as Transition Year co-ordinator. Of the five schools which did have a co-ordinator, all five questionnaires were returned.

5.3 School Profiles

5.3.1 School Type:

Of the six schools included in the study, three were Community Schools, two were VEC Community Colleges and one was a Secondary School. Table 5.2 shows the breakdown of schools by school type. Figure 5(a) represents this information graphically.

Table 5.2

School Types in Sample

School Type	No. of Schools
Community School	3
V.E.C./ Community College	2
Secondary School	1
Total	6

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[353]Louis Cohen and Lawrence Mannion, (1980), *Research Methods in Education,* p.88.

Figure 5(a)

School Types in Sample

Secondary School 1 (16.7%)

Community School 3 (50%)

Community College 2(33.3%)
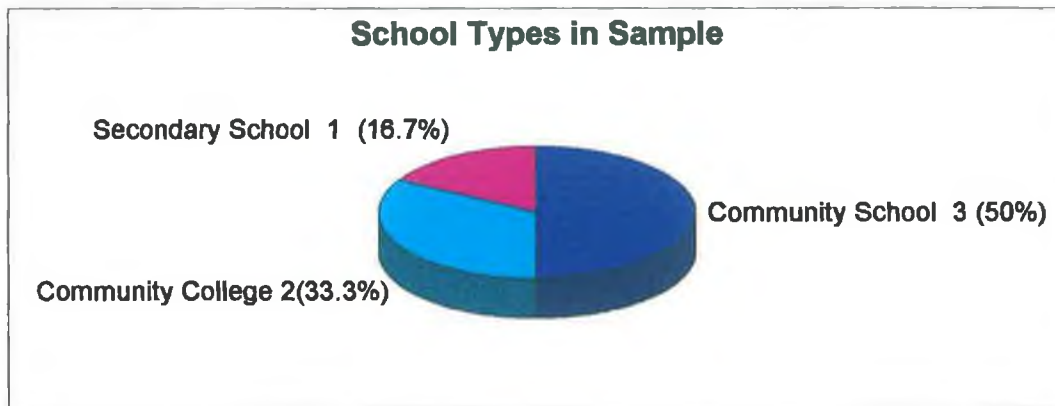
The breakdown of schools by school type in this sample does not correspond numerically with the breakdown of schools by school type nationally. No effort was made to ensure that the sample chosen was representative of the national situation as the comparison of school types is not relevant to this study and no generalisations are made regarding the results. Table 5.3 shows the breakdown of schools by school type nationally for the most recent available data.[354] Figure 5(b) illustrates this information graphically.

Table 5.3

National Breakdown of Schools by School Type

School Type	No. of Schools
Community School	76
V.E.C./ Community College	247
Secondary School	452
Total	775

Figure (b)

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[354]Department of Education, (1996), *Implementing the Agenda for Change*, p.47, data refer to the school year 1994/95.

School Types, National Breakdown

Community School 76 (9.8%)

Secondary Sch. 452 (58.3%)

VEC/Com.Col. 247(31.9%)
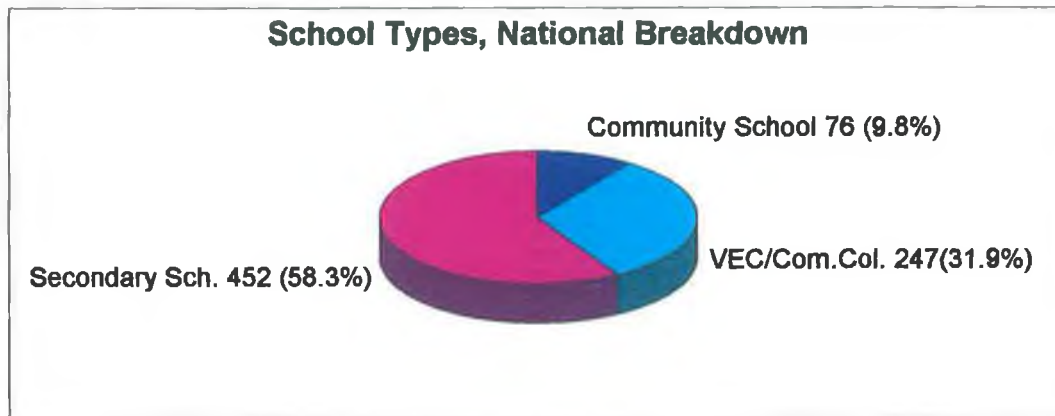
5.3.2 School Profiles:

School profiles are important in that they describe the organisational context in which the programme is implemented. In this study, in addition to information regarding type of school and number of pupils, information regarding the number of years for which a school had been offering a Transition Year Programme and the other optional programmes offered by a school was also collected. Offering programmes such as the LCAP and LCVP suggests that a school has a progressive attitude to taking on new programmes to suit the needs of their students. This in turn affects the success of the implementation of the new programme in the school. Principals were asked if other programmes such as the LCAP, the LCVP and the Junior Certificate Elementary Programme were offered and also whether CSPE was being offered on a pilot basis and whether or not there was a Social and Personal Development programme offered to students.

School A is a Community School which opened in 1994 as a greenfield school with first and second years. This year there are 599 students enrolled. This school is in its first year offering the Transition Year Programme. Students opt for the programme and this year there are two Transition Year classes with fifty students following the

programme. The school does not have Leaving Certificate students yet so there is no LCAP or LCVP but the school offers CSPE and an SPD programme.

School B is a Community School which opened in 1992. This year there are 807 students enrolled. This school is in its second year offering the Transition Year Programme. Students opt for the programme and this year there are two Transition Year classes with fifty-two students following the programme. The school also offers the LCAP and CSPE and will have an SPD programme from September 1997.

School C is a Community School which opened in 1979. This year it has 858 pupils. School E started offering the Transition Year Programme in the school year 1995/1996 and is in its second year. Students opt for the Transition Year Programme and one class was formed this year containing twenty-nine students. The school also offers the LCA and LCV programmes, CSPE, the Junior Certificate Elementary Programme and a Social and Personal development.

School D is a Community College which opened in 1986. This year there are 605 students enrolled. This school has been offering the new Transition Year Programme for three years and also offered the old Transition Year Option for two years before the new programme was introduced. The Transition Year Programme is compulsory and this year there are three Transition Year classes with seventy-nine students following the programme. The school also offers the LCA and LCV programmes, CSPE, the Junior Certificate Elementary Programme and a Social and Personal Development programme.

School E is a Community College which opened in 1986. This year there are 600 students enrolled. This school has been offering the new Transition Year Programme for three years. Students opt for the programme and this year there is one Transition

Year class with fifteen students following the programme. The school also offers the LCAP and CSPE and will have an SPD programme from 1997.

School F is a girls' Secondary School which opened in 1864. This year there are 595 students enrolled. School F started offering the Transition Year Programme in 1994. Students opt for the programme and this year there are nineteen students in four classes. The school does not offer any of the alternative Leaving Certificate programmes or the Junior Certificate Elementary or CSPE and does not have a designated Social and Personal Development programme.

Although four of the schools were open at the time of the introduction of the Transition Year Option in 1986, only one of the schools, school D, had experienced offering this programme. This school had the most experience in operating a Transition Year Programme and had been offering the Transition Year Option for two years when the new Transition Year Programme was introduced.

5.3.3 Additional Programmes Offered by Schools:

Two of the schools surveyed, school C and school D offer all of the extra programmes. School F offers none of the five programmes listed. Table 5.4 shows the additional programmes offered by schools.

Table 5.4

Additional Programmes Offered by Each School

School	Additional Programmes Offered by the School				
	L.C.A.P.	L.C.V.P.	C.S.P.E.	J.C.E.P.	S.P.D.
A	N/A*	N/A*	X	O	X
B	X	O	X	O	O
C	X	X	X	X	X
D	X	X	X	X	X
E	X	O	X	O	X
F	O	O	O	O	O

X = School offers the programme
O = School does not offer the programme
* School A does not yet have a Leaving Certificate class.

If experience in implementing new programmes positively affects the successful implementation of innovation in the schools, it would be expected that staff in schools C and D would have a more positive attitude to change and be more experienced in implementing new programmes, thus affecting their views of innovation. The attitudes and perceptions of teachers in schools C and D will be compared with those of teachers in school F, which was not offering any of the extra programmes. The effect of becoming accustomed to implementing new programmes almost defies measurement but it is possible to compare the attitudes and perceptions of teachers in both settings to see if there are any differences. This possibility is investigated subsequent to a preliminary analysis of findings.

5.4 Respondent Profiles

As this study involves the perceptions of Transition Year teachers, this profile gives details of the respondent teachers only. While co-ordinators may also be Transition Year teachers, in this study they are treated separately due to their different role in implementation and their different perspective on the implementation of a new programme. Co-ordinators who were also teaching Transition Year classes were not required to fill in two separate questionnaires.

5.4.1 Sex:

Of the seventy respondents, fifty (71.4 %) were female and twenty (28.6 %) were male. Figure 5(c) represents this information graphically.

Figure 5(c)
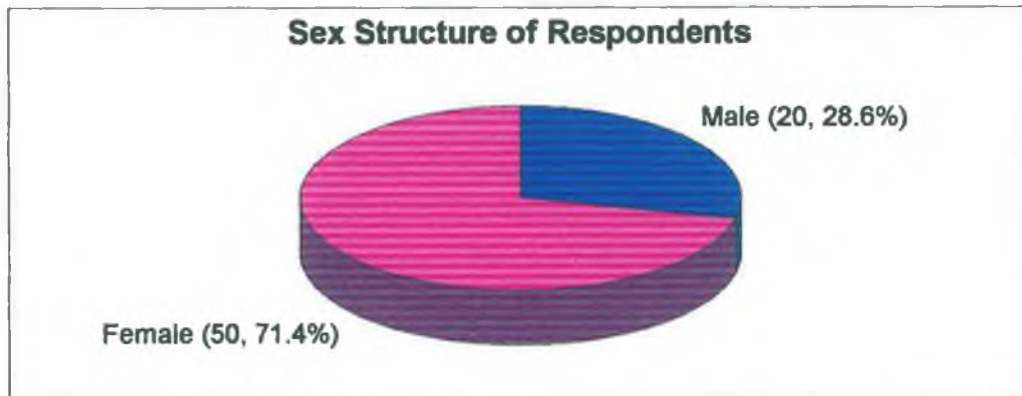
5.4.2 Age:

Of the seventy respondents, twenty-five (39.7 %) were in the age bracket 21-29 years, thirty-five (50 %) were in the age bracket 30-45 years and ten (14.3 %) were over 45 years old. Table 5.5 shows the breakdown of respondents by age. Figure 5(d) represents this information graphically.

Table 5.5

Age of Respondents

Age	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
21-29	25	35.7
30-45	35	50
Over 45	10	14.3
Totals	70	100

Figure 5(d)
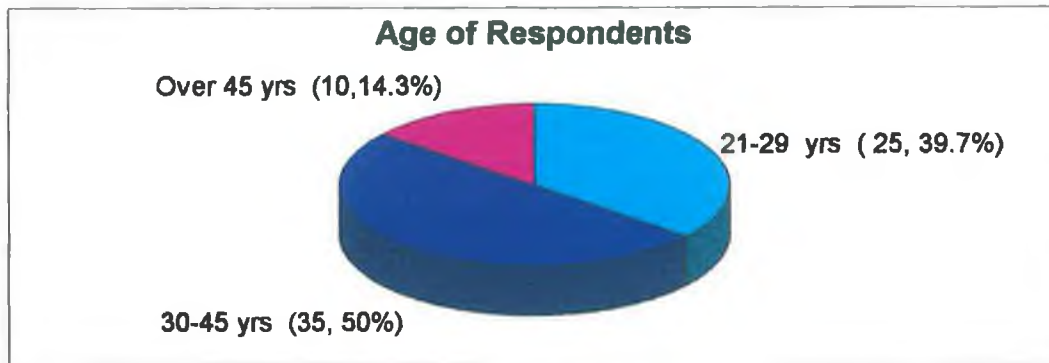
Following preliminary analysis, the responses of those teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket are compared with the responses of those in the over 45 years age bracket.

5.4.3 Teaching Experience:

Of the seventy respondents, eighteen (25.7 %) had been teaching for 1-5 years, twenty-one (30 %) had been teaching for 6-10 years and thirty-one (44.3 %) had been teaching for over ten years.

Table 5.6 shows the breakdown of respondents by years teaching experience. Figure 5(e) represents this information graphically.

Table 5.6

Teaching Experience of Respondents

Teaching Experience	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1-5 Years	18	25.7
6-10 Years	21	30
Over 10 Years	31	44.3
Totals	70	100

Figure 5(e)

Teaching Experience of Respondents

1-5 yrs (18, 25.7%)

Over 10 yrs (31, 44.3%)

6-10 yrs (21, 30%)
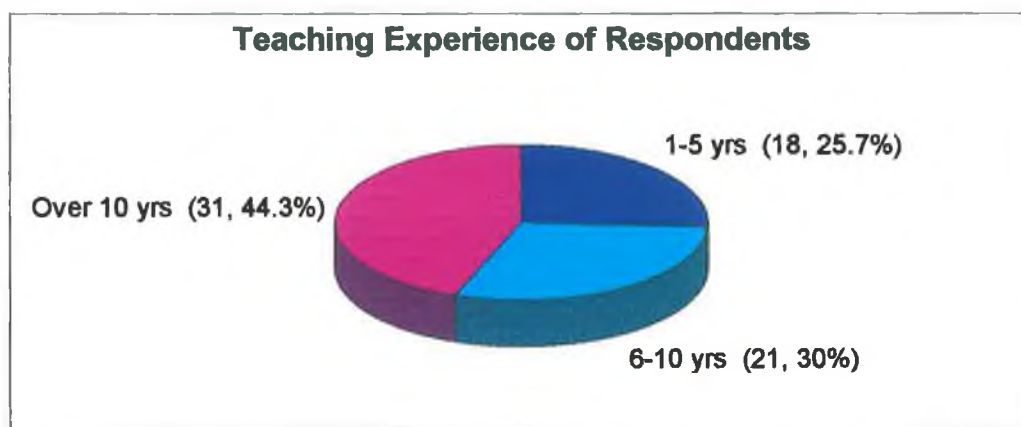
Some authors suggest that teaching experience and age can have an effect on a teachers' attitude to the change process and to implementing a new programme. Michael Fullan maintains that:

> Age, stage of career, life experiences and gender factors make up the
>
> total person. They affect people's interest in and reaction to innovation
>
> and their motivation to seek improvement.[355]

Michael Hubermann, in research on the career cycles of teachers, interviewed 160 secondary school teachers in Switzerland about the ways in which their careers impacted on their attitudes to innovation and teaching. He found that most teachers in mid to late career were unlikely to embrace innovation with enthusiasm and unlikely to make any radical changes in their approach to teaching.[356]

The perceptions of these two sets of teachers, divided in terms of Transition Year teaching experience and age, regarding the factors they feel are necessary for successful implementation and their attitudes towards teaching the Transition Year

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[355]Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves, (1992), *What's Worth Fighting for in your School?*, p.39.

[356]Michael Hubermann, (1988), "Teacher Careers and School Improvement", *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 20, No.2, 1988, pp.119-132.

Programme are compared. In relation to the respondents in this survey, there was a high correlation between years teaching experience and age. All ten teachers in the over 45 years age bracket had been teaching for more than ten years and seventeen of the twenty-five teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket had been teaching for only 1-5 years, the remainder having 6-10 years teaching experience. For this reason, it would appear that a study of teachers divided by teaching experience would duplicate the results of the study of teachers divided by age range. It was felt that a study of teachers divided by experience of teaching the Transition Year Programme in addition to the study of teachers' responses divided by age would yield more useful data.

5.4.4 Experience Teaching Transition Year Classes:

Of the seventy respondents, twenty-one (30 %) had been teaching Transition Year classes for one year, twenty-four (34.3 %) had been teaching Transition Year classes for two years, eighteen (25.7 %) had been teaching Transition Year classes for three years and seven (10 %) had been teaching Transition Year classes for over three years, meaning that these seven respondents had experienced teaching the Transition Year Option. Table 5.7 shows the breakdown of respondents by experience teaching Transition Year programmes. Figure 5(f) represents this information graphically.

Table 5.7

Respondents' Experience Teaching Transition Year Classes

Years teaching Transition Year	No. of teachers	% of teachers
1 year	21	30
2 years	24	34.3
3 years	18	25.7
over 3 years	7	10
Totals	70	100

Figure 5(f)

Experience Teaching Transition Year

over 3 years (7, 10%)

3 years (18, 25.7%)

1 year (21, 30%)

2 years (24, 34.3%)
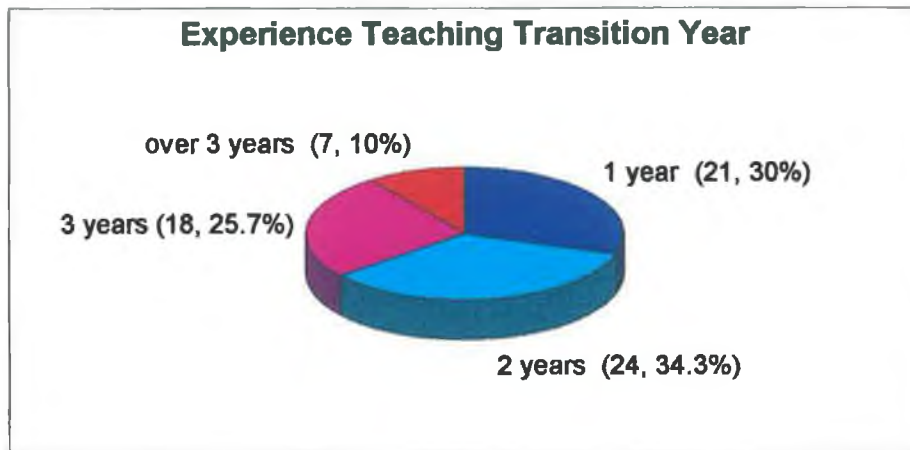
Seventy percent of teachers surveyed had two or more years experience of teaching the Transition Year programme. A survey of seventy teachers in their first year of teaching the programme may have yielded different results.

The question of the effect of experience in teaching the Transition Year Programme is included in the study of career stage effects. The responses of teachers who had started to teach the programme in the school year 1996/97 or were in their second year teaching the programme are compared with those from teachers who had been teaching the programme for three or more years.

5.4.5 Co-ordinator Profiles:

Of the five Transition Year co-ordinators, two were female and three were male. Four were in the age bracket 30-45 years and one was over 45 years old. Two had been teaching for 6-10 years, one for 11-20 years and one had been teaching for over twenty years. One had been a Transition Year co-ordinator for three years, one had been a co-ordinator for two years and three were in their first year of being a Transition Year co-ordinator. One of these three had taken up the post mid term but this person had been fulfilling the duties of co-ordinator "without the title" prior to receiving the post.

5.4.6 Principals' and Co-ordinators' Responses:

Principals' and co-ordinators' perceptions differed slightly from those of teachers, in that they have different inservice requirements and view the dissemination process from a different perspective. Using percentages for samples as small as six and five respondents tends to distort the size of the sample and the significance of the result. Percentages, summed ratings and mean values are employed here to enable comparisons to be made between the responses of principals' and those of teachers and co-ordinators. It is recognised by the researcher that the sample of principals and of co-ordinators is very small and the results are used only to augment the analysis of teachers' responses, on whom the study is focused.

5.5 Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of the Transition Year Programme Nationally 1993-1997

5.5.1 Dissemination:

- Referral to the Department of Education Guidelines

Of the seventy respondents, forty-eight (68.6 %), said that they referred to the *Department of Education Guidelines 1994/95* while planning their programme, while twenty-two, (31.4 %) said that they did not. The Guidelines were designed as an update on the *Notes for Schools* produced in 1987. They were intended as a resource for planning and implementing the programme. The Guidelines state that:

> the main purpose of the guidelines is to facilitate the design of programmes by individual schools, especially those offering the programme for the first time in 1994/95.[357]

Table 5.8 shows how the Guidelines are rated as a resource for planning the programme by teachers. Figure 5(g) represents this information graphically.

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[357]Department of Education, (1994), *The Transition Year: Guidelines 1994/95*, p.3.

Table 5.8

Department of Education Guidelines 1994/95

Rated as a Resource while Planning a Transition Year Programme

	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	2	4.2
Good	24	50
Fair	19	39.6
Poor	1	2.1
Very Poor	2	4.2
Totals	48	100

Figure 5(g)

Department of Education Guidelines
Rated as a resource while planning
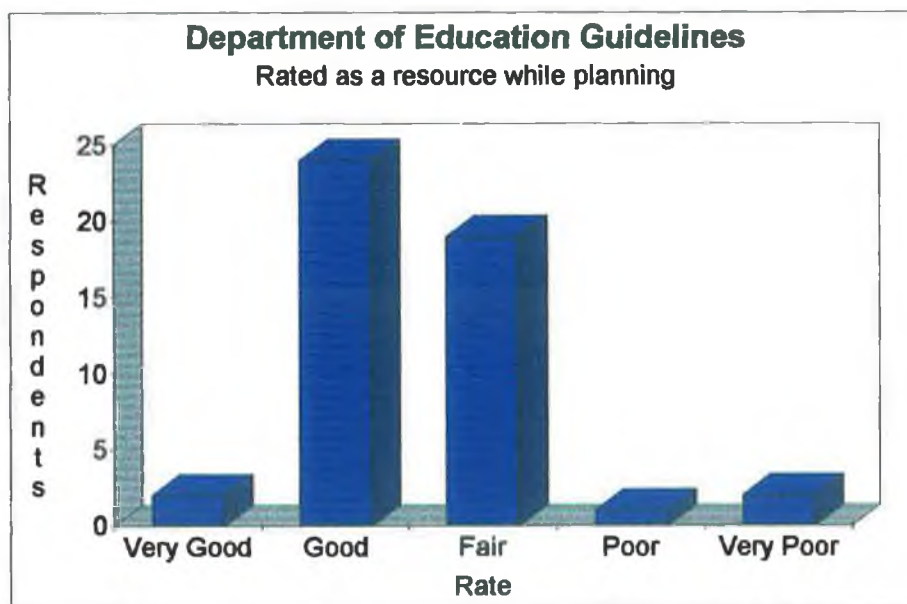
Only two of the respondents who reported using the Guidelines, (4.2%), regarded them as "Very Good", but twenty-four respondents, (50%) rated them as "Good" and nineteen respondents, almost 40%, rated them as "Fair". Only three respondents regarded the guidelines as either "Poor" or "Very Poor". Overall this would suggest that the Guidelines were rated favourably by well over half of the respondents. If summated rating is applied to the figures, the Guidelines achieve an overall rating of

177 out of a possible 240 points. This figure is calculated by applying the following numerical scale which appeared on the questionnaires and summing the totals:

5 = Very Good,   4 = Good,   3 = Fair,   2 = Poor,   1 = Very Poor

Because there were forty-eight respondents using the Guidelines, the maximum points available amount to 240. The total rating of 177 means that a mean mark of 3.7 was awarded to the Guidelines booklet as a resource for planning a programme by those teachers who use it.

Only two respondents, (2.9%), said that they referred to the Guidelines in the day-to-day teaching of the Transition Year Programme, while sixty-eight, (97.1 %) said that they did not. Reasons cited for referring to the Guidelines included - curriculum ideas, Department of Education directives on particular issues and information on the aims and philosophy of the programme. The fact that only two respondents refer to the Guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme suggests that use of the Guidelines is confined to the planning stages rather than the day-to-day implementation of the programme.

Four of the co-ordinators said that they referred to the Guidelines while planning their programme, while one did not. Details of the rates applied by co-ordinators to the Department of Education Guidelines as a resource for planning a programme are given in table (i) in appendix six. Two of the co-ordinators referred to the Guidelines in the day-to-day teaching of the Transition Year Programme, while three did not. Reasons for referring to the Guidelines included curriculum ideas and Department of Education specifications. Again, these findings support the earlier suggestions that the Guidelines are designed and used as a resource while planning only.

All six principals said that they referred to the Guidelines while planning their Transition Year Programmes. Details of the rates applied by principals to the Department of Education Guidelines as a resource for planning a programme are given in table (ii) in appendix six. 83.3% of principals regarded the Guidelines as "good" or "very good", while none of the principals regarded the Guidelines as "poor" or "very

poor". While all six referred to the Guidelines while planning the programme, none of the principals refer to the Guidelines in the day-to-day running of the Transition Year Programme. This would support the findings from teacher and co-ordinator responses which suggest that the Guidelines are a planning resource only rather than a resource to be used day-to-day.

- Referral to the Department of Education Resource Folder

The concept of the Resource Folder arose from the "train the trainers" inservice programme. The introduction to the Folder reads:

> The resource material is not a central prescription for any particular programme but is intended as a resource for whole school development and enrichment of the programmes offered by schools....The material does not mark the end of a process but is merely a beginning and is intended to be neither comprehensive nor definitive.[358]

While the introduction to the Folder does not indicate that it is intended as a resource specifically for classroom teachers, it does contain curriculum ideas and suggestions for content, as well as evaluation sheets, sample certificates and work experience documentation.

Of the seventy respondents, 34 (48.6 %) said that they referred to the Resource Folder while planning their programme, while 36 (51.4 %) did not. The Folder was rated as a resource for planning the programme as follows:

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[358]Chris Connolly, (1994), *The Transition Year Resource Material Folder*, Introduction, not paginated.

Table 5.9

Department of Education Resource Folder

Rated as a Resource while Planning a Transition Year Programme

	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	8	23.5
Good	20	58.8
Fair	5	14.7
Poor	1	2.9
Very Poor	0	0
Totals	34	100

Figure 5(h)
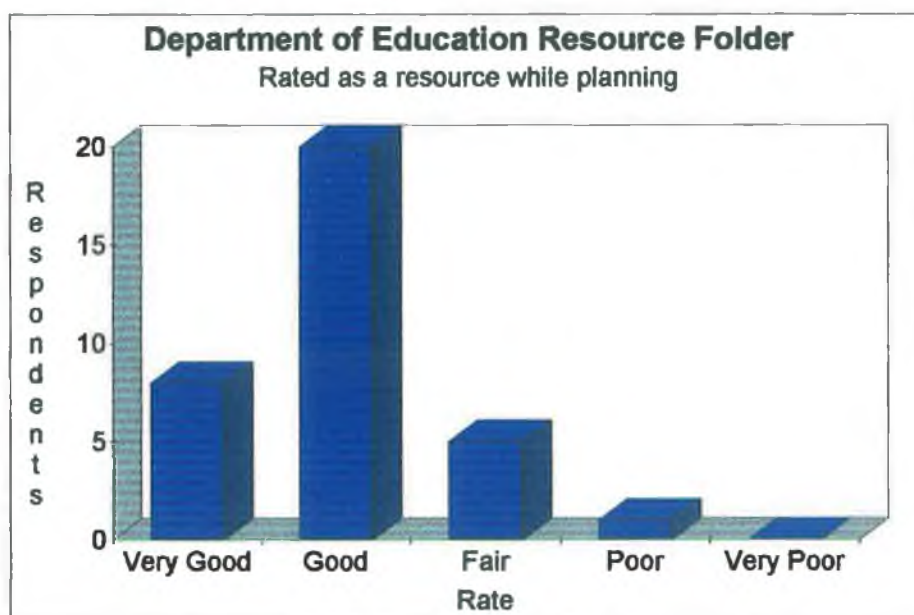
The Resource Folder was used by fewer teachers while planning the programme but was rated more highly by those who used it. Of the thirty-four teachers who used the Folder, 82.3% regarded the Folder as "Very Good" or "Good". None of the respondents felt that the Folder was "Very Poor" while one respondent felt that it was "Poor".

Nine teachers, (12.9%) said that they referred to the Resource Folder in the day-to-day teaching of the Transition Year Programme while sixty-one, (87.1%) said that

they did not. Most common reasons for referring to the Folder included - evaluation sheets, certificates, curriculum ideas and work experience information.

The fact that the Folder is used less day-to-day than in planning suggests that the Folder may be more useful when schools are introducing the Transition Year Programme for the first time or while planning the programme year to year. As will be shown later, the Folder is particularly useful for co-ordinators and may be less useful as a resource for classroom teachers.

While a higher number of teachers use the Folder day-to-day than use the Guidelines booklet, the number using both is still quite low. This suggests that neither is very useful in the day-to-day teaching of the Transition Year Programme. This is not necessarily a shortcoming of either the Guidelines or the Folder as classroom usage was not their intended use. As is shown in responses to questions involving extra help and important types of support needed to implement the Transition Year Programme successfully, teachers do however require flexible classroom materials.

Four of the co-ordinators referred to the Resource Folder while planning their programme, while one did not. Details of the rates applied by co-ordinators to the Department of Education Resource Folder as a resource for planning and implementing a programme are given in table (iii) in appendix six. All five co-ordinators referred to the Resource Folder in the day-to-day teaching of the Transition Year Programme. Most common reasons for referring to the Folder included evaluation sheets, curriculum ideas, information for staff and parents, work experience forms, contact telephone numbers and certificates for students.

Five of the six principals said that they referred to the resource folder while planning their programme, while one did not. Details of the rates applied by principals to the Department of Education Resource Folder as a resource for planning and implementing a programme are given in table (iv) in appendix six. Sixty percent of respondents regarded the folder as "good" or "very good" while the remaining forty

percent regarded it as "fair". None felt that the folder was "poor" or "very poor". One of principals referred to the resource folder in the day-to-day running of the Transition Year Programme, while five did not. The principal who did use the Resource Folder day-to-day was principal of the school in which there was no Transition Year co-ordinator. These results suggest that principals' use of the folder is largely confined to the planning stages except when the principal has a co-ordination role.

Both the Guidelines and the Resource Folder were used by four of the five co-ordinators while planning. Only two of the co-ordinators referred to the Guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme whereas five co-ordinators referred to the Resource Folder day-to-day. This would suggest that the Resource Folder is more useful as a resource in the day-to-day running of the programme than the Guidelines are. This is as expected as the Resource folder is designed as a resource for both planning and implementation of the programme. The higher rate of usage by principals and co-ordinators suggests that both the Guidelines and Resource Folder may have more use in areas of introduction and co-ordination of the programme for principals and co-ordinators and as such fulfil their function.

A comparison of the responses of teachers', principals' and co-ordinators' perceptions of the materials of dissemination - the Department of Education Guidelines and the Resource Folder is shown in the following tables.

Table 5.10

Respondents' Perceptions of the Department of Education Guidelines

Ratings	% (number) of Teachers	% (number) of Co-ordinators	% (number) of Principals
Very Good	4.2 (2)	0 (0)	16.7 (1)
Good	50 (24)	75 (3)	66.6 (4)
Fair	39.6 (19)	25 (1)	16.7 (1)
Poor	2.1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Very Poor	4.2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Mean Rating	3.5	3.75	4
Totals	100 (48)	100 (4)	100 (6)

Table 5.11

Respondents' Perceptions of the Department of Education Resource Folder

Rating	% (Number) of Teachers	% (Number) of Co-ordinators	% (Number) of Principals
Very Good	23.5 (8)	25 (1)	40 (2)
Good	58.8 (20)	50 (2)	20 (1)
Fair	14.7 (5)	25 (1)	40 (2)
Poor	2.9 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Very Poor	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Mean Ratings	4.02	3	4
Totals	100 (34)	100 (4)	100 (5)

Overall, when the mean scores are analysed, the Guidelines were rated more highly by co-ordinators and principals than by teachers. The Resource Folder was rated most highly by teachers and principals and less highly by co-ordinators. Despite this, the Resource Folder is used by a relatively higher number of co-ordinator than teachers, suggesting that it is still used despite its lower rating.

The Resource Folder is used by a relatively higher number of principals and co-ordinators than teachers while planning. Only one principal used the Folder on a day-to day basis, while only nine teachers reported using the Folder day-to-day. The Folder was used by all five co-ordinators day-to-day suggesting that while it may not be a valuable teaching resource it is very useful for co-ordinators in the day-to-day running

of the programme. This is further supported by the fact that the only principal using the folder was the principal who had co-ordination duties.

The dissemination materials are rated quite highly overall with no group of respondents giving a mean value of less than three to either of the publications.

5.5.2 Inservice Training:

Of the seventy respondents, fifty-two (74.3 %) had not participated in any inservice training while eighteen, (25.7 %) had. Of those respondents who had not received inservice training, forty-three (61.4 %) identified areas in which they would like inservice training.

Most respondents named more than one area. Table 5.12 gives the most commonly cited areas in which respondents felt that inservice was required and the numbers of respondents naming these areas, in descending order.

Table 5.12

Areas in Which Inservice is Required by Respondents

Area in which inservice is required	No. of Respondents
Designing a programme	14
Teaching methodology	9
Resources	6
Assessment of progress	4
Programme evaluation	4
Timetabling	4
Specific subject areas	3
Cross-curricular approaches	3
Project oriented studies	3

The importance of teaching methodology as an inservice topic is echoed in a study by Ancilla O'Reilly on the Transition Year Programme in CDVEC schools. She found that teachers requested in career development involving subject based elements, teaching methodologies and remediation.[359]

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[359]Ancilla O'Reilly, (1995), *The Transition Year Option in CDVEC Schools*, p.22.

There are a number of possible reasons why such a large percentage of respondents did not receive inservice training despite the fact that a national inservice programme was implemented in 1994/1995. One explanation is that a particular school may not have been offering the programme at this time. Three of the schools in this study were not offering the programme in 1994/95. Schools subsequently starting to offer the programme could arrange inservice through the Transition Year Support Team, but this is be at the discretion of the school. A second possibility is that the majority of teachers surveyed took part only in the half-day session in their own school and did not receive any further training in the cluster groups which followed. As shown in chapter three, these cluster groups consisted of a small number of teachers from each school only. Several teachers remarked on the questionnaire that they did not regard the half-day session in the school as inservice training as such, but rather as an "introductory session".

Those who did receive inservice training, were asked to rate the training they received on a five point scale in relation to fifteen areas. With eighteen respondents having received some inservice training the maximum number for each area is ninety.

To see the rates applied to the treatment of inservice topics overall, it is possible to analyse the mean scores allocated to each inservice topic. Summated ratings are also given in order to illuminate the overall ratings applied to each area by the respondents. The minimum number of points for any topic is eighteen as there are eighteen respondents who must give at least one mark to each area.

Table 5.13

Teachers' Rating of Inservice Provision

Inservice Topic	V.Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V.Poor	Total Rating	Mean Rating
						Max=90	
Rationale and Philosophy of TY	1	8	7	2	0	62	3.44
Organising Work Experience	1	9	4	4	0	61	3.39
Curriculum development/design	0	9	6	3	0	60	3.33
Introducing TY to Parents	0	8	8	2	0	60	3.33
Programme Management	1	6	8	3	0	59	3.28
Curricular Content	2	3	9	4	0	57	3.17
Co-ordination of TY Programme	1	5	7	5	0	56	3.11
Programme Evaluation	0	7	6	4	1	55	3.06
Assessment	0	5	8	5	0	54	3
Timetabling Requirements	0	6	6	5	1	53	2.94
Organising Student Groups	0	4	7	7	0	51	2.83
Teamwork Strategies	0	4	7	6	1	50	2.78
Teaching Methodology	1	3	4	10	0	49	2.72
Teaching Materials	1	3	4	9	1	48	2.67

Respondents were also asked to rate the inservice training overall. Three respondents regarded the training as "very good", four regarded it as "good" and eleven regarded the training as "fair". The total rating from the eighteen respondents was sixty-four, giving an average rating of 3.56.

Considering the mean values, the first nine items on this list would be considered "fair" or better and the remainder fall into the "poor" category. Representing the results in this fashion illustrates both the rating of the individual items and the ratings of the items in relation to each other. It would appear that an item rated 3.44, for example, as in the case of "Rationale and Philosophy" is separated only by a small margin from an item rated 2.83 as is the case with "Timetabling Requirements". It is worth noting that these factors are separated by 0.61 on a five point scale, making the difference more significant than it would first appear. This difference is statistically significant when statistical significance, is calculated as described in chapter four. The *d* values of the top four inservice topics showed statistically significant differences from the means of the four topics at the bottom of the table. Statistical significance is exhibited when the

factors scoring a mean of 2.83 or less are compared with the highest mean values above 3.33 suggesting that the areas of inservice scoring 2.83 or below were treated significantly less well during inservice training than the top four on the list as rated by respondents.

Practically, this suggests that inservice training on the top four topics "Rationale and Philosophy", "Organising Work Experience", "Curriculum Development" and "Introducing the Programme to Parents" was regarded as significantly better than those at the bottom - "Organising Student Groups", "Teamwork Strategies", "Teaching Methodology" and "Teaching Materials". There is some correlation between the ratings applied to individual topics and the responses to other open ended questions in the survey. Responses to the question regarding types of external support required rate "teaching materials" as very important. When asked what extra help and resources are needed, teaching materials was the resource named by the highest number of teachers (17). The low rating for "Teaching Materials" is as expected as teaching materials were not supplied at the inservice course due to the school based components of the programme. Respondents did however rate teaching materials high on the list of extra requirements needed to implement the programme and also maintained that the Transition Year Support Team had been consulted in regard to teaching materials. To some extent, teaching materials which can be used and adapted optionally by schools depending on their adopted programme are required.

The fact that the topic "Teamwork Strategies" was regarded as poorly treated in inservice is significant as "Team work among staff members" is suggested by Transition Year co-ordinators as the most important factor affecting the successful implementation of the programme at school level. The low rating of "Teaching Methodology" is also significant. When asked if their teaching methods had changed while teaching the Transition Year Programme, 82.9% of teachers maintained that their teaching methods had changed to some degree. This suggests that inservice training in new methods is required but also raises further issues regarding other factors which affect changes in teaching methods.

When asked what extra help and resources were required for implementing the Transition Year Programme or in which areas inservice was required, none of the respondents felt that extra help was required on the rationale and philosophy of the programme, the inservice topic rated most highly by those respondents who had participated in inservice training. Respondents did however request training in other areas such as designing a programme, teaching methodology, resources, assessment and evaluation. While some of these factors are rated higher than others, none are rated "Good" or "Very Good" on the five point scale. A small number of staff members from each school implementing the Transition Year Programme in 1994/95 participated in inservice training cluster groups after the initial half day introduction to the course for all staff members. The fact that there are similarities between the areas in which training was rated lowly and those areas in which inservice is required may suggest that information from the cluster days did filter back to other staff members and that areas which were not treated well are those in which inservice is still required.

These figures may not be representative of the inservice training provided in 1994/95 as the number of respondents participating in inservice training is quite low. The main point drawn from these results is that a large proportion of those teachers surveyed did not participate in inservice training. It is also significant that so many respondents felt that they needed inservice training in a wide range of areas.

Of the seventy respondents, sixty-eight (97.1 %) felt that inservice training should be ongoing, while two respondents, (2.9 %) felt that ongoing inservice training was not necessary.

As principals and co-ordinators are very influential in the implementation of new programmes at school level, a brief look at their inservice provision and requirements is useful in building a bigger picture of what is actually happening in schools.

Inservice Training for Co-ordinators

All five co-ordinators felt that inservice training was necessary for co-ordinators. Three of the five co-ordinators had received in service training in relation to the Transition Year Programme, while two had not. Of the three who had participated in the inservice training provided, all three rated the inservice training as "very good" overall. Those who had received inservice training were also asked to rate the training they participated in under fourteen headings on a 1-5 scale. Details of the responses of co-ordinators are given in table (v) in appendix six.

The ratings applied by co-ordinators suggest that while the overall training was rated as "very good", ratings varied for individual topics, with no topic receiving a full five points on the scale. The highest ratings went to "Resources for the new programme" and "Assessment", both allotted eleven marks out of a possible fifteen points, scoring 3.67 on the means scale. "Programme Evaluation" followed with a mean mark of 3.33. The lowest rating was allotted to the treatment of "Funding and Budgeting" as an inservice topic which was allotted only five out of a possible fifteen marks, a mean of one mark from each of the five respondents.

When the d values are calculated, to compare the mean scores of each of the inservice topics, the five topics at the bottom of the list - "Curricular Content", Timetabling Requirements", "Teaching Methodology", Teamwork Strategies" and "Funding and Budgeting" are statistically significantly different to the top three - "Resources for the new Programme", "Assessment" and "Programme Evaluation". This suggests that the top three topics were treated significantly better in inservice training than the bottom five. To a large extent this coincides with the findings from the teachers' survey of inservice, although a number of extra topics appeared on the co-ordinator questionnaire in relation to their different role in implementation. The high rating of "Resources for the new programme" indicates that co-ordinators rate the provision of information on resources highly. Three of the five co-ordinators suggested that the Transition Year Support Team had been a great help in this regard through their newsletters, inservice evenings and monthly co-ordinator meetings.

Only five of the topics received a mean rating of three or more points - "Resources for the new programme", "Assessment", "Programme Evaluation", Rationale and Philosophy of the Programme" and "Curriculum Development". This suggests that the other nine topics were less well treated during inservice. These findings suggest that many of the topics rated important by principals in the implementation of new programmes such as funding and budgeting, curriculum content and teaching methodology were poorly treated in the inservice training provided for co-ordinators.

Inservice Training for Principals

Responses of principals regarding inservice training are included in this analysis as the support of the principal was named as an important factor in the implementation of the programme by respondent teachers. Principal perception of the programme has an impact on the support for the programme in the school and perceptions of the programme are influenced by inservice provision.

Only two of the principals had received inservice training in relation to the Transition Year Programme while four had not. Those who had received inservice training were asked to rate the training they received under eleven headings on a 1-5 scale. These results are shown in Table (vi) in appendix six.

It would appear that the inservice training for principals dealt most effectively with the topic of "Rationale and Philosophy" of the programme followed by "Curricular Content" and "Introducing the Programme to Staff". There are differences in the areas treated sufficiently by inservice training according to the replies of teachers and co-ordinators and those of principals but there are also parallels. Inservice on "Funding and Budgeting" scored quite low on all three scales and "Rationale and Philosophy" of the programme and "Curricular Content" scored relatively highly on all three.

For both principals who had participated in inservice training, inservice seems to have been rated quite low with eight of the eleven topics scoring mean marks of three or less. Inservice provision for teachers rated slightly higher with nine out of fifteen topics scoring three or higher when the mean scores are calculated. A comparison of

the means shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the topics rated three or more on the mean scale and "Rationale and Philosophy" which rated highest. There were however, statistically significant differences between the mean values for provision of inservice on "Rationale and Philosophy" and those topics rated at the bottom of the table - "Organising Student Groups" and "Funding/ Budgeting".

All six principals were also asked to rate the importance of the eleven different areas of inservice in relation to implementing a new programme. Details of the responses of principals are given in table (vii) in appendix six.

By arranging the summed responses in descending order, it is possible to see the areas in which principals felt that inservice was most important and the mean importance level applied to each topic. The results suggest that while eight of the topics scored twenty-five or more out of a possible thirty marks, "Introducing the Programme to Staff", "Timetabling Requirements", "Resources for the Programme" and "Funding and Budgeting" were the most important areas. These six principals felt that "Curricular Content" and "Organising Class Groups" were less important, probably because tasks involving these areas would be delegated to other staff members. When d values are calculated it is shown that there are no statistically significant differences between the first ten mean values and the top rated topic - "Introducing the Programme to Staff" suggesting that none of the top ten topics on the table formed from the responses of principals was more important than any other. The only statistical significance is between the topic "Introducing the Programme to Staff" and that rated lowest on the table of importance - "Organising Student Groups".

Table 5.14 compares the actual provision of inservice with the importance of each type of inservice topic as rated by principals. Details of these responses are included here due to the pivotal role of the principal in the implementation of the new programme as recognised by teachers in questions regarding factors affecting implementation and important types of support. Figure 5(i) represents this information graphically.

Table 5.14

Comparison of Importance of Inservice Topics and Actual Provision of Inservice Training in those Topics - Rated by Principals

	Importance Rating Mean Values	Actual Provision Mean Values
Inservice Topic		
Introducing the programme to staff	4.83	3.5
Timetabling requirements	4.67	2
Resources for the programme	4.67	3
Funding/budgeting	4.67	2
Curriculum Development	4.5	2.5
Introducing TY to Parents	4.33	2.5
Rationale and Philosophy of TY	4.17	4
Implementing change in the school	4.17	2.5
Co-ordination of TY Programme	4.17	2.5
Curricular Content	3.83	3.5
Organising Student Groups	3.17	2

For topics G and J, "Rationale and Philosophy" and "Curricular Content", the rating of the provision of inservice is closest to the rating of the importance of the inservice topic. "Timetabling Requirements" and "Funding and Budgeting" are rated highly on the importance scale by principals but are not rated highly on the scale describing actual provision. There are statistically significant differences between the mean ratings for actual provision of inservice and the importance of inservice provision for the following topics: "Introducing the Programme to Staff", "Timetable Requirements", "Resources for the new Programme", "Funding and Budgeting", "Curriculum Development" and "Introducing the Programme to Parents". This would suggest that while important to principals, these topics were not adequately covered by inservice training. This is a significant finding as these are important areas for principals introducing a new programme in their school and will ultimately affect the implementation of the programme. They are also the areas in which most of the principals who had not received inservice training felt that training was required. Principals also suggested that training in implementing the programme and in resources for the programme is required.

Figure 5(i)

Comparison of Importance of Inservice Topics and Actual Provision of Inservice Training in those Topics - Rated by Principals

Actual Vs Importance
Inservice Training

A = Introducing the Programme to Staff
B = Timetabling Requirements
C = Resources for the Programme
D = Funding/Budgeting
E = Curriculum Development
F = Introducing the Programme to Parents

G = Rationale and Philosophy
H = Implementing Change
I = Co-ordinating Programme
J = Curricular Content
K = Organising Student Groups
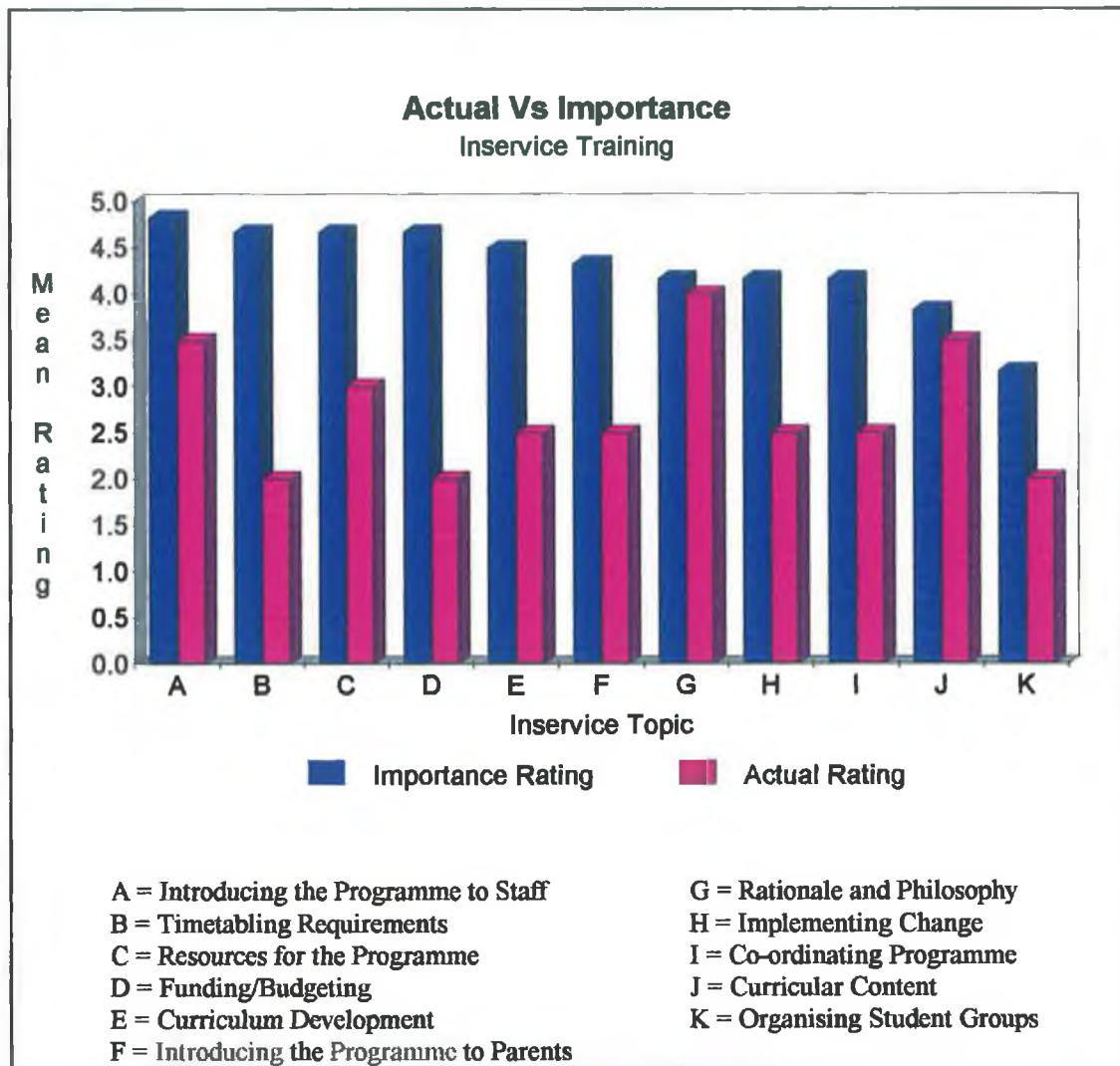
5.5.3 Department of Education Support for the Programme:

Respondents were asked to rate Department of Education support for the programme under five headings: "Teaching Materials", "Extra Teachers", "Extra Time for Planning and Meetings", "Curriculum Development Assistance" and "Funding". Again the factors were rated on a five point scale. External support for new programmes is recognised by the literature on change as an important factor in implementation. The types of support suggested include those suggested by the literature written on the

implementation of Transition Year programmes in the 1970s and 1980s and by other research on changing the curriculum.

Using summative rating, the maximum points any area could achieve is 350, as there were seventy respondents. Mean ratings are also shown to allow comparison. Table 5.15 shows the results for each type of support.

Table 5.15

Types of Department of Education Support - Rated by Teachers

Type of Support	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor	Total Rating	Mean Rating
						Max = 350	
Funding	2	3	30	20	15	167	2.39
Teaching Materials	1	8	20	22	19	160	2.29
Curriculum Assistance	1	5	22	23	19	156	2.23
Extra Teachers	0	2	17	30	21	140	2
Extra Planning Time	0	1	10	17	42	110	1.57

"Funding" is the resource rated most highly by teachers while "Extra Planning Time" is allotted the lowest rating suggesting that while relatively satisfied with the funding provided, respondents felt that provision of support in the form of extra time for planning has been inadequate. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings for "Funding" and "Extra Planning Time" and between the ratings for "Funding" and "Extra Teachers" but no statistically significant differences among the ratings of the top three types of support. This suggests that provision of the three types of support rated mostly highly - "Funding", "Teaching Materials" and "Curriculum Assistance" was significantly better than the provision of "Extra Teachers" or "Extra Planning Time". At first glance the seemingly high rating for "Teaching Materials" seems in contradiction to the requests for teaching materials recorded in the responses to questions on extra resources and help needed to implement the programme which show high numbers of teachers requiring teaching materials. This contradiction is explained if one looks at summed ratings and the mean ratings for each type of support. All five types of support are allotted mean ratings of

below three on a five point scale, with "Teaching Materials" achieving a rating of only 2.29. This low rating is supported by responses to the open ended questions regarding the extra resources needed to implement the programme successfully. The lack of teaching materials was also cited in the additional comments section as a factor affecting implementation and was deemed the most important form of external support as shown below.

Summation of ratings is particularly useful for analysing questions which are asked in the form of a semantic differential scale with adjectives at either end of a continuum as below. This is because, while a rating of five denotes high level of importance, a rating of four would also be quite significant on an importance scale. Summation allows the researcher to take into account the number of times each rate is applied and to gain, in addition, a summated total. Mean values are commonly used in the presentation and analysis of statistics and using mean values allows comparison where different numbers of respondents are concerned.

When respondents were also asked to rate the importance of these types of support in the implementation of a new programme, the following were the results.

Table 5.16

Importance of Different Types of Department of Education

Support - Rated by Teachers

Type of Support	Unimportant.....................Important					Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max 350	
Teaching Materials	0	1	4	20	45	319	4.56
Funding	0	0	6	19	45	319	4.56
Curriculum Assistance	0	1	9	19	41	310	4.43
Extra Planning Time	0	2	8	26	34	302	4.31
Extra Teachers	1	3	15	25	26	282	4.03

Comparing the ratings for actual Department of Education support with those which show the importance of these types of support suggests that the two most important types of support are "Teaching Materials" and "Funding" and those for which actual support was highest are "Funding" and "Teaching Materials". Despite this apparent

correlation, the difference in the level of importance of these factors and the actual provision of them is quite marked.

Table 5.17 shows a comparison of the importance of the different types of Department of Education support and the actual provision of Department of Education support in these areas. Items have been arranged in order of descending importance.

Table 5.17

Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Support and Actual Provision of Different Types of Support - Rated by Teachers

Type of Support	Actual Provision	Level of Importance
	Mean Values	Mean Values
Teaching Materials	2.29	4.56
Funding	2.39	4.56
Curriculum Assistance	2.23	4.43
Extra Planning Time	1.57	4.31
Extra Teachers	2	4.03

The largest difference in ratings occurs for the factor "Extra Planning Time" which was allocated an average rating of 1.57 on the actual provision scale and a rating of 4.31 on the importance scale. The smallest discrepancy is for "Funding" which was allocated a mean score of 2.39 on the actual provision scale and a rating of 4.56 on the importance scale, but this discrepancy is still notable large.

For all five types of support there are statistically significant differences between the means. These findings suggest that the gap between the importance of these types of support as rated by teachers and the actual provision of the different types of support is significant. The practical significance of this gap is revealed in the responses to other questions answered by respondents. As shown in responses to the questions on inservice and extra help and resources required, teaching materials features prominently as do requests for extra planning time which also featured in the responses of principals and co-ordinators when asked about the difficulties encountered in implementation.

Figure 5 (j)

**Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Support and Actual Provision
of Different Types of Support – Rated by Teachers**
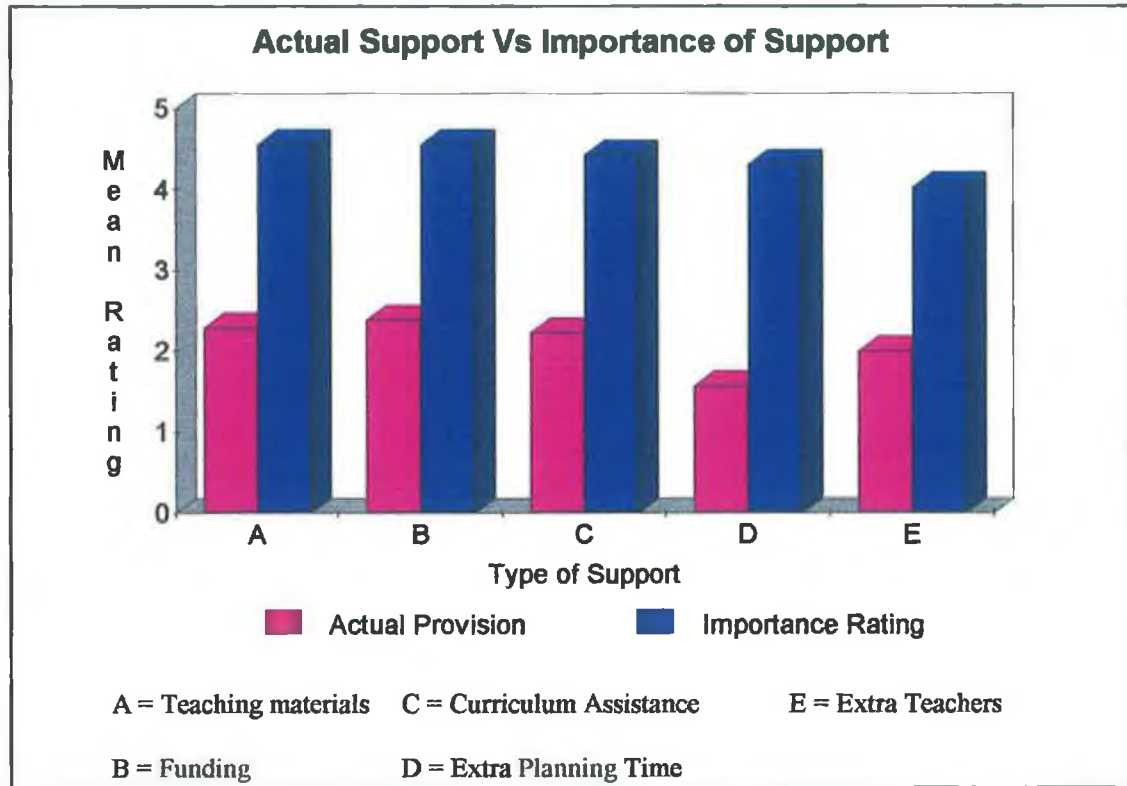
There are no statistically significant differences between the importance ratings
themselves suggesting that none of the types of support is rated significantly more
important than any of the others, but the provision of teaching materials and funding
both achieve marginally higher mean ratings on the importance scale than the other
forms of support.

Again, the importance of external support to the implementation of the programme
internally has an impact on the perceptions of co-ordinators and principals, in turn
influencing their approach to implementing the programme at school level. For this
reason, details of co-ordinators' and principals' perceptions of Department of
Education support are included here.

Co-ordinators were also asked to rate the actual provision Department of Education support and the importance of Department of Education support under the same headings. Detailed results are given in tables (viii) and (ix) in appendix six.

"Curriculum Assistance" is the type of support rated most highly on the actual provision scale followed by "Teaching Materials" but both of these ratings are relatively low with mean values of 3.4 and 3.2 respectively. "Extra Planning Time" received the lowest rating achieving only eight out of a possible twenty-five points, a mean rating of 1.6 on a five point scale.

On the importance scale, the factors rated as most important are "Curriculum Assistance" and "Funding" followed by "Extra Planning Time". These results suggest that the factor viewed as most important, "Curriculum Assistance", is that which is actually provided to the greatest extent. Despite this apparent correlation, the difference between the ratings is quite marked. On the importance scale, curriculum assistance achieves twenty-four out of twenty-five marks, a mean of 4.8, whereas it receives only seventeen marks, a mean of 3.4 on the scale measuring actual provision.

The following table illustrates the gaps between actual provision and the importance of provision of the different types of support in the opinion of co-ordinators. Differences between the perceptions of teachers and co-ordinators are evident in the ordering of the different types of support but the size of the gaps between actual provision and the importance of the different types of support are in common with the findings from the responses of teachers.

Table 5.18

Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Support and Actual Provision of the Different Types of Support - Rated by Co-ordinators

Type of Support	Importance Rating Mean Values	Actual Provision Mean Values
Curriculum Assistance	4.8	3.4
Funding	4.8	2.6
Extra Planning Time	4.4	1.6
Extra Teachers	4	2
Teaching Materials	3.8	3.2

These findings suggest that there are large differences between the importance rating of the different types of support and the actual provision of those types of support in the opinion of co-ordinators. The largest discrepancy is for "Extra Planning Time", which scored twenty-two on the importance scale, a mean rating of 4.4 and only eight on the actual provision scale a mean rating of 1.6. This is clear from Figure 5 (k) below.

The smallest discrepancy occurs for "Teaching Materials" which scored nineteen on the importance scale, a mean of 3.8 and sixteen on the actual provision scale, a mean of 3.2. The differences between the actual provision of inservice and the importance ratings are statistically significant on all five cases.

Figure 5(k)

Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Support and Actual Provision of the Different Types of Support - Rated by Co-ordinators

Importance vs Actual Provision
Types of Support Rated by Co-ordinators

A = Curriculum Assistance   C = Extra Planning Time   E = Teaching Materials
B = Funding   D = Extra Teachers
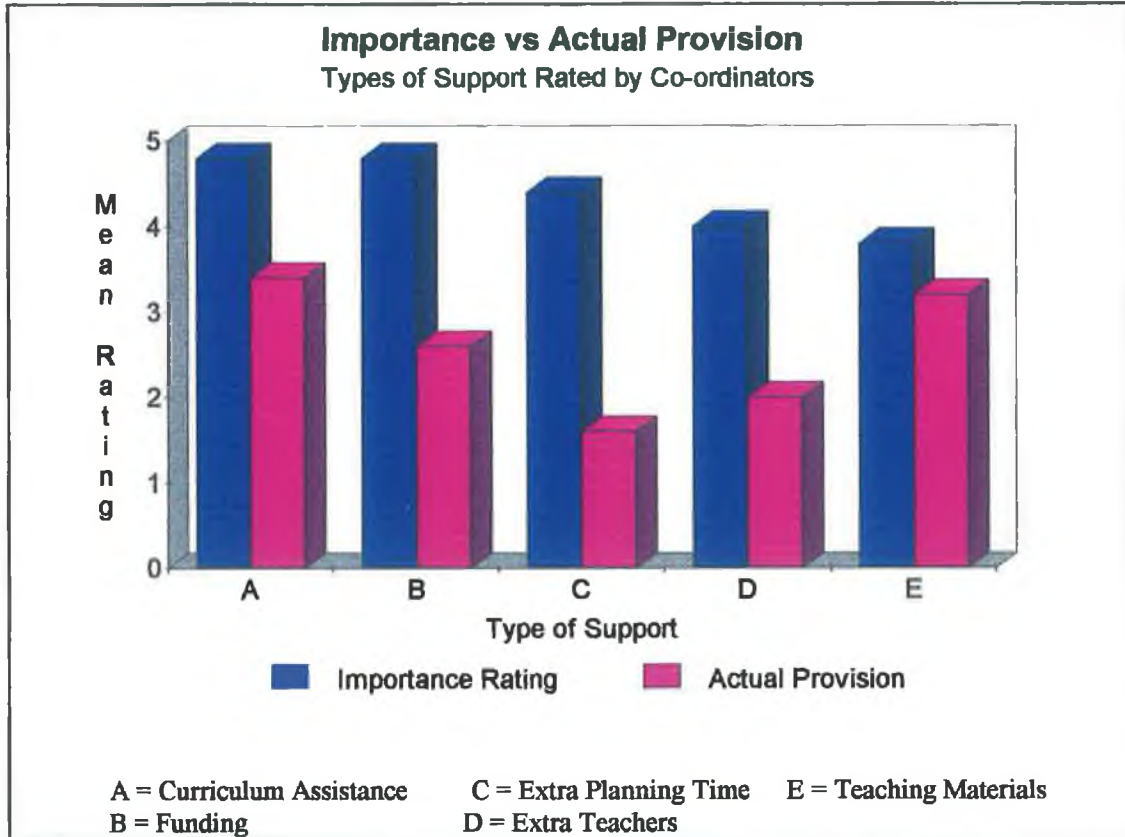
The responses of principals to the questions regarding actual Department of Education support and the importance of the different types of support differed from those of teachers. Details of the responses of principals are included in tables (x) and (xi) in appendix six.

The results suggest that none of the principals felt that any of the five types of support warranted a "very good" rating. All five types of support are rated below three when the mean scores are analysed. Although "Teaching Materials" and "Curriculum Assistance" scored most highly in the summed ratings, the scores are still very low, with both receiving seventeen out of a possible thirty marks, mean marks of just 2.83. Significantly, "Extra Planning Time" received a rating of "very poor" from all six principals.

The importance of the different types of support in the opinion of these six principals shows a different result. All six principals regarded each type of support as a "4" or "5" on the importance scale. There are no statistically significant differences between the mean values of the rating any of the types of support, suggesting that none is statistically more important to principals than another. The factors are separated only narrowly, but curriculum assistance and funding were rated most important according to the summated ratings.

There are slight differences between the responses of teachers and those of principals. Teachers rated the funding actually provided slightly higher than principals did. "Funding" received a mean rating of 2.39 on the teachers' rating scale and only a mean rating of only 2.0 on the principals' scale. Principals rated "Funding" slightly more important than teachers did, probably due to their close proximity to the task of budgeting. There are also similarities. Teachers felt that "Teaching Materials" was the most important form of support but also rated "Curriculum Assistance" quite highly and agreed that the provision of extra teachers was the least important form of support. On the scale measuring the actual support provided, "Funding" came highest on the teachers' scale followed by "Teaching Materials", meaning that those forms of

support viewed as most important by teachers were those that were actually provided to the greatest degree. Despite this correlation, the scores for all five factors were still quite low, with "Funding", which achieved the highest result, obtaining only 167 out of a possible 350 marks on the teachers' scale.

In order to illustrate the differences in the perceptions of Transition Year teachers, teachers in the position of co-ordinator and principals, the following table and graph compare the importance ratings of each type of Department of Education support as rated by the three groups of respondents. It is possible to compare the responses of principals, co-ordinators and teachers by comparing the mean values of the ratings for each type of support.

Table 5.19

Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Department of Education Support Rated by Principals, Co-ordinators and Teachers

Type of Support	Principals' Ratings	Teachers' Ratings	Co-ordinators' Ratings
	Mean Values	Mean Values	Mean Values
Curriculum Assistance	4.83	4.43	4.8
Funding	4.83	4.56	4.8
Teaching Materials	4.67	4.56	3.8
Extra Planning Time	4.67	4.31	4.4
Extra Teachers	4.5	4.03	4

There is a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings applied by each group of respondents in only one instance. When the mean values applied by teachers and principals for the type of support labelled "Teaching Materials" are compared with the ratings applied by co-ordinators there is a statistically significant difference between the ratings. The practical significance of this is that teachers and principals rate teaching materials as a more important type of support than co-ordinators do. In the question regarding referral to the Transition Year Support Team, co-ordinators had increased levels of contact with the Team. This suggests one reason why co-

ordinators feel that materials are less important. Co-ordinators may feel more confident and skilled when it comes to formulating their own teaching materials.

Figure 5(l)

Comparison of Importance of Different Types of Department of Education Support Rated by Principals, Co-ordinators and Teachers

Importance of Types of Support

A = Curriculum assistance   C = Teaching Materials   E = Extra Teachers
B = Funding   D = Extra Planning Time
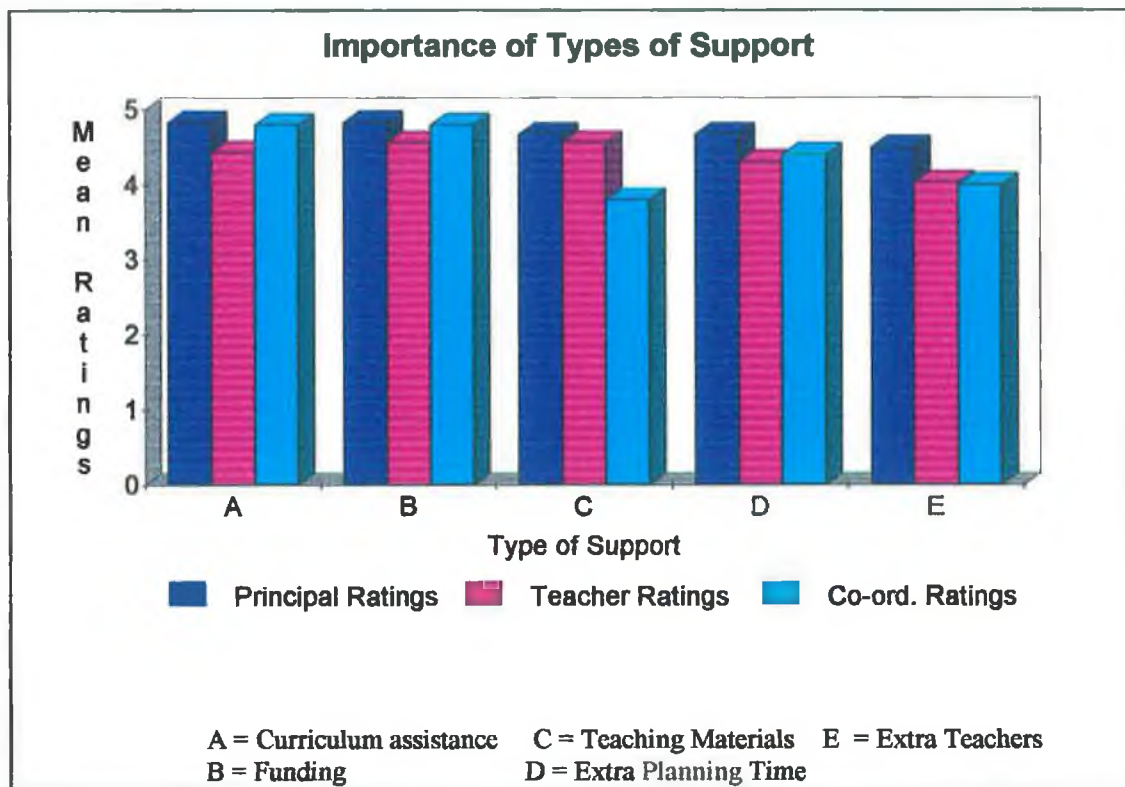
The Transition Year Support Team:

Of the seventy respondents, twenty-seven (38.6 %) had availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team while forty-three (61.4%) had not. Three respondents remarked that they did not know of its existence and two remarked that they did not realise that individual teachers could use the service. Table 5.20 shows the areas in which respondents had consulted the team. This was an open ended question and several respondents named more than one area. Responses have been divided into areas involving advice on particular issues and areas requiring some tangible resource such as materials or a speaker to visit the school.

Table 5.20

Areas in which Respondents had Availed of the Services of the

Transition Year Support Team

Areas of Consultation	No. of Respondents
Advice on:	
Planning a programme	7
Curriculum ideas/content	8
Starting the programme	3
Problem Solving	4
Funding/budgeting	2
Evaluating the programme	1
Assessment of students	1
Organisation of students	1
Tangible Resources:	
A speaker visited the school	7
Inservice meetings	4
Materials	3
Newsletters	2
Contact names for trips	1

The areas in which respondents need to consult the team match the areas in which inservice and support are required. The tangible resource most respondents had availed of was having a visit to the school by a representative of the Transition Year Support Team - a type of inservice training - and for ideas on programme content and programme planning. Both these factors featured highly in the responses to the question which asked about the most important types of support needed - teaching materials, funding and curriculum assistance. Also, in the question exploring the inservice requirements of respondents, curriculum assistance is the area in which most of those respondents who had not received inservice training felt that training was required.

All five co-ordinators had availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team. Areas in which they had consulted the team included: having a speaker to the school, help in setting up the programme, problems with specific subject areas, resource materials, advice on organising student groups and curriculum development advice.

Co-ordinators also remarked on the welcome opportunity to liaise with other co-ordinators at the monthly meetings held by the Transition Year Support Team.

All six principals had also availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team. Areas in which they had consulted the team included: initial planning, specific subject assistance, ongoing evaluation, as advisors for inservice, support during the school year and having a speaker to the school. The slight differences in reasons for consulting the Transition Year Support Team reflect the differing needs of respondents depending on their role in implementation, an outcome echoed in the findings from other questions such as those involving inservice training, external support and factors affecting implementation.

5.6 The Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at School Level 1993 - 1997

5.6.1 Initial Decision:

Involvement in the initial decision to offer the Transition Year Programme varied from school to school. In five of the schools there was no parental involvement in the initial decision to offer the programme. In the sixth school there was involvement of the PTA and through the parental representatives on the Board of Management. There was parental participation in the implementation of the programme in the form of an information night for third year parents in five of the six schools. In five of the six schools, a team of teachers was chosen prior to the introduction of the programme in the school, some of whom would become part of the core team. Of these five schools, the programme was researched with advice from other schools in two cases before the core group decided to offer the programme. In two other cases, the interest of the staff was investigated before it was decided to offer the programme. In the fifth school, there was a lot of input from the curriculum development officer and other staff members, who wouldn't necessarily be teaching the programme. In the school which did not choose a core team of teachers before deciding to offer the programme, the

decision was made by the principal and vice-principal and a small number of "A" post holders. Overall, in only two schools were all staff members involved in the decision to offer the programme.

None of the six schools reported any community or local employer involvement in the initial decision to offer the programme.

5.6.2 Planning, Co-ordination and Decision Making:

The Role of the Transition Year Co-ordinator

Five of the schools had a Transition Year co-ordinator and a Transition Year core team. Four of the teams were comprised of volunteers while the fifth was made up of teachers asked by the principal.

Four of the co-ordinators took up the post as a post of responsibility, the fifth had a post of responsibility in an area other than the Transition Year and was fulfilling the duties of co-ordinator voluntarily with the help of his core team. Of the four post holders, three held "A" posts and two held "B" posts. All had been asked by the principal in advance of receiving the co-ordination of the Transition Year Programme as their post. All five felt that timetabled time was necessary in order to carry out the duties of the co-ordinator. Four of the five respondents had timetabled time allotted to their duties. The time allotted varied and three of the four co-ordinators who had time allotted to carry out their duties had less time than they think is necessary. All respondents felt that the post should be a post of responsibility. Four felt that it should be an "A" post while one felt that a "B" post was sufficient.

When asked what the main duties of the co-ordinator were the answers were diverse. They included the following: communication with staff, students and parents. Facilitation of meetings, curriculum development, staff development, organisation of school calendar for Transition Year, organisation of work experience, organisation of cross-curricular events, organisation of budget, planning guest speakers and special events, discipline, day-to-day co-ordination, dealing with problems, organising module

changes, evaluation, planning and "overseeing everything". These responses suggest that the role of the co-ordinator is complex and requires particular skills and aptitudes. These findings also support the view that inservice training and ongoing support for co-ordinators is very important in the implementation of the programme.

Decision Making

Principals and co-ordinators were asked who was involved in decision making regarding a number of issues. Responses from principals reflected those of co-ordinators in the five schools which had a co-ordinator in place in all but one aspect of decision making. This discrepancy was clarified through further contact with the Transition Year co-ordinator. Answers varied from school to school. The results are shown in table 5.21.

Table 5.21

Participants in Different Areas of Decision Making

by Number of Schools

Those involved	Area of decision making / No. of Schools				
	Course Format	Curricular Content	Organising Students	Module Content	Pupil Assessment
Principal	6	5	6	0	1
Senior Staff	4	4	5	0	1
TY Co-ordinator	5	5	5	0	5
TY Core Team	5	5	2	0	3
TY Teachers	4	3	0	6	5
Other Teachers	2	1	0	0	0
Parents	0	0	0	0	0
Students	1	0	0	0	0
Employers	0	0	0	0	0
Community members	0	0	0	0	0

i.e. Principals were involved in decisions regarding the format of the course in all six schools, principals were involved in decisions regarding the curricular content of the course in five of the schools etc.

Decisions regarding the course format included such aspects as whether or not the course would be sorted into modules and how many classes and pupils there would be.

Decisions regarding curricular content include which subjects or areas of experience to include in the programme and what the rationale and aims of each inclusion would be. In decisions regarding the organisation of students groups, areas such as the streaming or banding of students where large numbers are taking the programme and the organisation of students into optional modules where applicable are included. These divisions and clarifications were added to the questionnaires following feedback from the pilot questionnaires.

Overall it is suggested that principals are greatly involved in decisions regarding course format, curricular content and the organisation of student groups. None of the schools reported parental, employer or community involvement in any area of decision making. Transition Year subject teachers are involved to a high degree in decisions involving all aspects of the programme except the organisation of students into groups. Significantly, in all six schools, decisions regarding actual module content - what is actually taught in the classroom - are undertaken by the individual teachers or small groups of teachers where cross-curricular work is involved. Teachers who are involved as co-ordinators or as members of the core team are involved in all aspects of the programme to a high degree. This information is important to this study as it illustrates the new demands as regards the curriculum development role of teachers in deciding on course content and module content. This high level of involvement in decision making would suggest that new skills and competencies are required by teachers in order to fulfil these duties. Abilities, attitudes, skills and competencies vary from teacher to teacher. Some would welcome the challenges involved in the development and implementation of a new programme. Others would feel less confident and less comfortable with these new responsibilities. A situation, where teachers volunteer to teach the programme is preferable but was the norm in only two of the six schools surveyed. In one school teachers were chosen by the principal when the timetable was being drawn up and in the other three a mixture of these two

methods was employed, where some of the teachers were volunteers and others were assigned Transition Year classes prior to their knowledge.

Evaluation

The Transition Year Programme was evaluated in all six schools. In three of the schools, the programme was evaluated once a year. In two of the schools it was evaluated once per term and in one school it was evaluated less than once a year. In this school the programme had been in operation for two years and was to be evaluated at the end of 1996/1997. In five of the schools, evaluation was undertaken by the Transition Year teachers and the core team. In all six school Transition Year teachers were involved. Two schools gave written evaluation sheets to staff, students and parents. In the other four, evaluation was more informal, in the form of discussion at meetings. During evaluation, schools reviewed the course content, new activities, proposed changes, progress, motivation and interest of pupils, and problem areas. That the programme is evaluated is a recommendation of the Department of Education Evaluation Report carried out in 1996.[360] The high level of teacher involvement in evaluation suggests yet another area new to teachers in which additional skills are required.

5.6.3 Contact with Other Schools:

Of the seventy respondents twelve (17.1 %) maintained that their school had contact with other schools. These twelve respondents were spread over three schools. In two cases, the contact teachers had was informal and on a personal basis. This explains why some of the respondents from a school answered "yes" to this question while others responded "no". In only one school there were meetings with teachers from another school to share ideas. Of those fifty-eight respondents who did not have

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[360]Department of Education, (1996), *Transition Year Programme 1994/95: An Evaluation by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education.*

contact with other schools, forty-nine (84.5 %) felt that contact would be beneficial while nine respondents (15.5 %) did not. All five co-ordinators felt that contact with other schools would be beneficial, while two reported having informal personal contact with teachers in other schools. Four of the five co-ordinators suggested that contact with other teachers through the Transition Year Support Team monthly meetings was very beneficial.

Contact with other schools was included as a question as it was suggested in the pilot study that this feature was an important asset when introducing a programme and in the early years of implementation. Discussion between teachers of what works and does not work and of ideas for curriculum content was seen to be a valuable resource for teachers. The high percentage of teachers suggesting that contact with other schools would be beneficial coincides with the advice given to other schools beginning a Transition Year Programme in which eight respondents suggested that schools introducing the programme for the first time should contact other schools for advice. In a list of the most commonly cited advice, this piece of advice was second only to that concerning planning well in advance.

5.6.4 Differences in Teaching Methods:

Implementation of the Transition Year Programme requires that teachers alter their teaching methods. When asked if their teaching methods were different in the Transition Year the following were the replies:

Table 5.22

Differences in Respondents' Teaching Methods

Response	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Different	6	8.6
Quite Different	21	30
Slightly Different	31	44.3
Much the Same	5	7.1
It varies from class to class	7	10
Totals	70	100

Figure 5(m)
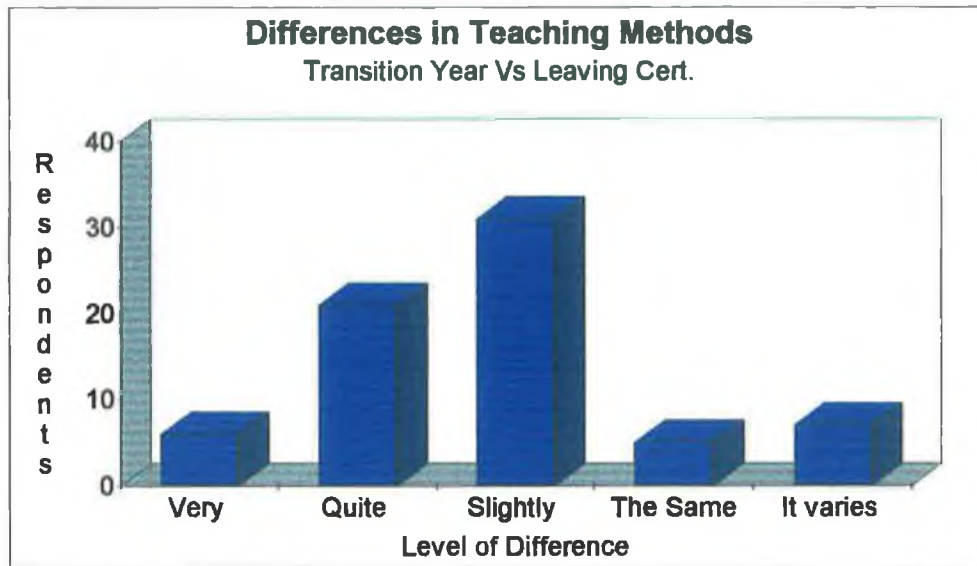
Differences in Teaching Methods
Transition Year Vs Leaving Cert.

Of the seventy respondents, fifty-eight (82.9%) felt that their teaching methods were different to some degree while only five (7.1%) reported that their teaching methods were the same, with seven (10%) reporting that degree of difference in teaching methods varied from class to class. "Teaching Methodology" was rated highly on the list of types of inservice required by those who had not participated in inservice training, with nine respondents naming teaching methodology as the area they would like inservice in. This was second only to "How to Design a Programme" on the list of inservice requirements based on an open ended question. The differences in teaching methods also draws significance on the fact that treatment of "Teaching Methodology" as a topic during inservice was rated quite low by those who had participated in inservice training, ranked thirteenth on the list of fifteen inservice topics, with a mean rating of only 2.72 on the 1-5 scale. Although 82.9% of teachers maintained that their teaching methods were different to some degree, 44.3% of respondents reported teaching methods that were only "slightly different". This may be related to the poor training in teaching methodology recorded in the question regarding inservice provision. Further exploration of the requirements of teachers regarding teaching

methodology is required. An in-depth study of how different teaching methods actually are, through observation and interview, and the level of training and resourcing required is warranted.

5.6.5 Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Transition Year Programme:

A study of personal attitudes to teaching the Transition Year Programme was undertaken in order to ascertain the prevalent opinions of teachers in regard to teaching a new programme where curriculum development is largely school based. Some teachers do not like the responsibility of developing a new programme. This affects the implementation of the programme at school level - meaning that the feelings of teachers about teaching the programme is an important factor in implementing the programme successfully. Teacher attitudes are affected by and in turn affect the predominant school culture. Many attempts have been made to define school culture. Schein suggests that school culture is:

> the deeper level of *basic assumptions* and *beliefs* that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic "taken for granted" fashion an organisation's view of itself and its environment.[361]

Few would argue that the perceptions and beliefs of teachers contribute largely to school culture which has an impact on the implementation of innovations. For this reason it is essential to include the attitudes and perceptions of teachers in a study of the factors affecting implementation.

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[361] E.H. Schein, (1985), *Organisational Culture and Leadership*, p.6, quoted by Louise Stoll and Dean Fink, (1996), *Changing our Schools*, p.81.

Table 5.23

Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Transition Year Programme

- Statements Rated by Teachers

Statement	Disagree...........Agree					Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=350	
Respondents showed agreement with the following							
I find planning a programme challenging	1	6	16	29	18	267	3.81
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	4	6	24	24	12	244	3.49
I find planning a programme rewarding	1	11	24	24	10	241	3.44
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	6	8	20	25	11	237	3.39
I find planning a programme enjoyable	5	9	25	19	12	234	3.34
I found planning a programme daunting at first	13	7	15	19	16	228	3.26
Respondents showed disagreement with the following							
I find planning a programme difficult	11	16	20	18	5	200	2.86
I still find planning a programme daunting	24	9	17	16	4	177	2.53
I find planning a programme a nuisance	30	16	12	9	3	149	2.13
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.*	35	10	13	5	6	144	2.06

*Only sixty-nine respondents answered this question. One respondent taught only PE, and felt that a preference for the Traditional Leaving Certificate programme was not applicable to her situation. The missing result does not affect the overall result. Even with a maximum of five points from a seventieth respondent, the total score would still have only been 149 ranking this statement joint bottom of the table.

The highest score was for the statement "I find teaching the programme challenging" which had a mean rating of 3.81. The lowest score was for "I would rather stick to the Traditional Leaving Cert" which had a mean rating of 2.06. Notably, only six respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while thirty-five strongly disagreed with it.

In general, the positive statements are found in the upper half of the table suggesting that respondents agreed with the positive statements while the negative statements are further down in the table suggesting that respondents disagreed most with these statements. Despite this apparent polarity, mean values show that responses are clustered around the average rating of three, a neutral rating, suggesting that there is still some reticence about the programme on the part of teachers.

There are statistically significant differences between the mean values applied to the top four statements in the table and the four statements at the bottom of the table. This would suggest that the positive statements regarding finding the programme encourages teamwork at school level, finding the programme rewarding and finding the programme a pleasant change from mandated programmes are rated significantly higher than the negative statements regarding finding the programme a nuisance, daunting or difficult and preferring to teach the traditional Leaving Certificate programme. While the statement agreed with most strongly by respondents is that regarding finding the programme challenging, there may be some disagreement as to whether this statement is a positive or negative statement depending on the disposition of the individual teacher. Some teachers may prefer not to undertake this challenge while others would welcome it. Five of the respondents in the pilot study were asked if they regarded this statement as a positive or a negative statement. All five regarded it as a positive statement.

There is some correspondence between the responses to this question and to the question regarding the advice to other schools implementing a Transition Year Programme as detailed later in this chapter. Advice to other schools was largely positive, involving planning well in advance and not losing heart during the first year of the programme. This coincides with agreement by teachers that teaching the programme is daunting at first. In the additional comments section many teachers reiterated their positive feelings towards the programme, suggesting that teamwork in order to introduce cross-curricular units was providing extra support for individual teachers. This coincides with agreement with the suggestion that teaching the Transition Year Programme encourages team work at school level.

5.6.6 Factors Affecting the Implementation Of the Transition Year Programme

at School Level:

In addition to ascertaining teachers' personal attitudes to teaching the programme, it is also useful to explore the factors and conditions teachers feel have an impact on the implementation of change in the school.

Hargreaves maintains that:

> if we can understand teachers' own desires for change *and* for conservation along with the conditions that strengthen and weaken such desires, we will get valuable insights from the grassroots of the profession, from those who work in the frontlines of our classrooms, about how change can be made most effective....[362]

Teachers' perceptions of the factors affecting the implementation of the Transition Year Programme in schools were determined using series of twenty-four factors to be rated on a five point scale of importance. Employment of summated ratings illustrates how highly each factor is rated overall. By using the mean values it is possible to see which factors are the most important factors and the differences in their importance. The most important factors are "Pupil Perception", "Teacher Motivation", Support of Principal" and "Support of Parents". It is possible to see which factors influence the implementation of new programmes in the school in the opinion of teachers by analysing the mean scores, using three - the mid or neutral level - as the cut off point between those values which are influential and those which are not.

Table 5.24 shows the ratings of respondents for each factor. As there were seventy respondents the maximum rating for any factor is 350. Factors have been arranged in order of descending importance.

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[362] Andy Hargreaves, (1994), *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' Work and Culture in the Post-modern Age,* p.11.

Table 5.24

Factors Affecting Implementation of the Transition Year Programme

at School Level - Rated by Teachers

Factor	Unimportant.........Important					Totals Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=350	
Important							
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	3	14	53	330	4.71
Support of Principal	0	1	4	13	52	326	4.66
Teacher motivation	0	0	3	21	46	323	4.61
Support of parents	0	1	3	21	45	320	4.57
Inservice training	0	0	10	15	46	316	4.51
Resources for new programme	0	1	2	29	38	314	4.49
Willingness of staff to change	0	1	5	23	41	314	4.49
Team work among staff members	1	0	3	27	39	313	4.47
Dept. of Ed. support	0	1	5	25	39	312	4.46
Equipment available in school	1	0	6	22	41	312	4.46
Funding	0	1	9	18	42	311	4.44
Support of other staff members	0	2	9	16	43	310	4.43
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	6	28	36	310	4.43
Extra time for planning	0	0	11	22	37	306	4.37
Curriculum dev. assistance	1	1	8	31	29	296	4.28
Public status of new course	1	3	19	23	24	276	3.94
Support of community members	1	6	22	19	22	265	3.79
Whether school is used to change	1	7	23	15	24	264	3.77
Teaching experience of staff	1	13	22	24	10	239	3.41
Relatively Unimportant							
Size of school	16	14	19	10	11	196	2.8
Average age of teaching staff	19	11	27	8	5	179	2.56
Academic ability of students	17	20	22	6	5	172	2.46
Academic success of the school	19	19	20	7	5	170	2.43
Social background of students	18	24	17	6	5	166	2.37

There are statistically significant differences between the mean ratings of the top two factors - "Pupils' Perception of the Programme" and "Support of the Principal" and the mean ratings below 4.51, suggesting that these two factors are significantly more important than factors such as "Department of Education Support", "Funding", "Extra Time for Planning" and "Curriculum Development Assistance".

Earlier studies of Transition Year programmes such as Egan and O'Reilly's study in the 1970s and the ASTI survey of the mid 1980s would suggest that externally applied factors such as inservice training, Department of Education support and curriculum

assistance are the most important factors in implementation of a new programme in the opinion of teachers. The results outlined above would suggest that there are a number of factors which are more important for teachers than these. Such factors include internal factors such as pupil perception of the programme, support of the principal, support of parents, teacher motivation, team work among staff members and a willingness to change on behalf of the staff.

When the internal factors are removed, the high ratings of the factors such as resources, Department of Education support, curriculum assistance and funding, support the findings from earlier questions regarding the extra help and resources required and the importance of different types of Department of Education Support. All of these factors rated four or more on a five point scale of importance when the mean values are calculated.

Because of their pivotal role in the day-to-day implementation of the Transition Year Programme the perceptions of co-ordinators are also studied in detail in this section.

Co-ordinators' perceptions of the factors affecting the implementation of the Transition Year Programme in schools were also determined using the same series of twenty-four factors to be rated on a five point scale of importance. As there were five respondents the maximum rating for any factor is twenty-five. Table 5.25 shows the results.

By putting the summated ratings in descending order it is possible to see which are the most important factors. In the opinion of co-ordinators they are "Teamwork among Staff Members", "Support of the Principal" and "Curriculum Development Assistance". There are statistically significant differences between the mean values applied to the factors rated most highly - "Teamwork among Staff Members" and "Support of the Principal" - and the factors with mean ratings below four such as "Teaching Experience" and "Average age of Teaching Staff".

Table 5.25

Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Transition Year Programme

at School Level - Rated by Co-ordinators

Factor	Unimportant........Important					Total Ratings	Mean Values
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=25	
Important							
Team work among staff members	0	0	0	1	4	24	4.8
Support of Principal	0	0	0	1	4	24	4.8
Curriculum development assistance	0	0	0	1	4	24	4.8
Support of other staff members	0	0	1	0	4	23	4.6
Resources for new programme	0	0	0	2	3	23	4.6
Funding	0	0	1	0	4	23	4.6
Inservice training	0	0	1	0	4	23	4.6
Support of parents	0	0	1	0	4	23	4.6
Extra time for planning	0	0	0	2	3	23	4.6
Teacher motivation	0	0	0	2	3	23	4.6
Equipment available in school	0	0	1	1	3	22	4.4
Public status of new course	0	0	1	1	3	22	4.4
Willingness of staff to change	0	0	0	3	2	22	4.4
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	0	3	2	22	4.4
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	1	1	3	22	4.4
Support of community members	0	0	1	2	2	21	4.2
Dept. of Ed. support	0	1	0	1	3	21	4.2
Whether school is used to change	0	0	2	1	2	20	4
Teaching experience of staff	0	0	2	2	1	19	3.8
Relatively Unimportant							
Size of school	1	2	1	0	1	13	2.6
Average age of teaching staff	0	2	3	0	0	13	2.6
Social background of students	0	3	2	0	0	12	2.4
Academic ability of students	1	2	2	0	0	11	2.2
Academic success of the school	2	1	2	0	0	10	2

These results show some similarities to the rates applied by teachers although the factors rated most highly do differ. Teachers regarded "Pupil perception of the programme" as the most important factor, while co-ordinators rated "Teamwork among staff members" most highly. This reflects the differing perceptions of teachers in different positions. Both teachers and co-ordinators included "Support of Principal" in the top three, but there were differences in the remainder of the top ten factors named by both groups of respondents.

The responses of teachers and co-ordinators can be compared by analysing the two sets of means.

Table 5.26

Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Transition Year Programme

A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers and Co-ordinators

Factor	Co-ordinators Mean Values	Teachers' Mean Values
Important		
Team work among staff members	4.8	4.47
Support of Principal	4.8	4.66
Curriculum development assistance	4.8	4.28
Support of other staff members	4.6	4.43
Resources for new programme	4.6	4.49
Funding	4.6	4.44
Inservice training	4.6	4.51
Support of parents	4.6	4.57
Extra time for planning	4.6	4.37
Teacher motivation	4.6	4.61
Equipment available in school	4.4	4.46
Public status of new course	4.4	3.94
Willingness of staff to change	4.4	4.49
Pupils' perception of programme	4.4	4.71
Teachers' attitude to change	4.4	4.43
Support of community members	4.2	3.79
Dept. of Ed. support	4.2	4.46
Whether school is used to change	4	3.77
Teaching experience of staff	3.8	3.41
Relatively Unimportant		
Size of school	2.6	2.8
Average age of teaching staff	2.6	2.56
Social background of students	2.4	2.37
Academic ability of students	2.2	2.46
Academic success of the school	2	2.43

There is full agreement in regard to the factors which are relatively unimportant in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level. When the d values are calculated for each factor as rated by both teachers and co-ordinators, the results show that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean ratings applied by teachers and those applied by co-ordinators, suggesting that there is high

correlation between the opinions of subject teachers and co-ordinators regarding the factors affecting the implementation of the Transition Year Programme.

Although statistically, there is high correlation, the position of particular factors when ranked in order of importance with regard to the summated ratings shows some differences. Most marked differences are on the following points:

-Pupil perception of the programme while ranked first on the teachers' scale is ranked fourteenth by co-ordinators.

-Teacher motivation is ranked third by teachers and tenth by co-ordinators.

-Department of Education support is ranked ninth by teachers and seventeenth by co-ordinators.

-Curriculum development assistance is ranked fifteenth by teachers and third by co-ordinators.

-Support of other staff members is ranked twelfth by teachers and fourth by co-ordinators.

This suggests that the factors directly affecting the classroom situation such as pupil perception of the programme and teacher motivation are ranked higher by teachers and those pertaining to the day to day co-ordination of the programme such as the support of other teachers for the programme, and curriculum development assistance are rated higher by co-ordinators which again highlights the differing perceptions of those in different roles regarding implementation.

5.6.7 Difficulties Encountered During Implementation:

Principals and co-ordinators were asked what difficulties they had anticipated and which of these had materialised in the implementation of the programme to date. They were also asked which difficulties had arisen which had not been foreseen. These were open ended questions and the responses of principals were grouped under several headings: concerns about timetabling, concerns about programme content and options available to students, concerns about the lack of time for meetings and inservice, planning and co-ordination, concerns regarding the selection and motivation of

students and concerns regarding the poor public perception of the programme. Five of the six principals said that all of the anticipated problems had arisen. Four respondents reported problems that had not been anticipated, but had arisen. These included "settling in difficulties", high expectations of staff, the effect of the Transition Year on other classes due to disruption of timetable for trips and guest speakers, problems with individual students, problems due to lack of text books, keeping students interested and problems due to the large amount of time needed by staff for planning, co-ordination and ongoing assessment of the programme.

Anticipated difficulties encountered by co-ordinators were similar to those suggested by principals. Additional difficulties included worries of poor attendance and problems with pupils not having done certain subjects for junior cycle. Parental attitudes and the size of classes were also a concern. Lack of motivation among students, students' desire to choose their Leaving Certificate subjects at the start of Transition Year and time allowance were cited as problems which had arisen which were not foreseen. These are issues which can affect implementation long-term if they are not addressed and show some overlap with responses to earlier questions. "Extra Time for Planning" was rated quite low on the actual provision scale for Department of Education support and this is supported by the responses of principals and co-ordinators to the question regarding implementation difficulties, all of whom felt that more time is needed for planning and co-ordination. The lack of planning time is also significant due to the high number of respondents (twenty-four out of twenty-five respondents) who cited planning in advance as the most important piece of advice to schools introducing a Transition Year Programme. Even after the initial introduction of the programme, effective planning is needed year to year to ensure the successful implementation of the programme.

5.6.8 Most Beneficial Types of Support During Implementation:

When asked what types of support had been most beneficial, most respondents mentioned more than one type of support. Responses from principals included the

dedication of the Transition Year teachers, the Transition Year co-ordinator and the core team. Respondents also remarked that the Transition Year Support Team facilitators and newsletters had been helpful. "Meetings with other co-ordinators" was suggested by co-ordinators and the support of parents and the support of a positive management team at school level were also mentioned. Teachers suggested that talking to other teachers who were involved in the programme was also beneficial. This supports the findings from the questions involving advice to schools introducing the Transition Year Programme for the first time and extra help and resources required which indicate that talking to other teachers about the difficulties encountered and problem solving are important forms of support during implementation.

5.6.9 Extra Help and Resources Required:

When asked what forms of extra help and resources were needed by Transition Year teachers in order to implement the programme successfully, answers fell into a number of categories. Table 5.27 shows the most common answers given:

Table 5.27

Extra Help or Resources Requested by Respondents

Extra help/resources	No. of Respondents
Resource Materials	17
Time for planning	13
In-service training	10
Increased funding	8
Extra teachers for team teaching	4
Better guidelines	4
Help with evaluation methods	3
Practical advice from other teachers	3

Only two respondents wrote that no other resources or help were needed to implement the programme.

The responses suggest that a significant number of teachers would prefer to have resource materials for teaching the Transition Year Programme. This suggests that

teachers find it difficult to function without classroom materials. These results are also supported by the findings from the question regarding Department of Education support for the programme to which teachers responded that extra planning time and teaching materials were not sufficiently provided by the Department of Education.

No teacher requested prescribed syllabus content but adaptable materials along with extra time and training were requested in open ended questions and were also mentioned in the additional comments section.

5.6.10 Advice to Schools Introducing a Transition Year Programme:

Advice suggested for other schools in planning a Transition Year Programme can also be divided into several categories. Table 5.28 shows the main responses.

Table 5.28

Advice to Schools Starting a Transition Year Programme

Advice to schools starting a TY programme	No. of Respondents
Plan well in advance	24
Choose co-ordinator and core team carefully	7
Make contact with other schools	7
Try to ensure that all staff are fully committed	6
Select students carefully	5
Be prepared to change the programme	3
Consult with parents	3
Don't expect too much in the first year	3

The most significant finding from this open ended question is that of the forty-five respondents who answered this question, twenty-four - over half, suggested that planning well in advance was the most important piece of advice for schools beginning a Transition Year Programme. This is quite significant as it implies that extra time is needed, a factor in short supply. As shown, extra planning time was rated quite low on the scales measuring actual provision of Department of Education Support and was rated highly when teachers were asked what extra resources were needed to

implement the programme successfully, with thirteen respondents out of the sixty-two who answered this question citing extra planning time as essential.

All five co-ordinators stressed the importance of planning well and early. The importance of a committed core team and team of Transition Year teachers was also stressed. The support of management was also mentioned as was the involvement of all staff members, including those not teaching Transition Year classes. This is supported by the fact that co-ordinators rated the support of the principal and the support of other staff members quite highly with mean ratings of 4.6 and 4.8 respectively on a five point scale and ranked support of the principal second and support of other staff members fourth on the ranked list of twenty-four factors.

Principals' advice to schools beginning a Transition Year Programme was similar to that given by teachers and co-ordinators. All six principals stressed that planning well was essential. Careful selection of teachers, co-ordinator and core team, contacting other schools for advice and consultation with parents were also suggested.

5.6.11 Respondents' Additional Comments:

Many respondents used the additional comments box to reiterate areas they obviously felt quite strongly about. Such comments included the need for more time and teaching resources. Respondents also relayed positive feelings towards the programme maintaining that students were generally more mature progressing to Leaving Certificate level and that, in principle, the programme was a good idea.

Notable additions occurred in the sentiments of principals who expressed strong feelings regarding certain concerns already mentioned by respondents. Principals were particularly concerned with the difficulties involved in trying to cover teachers to go on trips or to have time to meet and plan the programme. Two principals remarked that there are too many new programmes incorporated into the curriculum at the moment and that this was placing an undue amount of stress on the time of teachers and management in implementing these programmes with insufficient additional resources. On a positive note, principals suggested that the programme was

educational for staff members and that staff were learning to be flexible in order to implement the programme. This suggest that familiarity with implementing new programmes affects teacher perceptions of the implementation process and their attitudes to implementation. This suggestion is explored in the next section.

5.7 A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers in Schools Accustomed to Change and those in Schools Unaccustomed to Change

It has been suggested that as a school becomes accustomed to change, the attitudes and perceptions of those involved will change. Michael Murray maintains that schools must become learning organisations and suggests using "a curriculum development approach to enable schools to gain a mastery of the disciplines involved in becoming learning organisations and achieving whole school improvement."[363]

Writing about the experience of a group of teachers teaching a new module in the Transition Year, he discusses the development in teachers of a set of skills which included interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, skills in programme design, implementation and evaluation. He writes:

> Organisations seem to carry within themselves factors which resist change and oppose innovation. However the experience learned from small scale initiatives can serve as education and encouragement for more widespread improvements.[364]

This would suggest that those teachers in schools which had implemented other new programmes besides the Transition Year Programme may be better disposed towards implementing the programme and may have differing insights into which factors are necessary for the successful implementation of the Transition Year Programme in schools.

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[363]Michael F. Murray, (1994), "From Subject Based Curriculum Development to Whole School Improvement", *Educational Management and Administration*, Vol. 22, No.3, 1994, p.160.
[364]Ibid., p.167.

The responses from schools C and D were combined as both these schools were offering the LCAP, the LCVP, the Junior Certificate Elementary Programme, a social and personal development programme and were already offering CSPE when it was in its pilot phase. These responses were compared with those of teachers in school F which was offering none of these extra programmes. Responses to the questions regarding attitude to teaching the programme and regarding the factors affecting the implementation of the programme were studied. As there were eighteen respondents from schools C and D together and twenty respondents from school F, a comparison of the mean ratings is useful and allows a fair comparison.

5.7.1 A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers in Schools C/D and Teachers in School F Regarding Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Programme:

Table 5.29

The Combined Ratings of Teachers in Schools C and D for the

Attitude Statements

Statement	Disagree..........Agree					Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=90	
Respondents tended to agree with the following							
I find planning a programme challenging	0	2	6	7	3	65	3.61
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	1	1	5	9	2	64	3.6
I find planning a programme enjoyable	0	2	9	3	4	63	3.5
I find planning a programme rewarding	0	5	6	5	2	58	3.2
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	2	3	4	7	2	58	3.2
Respondents tended to disagree with the following							
I found planning a programme daunting at first	9	0	4	2	3	44	2.4
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	9	1	4	2	2	41	2.27
I still find planning a programme daunting	10	1	2	3	2	40	2.22
I find planning a programme difficult	7	5	4	1	1	38	2.11
I find planning a programme a nuisance	12	4	1	1	0	27	1.5

It would appear from these results that teachers from schools C and D, where several new programmes had been implemented, tended to agree with the positive statements regarding the teaching of the Transition Year Programme. There is a statistically significant difference in the means of those statements rated the three highest and those rated with a mean value 2.4 or less on the table, suggesting that the top three statements are significantly more strongly agreed with than those negative statements below the neutral point on the agreement scale. A difference between these results and those from the seventy respondents in total occurs in the positioning of the statement "I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert." This statement was rated last on the agreement scale when the responses of the seventy teachers were totalled and also came last on all the scales measuring the responses of teachers at different stages in their career cycles as is shown in section 5.8. This time this statement appeared higher up the scale. Although respondents still tended to disagree with this statement, respondents agreed more strongly with this statement than with the statements regarding finding planning a programme a nuisance, difficult or daunting. This could be because this group of teachers have implemented so many new programmes in recent years that they are tiring of the new programmes being introduced into schools, a point raised by principals in the additional comments sections of their questionnaires and also raised by Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan in their study of the implementation of a new programme.[365]

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[365] Andy Hargreaves, Lorna Earl and Jim Ryan, (1996), *Schooling for Change: reinventing education for early adolescents*, p.157.

Table 5.30

The Ratings of Teachers in School F for the Attitude Statements

Statement	Disagree..........Agree					Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max100	
Respondents tended to agreed with...							
I find planning a programme challenging	0	1	5	8	6	79	3.95
I found planning a programme daunting at firs	2	0	3	9	6	77	3.85
I find planning a programme difficult	2	3	2	10	3	69	3.45
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	1	2	9	5	3	67	3.35
I find planning a programme rewarding	1	3	9	3	4	66	3.3
I find planning a programme enjoyable	4	2	3	7	4	65	3.25
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	3	3	6	5	3	62	3.1
Respondents tended to disagree with...							
I still find planning a programme daunting	5	2	4	8	1	58	2.9
I find planning a programme a nuisance	7	1	4	5	3	56	2.8
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	11	2	3	2	2	42	2.1

It would appear from these results that teachers in a school which had not implemented any additional optional programmes had different attitudes to teaching the Transition Year Programme. Notably, of the top three statements on this list, two were negative. This indicates that these respondents found planning and teaching a Transition Year module challenging, difficult and daunting at first. There are statistically significant differences in the means when the mean value of the three statements rated highest are compared with the bottom four statements on the table. This suggests that there is a statistically significantly higher level of agreement with the statement regarding finding the programme challenging and with the negative statements regarding finding planning a programme "difficult" and "daunting at first" than with the last four statements on the table - including the positive statement referring to the finding the programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes.

To compare the responses of teachers in both groups a comparison of the means can be applied to the data. This bivariate analysis gives additional information on the statistical significance if any of the differences between the mean scores of each group for each factor.

Table 5.31

A Comparison of Responses Teachers in Schools C/D Vs. School F

Regarding the Attitude Statements

Statement	Mean Ratings Schools C/D	Mean Ratings School F
I find planning a programme challenging	3.61	3.95
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	3.59	3.35
I find planning a programme rewarding	3.2	3.3
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	3.2	3.1
I find planning a programme enjoyable	3.5	3.25
I found planning a programme daunting at first	2.4	3.85
I find planning a programme difficult	2.11	3.45
I still find planning a programme daunting	2.22	2.9
I find planning a programme a nuisance	1.5	2.8
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	2.27	2.1

These results illustrate marked differences on a number of points. The largest differences appear for the following statements:

"I found planning a programme daunting at first" - Those teachers in school F rated this statement much more highly than did those in schools C and D (3.85 Vs. 2.4). This indicates that the more programmes a school implements and the more experience staff members become at developing new programmes, the less daunting it becomes.

"I find planning a programme difficult" - Again those teachers in school F rated this statement much more highly than did those in schools C and D (3.45 Vs. 2.11). This suggests that those teachers with little experience of developing and implementing new

programmes found planning a Transition Year Programme for their students much more difficult than those who had experienced the implementation of other new programmes. This may reflect the increase in personal skills developed while implementing other programmes, supporting the view of Michael Murray mentioned at the start of this section.

"I still find planning a programme daunting" - Again, those teachers in school F rated this statement more highly than did those in schools C and D (2.9 Vs. 2.22). This indicates that those teachers in schools C and D disagreed with this statement more strongly than those in school F and suggests that those teachers new to programme planning find planning daunting for longer than those who have experience of new programme implementation.

"I find planning a programme a nuisance" - Yet again, those teachers in school F rated this statement much more highly than did those in schools C and D (2.8 - 1.5). This indicates that those teachers in schools C and D disagreed more strongly with this statement than those in school F.

When the mean values of the responses of the teachers in schools C/D and in school F are compared, statistically significant differences are shown for three of the statements:

- "I found planning a programme daunting at first" - Teachers in school F agreed with this statement significantly more strongly than those in school C/D suggesting that familiarity with implementing new programmes means that implementation of the Transition Year Programme seems less daunting when first introduced.

- "I find planning a programme a nuisance" - Teachers in school F agreed significantly more strongly with this statement than with those in schools C/D.

- "I find planning a programme difficult" - Teachers in school F agreed significantly more strongly with this statement suggesting that implementation is more difficult for those not used to implementation.

Despite apparently higher levels of agreement, the mean ratings for these statements were below three - suggesting that the differences are confined to the level of disagreement only.

5.7.2 A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers in Schools C/D and Teachers in School F Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation:

The responses to the question regarding the factors affecting implementation of the programme at school level are also analysed in a similar way.

Table 5.32

The Responses of Teachers in School C/D Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation at School Level

Factor	Unimportant...............Important					Totals Ratings	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=90	
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	0	3	15	87	4.83
Support of parents	0	0	0	3	15	87	4.83
Equipment available in school	0	0	1	2	15	86	4.78
Support of Principal	0	0	0	5	13	85	4.72
Inservice training	0	0	1	5	12	83	4.61
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	1	5	12	83	4.61
Dept. of Ed. support	0	0	1	5	12	83	4.61
Funding	0	0	2	4	12	82	4.56
Teacher motivation	0	0	1	6	11	82	4.56
Resources for new programme	0	0	0	8	10	82	4.56
Extra time for planning	0	0	3	2	13	82	4.56
Team work among staff members	0	0	0	10	8	80	4.44
Curriculum dev. assistance	0	0	2	6	10	80	4.44
Willingness of staff to change	0	0	3	5	10	79	4.39
Public status of new course	0	0	3	7	8	77	4.28
Support of other staff members	0	0	4	6	8	76	4.22
Support of community members	1	1	2	7	7	72	4
Whether school is used to change	0	2	6	2	8	70	3.89
Teaching experience of staff	1	3	3	8	3	63	3.5
Size of school	3	2	10	3	0	49	2.72
Academic success of the school	3	7	5	0	3	47	2.61
Social background of students	4	8	3	1	12	43	2.39
Academic ability of students	5	5	5	2	1	43	2.39
Average age of teaching staff	7	1	9	0	1	41	2.28

Teachers in schools C and D rated "Pupil perception of the programme" and "Support of parents" the most important factors in the implementation of programmes at school level followed by "Equipment available" and "Support of the principal". These responses coincide with those given by the total respondent group of seventy teachers. The bottom five factors also coincide with the responses of the total respondent group. There are statistically significant differences between the mean values of the top eleven factors and any of the bottom seven factors on the table.

Table 5.33

**The Responses of Teachers in School F Regarding the Factors
Affecting Implementation at School Level**

| Factor | Unimportant........Important | | | | | Total Ratings | Mean Ratings |
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=100	
Willingness of staff to change	0	0	1	1	18	98	4.9
Teacher motivation	0	0	0	3	17	97	4.85
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	0	4	16	96	4.8
Resources for new programme	0	0	0	6	14	94	4.7
Support of parents	0	0	1	5	14	93	4.65
Support of Principal	0	0	3	2	15	93	4.65
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	0	7	13	93	4.65
Support of other staff members	0	1	1	3	15	92	4.6
Equipment available in school	0	0	0	9	11	91	4.55
Inservice training	0	0	4	2	14	90	4.5
Team work among staff members	0	0	1	8	11	90	4.5
Dept. of Ed. support	0	1	2	4	13	89	4.45
Funding	0	1	3	5	11	86	4.3
Extra time for planning	0	0	5	6	9	84	4.2
Curriculum dev. assistance	0	1	1	12	6	83	4.15
Public status of new course	0	2	4	3	11	83	4.15
Whether school is used to change	0	1	8	4	7	77	3.85
Support of community members	0	4	8	2	6	70	3.5
Teaching experience of staff	0	6	5	7	2	65	3.25
Size of school	3	5	2	6	4	63	3.15
Average age of teaching staff	3	3	9	2	3	59	2.95
Academic success of the school	5	4	5	4	2	54	2.7
Academic ability of students	8	7	3	0	2	41	2.05
Social background of students	9	8	0	1	2	39	1.95

Three of the four top factors on the list formed by the responses of teachers from school F are different to the top four factors suggested by teachers in schools C/D.

The factor shared by both is "Pupil perception of the programme". Those factors which rate higher than 4.45 on the importance scale are rated statistically significantly more important than those below the 3.85 level. It is worth noting that the variance figures calculated in the process of calculating the statistical significance of mean values are low for those ten factors at the top of the table. Low variance figures suggest that there is a high level of consensus among staff members on the importance of these factors in implementation.

A comparison of the responses from teachers in both groups is useful in exploring the differences, if any.

Table 5.34

**A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers in Schools C/D Vs. School F
Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation at School Level**

Factor	Mean Ratings Schools C/D	Mean Ratings School F
Pupils' perception of programme	4.83	4.8
Support of parents	4.83	4.65
Funding	4.56	4.3
Teacher motivation	4.56	4.85
Equipment available in school	4.78	4.55
Inservice training	4.61	4.5
Support of Principal	4.72	4.65
Resources for new programme	4.56	4.7
Willingness of staff to change	4.39	4.9
Teachers' attitude to change	4.61	4.65
Dept. of Ed. support	4.61	4.45
Support of other staff members	4.22	4.6
Team work among staff members	4.44	4.5
Extra time for planning	4.56	4.2
Curriculum development assistance	4.44	4.15
Support of community members	4	3.5
Public status of new course	4.28	4.15
Whether school is used to change	3.89	3.85
Teaching experience of staff	3.5	3.25
Size of school	2.72	3.15
Average age of teaching staff	2.28	2.95
Social background of students	2.39	1.99
Academic ability of students	2.39	2.05
Academic success of the school	2.61	2.7

The factors which show the largest differences in their position in the table include:

- Willingness of staff to change - this factor was rated first by teachers in school F and fourteenth by teachers in schools C/D suggesting that teachers unaccustomed to change feel that this is a much more important factor than those in schools C/D where the teachers are more accustomed to change.

- Teacher motivation - this factor is rated second by teachers in school F and ninth by teachers in schools C/D. This factor is related to staff willingness to change which is also rated significantly higher by teachers in school F as shown above.

- Resources for the programme - this factor is rated fourth by teachers in school F and tenth by teachers in schools C/D suggesting that teachers unaccustomed to change feel that this is a much more important factor than those in schools C/D where the teachers are more accustomed to change. This indicates that teachers who were unaccustomed to change were more dependent on resources for the new programme.

- Support of other staff members - teachers in school F also rated this factor much higher on the importance scale - rating it eighth as opposed to sixteenth on the scale formed from the responses of teachers in schools C/D.

In contrast, "Equipment available in the school" was rated higher by teachers in schools C/D than those in school F.

Only the difference between the mean values applied to "willingness of the staff to change" are statistically significantly different.

5.8 Analysis of Career Cycle Effects

It has been suggested that age and years of teaching experience are among the factors which affect the personal attitudes of teachers towards innovation in schools. Michael Fullan uses the terms "career cycle" and "teacher biography" as collective names for these factors maintaining that "the stage in life and career that teachers are at, and the

effect this has on their confidence in their own teaching, their sense of realism and their attitudes to change" are important considerations.[366]

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there is a high correlation between years teaching experience and the age of the respondents in this study. Due to this high correlation, analysing both sets of figures would yield almost identical results. Instead, an analysis of those with different levels of experience of teaching Transition Year classes along with the analysis of age effects appears more beneficial.

In order to investigate this aspect of the implementation of the Transition Year Programme in the six schools studied, the responses of teachers are divided into categories depending on age and years of experience teaching the Transition Year Programme to see if there are any differences in their responses regarding their personal attitudes to teaching the programme and the factors they feel are necessary for the successful implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level. Analysis consists of:

- A comparison of responses of 21-29 year olds with over 45 year olds regarding the factors affecting implementation and personal attitudes to teaching the programme.

- A comparison of responses of those with one or two years experience teaching Transition Year Programme with those who have three or more years experience of the programme regarding the factors affecting implementation and personal attitudes to teaching the programme.

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[366]Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves, (1992), *What's Worth Fighting for in your School?*, p.36

5.8.1 A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers Aged 21-29 years and

Teachers Aged Over 45 years Regarding the Factors Affecting

Implementation and Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Programme:

Table 5.35 shows that the positive statements are rated highly by respondents in the 21-29 years age range. Again, low variance values for the mean ratings for each factor suggest high levels of consensus among respondents regarding the statements listed.

Table 5.35

The Ratings of Teachers Aged 21-29 for the

Attitude Statements (25 Respondents)

Statement	Disagree..........Agree					Rating	Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=125	
Respondents tended to agree with....							
I find planning a programme challenging	0	1	7	10	7	98	**3.92**
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	2	2	4	10	7	93	**3.72**
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	1	3	8	9	4	87	**3.48**
I find planning a programme rewarding	0	5	8	9	3	85	**3.4**
I find planning a programme enjoyable	1	3	10	7	4	85	**3.4**
I find planning a programme difficult	2	5	6	9	3	81	**3.24**
I found planning a programme daunting at first	5	2	7	8	3	77	**3.08**
Respondents tended to disagree with....							
I still find planning a programme daunting	9	3	8	5	0	59	**2.36**
I find planning a programme a nuisance	12	5	3	5	0	51	**2.04**
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	11	8	5	1	0	46	**1.84**

In the case of these responses, teachers tended to agree with seven of the statements including two negative ones. In contrast, the respondents in the over 45 years age group, whose results are shown in table 5.36, rated the positive statements in the "agreement" half of the table and the negative statements in the "disagreement" half of the table.

Table 5.36

The Ratings of Teachers Aged Over 45 for the

Attitude Statements (10 Respondents)

Statement	Disagree..........Agree					Total Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max = 50	
Respondents tend to agree with....							
I find planning a programme challenging	0	0	2	4	4	42	**4.2**
I find planning a programme rewarding	1	0	2	3	4	39	**3.9**
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	1	0	3	3	3	37	**3.7**
I find planning a programme enjoyable	2	0	2	2	4	37	**3.7**
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	0	1	4	4	1	35	**3.5**
Respondents tend to disagree with....							
I found planning a programme daunting at first	3	1	3	0	3	29	**2.9**
I find planning a programme difficult	2	2	3	1	2	29	**2.9**
I still find planning a programme daunting	4	1	2	2	1	25	**2.5**
I find planning a programme a nuisance	6	0	1	1	2	23	**2.3**
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	5	1	3	0	1	21	**2.1**

Analysis of the mean ratings allows a comparison of the responses of the two groups.

Table 5.37

A Comparison of Personal Attitudes of Teachers in the 21-29 Age

Group and those in the Over 45 Age Group

Statement	21-29 years Mean Ratings	Over 45 Years Mean Ratings
I find planning a programme challenging	**3.92**	**4.2**
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	**3.72**	**3.5**
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	**3.48**	**3.7**
I find planning a programme rewarding	**3.4**	**3.9**
I find planning a programme enjoyable	**3.4**	**3.7**
I find planning a programme difficult	**3.24**	**2.9**
I found planning a programme daunting at first	**3.08**	**2.9**
I still find planning a programme daunting	**2.36**	**2.5**
I find planning a programme a nuisance	**2.04**	**2.3**
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	**1.84**	**2.1**

These figures show a high correlation between the attitudes of teachers in the 21-29 years age range and those in the over 45 years age range. Both have the same items at the top of the list and at the bottom of the list suggesting agreement on the same issues. Small differences occur on the statements regarding finding teaching the programme rewarding and enjoyable. Respondents in the over 45 years age range rated these statements more highly than those in the 21-29 years age range. It would also appear that the younger respondents found planning more daunting at first than their older colleagues and also found planning a programme more difficult than older teachers. At the same time, older teachers agreed more strongly with the statements regarding finding the teaching of the programme a nuisance and preferring to stick to the traditional Leaving Certificate programme. It must be noted that these differences occurred in the area of the table marked "disagree" in general, meaning that the respondents did not agree to any great extent with these sentiments. Differences are only in degree of disagreement. There are no statistically significant differences between the means for any of the statements. This suggests that age is not a factor which affects teacher attitude to implementation of a new programme.

These results do not support the suggestion from some researchers that older teachers are more averse to innovation. In fact, the older group of teachers rated the positive statements higher than the younger teachers on four of the five positive statements.

The following table illustrates the ratings of teachers in the 21-29 years age range regarding the factors affecting the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level.

Table 5.38

**The Responses of Teachers Aged 21-29 Regarding the Factors Affecting
Implementation (25 Respondents)**

Factor	Unimportant.............Important					Total Ratings	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=125	
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	2	1	22	120	4.8
Support of parents	0	0	0	7	18	118	4.72
Funding	0	0	3	4	18	115	4.6
Teacher motivation	0	0	1	9	15	114	4.56
Equipment available in school	0	0	2	7	16	114	4.56
Inservice training	0	0	4	3	18	114	4.56
Support of Principal	0	1	2	5	17	113	4.52
Resources for new programme	0	0	2	8	15	113	4.52
Willingness of staff to change	0	1	2	5	17	113	4.52
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	1	11	13	112	4.48
Dept. of Ed. support	0	1	1	8	15	112	4.48
Support of other staff members	0	0	5	4	16	111	4.44
Team work among staff members	3	0	1	3	18	108	4.32
Extra time for planning	0	0	4	9	12	108	4.32
Curriculum dev. assistance	2	0	2	10	11	103	4.12
Support of community members	0	3	8	3	11	97	3.88
Public status of new course	0	0	10	9	6	96	3.84
Whether school is used to change	0	4	10	4	7	89	3.56
Teaching experience of staff	1	5	9	6	4	82	3.28
Size of school	7	6	7	1	4	64	2.56
Average age of teaching staff	7	5	10	3	0	59	2.36
Social background of students	8	4	10	3	0	58	2.32
Academic ability of students	8	4	11	2	0	57	2.28
Academic success of the school	11	5	6	1	2	53	2.12

The results in this table indicate that in common with the results from all seventy respondents, this group of teachers rated pupil perception of the programme the most important factor affecting the implementation of the new programme. "Funding" and "Support of the principal" were rated significantly higher while "Resources for the new programme" was rated slightly lower.

Table 5.39 shows the ratings of those teachers in the over 45 years age bracket in regard to the factors affecting implementation at school level.

Table 5.39

The Responses of Teachers Aged Over 45 Regarding the Factors

Affecting Implementation (10 Respondents)

Factor	Unimportant.......Important					Total Ratings	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max 50	
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	0	1	9	49	4.9
Teacher motivation	0	0	0	2	8	48	4.8
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	0	3	7	47	4.7
Support of Principal	0	0	1	2	7	46	4.6
Support of parents	0	0	0	4	6	46	4.6
Dept. of Ed. support	0	0	1	2	7	46	4.6
Resources for new programme	0	0	0	5	5	45	4.5
Support of other staff members	0	0	1	3	6	45	4.5
Willingness of staff to change	0	0	1	4	5	44	4.4
Equipment available in school	0	0	0	6	4	44	4.4
Public status of new course	0	0	1	4	5	44	4.4
Team work among staff members	0	0	0	8	2	42	4.2
Support of community members	0	0	2	4	4	42	4.2
Inservice training	0	0	3	3	4	41	4.1
Curriculum dev. assistance	0	1	0	6	3	41	4.1
Extra time for planning	0	0	4	3	3	39	3.9
Funding	0	0	2	3	5	37	3.7
Whether school is used to change	0	0	2	4	4	36	3.6
Size of school	1	2	3	3	1	33	3.3
Average age of teaching staff	0	3	4	2	1	31	3.1
Teaching experience of staff	0	0	2	7	1	25	2.5
Academic success of the school	3	2	3	1	1	25	2.5
Academic ability of students	3	4	1	0	2	24	2.4
Social background of students	4	3	1	0	2	23	2.3

While agreeing on the most important factor - pupil perception of the programme - there are differences in the remainder of the top five factors, with the two sets of respondents differing on three of the top five factors affecting implementation at school level.

For the purposes of comparison, the mean scores from both groups are analysed.

Table 5.40

A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers in both Age Groups

Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation

Factor	Mean Values 21-29 years	Mean Values Over 45 years
Pupils' perception of programme	4.8	4.9
Teacher motivation	4.56	4.8
Teachers' attitude to change	4.48	4.7
Support of Principal	4.52	4.6
Support of parents	4.72	4.6
Dept. of Ed. support	4.48	4.6
Resources for new programme	4.52	4.5
Support of other staff members	4.44	4.5
Willingness of staff to change	4.52	4.4
Equipment available in school	4.56	4.4
Public status of new course	3.84	4.4
Team work among staff members	4.32	4.2
Support of community members	3.88	4.2
Inservice training	4.56	4.1
Curriculum development assistance	4.12	4.1
Extra time for planning	4.32	3.9
Funding	4.6	3.7
Whether school is used to change	3.56	3.6
Size of school	2.56	3.3
Average age of teaching staff	2.36	3.1
Teaching experience of staff	3.28	2.5
Academic success of the school	2.12	2.5
Academic ability of students	2.28	2.4
Social background of students	2.32	2.3

These figures also show high correlation between the responses of teacher in the 21-29 years age bracket and those in the over 45 years age bracket. Areas in which responses differed significantly include the following:

Funding - funding was rated more important by those teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket than by those in the over 45 years age bracket. For those in the 21-29 years age bracket funding was the third highest factor on the importance scale. For those in the over 45 years age bracket, funding was ranked factor seventeen on a list of twenty-four factors. The mean values are 4.6 for the 21-29 years age group and 3.7 for the over 45 years age group.

Average age of teaching staff - teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket did not feel that this was as significant a factor as those in the over 45 years age bracket did (2.36 Vs 3.1).

Teaching Experience of Staff - this time the reverse was true. Teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket felt that this was a more important factor than those in the over 45 years age bracket did (3.28 Vs 2.5).

Size of school - teachers in the 21-29 bracket felt that this was a less important factor than those in the over 45 years age bracket (2.56 Vs. 3.3).

It is worth noting that the factor entitled "Pupil perception of the programme" scored 120 and 123 out of a possible 125. In agreement with the scale showing the results of all seventy respondents, this is the most important factor for teachers.

Statistically significant differences between the mean values applied to each factor by both groups are shown in only two cases. These are:

- funding - which is rated significantly higher by teachers in the 21-29 years age range and

- teaching experience - which is rated significantly higher by teachers in the 21-29 years age group.

Despite these differences, twenty-two of the twenty-four factors show no statistically significant differences between the means applied by teachers in the 21-29 years age range and those in the over 45 years age range suggesting that age does not significantly affect perceptions of the factors teachers feel are necessary for the successful implementation of a new programme.

5.8.2 A Comparison of the Responses of Teachers with One or Two years Experience Teaching Transition Year Classes and Teachers who have Three or More Years Experience Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation and Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Programme:

Table 5.41 shows the ratings applied to the personal attitudes scale by those teachers who had one or two years experience of teaching the Transition Year Programme.

Table 5.41

**Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Transition Year Programme -
Statements Rated by Teachers with One or Two years Experience Teaching
Transition Year Classes (44 Respondents)**

Statement	Disagree..........Agree					Total Rating	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max=220	
I find planning a programme challenging	17	4	9	10	4	169	3.84
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	2	4	15	15	8	155	3.52
I find planning a programme rewarding	0	7	19	12	6	149	3.39
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	5	4	14	14	7	146	3.32
I find planning a programme enjoyable	4	6	13	12	9	148	3.36
I found planning a programme daunting at first	11	2	10	11	10	139	3.16
I find planning a programme difficult	8	7	12	13	4	112	2.55
I still find planning a programme daunting	17	4	9	10	4	112	2.55
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	20	6	10	5	3	97	2.2
I find planning a programme a nuisance	23	7	7	5	2	88	2

Again, the positive statements were rated higher on the agreement scale than the negative statements. One notable difference between this table and the tables formed by the responses of those of teachers divided by age and by the responses of the seventy respondents in total, is the position of the last two statements. The statement "I find planning a programme a nuisance" is the statement agreed with least by respondents, replacing "I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert." which is rated second from the bottom. This suggests that teachers with one or two years experience of teaching the Transition Year Programme disagreed less strongly with this statement than did the respondent population in total. The difference in the means is not statistically significant.

Table 5.42 shows the personal attitude ratings of teachers with three or more years experience of teaching the Transition Year Programme.

Table 5.42
Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Transition Year Programme
- Statements Rated by Teachers with Three or More Years Experience Teaching
Transition Year Classes (26 Respondents)

Statement	Disagree...........Agree					Total Rating	Mean Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Max = 130	
I find planning a programme challenging	1	1	7	11	6	98	3.77
I find planning a programme rewarding	1	4	5	12	4	92	3.54
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	1	4	6	11	4	91	3.5
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	2	2	9	9	4	89	3.42
I found planning a programme daunting at first	2	5	5	8	6	89	3.42
I find planning a programme enjoyable	1	3	12	7	3	86	3.31
I find planning a programme difficult	3	9	8	5	1	70	2.69
I still find planning a programme daunting	7	5	8	6	0	65	2.5
I find planning a programme a nuisance	7	9	5	4	1	61	2.35
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	15	4	4	0	3	50	1.92

Yet again, the same positive statements are rated highly in the table while the negative statements are rated lower. For comparison, the mean values applied to each statement by teachers who had three or more years teaching Transition Year classes are compared with those applied by teachers who had one or two years experience. The results are shown in table 5.43.

These results show a very high correlation between the responses of teachers with one or two years experience teaching Transition Year classes and those who had been teaching Transition Year classes for three or more years. The areas these groups differed on, however marginally, were the two lowest rated statements, both in the "disagree" section, meaning that differences are only in the level of disagreement and the statement which reads "I found planning the programme daunting at first."

Teachers who had three or more years experience teaching the programme agreed with this statement slightly more than those with one or two years experience. Both sets of respondents rated this statement higher than three on a five point scale suggesting agreement.

Table 5.43

A Comparison of the Responses of Those Teaching Transition Year Classes for One or Two Years and Those Teaching Transition Year Classes for three or More Years Regarding Personal Opinions of Teaching the Transition Year Programme

Statement	1/2 yrs experience teaching TY Mean Ratings	3 + yrs experience teaching TY Mean Ratings
I find planning a programme challenging	3.84	3.77
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	3.52	3.5
I find planning a programme rewarding	3.39	3.54
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	3.32	3.42
I find planning a programme enjoyable	3.36	3.31
I found planning a programme daunting at firs	3.16	3.42
I find planning a programme difficult	2.55	2.69
I still find planning a programme daunting	2.55	2.5
I find planning a programme a nuisance	2	2.35
I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert.	2.2	1.92

Teachers who had just started teaching the programme agreed more with the statements "I find teaching the programme a nuisance" and "I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert." than those who had been teaching the programme for more than three years. This would suggest a more negative attitude from those teachers who were relatively new to the programme and is perhaps because of lack of confidence on the part of the teachers who are new to the programme and lack of familiarity with new teaching methods and content.

These small differences are not statistically significant when the *d* values are calculated for each pair of factors in this table. Again, none of the statements had summed or mean ratings in the strongly agree or strongly disagree sections of the scale.

The responses of both groups regarding the factors affecting implementation are analysed in a similar way. Table 5.44 shows the responses of teachers with one or two years experience teaching Transition Year classes with regard to the factors necessary for the successful implementation of the programme.

Table 5.44

The Responses of Teachers with One or Two Years Experience Teaching Transition Year Classes Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at School Level (26 Respondents)

Factor	Unimportant.......Important					Totals	Means
						Max=220	
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	2	9	33	207	4.7
Support of Principal	0	0	2	10	32	206	4.68
Teacher motivation	0	0	1	13	30	205	4.66
Support of parents	0	1	1	12	30	203	4.61
Inservice training	0	0	5	8	31	202	4.59
Willingness of staff to change	0	0	4	12	28	200	4.55
Resources for new programme	0	0	1	19	24	199	4.52
Equipment available in school	0	0	5	11	28	199	4.52
Team work among staff members	0	0	2	19	23	197	4.48
Funding	0	1	7	9	28	197	4.48
Extra time for planning	0	0	7	9	28	197	4.48
Support of other staff members	0	1	5	11	27	196	4.45
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	4	17	23	195	4.43
Curriculum dev. assistance	0	0	6	14	24	194	4.41
Dept. of Ed. support	0	1	4	16	23	193	4.39
Public status of new course	1	0	13	17	13	173	3.93
Support of community members	1	3	14	11	15	168	3.81
Whether school is used to change	1	6	14	9	14	161	3.66
Teaching experience of staff	0	8	12	16	8	156	3.55
Size of school	10	7	13	7	7	126	2.86
Academic ability of students	9	10	15	6	4	118	2.68
Social background of students	10	13	11	6	4	113	2.57
Academic success of the school	11	13	14	3	3	106	2.41
Average age of teaching staff	14	7	18	2	3	105	2.39

A group of factors similar to those appearing on the scale formed by the responses of teachers in the total respondent group appear at the top and bottom of this table.

Again, "pupil perception of the programme", "support of the principal" and "teacher motivation" are regarded as the most important factors. A similar pattern is seen in the responses of teachers with three or more years Transition Year experience.

Table 5.45

The Responses of Teachers with Three or More Years Teaching Transition Year Classes Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at School Level (26 Respondents)

Factor	Unimportant.........Important					Totals	Means
						Max=130	
Pupils' perception of programme	0	0	1	5	20	123	4.73
Funding	0	0	2	5	19	121	4.65
Support of Principal	0	1	2	3	20	120	4.6
Dept. of Ed. support	0	0	1	9	16	119	4.58
Teacher motivation	0	0	2	8	16	118	4.54
Support of parents	0	0	2	9	15	117	4.5
Team work among staff members	1	0	1	7	17	117	4.5
Resources for new programme	0	1	1	10	14	115	4.42
Support of other staff members	0	1	4	4	17	115	4.42
Teachers' attitude to change	0	0	2	11	13	115	4.42
Inservice training	0	0	5	6	15	114	4.38
Willingness of staff to change	0	1	1	11	13	114	4.38
Equipment available in school	1	0	1	10	14	114	4.38
Extra time for planning	0	0	4	12	10	110	4.23
Public status of new course	0	3	6	6	11	103	3.96
Curriculum dev. assistance	1	1	2	17	5	102	3.92
Whether school is used to change	0	1	9	7	9	102	3.92
Support of community members	0	3	9	8	6	95	3.65
Teaching experience of staff	17	6	10	7	2	81	3.12
Average age of teaching staff	5	4	9	5	3	79	3.04
Size of school	6	7	6	3	4	70	2.69
Academic success of the school	7	6	6	5	2	67	2.58
Academic ability of students	7	11	7	0	1	55	2.12
Social background of students	7	12	6	0	1	54	2.08

A comparison of the mean values reveals the significant differences, if any.

Table 5.46

**A Comparison of the Responses of Those Teaching Transition Year Classes for
One or Two Years and Those Teaching Transition Year Classes for Three or
More Years Regarding the Factors Affecting Implementation**

Factor	1/2 yrs Teaching TY Mean Values	3+ yrs Teaching TY Mean Values
Pupils' perception of programme	4.7	4.73
Support of Principal	4.68	4.6
Teacher motivation	4.66	4.54
Support of parents	4.61	4.5
Inservice training	4.59	4.38
Resources for new programme	4.55	4.42
Willingness of staff to change	4.52	4.38
Team work among staff members	4.52	4.5
Dept. of Ed. support	4.48	4.58
Equipment available in school	4.48	4.38
Funding	4.48	4.65
Support of other staff members	4.45	4.42
Teachers' attitude to change	4.43	4.42
Extra time for planning	4.41	4.23
Curriculum development assistance	4.39	3.92
Public status of new course	3.93	3.96
Support of community members	3.81	3.65
Whether school is used to change	3.66	3.92
Teaching experience of staff	3.55	3.12
Size of school	2.86	2.69
Average age of teaching staff	2.68	3.04
Academic ability of students	2.57	2.12
Academic success of the school	2.41	2.58
Social background of students	2.57	2.08

Low variance figures are calculated here for teaching experience of staff and teacher attitude towards change. Again, these figures show a high correlation between the responses of those teachers who had one or two years experience teaching the Transition Year Programme and those who had three or more years experience of teaching the programme. The factors they differed on were, again, those lower down on the agreement scale. These included:

Curriculum development assistance - teachers who had been teaching the programme for only one or two years rated curriculum assistance more highly than those who had been teaching the programme for three or more years. This stands to reason as

curriculum development assistance would be especially important to those teachers new to the programme.

Teaching experience of staff - teachers who had one or two years experience rated this as a more important factor than those with three or more years experience.

Average age of staff - the reverse was true in the case of this factor. Those who had more than three years experience rated age as a more important factor than those who were relatively new to the programme.

Academic ability of students - the less experienced teachers rated this as more significant than did those teachers who had three or more years experience teaching the Transition Year Programme. The same was true of the social background of students.

Funding - teachers with three or more years experience rated funding more highly than those who had been teaching the programme for one or two years.

Statistically significant differences between the means occur for three of the factors. These are:

- Curriculum development assistance was rated significantly higher by teachers who had been teaching the programme for only one or two years.

- Average age of teaching staff was rated significantly higher by teachers who had been teaching the programme for three or more years.

- Academic ability of students was rated significantly higher by teachers with only one or two years experience teaching the programme.

Overall, the greatest differences between both sets of teachers are for the factors rated lower down on the importance scale and in the statements generally in the "disagreement" region attitude scale. Teachers in both groups generally agreed on the factors most important in the implementation process. These were "Pupil perception of the programme", "Teacher motivation", "Support of parents" and "Support of the

principal". Both groups generally agreed with the positive statements regarding personal attitudes towards teaching the programme. These findings would suggest that any differences in responses due to career stage effects are very minor and would not cause a significant impact on the change process in the school.

5.9 Summary of Findings

Dissemination

The materials used in the dissemination of the Transition Year Programme are the Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines and the Department of Education Transition Year Resource Folder. From the results of the primary research it would appear that the Department of Education Guidelines were useful in the initial dissemination of the programme in that they are used in planning by principals and co-ordinators and are rated quite highly by users. In general the Guidelines are not used day-to-day. The Department of Education Folder is also rated highly by users. This resource was used both in the planning and in the day-to-day running of the programme by co-ordinators but less so by principals and teachers. While useful in dissemination, neither was used to any great degree by Transition Year teachers indicating that neither is regarded as a teaching resource.

Inservice Training

Despite the fact that inservice training was rated as "good" overall by teachers, none of the individual topics was rated as "very good" with only one topic - "Rationale and Philosophy of the Programme" falling into the "good" category. This suggests that the dissemination function - regarding the introduction to the programme - of the inservice provided was fulfilled. Most of the inservice topics fell into the "fair" category. Ninety-seven percent of respondents remarked that inservice should be ongoing. Correlation was shown between those factors which were not well covered by inservice training

and those mentioned in the questionnaires as areas in which inservice is required by those who had not participated in inservice. These included teaching methodology, designing a programme and resources.

The most significant finding in regard to inservice training is that a very low percentage of those teachers surveyed had participated in inservice training. Only eighteen of the seventy respondents (25.7%) had received any training. This would suggest that, as many schools have begun to offer the programme since the original inservice programme in 1994/95, further inservice is required.

Department of Education Support for the Transition Year Programme

Teachers did not rate Department of Education support for the programme highly. Of a possible 350 marks from seventy teachers, rating the factors on a five point scale, none of the five types of support even reached the half way mark, 175. The highest mark achieved was by "funding", which was assigned 167 points out of 350. The lowest rating was for "extra planning time". When asked which types of support were most important, teachers felt that "funding" and "teaching materials" were most important. As teaching materials were rated second on the list of actual support provision, it would appear that the types of support deemed most important by respondents are those which are provided to the greatest extent. Despite this, it is important to note the gap between the perceived importance of the different types of support and the actual provision of these types of support. Teaching materials and funding were both rated 319 on the importance scale while they rated only 160 and 167 respectively on the actual provision scale.

On the importance scale, principals and co-ordinators rated "curriculum assistance" and "funding" most important followed closely by the remaining three types of support. All three groups of respondents agreed that "extra planning time" was the type of support provided least adequately. This has some significance, as many respondents stressed the importance of planning ahead and meeting throughout the year to co-ordinate and evaluate the programme.

The Transition Year Support Team

The Transition Year Support Team is recognised as being a valuable resource by principals and co-ordinators. All six principals and all five co-ordinators had availed of the services of the TYST while only 38.6% of teachers had used it. Most had consulted the team on curriculum development issues such as programme planning and curricular content. The team also appeared to be valuable in solving problems which arose during implementation, especially in the early stages of the introduction of the programme into a school. The areas in which the team was consulted coincide with those areas in which teachers who had not received inservice felt that it was required.

In addition to these areas, co-ordinators also remarked on the valuable opportunity provided to meet with other co-ordinators at the monthly meetings of Transition Year co-ordinators organised by the regional TYST member.

Co-ordination, Planning and Decision making at School Level

The important role of the Transition Year co-ordinator and core team were stressed by respondent teachers. The suggested duties of the co-ordinator were diverse, requiring many skills and particular aptitudes. In general, teachers were involved in areas of decision making such as course format, curricular content, module content and pupil assessment. Significantly, in all six schools, module content - the material actually taught at classroom level - was at the sole discretion of the Transition Year teachers. This new responsibility requires personal and professional development of teachers in order that skills and aptitudes may be developed to facilitate successful implementation of the programme. In addition, of the seventy respondents, fifty-eight (82.9%) felt that their teaching methods were different to some degree while only five (7.1%) reported that their teaching methods were the same. This alteration in teaching methodology highlights the importance of inservice training and ongoing support.

The fact that parents, students, community members and employers are not involved in any aspect of the programme is also significant. Fostering ties with industries in the

community and including parents in the implementation of the programme could potentially raise the profile and external perception of the programme overall. The tourism programme piloted in a Limerick school this year is one example of the potential for forging links with industries to create new modules.

Difficulties Encountered in Implementation

The difficulties encountered in implementing the programme were described by principals and co-ordinators. There were similarities between the two sets of answers. Difficulties included concerns about timetabling, programme content, inservice training for teachers and the poor public perception of the programme. Co-ordinators concerns also included pupil perceptions of the programme, parental support, pupil attendance and motivation and the time allowed for planning and co-ordination. Addressing these concerns is important if successful continuation of the implementation process is to be ensured.

Most Beneficial Types of Support During Implementation

The most beneficial types of support included the Transition Year Support Team, a supportive management team and the dedication of teachers. Support in the form of liaison with teachers teaching the programme in other schools was also suggested. This is supported by the findings regarding contact with teachers in other schools. While teachers in only three of the schools maintained that their school had contact with other schools, (twelve of the seventy respondents, 17.1 %), 84.5 % of those who did not have contact with other schools felt that contact would be beneficial. This point was reiterated in the advice to schools introducing a Transition Year Programme for the first time. Contact with teachers in other schools was stressed as an important asset. Most of the advice to other schools concerned the importance of planning with twenty-four of the forty-five respondents who answered this open ended question recommending forward planning as the most important piece of advice. In a related question, when asked which resources or extra help were needed for successful

implementation, respondents put resource materials, time for planning and inservice training top of the list.

Personal Attitudes to Teaching the Transition Year Programme

The statement agreed with most strongly by respondent teachers was the statement regarding finding the teaching of the programme challenging. The statement least strongly agreed with was the one regarding preference for teaching the traditional Leaving Certificate programme. In general, respondents agreed with the positive statements and disagreed with the negative statements. This suggests a positive attitude to the programme in general. There were no statements in the "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree" sections when summated rating were used, suggesting that there is still some reticence regarding the programme.

Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at School Level

Teachers felt that "pupil perception of the programme" was the most important factor, followed by "support of the principal", "teacher motivation", "support of parents" and "inservice training". The responses of co-ordinators reflected their different perspectives. Co-ordinators named "teamwork among staff members", as the most important factor followed by "support of the principal" and "curriculum development assistance". Both sets of respondents agreed that the academic ability of students, the social background of students and the academic success of the school were the least important factors.

These responses would suggest that there is a mixture of internal and external factors which are essential for the successful implementation of curriculum change.

Career Stage Effects

There are small differences between the answers of teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket and those in the over 45 years age bracket, regarding attitudes to teaching the

programme. Where there are significant differences in the ratings, they arise in the "disagree" section suggesting differences in levels of disagreement with particular statements. These include differences on the statements regarding finding teaching the programme rewarding and enjoyable. Respondents in the over 45 years age range rated these statements more highly than those in the 21-29 years age range. It would also appear that the younger respondents found planning more daunting at first than their older counterparts and also found planning a programme more difficult than older teachers. At the same time, older teachers agreed more strongly with the statements regarding finding the teaching of the programme a nuisance and preferring to stick to the traditional Leaving Certificate programme.

Similarly, there were small difference between the responses of teachers who had been teaching the programme for one or two years and those who had been teaching the programme for three or more years. Teachers who had just started teaching the programme agreed more with the statement "I find teaching the programme a nuisance" and "I would rather stick to the traditional Leaving Cert." than those who had been teaching the programme for more than three years. This would suggest a more negative attitude from those teachers who were relatively new to the programme.

On the issue of important factors, there was also high correlation between the responses of teachers in the 21-29 years age group and those of teachers in the over 45 years age group. Significant differences were found in areas such as "funding", which was rated more important by those teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket than by those in the over 45 years age bracket. "Size of school" was rated less important by teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket than by those in the over 45 years age bracket. "Average age of teaching staff" was also rated less important by teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket than by those in the over 45 years age bracket. For "teaching experience of staff" the reverse was true. Teachers in the 21-29 years age bracket felt that this was an important factor while those in the over 45 years age bracket regarded it as less important.

In the comparison of responses regarding the factors affecting implementation at school level, similar discrepancies were found between the responses of teachers who had been teaching Transition Year classes for one or two years and those who had been teaching Transition Year classes for three or more years. Teachers who had been teaching the programme for only one or two years rated "curriculum assistance" more highly than those who had been teaching the programme for three or more years. "Teaching experience of staff" was also rated more highly by those teachers in the one or two years experience category. For the "average age of staff" - the reverse was true. Those who had three or more years experience rated "age" as a more important factor than those who were relatively new to the programme.

The less experienced teachers rated "academic ability" as more significant than did those teachers who had three or more experience teaching the programme. The same was true of the "social background of students". Teachers with three or more years experience of the programme rated "funding" more highly than those who had been teaching the programme for one or two years.

It would seem that experience of teaching the programme caused bigger discrepancies than did age, suggesting that while age may not be a significant factor in the implementation of a new programme, actual experience of the programme is.

Comparison of Perceptions and Attitudes of Staff Members in Schools Accustomed to Change with those in a School Unaccustomed to Change

There were marked differences between the responses of teachers in schools C/D which had implemented several new programmes and those in school F which had not recently implemented any new programmes, on the issues of attitudes towards teaching the programme and factors affecting the implementation of the programme at school level. On the issue of personal attitudes, those teachers unaccustomed to change felt significantly more negatively towards the programme, including two negative statements in the three statements they agreed with most strongly. On the issue of factors affecting implementation, there were also differences. The factors

"willingness of staff to change", "teacher motivation", "resources" and "support of other staff members" were all rated significantly higher by teachers in school F which was unaccustomed to change. "Equipment available in the school", "support of the principal" and "the support of parents" were all rated higher by teachers in schools C/D who were more accustomed to implementing new programmes.

The issues emerging from the preliminary and primary research parts of this study are discussed in chapter six.

CHAPTER SIX

Issues Emerging, Conclusions and Scope for Future Work

Implementation is often a neglected part of the whole planning process and guidelines in this area are often noticeably short. Yet it is during implementation that the school has to follow through with the plan and carry out all actions to ensure its fulfilment.[367]

6.1 Introduction

The review of the current literature on educational change presented in chapter one raises issues concerning the implementation of new curricula in schools, particularly where a large element of school based curriculum development is involved. The historical overview of the development of the concept of a Transition Year programme undertaken in chapters two and three introduced a contextual framework for the focus of the research which was furthered by the study of the implementation strategies employed in the 1970s and 1980s and by the identification of factors affecting implementation in these periods. Chapter four brought the study up to date, describing the national implementation strategy employed since 1993 in order to reintroduce the programme. The survey research carried out for the purpose of this thesis looked specifically at the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level, concentrating on the perceptions of those actually implementing the programme and their personal attitudes to the implementation process.

It is the purpose of this concluding chapter to relate the findings of the primary research survey to the findings of the preliminary research into the history of the programme concerning the implementation processes employed in the 1970s and 1980s in light of the literature review. This chapter aims to identify similarities and differences in the implementation processes and to explore improvements and progressions, if any, in the implementation strategies employed for new programmes. Earlier research in this area includes Egan and O'Reilly's study of the Transition Year Project in the late 1970s and the smaller ASTI survey of Transition Year teachers in

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[367]Louise Stoll and Dean Fink, (1996), *Changing Our Schools*, p.65.

the mid 1980s. The Department of Education undertook an evaluation of the Transition Year Programme in 1995/96 which concentrated on the level and standard of implementation of the programme rather than on the perceptions of teachers - on whom this study is focused. Despite the relatively small scale of this research project, there are similarities in the patterns of response and the findings are further supported by research carried out in other countries and discussed in the literature review.

This project was undertaken in light of the current educational climate in which many new programmes are currently undergoing implementation in schools. In *Schools for Active Learning: Final Report*, Callan notes that the necessity of focusing on more than one element in the context of change is recognised by a number of researchers and quotes Goodlad who invites a movement away from "myopic preoccupations with individual teachers to groups of teachers and the culture of the school as a whole."[368] It was the aim of this thesis to take a broad view of the implementation processes operating at national and local levels. The issues emerging in this dissertation which warrant attention reflect its broad base. They can be discussed under the following headings:

Educational Change - Climate and Context

Implementation Strategies

Factors Affecting Implementation

Career Cycle and School Culture Effects

Implications for Teachers

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[368]J.I. Goodlad, (1972), "Staff Development: The League Model" in *Theory into Practice* Vol.xi, No.4, pp.207-14, quoted by James Callan, (1994), *Schools for Active Learning: Final Report*, p.26.

6.2 Issues Emerging and Conclusions

6.2.1 Educational Change - Climate and Context:

> The political context of the implementation of innovative programmes can seriously affect the operation of three sets of factors: the nature of the adoption decision, organisational process characteristics and the role of individual staff characteristics.[369]

In the early 1970s, the Transition Year Programme was originally introduced in a socio-economic climate in which the view of education as an economic investment was gathering impetus. Increased student numbers due to educational developments throughout the 1960s led to an increasingly heterogeneous clientele. In order to cater for the needs of a diverse range of students, a broadening of the curriculum - through curriculum development - was gathering momentum. Developments in Transition Education world-wide and interest in social and personal development programmes were also influential factors. While implementation remained low key in regard to participation figures, numbers held until the late 1970s and early 1980s when the implementation process faltered. When the programme was reintroduced in 1986, many of the same socio-economic factors were still influential. EC funded projects continued to flourish. It was soon after the reintroduction of the programme in 1986 that the continued implementation of the programme faltered for a second time. In the late 1980s, the economic climate was a stringent one and all government departments were economising. The Department of Education issued a directive that no additional schools would be allowed to offer the programme in 1988. At the same time, the number of pupils entering second level schools dropped slightly during this period and in order to raise pupil numbers some schools offered a repeat Leaving Certificate year and others, who had been granted permission to offer a Transition Year programme earlier, reintroduced it. After 1990, when schools were again granted permission to

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[369]Michael Fullan and Alan Promfret, (1975), *Review of Research on Curriculum Implementation*, pp.101-105.

offer a six year cycle to students, numbers rose slightly but steadily each year until the programme was reintroduced for a third time in 1993. Neither phase of implementation was aided by strong external support but the additional problems in the late 1980s of economic recession and government changes, exacerbated the always problematic issue of implementation.

A.V. Kelly discusses curriculum planning in a time of economic recession and notes that:

> economic recession does not alter the theoretical issues; it does not change the messages of the research findings or invalidate ideals....it does not alter children's developmental needs....it merely makes it more difficult to attain this form and quality of educational provision; it may make it necessary for us to settle for something less.[370]

He also notes that features such as increased central control, an overt instrumentalism, a narrowly conceived vocationalism and consequent elitism arise at such times.[371] Increased central control in the late 1980s meant that, for a time, no additional schools were granted permission to offer the programme. Climate and context also affected the reasons for offering the programme to students and the identified target group at school level. This in turn affected the national identity, and hence the status, of the programme.

In 1993 the programme was reintroduced in the context of an overall restructuring of the senior cycle curriculum. This in itself gives additional credence to the programme. The stipulation that the programme cannot be used as a means to offering a three year Leaving Certificate course also helps the cause of the programme, protecting it from the abuse which led in part to the identity crisis suffered by the programme in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the socio-economic elements operating in the 1970s and 1980s are still influential today. The importance of education as an economic investment, the importance of the transition from school to adult working life, and the

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[370]A.V. Kelly, (1988), "Schools, Teachers and Curriculum Planning at a Time of Economic Recession", *Compass*, Vol.17, No.2, 1988, p.18.
[371]Ibid., p.19.

importance of social and personal development of students are still influential factors in the implementation of a programme such as the Transition Year. There are slight alterations to the aims of the programme which mirror changes in the industrial and economic climates and in the role of schooling. Appendix six shows the modifications in the three sets of guidelines, tracing changes in aims, content and teaching methodology of the programme. Work experience is now an integral part of the programme as are interdisciplinary studies. Additional skills in computer technology are also incorporated into many Transition Year Programmes as are elements of teamwork and problem solving skills. The programme is promoted as giving students additional skills and increased maturity in order to prepare them for their role as responsible citizens.

A clear picture emerges from the results of the preliminary research part of this dissertation into earlier efforts at implementing a Transition Year programme and from the results of the primary research into the implementation of the programme at school level and national level in the 1990s. The increase in the numbers of students participating, increased levels of Department of Education support for the programme, the promotion of the programme nationally and the findings of the Department of Education Evaluation Report regarding the quality of implementation indicate that to date, this phase of implementation is more successful. There is a view which suggests that it may just be the right time for the implementation of a programme such as the Transition Year Programme - a time when the right elements come together in the right configuration which positively favours a new programme. These elements include a supportive Minister and government, a buoyant economy and favourable social conditions - all of which have been in evidence since the early 1990s, undoubtedly contributing to the success of the programme.

While external factors such as socio-economic climate and context are influential, equally important are factors acting at school level. This point is made by Ivan Wallace who maintains that:

> Government, Board, Department, Inspectorate, Governors, Parents, can inhibit or encourage, support or neglect; they can help create the conditions under which a....school may better thrive, but they are not the school.[372]

As far back as 1931, A.N. Whitehead commented that "the first requisite for educational reform is the school as a unit with its approved curriculum based on its own needs, and evolved by its own staff."[373] For this reason, the perceptions and attitudes of teachers regarding implementation strategies and the factors affecting implementation are important.

6.2.2 Implementation Strategies:

The national implementation strategies employed to implement the programme differ significantly over the three phases of implementation, spanning a period of more than twenty years. In 1974, when the programme was first introduced by Minister Burke, there was no central co-ordinating committee, no established curriculum and no booklet of guidelines. Teachers from schools which were interested in offering a programme to their students attended a meeting in July of 1974 to put together proposals for a Transition Year. Following this, an inspector liaised with the principal and one or two key staff members to develop the programme at school level. In 1986, the dissemination process consisted only of a booklet of guidelines issued by the CEB which was replaced by the Department of Education *Notes for Schools* the following year. During neither phase of implementation was a national inservice programme provided. These early forms of implementation created problems at school level. Research from the 1970s shows that teachers felt isolated and unsupported in their

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[372]Ivan Wallace, (1987), "The Challenge of Change", *Seminar for CDVEC Principals and Vice-principals, May 1987*, p.15.
[373]A.N. Whitehead, (1931), *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, quoted by James McKernan, (1981), "Organising for Curriculum Development", *Compass*, Vol.10, No.2, 1981, p.39.

efforts to implement the programme and this led to frustration and resentment. Similar sentiments are discovered through a study of teachers responses in the 1980s.

At school level, implementation strategies also differed. Schools developed programmes for different reasons. Some schools offered the programme as a final year for early school leavers. Others developed a programme which acted as a bridge between junior and senior cycle. These differences created problems of identity for the programme which in turn had a long term impact on the successful continuance of the implementation process. The frustration of teachers in both periods of implementation is clear throughout the studies of Egan and O'Reilly in the late 1970s and the smaller ASTI study in the mid 1980s. Disillusionment and frustration followed initial enthusiasm, due to lack of funding, teaching materials, curriculum development assistance and extra time for planning.

There are marked differences between the implementation processes employed in the 1970s and 1980s and the strategy used in the most recent reintroduction of the programme. On the national front - Department of Education support for the programme has been significantly better. A national inservice programme took place in 1994/95 and the Transition Year Support Team are currently funded by the Department of Education in order to support schools in the implementation of the programme. Apart from a new booklet of guidelines, a resource folder was also issued to each school and funding has improved. At school level, implementation has in many cases included appointment of a Transition Year core team as well as a co-ordinator to aid implementation.

Despite a more positive approach by the Department of Education, the report evaluating the "train the trainers" inservice programme[374], the evaluation of the Transition Year Programme undertaken by the Department of Education[375] and the

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[374]Mary Lewis and Lean McMahon, (1996), *An Evaluation of a Training of Trainers In-service Education Model: The Transition Year in Career Development Programme.*

[375]Department of Education, (1996), *Transition Year Programme 1994/95: An Evaluation by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education.*

primary research part of this dissertation show that there are still flaws in the implementation process. During the evaluation of the "train the trainers" programme teachers voiced concerns about the lack of time available for planning, the role of the Transition Year co-ordinator, the provision of resources and finance. The evaluation report recommends the networking of schools and a whole school approach to the programme and remarks at the lack of an interdisciplinary approach at school level suggesting further implementation issues. A recent report by Ancilla O'Reilly on the Transition Year in CDVEC schools, finds that the needs of schools during implementation of the programme can be grouped under a number of headings. These are - funding, resource materials, time, staff development, programme evaluation, certification and student needs.[376] The primary research part of this thesis shows that attitudes towards teaching the programme are generally positive and that this improves with experience of teaching the programme and through experience of implementing other programmes. Despite these positive feelings there are shortcomings. Concerns of staff members include shortfalls in Department of Education support in the form of extra time for planning, teaching materials, curriculum assistance and further inservice training. Teachers also feel that contact with other schools would be beneficial. The similarities between these concerns and those expressed by teachers in the 1970s and 1980s are clear. Contact with other schools was suggested by teachers in the 1970s and twenty years later teachers still feel that talking to other teachers about what works and what doesn't work is a valuable asset. Extra planning time has appeared as a requirement in all three phases of implementation as has the provision of resources. Parental concerns also feature as an issue in all three phases of implementation.

In light of these findings, this dissertation sought to examine the personal attitudes of teachers to teaching the programme and to isolate those factors teachers felt were most influential in encouraging successful implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level.

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[376] Ancilla O'Reilly, (1995), *The Transition Year Option in CDVEC Schools*, p.8.

6.2.3 Factors Affecting Implementation:

While this study does not purport to be a comparative study, it is useful to note where improvements in the implementation processes have occurred and where shortfalls still exist.

Table 6.1

The Factors Affecting Implementation:

National and Local/School Level 1974-1997

	Factors Acting at National Level	Factors Acting at Local Level

1974-1986	The operation of the programme in a crowded niche in the curriculum
	The identity crisis of the programme
	Changes of Minister and government
	Financial pressure on the State
	Lack of:
	    Dept. of Ed. Support
	    Finance
	    Inservice training
	    Curriculum assistance
		Financial pressure on parents
		Success of other transition type programmes
		Lack of:
		    Funding
		    Support of Dept. of Ed.
		    Planning time
		    Contact with other schools
		    Resources
		    Whole school support

1986-1993	Wide choice of alternative
	Programmes available
	Guarded approach of Dept. of Ed.
	Endurance of the identity crisis
		Concerns of parents
		Affect of offering TY on the rest of the senior cycle curriculum
		Lack of:
		    Inservice
		    Planning time
		    Resources
		    Extra teachers
		    Funding

1993-1997	Lack of Dept. of Ed. support in the form of:
	    Inservice training
	    Extra planning time
	    Teaching materials
	    Curriculum development
	    assistance
		Pupil perception of the programme
		Support of principal
		Teacher motivation
		Teamwork among staff members
		Willingness of staff to change
		Support of parents
		Lack of:
		    Inservice training
		    Planning time
		    Resources

From the results it would appear that a combination of internal and external factors are necessary. Regarding the influential factors in the 1970s and early 1980s, although funding was withdrawn in 1983 this was not the sole cause of the breakdown of the implementation process. Naturally, problems in national implementation manifest themselves locally in schools. Factors identified as influential at national level include those that are also identified as acting at school level. These factors include lack of central support, funding, curriculum assistance and training and the operation of the programme in a crowded niche in the curriculum.

In addition to the impact of these problems at school level, the concerns of parents, lack of planning time, the status and legitimacy of the programme, lack of contact with other schools, lack of resources, lack of whole school support and financial pressure on parents were also mitigating factors.

A study of the mid 1980s reveals a similar picture with regard to the factors acting at national level. The operation of the programme in a crowded niche in the curriculum and the identity crisis were still in evidence. In addition, the concerns of parents and the guarded approach of the Department of Education did not help.

At local level, again many of the same factors were affecting implementation. Lack of planning time, funding and inservice training and parental concerns were all named by teachers surveyed by the ASTI as acting against implementation of the programme. The effect of the implementation of the Transition Year programme on the rest of the curriculum was also noted and it was felt that extra teachers were required to alleviate the resulting effect of larger classes at senior level.

In regard to the most recent phase of implementation, the impact of some of these shortcomings has been alleviated largely by increased Department of Education support for the programme. Funding has been increased, a national inservice programme was provided and the Transition Year Support Team are available to support schools in the day-to-day implementation of the programme.

The Transition Year Programme no longer competes with similar programmes in the curriculum. The programme closest in content and philosophy is the Leaving

Certificate Applied Programme and this programme is aimed at students with different needs. The approach of the Department of Education is more supportive and while the legacy of the image of the programme as a "doss year" has not been completely eradicated, the programme no longer has a major identity crisis. At school level, although there is increased support, some of the same factors are influential such as lack of planning time, resources and inservice training. A new feature, evident in responses to both open and closed questions, is the recognition of the importance of internal factors such as teacher motivation, teamwork among staff members and a willingness on the part of the staff to change.

The effect of the extra support for the programme is evident in the positive attitude of teachers towards the programme. Of the ten factors rated most highly on the importance scale six can be regarded as internal factors pertaining to the staff and school. They are "pupil perception of the programme", "support of the principal", "teacher motivation", "support of parents", "willingness of staff to change" and "teamwork among staff members". The other four factors in the top ten are "inservice" (5th), "resources" (6th), "Department of Education support", (9th) and "equipment available in the school" (10th).

The factors rated highly by co-ordinators are different and reflect their different perspectives on the implementation process. In the case of co-ordinators, the external factors were rated as highly as the internal factors, but for teachers the school based factors are more important. In their role, co-ordinators depend highly on both internal, staff related factors and external factors acting at local level. They rated "teamwork among staff members", "support of the principal", and "curriculum development assistance" highest. In the top ten factors identified by co-ordinators five were internal - "teamwork among staff members", "support of the principal", "support of other staff members", "support of parents" and "teacher motivation". The five external factors were the provision of "curriculum development assistance", "resources", "funding", "inservice training", and "extra time for planning". Along with these forms of support, in open ended questions teachers named "teaching materials" as a resource they felt

was necessary for implementation. This suggests that the production of flexible classroom materials which could be adapted and used in each school situation as required would be welcomed. When asked what advice they would give to other schools, the significance of planning well in advance was evident. This requires time and support. Calls for extra planning time, the type of support rated lowest on the actual provision scale by all groups of respondents, suggests that time is a resource in short supply and yet essential for successful implementation.

None of these factors can be treated in isolation. Providing any one of them would not necessarily ensure successful implementation. Many of these factors are affected by additional factors suggested by teachers. For example "pupil perception of the programme" is the factor rated most highly by teachers. This indicates that worthwhile, stimulating and enjoyable programmes which motivate students to participate fully are required. In order to fulfil these requirements many of the factors mentioned such as extra funding, equipment and planning time are necessary. "Support of the principal" is also suggested as an important factor. In order to encourage the support of the principal other factors such as increased funding, extra teachers and provision for planning time are necessary. One principal also remarked that space was a problem and that extra classrooms were required if the programme is to be implemented fully. While some of these internal factors are influenced by external factors and could be enhanced through increased Department of Education support, it is clear that factors built into the culture of the school are also regarded as quite influential in the implementation process. For this reason, the implications of the implementation of new programmes for teachers emerge as important issues.

Hargreaves et al recognise that:

> It is little use encouraging teachers to be more flexible and learner centred in their approaches to teaching if they are left to work within traditional, judgmental, fact centred systems of assessment and evaluation.[377]

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[377]Andy Hargreaves, Lorna Earl and Jim Ryan, (1996), *Schooling for Change:*

It is also little use encouraging teachers to change their teaching methods and adopt new practices if the elements and features they feel are necessary to implement a new programme are not provided. The implications of working in this changing environment are discussed in the next section.

6.2.4 Implications for Teachers:

All issues relating to the implementation of new programmes – be they in relation to national or local implementation strategies - have implications for teachers due to their involvement in all stages of the implementation process. The implementation of the Transition Year Programme, introduces new demands on teachers in the sense that it involves school based curriculum development. This requires that teachers develop skills in programme design and planning, programme implementation and evaluation. Implementing a school based programme also involves new skills with regard to co-ordination and assessment of student progress. In addition to these tangible skills, implementing a new programme such as the Transition Year Programme involves changes in values and beliefs and brings changes in teaching methodology and in relationships with students. Teacher development is essential if changes in practice are to be successful. Fullan and Hargreaves have found that "teachers are the ultimate key to educational change and school improvement"[378] and Crooks contends that "the essence of curriculum change is development in teachers."[379] Teachers are not merely transmitters of knowledge. They selectively develop, define and interpret the curriculum. In discussing the impact of implementing a new module for the Transition Year Programme on the teachers involved, Michael Murray notes that:

> free from the demands of externally imposed syllabi the teachers were
> forced to rethink, relearn and redirect their own perception of their role
> in the realisation of the aims and objectives which they set themselves

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reinventing education for early adolescents, p.5.
[378]M. Fullan and A. Hargreaves, (1992), *Understanding Teacher Development*, p.ix.
[379]Tony Crooks, (1981), "Supporting Curriculum Development in Schools", also read at the education studies of Ireland Symposium 1980, *Compass*, Vol.10, No.2, 1981, p.29.

for the programme....it was clear that the aims they set themselves created a range of inservice training needs not least in relation to their ability to cope with the stress of role change from traditional teacher, to facilitator and evaluator. [380]

The changes involving teachers are widespread. They also include changes in the school environment, in relationships with parents, community members and local employers. Group work among students entails different levels and forms of discipline. In addition, the culture of the school staff must change in order to accommodate such a programme. Teamwork among staff members raises further issues for teachers unaccustomed to cross-curricular and interdisciplinary work and changes working relationships with colleagues.

The rich and varied literature on the related areas of school improvement and curriculum implementation raises many issues regarding curriculum development and educational change which have implications for teachers. Topics such as the change process itself, curriculum development, the implementation process, dissemination, staff development, school culture and the role of external bodies all have implications in a study of the implementation of the Transition Year Programme. The findings of this study also have implications for the implementation of other new programmes in schools such as the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme, Civic, Social and Political Education, The Junior Certificate Elementary Programme and the new Relationships and Sexuality Education programmes which will be introduced by schools from September 1997.

That we are in a time of change is evident. How schools respond to this change is less clear cut. One of the salient issues raised by the literature is the issue of centralised as opposed to decentralised curriculum development. Central initiatives fail because they do not respond to the cultural complexity of the classroom. Locally devised initiatives fail for lack of local capacity to manage, resource and sustain the impetus for change.

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[380]Michael F. Murray, (1994), "From Subject Based Curriculum development to Whole School Improvement", *Educational Management and Administration,* Vol.22, No.13, 1994, pp.160-163.

This argument has implications for the Transition Year Programme due to its school based nature. School based curriculum development efforts raise different staff development requirements to those raised by centrally mandated programmes. The problems suggested by Skilbeck in the 1970s as affecting school based curriculum innovations are still influential today. They are:

- Low self esteem and inadequacy in staff and lack of relevant skills

- Lack of interest or conviction in staff in sustaining change processes

- Inadequate allocation of resources

- Failure to appreciate the subtleties of group interactions

- Neglect of the diversity of the different teaching styles.[381]

In order to reduce the impact of these problems, staff development is necessary. The necessity of staff development has been discussed at length in the literature. The type of inservice required is less clearly defined. The importance of changes in the beliefs and values of those involved, to coincide with changes in behaviour, relationships and skills is highlighted. That staff members understand the rationale and philosophy behind a proposed change is crucial and fortunately this study shows that this aspect of the dissemination process has been ably achieved through the Department of Education Guidelines and Resource Folder and through inservice provision. This study highlights the areas in which inservice is required. These include skills in designing a programme, teaching methodology, resources, assessment, evaluation and timetabling. Programmes such as the Transition Year Programme, which challenge pedagogic styles and beliefs of teachers, require a specific type of inservice which goes beyond the information distribution function of inservice to encouraging alterations in the beliefs and attitudes of the individual. When this is achieved further skills may be acquired. Brent Davies suggests that resources will becomes constrained in education in the future and that teachers will have to learn to be creative and work without

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[381]Malcolm Skilbeck, (1984), *Readings in School Based Curriculum Development*, pp.161-162.

them.[382] In light of this, training in the development of resources is also required. Diarmuid Leonard maintains that:

> one of the most consistent lessons of curriculum development over the past three decades is that innovations aimed at improving the school experience of pupils invariably fail where either teachers do not themselves accept a prerequisite change in values, priorities and their own classroom practice, or where even if the teachers do accept change, the institutional and organisational structures remain unchanged.[383]

Such changes in values and priorities are related to the stages in career cycles of teachers which in turn affect school culture. Another aspect of school culture is how accustomed and open the school is to change. The effect of these factors is discussed in the next section.

6.2.5 Career Cycle and School Culture Effects:

The results of this study for the total respondent population suggest that personal attitudes to teaching the programme are generally positive. The statement agreed with most strongly was that regarding finding teaching the programme challenging. Despite the fact that few teachers had had any inservice training and many felt that Department of Education support for the programme was inadequate in certain areas, teachers still feel positively towards the programme. The statement most strongly disagreed with was the statement regarding a preference to stick to the traditional Leaving Certificate programme. This positive attitude to the programme is similar to that discovered by the ASTI study in 1987, when despite the obvious implementation problems, one hundred percent of teachers maintained that they would still offer the programme in their schools if given a choice. Teachers did, however, stress that extra resources and help such as teaching materials, extra planning time, inservice training and increased

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[382]Brent Davies, (1996), "Re-engineering school leadership" *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol.10, No.2, 1996, p.16.
[383]Diarmuid Leonard, (1986), "The Teacher and Curriculum Change", *The Secondary Teacher*, Vol.15, No.3, 1986, pp.22-24.

funding would be required for implementation to be continually successful. This finding is supported in *The Junior Certificate: Issues of Implementation - Report on Seminars for School Principals*. Throughout the booklet it is stressed that the forms of support needed in implementing a new course are time, resources and inservice training.[384]

The analysis of career stage effects showed that perceptions of teaching the programme and perceptions of the factors affecting the successful implementation of the programme did not differ significantly depending on age and differed only slightly depending on experience of teaching the Transition Year Programme. Small differences were found on issues regarding attitudes towards the programme. Older teachers found the programme more rewarding and enjoyable and younger teachers found teaching the programme more daunting at first. On the question of factors affecting implementation, younger teachers rated "funding" and "teaching experience of staff" higher but rated "age" less important than older teachers did. Based on experience of teaching the programme, teachers who were new to the programme had a slightly more negative attitude to it. Teachers who had experience of teaching the programme rated "average age of staff" and "funding" more important than those teachers new to the programme and the teachers new to the programme rated "curriculum assistance" and "teaching experience of staff" more highly than those who had experience of teaching the programme. Differences in attitudes occurred mainly in the level of disagreement and are not practically significant when distributed throughout a large staff but familiarity with the programme would appear to be a more influential factor than age.

In a related question, analysis of the responses of teachers in a school unaccustomed to implementing new programmes and the responses of teachers in schools which had implemented a number of new programmes in recent years revealed significant

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[384]CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, (1989), *The Junior Certificate: Issues of Implementation - Report on Seminars for School Principals.*

differences in attitudes and perceptions. McGeown, finds that "schools' adoption, implementation and internalisation of curriculum change was critically related to the school's ongoing capacity for change"[385] It is the effect of this aspect of the school culture which was studied through this aspect of the analysis of the responses. Those teachers who were accustomed to change showed response patterns similar to those of the entire respondent group of seventy teachers, agreeing with the positive statements and disagreeing with the negative ones. In contrast, when the responses of teachers unaccustomed to change were analysed, two negative statements, those pertaining to finding planning the programme "daunting at first" and "difficult" where rated in the top three statements on the agreement scale formed by the collective ratings of these teachers. There were also differences in the factors identified as important in the implementation of new programmes. "Willingness of staff to change", "teacher motivation", "resources" and "support of other staff members" were all rated higher by teachers in the school which was unaccustomed to change. "Equipment available", "support of the principal" and "support of parents" were rated higher by teachers in the schools which had implemented a number of new programmes in recent years.

These findings have implications for the implementation process. Teachers at different stages of their careers and in schools with different approaches and attitudes to the change process will have differing inservice requirements. This finding is an argument for highly selective clustering of inservice training where compatible schools work together. Trainers involved in the Transition Year inservice programme in which teachers from schools which had been implementing the programme for a number of years were participating in inservice with schools which were just beginning to implement the programme suggested that this made inservice training difficult to pitch. While it may have been the intention to utilise the experience of the teachers in schools accustomed to operating the programme during inservice training, an alternative form

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[385]Vincent McGeown, (1980), "The Organisational Context of Curriculum Innovation and Change", *Compass*, Vol.9, No.2, 1980, p.51.

of inservice training, which is school based is necessary. The introductory sessions for staff members in their schools took this form. This type of inservice training, while expensive, is also recommended in O'Reilly's report on the Transition Year Programme in CDVEC schools which finds teachers requesting "school focused" inservice training.[386]

Hargreaves et al note that research on teachers in mid-career suggests that many are sensibly reluctant to change their whole teaching approach all in one go: "what these teachers are willing to do, given time and flexibility, is to 'tinker around' with new methods and expand their repertoire a little."[387] This applies to teachers at all stages of their careers. In terms of the strategies most likely to be effective, and of the realities of teachers careers, therefore, it may be advisable to encourage teachers to widen their repertoires rather than advocating a total transformation of teaching styles.

6.3 Concluding Remarks and Scope for Future Work

In the 1970s it was suggested that "Ireland cannot afford to emulate our more wealthy neighbours in spending large sums of money on curriculum development projects..."[388] and that "a country such as the Republic of Ireland with limited means and resources at its disposal cannot afford the luxury of taking time to devise original programmes."[389] In 1996, then Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach, said "the setting up of the Transition Year in our schools is an example of where we in Ireland

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[386]Ancilla O'Reilly, (1995), *The Transition Year Option in CDVEC Schools*, p.22.
[387]Andy Hargreaves, Lorna Earl and Jim Ryan, (1996), *Schooling for Change: reinventing education for early adolescents*, p.157.
[388]City of Dublin CDU, *Report on Feasibility Year 1972-1973*, quoted by Jean Rudduck and Peter Kelly, (1976), *The Dissemination of Curriculum Development*, p.43.
[389]Iohn Harris and Bryan Powell, (1972), "Curriculum Development in the Republic of Ireland", *Oideas* 23, Oct.1972, p.50, quoted by Jean Rudduck and Peter Kelly, (1976), *The Dissemination of Curriculum Development*, p.43.

have become leaders in the field of learning in Europe......"[390] The difference in these two sentiments is clear. Given our ability to formulate new programmes, the task facing educationists is the dissemination and successful implementation of such new ideas. Further work in the study of the implementation process includes a wider study of the factors affecting implementation of the Transition Year Programme and those factors affecting the implementation of other new programmes, currently undergoing implementation in schools. Application of the findings of studies on implementation is also worthy of further research. The findings of this study suggest that contact with other teachers in other schools is a valuable asset during implementation. The developments for channels for the flow of communication and support between schools, and between teachers within schools, is worthy of research. This study also suggests that teaching materials are required for successful implementation. A worthy study would involve the development of sets of flexible classroom materials, their trial in classroom situations and a determination of whether or not they affect the implementation of a new programme at school level. Possible foci for a study of the effect of providing teaching materials include the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme and the Relationships and Sexuality Education programmes. This type of study could be linked, perhaps, to an exploration of the aspect of implementation of the Transition Year Programme which requires the greatest development according to the Department of Education Evaluation Report - the interdisciplinary, cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning.[391] Research suggests that the persistence of subject boundaries is linked to social, political and historical factors, but also to the way in which teachers' identities and allegiances are formed through them. A study of the factors mitigating against the implementation of the interdisciplinary aspect of the programme could serve as a micro study in the implementation of new programmes.

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[390]Anne Byrne, "Ireland's Transition has been an Example to Others", *Education and Living,* October 22nd 1996, p.8.
[391]Department of Education, (1996), *Transition Year Programme 1994/95: An Evaluation by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education,* p.22.

Currently, two transitions can be recognised. On the cusp of the century, societies are changing and with accelerating programmes of educational reform, schools are changing. Curriculum reform policies and implementation plans are often put together in ways which assume relatively ideal school conditions, yet the work of schools is far from ideal, rather it is unpredictable and highly variable. Furthermore, the complexity involved in such changes cannot be broken down into discrete variables that can be tackled individually. Fullan and Promfret conclude from their study of the implementation process that:

> the issue is not so much whether one can measure or assess degree of implementation but whether the implementation process is conceptualised as a problem to be addressed.[392]

That we recognise that the implementation process is an issue worthy of research is a starting point.

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[392]Michael Fullan and Alan Promfret, (1975), *Review of Research on Curriculum Implementation*, p.121.

APPENDICES

Appendix One

Table (i)

The Transition Year - Participation Rates 1974-1996

Year	No. of students in TY	Total No. at 2nd level	% of total in TY
1974	66	186416*	0.035
1975	249	260268	0.096
1976	518	270033	0.192
1977	702	274109	0.256
1978	281	278071	0.101
1979	174	282254	0.062
1980	540	286924	0.188
1981	629	295418	0.213
1982	545	302219	0.18
1983	503	309245	0.163
1984	425	329434	0.129
1985	484	335153	0.144
1986	2918	338533	0.862
1987	2786	339556	0.82
1988	2673	338853	0.789
1989	5564	339132	1.641
1990	6105	342416	1.783
1991	8050	348917	2.31
1992	8193	358347	2.286
1993	8499	367645	2.312
1994	21173	371230	5.703
1995	24149	369865	6.529
1996	24292	371763**	6.534

* This figure does not include the students in Secondary Tops, Vocational Schools or Regional Technical Colleges for 1974/75 as data for this particular classification are not available in respect of these educational institutions. Figures for these institutions are included for subsequent years.
** Provisional figure obtained from the database section of the Department of Education in Athlone based on the "October return" figures for the school year 1996/1997. The actual figure is not available at the time of writing and will not be available until July 1997.

Figure (a)

The Transition Year - Participation Rates 1974-1996

No. of Students in TY 1974-1996
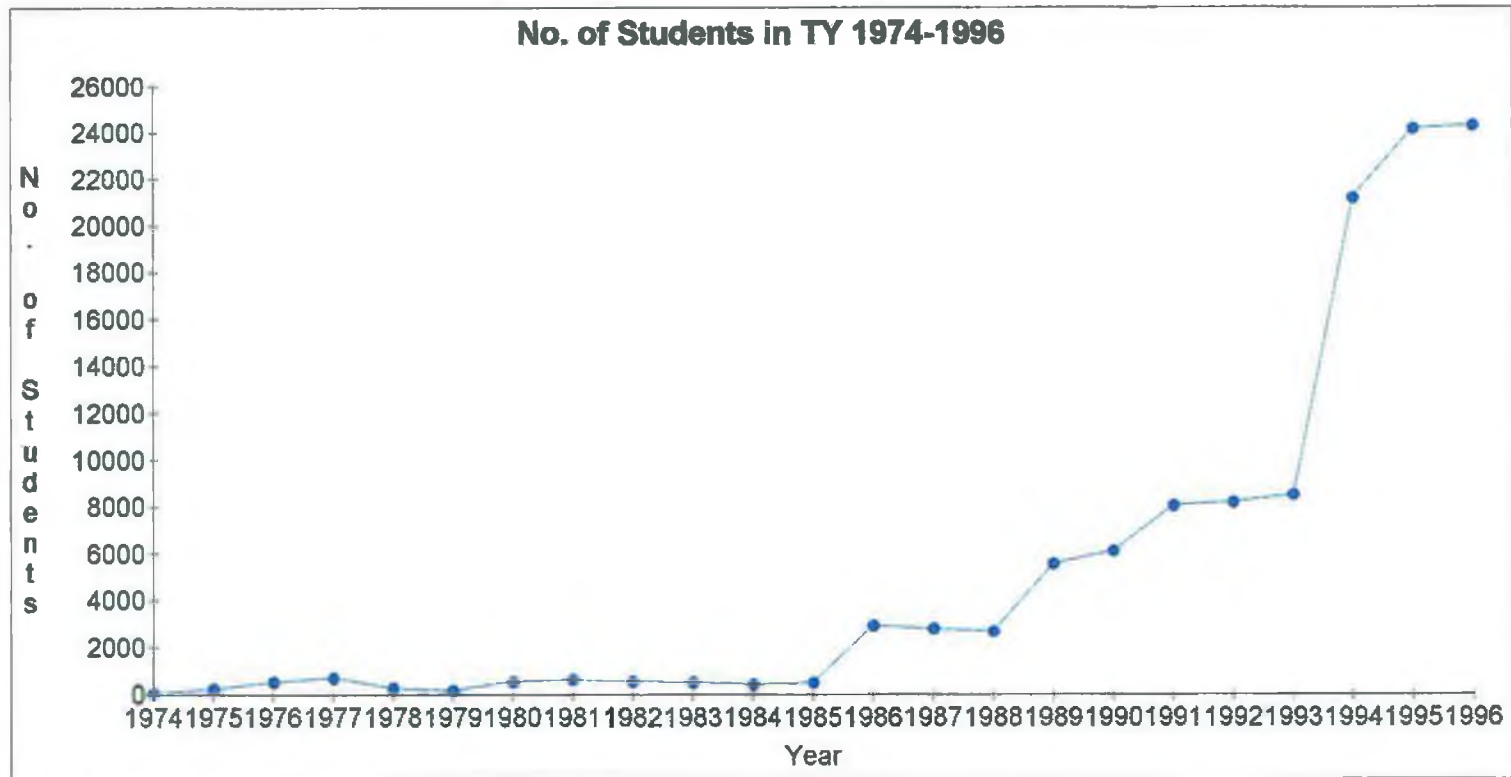
Appendix Two

The Transition Year Programme Inservice Provision 1993/94

In service training is essential to successful implementation of new programmes. Fullan and Promfret cite a report by Crowther which found that "in-service training prior to implementation was significantly related to degree of implementation."[393]

To facilitate country wide inservice education, the country was divided into the following regions by the Department of Education:

1. The Carlow Area	6. The Limerick Area
2. The Carrickmacross Area	7. The Waterford Area
3. The Castlebar Area	8. The Tullamore/Athlone Area
4. The Galway Area	9. The Cork Area
5. The Sligo/Letterkenny Area	10. The Dublin Area

The Carlow area, for example, served not only Carlow but areas such as Kilkenny and parts of Kildare.

In each region an action group co-ordinator and a team of teachers were appointed. Each of the regions 1 to 8 had four members on the inservice team. Cork and Dublin were further divided into subgroups, each with four teachers assigned to them. The number of schools assigned to each teacher varied depending on the size of the area.

Between December 1993 and January 1994 the trainers/regional co-ordinators completed six training days and were assigned to one of the fifteen regional teams. They continued to prepare locally in their teams for the next phase in schools.

In summary, the tasks of the teams members, to be carried out between January and March of 1994 were:

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[393]Crowther, (1972), cited by Michael Fullan and Alan Promfret, (1975), *Review of Research on Curriculum Implementation*, p.81.

1. To meet with the principal and the co-ordinator of the schools assigned to them.

2. To give a half-day in career education seminar for the staff of the school.

3. To delivered two cluster days inservice for groups of neighbouring schools at venues throughout the country.

4. To report back on the above to the action group co-ordinator.

In January 1994, the members of the teams contacted the schools allocated to them. In some cases an agenda for the meeting with the principal and with the staff was enclosed and all schools received a questionnaire to be completed and returned before the initial meeting took place. The questionnaire covered such topics as content, assessment, certification of the programme and asked about any difficulties encountered in the planning of the Transition Year programme.

A typical agenda for the meeting with the principal and the co-ordinator was as follows:

1. The Curriculum

2. Staff

3. Motivation

4. Parents

5. Planning Time

6. Co-ordination

7. Students.

In many cases the meeting with the principal on the morning of the half-day inservice in the school which took place in the afternoon. Reports were sent to the action team co-ordinator covering such issues as the response to the programme in the school, the amount of planning done and the concerns of staff members.

The final phase was completed in October when, following a further two days training and preparation a second series of cluster days was organised by the regional co-

ordination teams. Cluster days in both the second and third phase were targeted at principals and co-ordinators and up to three teachers from each school.

The first day of the two day regional inservice concentrated on:

-Assessment

-Evaluation

-Programme Management

It was stressed that programme management is not just about the role of the co-ordinator, or co-ordination itself. The information sent to the Training Teams on the subject of Programme Management states that "in the rest of the curriculum there is a discipline enforced by the examination system which acts as an external control. In the absence of an external control there must be internal programme management."[394] The notes go on to say that:

> Effective management of a TY programme should imply:
>
>> -Involvement
>>
>> -Ownership
>>
>> -Responsibility
>>
>> -Teamwork
>>
>> -A capacity to make decisions and to take
>>
>> appropriate action.[395]

The second cluster day concentrated on:

-Curriculum design

-Curriculum design and methodology

-Assessment

-Co-ordination and Implementation

The sections on co-ordination and implementation are particularly relevant to this study. The co-ordination section included issues such as The role of the Co-ordinator,

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[394]"Programme Management", Additional Information from Action Group to Training Teams, TYP In Career Development, October 6th, 1994.
[395]Ibid.

Curriculum Development and Facilities and Resources. The implementation section concentrated on areas such as Leaving Certificate Material, Absenteeism, Parents, Disruptions, Assessment, Job placement and Planning meetings.

The section also included a discussion of team work and time and stressed the importance of planning.

Analysis of the programme is included in chapter three.

Appendix Three

The Pilot Questionnaires

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE - GENERAL INFORMATION

Q.1 School details *(please tick)*

(a) Type of school:

Community school ____
V.E.C./Community college ____
Comprehensive School ____
Secondary school ____
Other ____

(b) In what year did this school open? ____

(c) In what year did this school begin offering the Transition Year
Programme? ____

(d) Has there been any period since in which the school did not offer the
programme?
Yes ____
No ____
If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(e) Is the Transition Year compulsory for students after third year ?
Yes ____
No ____

(f) How many Transition Year classes does your school have this year? ____

(g) How many students are there in the Transition Year in total this year? ____

(h) How many teachers are teaching Transition Year classes this year? ____

(i) Which of the following programmes is your school offering this year?
(please tick)

LCAP ____ LCVP ____ The Junior Certificate Elementary Programme ____

CSPE ____ A social / personal development programme ____

PART TWO - NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME

Q. 2 Dissemination

(a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(b) Do you, as principal, have reason to refer to the guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purpose

_____

_____

(c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(d) Do you, as Principal, have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purpose

_____

_____

Q. 3 Inservice training/activity

(a) How important do you think inservice training/activity for Principals is in the following areas, when a new course such as the Transition Year is introduced? *(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)*

Inservice topic	Unimportant ....Important				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to staff	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Implementing change in the school	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordination of new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5

(b) Did you, as Principal, receive inservice training on the Transition Year Programme?

Yes ____
No ____

(c) If yes, how would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of a new programme into your school?

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(d) Specifically, please rate the inservice training you received in relation to the following areas:
Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

Inservice topic	Very Poor...............Very Good				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to staff	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Implementing change in the school	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordination of new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) Do you think Department of Education support in the form of resources:

teaching materials, extra teachers, extra time allocation, curriculum development assistance and funding is adequate?

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

Very Poor..........................Very Good

Resource

Teaching materials:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(b) Do you think support of this type is important for the successful implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level?
(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)

Unimportant ....Important

Resource

Teaching materials:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(c) Has your school used the services of the Transition Year Support Team?
Yes ____
No ____

If yes, in what capacity?

PART THREE - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME AT SCHOOL LEVEL

Q. 5 Initial Planning

(a) What process was undertaken at school level in deciding to offer the programme initially?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Was there any parental participation in the initial decision to offer the programme?
Yes ____
No ____
If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(c) Was there community involvement in the initial decision to offer the programme?
Yes ____
No ____
If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(d) Who is involved in making the following curriculum decisions for the Transition Year?
(i) Decisions regarding the format of the course:

_____

_____

(ii) Decisions regarding the curricular content:

_____

_____

(iii) Decisions regarding the organisation of student groups:

_____

_____

(iv) Decisions regarding assessment of students' progress

_____

_____

Q. 6 Teachers

How are those teachers teaching the Transition Year classes
chosen? *(please tick)*
They are volunteers who have expressed an interest in teaching the programme

_____

They are chosen by the Principal / Vice principal when the timetable is drawn up

_____

Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

Q. 7 Co-ordination of the programme

(a) Is there a Transition Year co-ordinator in your school? Yes _____

No _____

(b) If there is a co-ordinator, how was he/she chosen? *(please tick)*
Asked by the Principal _____
Took on duties as part of a post of responsibility _____
Elected by staff members _____
Assumed the role voluntarily _____.
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(c) If the position of co-ordinator is a post of responsibility, is it:
An "A" Post _____
A "B" Post _____

(d) Is there a Transition Year core team in your school? Yes _____

No _____

(e) How were the members of the core team chosen?
Asked by the principal _____
Volunteers _____
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(f) What are the main functions of the core team?

_____

_____

Q. 8 Evaluation

(a) Is the programme evaluated at school level?
Yes _____

No ____
If yes, how often is it evaluated?

_____

_____

(b) If the programme is evaluated, who takes part in this evaluation?

_____

_____

(c) What form does this evaluation take?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.8
(a) What difficulties were anticipated when planning the programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Which, if any, of these difficulties materialised?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(c) What difficulties, if any, have arisen since the introduction of the programme which were not anticipated?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(d) Which forms of support have been most beneficial in running the Transition Year programme in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(e) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

CO-ORDINATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE

Q.1 General information
(in each question, please tick one)
    (a) Age   22 - 29 _____
                   30 - 45 _____
                   over 45 _____

    (b) Sex   Male _____
                Female _____

    (c) Number of years you have been teaching   1 - 5 _____
                                            6 - 10 _____
                                        11 - 20 _____
                                        over 20 _____

    (d) How long have you been a Transition Year co-ordinator? _____

    (e) How did you come to have the post?
        Asked by the Principal _____
        Took on duties as part of a post of responsibility _____
        Elected by staff members _____
        Assumed the role voluntarily _____
        Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

    (f) Do you think timetabled time to carry out your duties is necessary ?
        Yes _____
        No _____

        If yes, how much time do you think is required, per week? _____

    (g) Are you allowed timetabled time to carry out your duties?
        Yes _____
        No _____

        If yes, how much time per week? _____

    (h) Do you think the post should be a post of responsibility?
        Yes _____
        No _____

    (h) If yes, should it be
        An "A" post _____
        A "B" post _____

PART TWO - National implementation of the Transition Year Programme

Q. 2 Dissemination

(a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(b) Do you, as co-ordinator, have reason to the guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

(c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(d) Do you have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify, how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

Q.3 Inservice Training

(a) Do you think inservice training for the post of co-ordinator is necessary?

Yes ____

No ____

(b) Did you receive inservice training for this position?

Yes ____

No ____

(c) If yes, how would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of a new programme into your school?
(please tick)

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

Specifically, how would you rate the training you received in relation to the following areas:
Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor

2 = poor

3 = fair

4 = good

5 = very good

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Programme Management	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordination of new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development/design	1	2	3	4	5

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good
Programme Evaluation	1 2 3 4 5
Organising work experience	1 2 3 4 5
Team work strategies	1 2 3 4 5
Teaching methodology	1 2 3 4 5

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) Do you think Department of Education support in the form of resources:
teaching materials, extra teachers, extra time allocation, curriculum development
assistance and funding is adequate?
Please rate by circling one number where   1 = very poor
              2 = poor
              3 = fair
              4 = good
              5 = very good

	Very Poor.........................Very Good
Resource Teaching materials:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra teachers:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development assistance:	1 2 3 4 5
Funding:	1 2 3 4 5

(b) Do you think support of this type is important for the successful implementation of new programmes at school level?
(please circle one number, 1 being least important and 5 being most important)

	Unimportant ....Important				
Resource					
Teaching Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(c) Have you availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team?
Yes ____
No ____

If yes, in what capacity?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART THREE - Implementation of the Transition Year programme at school level

Q.5 Co-ordination of the programme *(please tick)*

(a) Does our school have a Transition Year Core team?
Yes ____
No ____

(b) If not, do you think a team would be beneficial?
Yes ____
No ____

(d) What would you describe as the main duties of the Transition Year co-ordinator?

_____

_____

_____

Q. 6 Planning

(a) Who is involved in making the following curriculum decisions for the Transition Year?

_____

_____

(ii) Decisions regarding the curricular content:

_____

_____

(iii) Decisions regarding the organisation of student groups:

_____

_____

(iv) Decisions regarding assessment of students' progress:

_____

_____

(v) Decisions regarding what is taught within a module at classroom level:

_____

_____

If more than one person is involved, how are decisions made?

_____

_____

_____

(b) What difficulties in running the Transition Year Programme were anticipated in advance?

_____

_____

(c) Which, if any, of these difficulties have materialised?

_____

_____

_____

(d)What difficulties if any, have arisen which were not anticipated?

_____

_____

(e) Which forms of support have been most beneficial in running the Transition Year programme in your school?

_____

_____

_____

(f) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.7 Factors affecting implementation

How important are the following factors in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level? *(please circle one number, where 1 is unimportant and 5 is very important)*

	Unimportant ....Important				
Team work among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Support of Principal	1	2	3	4	5
Support of other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding	1	2	3	4	5
Support of parents	1	2	3	4	5
Support of community members	1	2	3	4	5
Public status of new course	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Willingness of staff to change	1	2	3	4	5
Department of Education support	1	2	3	4	5
Credibility of course in the eyes of the students	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers' attitude to change	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher motivation	1	2	3	4	5
Inservice training	1	2	3	4	5

Q. 8 Evaluation
   (a) Is the Transition Year Programme in your school evaluated?
      Yes ____
      No ____

If yes, how often is it evaluated?

_____

_____

   (b) If the programme is evaluated, who takes part in this evaluation?

_____

_____

   (c) What form does this evaluation take?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE

Q.1 General information *(please tick)*

    (a) Age   22 - 29 _____

                  30 - 45 _____

                  over 45 _____

    (b) Sex   Male _____

                  Female _____

    (c) Number of years you have been teaching   1 - 5 _____

                                            6 - 10 _____

                                          over 10 _____

    (d) How many years have you been teaching Transition Year classes? _____

PART TWO - National implementation of the Transition Year Programme

Q. 2 Dissemination

    (a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the programme?

    Yes _____

    No _____

    If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

    Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

    (b) Do you have reason to refer to the guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme?

    Yes _____

    No _____

    If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

    (c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?

    Yes _____

    No _____

    If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme?

(please tick one)

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(d) Do you have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in teaching the programme day-to-day?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

Q.3 Inservice Training

(a) Did you attend the in service training for the Transition Year Programme
Yes _____
No _____

(b) If yes, how would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of a new programme into your school?
(please tick)

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(c) Specifically, how would you rate the training you received in relation to the following areas:

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Programme Management	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups	1	2	3	4	5

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good
Co-ordination of new programme	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development/design	1 2 3 4 5
Programme Evaluation	1 2 3 4 5
Organising work experience	1 2 3 4 5
Team work strategies	1 2 3 4 5
Teaching methodology	1 2 3 4 5

(c) Do you think ongoing in service training is necessary?

Yes ____

No ____

(d) If you did not attend inservice training, which areas would you like some training in?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) Do you think Department of Education support in the form of resources: teaching materials, extra teachers, extra time allocation, curriculum development assistance and funding is adequate?

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

	Very Poor.........................Very Good
Resource	
Teaching materials:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra teachers:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development assistance:	1 2 3 4 5
Funding:	1 2 3 4 5

(b) Do you think support of this type is important for the successful implementation of new programmes at school level?
(please circle one number, 1 being least important and 5 being most important)

	Unimportant ....Important
Resource	
Teaching Materials	1 2 3 4 5
Extra teachers:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra time for planning	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development assistance:	1 2 3 4 5
Funding:	1 2 3 4 5

(c) Have you availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team?
Yes _____
No _____
If yes, in what capacity?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART THREE - Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level

Q.5 Co-ordination of the programme

(a) Is there a Transition Year core team in your school?
Yes _____
No _____

(b) If not, do you think a team would be beneficial?
Yes _____
No _____

Q. 6 Planning
(a) Who is involved in making the following curriculum decisions for the Transition Year?

(ii) Decisions regarding the curricular content:

_____

_____

(iii) Decisions regarding the organisation of student groups:

_____

_____

(iv) Decisions regarding assessment and evaluation of students' progress

_____

_____

(v) Decisions regarding what is taught within a module at classroom level:

_____

_____

If more than one person is involved, how are decisions made?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) How do you personally feel about planning a Transition Year programme for your students? *Please rate the following statements by circling one number on each line*

	disagree..................agree
I found planning a programme daunting at the beginning	1 2 3 4 5
I still find planning a programme daunting	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme challenging	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme difficult	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme enjoyable	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme a nuisance	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme rewarding	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	1 2 3 4 5
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	1 2 3 4 5

(c) What extra resources/help in teaching the Transition Year programme would you like?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q.7

(a) What difficulties were anticipated in advance?

_____
_____

(b) Which if any of these difficulties has materialised?

_____
_____
_____

(c)What difficulties if any, have arisen which were not anticipated?

_____
_____

(d) Which forms of support have been most beneficial in running the transition Year programme?

_____
_____
_____

(e) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q.8 Factors affecting implementation of the Transition Year Programme

(a) How important are the following factors in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level? *(please circle one number, where 1 is unimportant and 5 is very important)*

	Unimportant ....Important				
Team work among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Support of Principal	1	2	3	4	5
Support of other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding	1	2	3	4	5

	Unimportant ....Important
Support of parents	1	2	3	4	5
Support of community members	1	2	3	4	5
Public status of new course	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Willingness of staff to change	1	2	3	4	5
Department of Education support	1	2	3	4	5
Credibility of course in the eyes of the students	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers' attitude to change	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher motivation	1	2	3	4	5
Inservice training	1	2	3	4	5

If there are any other factors you would regard as important in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme, please state them and rate 1-5.

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Do you find that your teaching methods are different in Transition Year classes?
   Yes, very different _____
   Quite different _____
   Slightly different _____
   Much the same _____
   It varies from class to class _____

Additional Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix Four

Sample Letters

Initial Letter to Principals

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

1st March 1997

Dear (Principal's name),

I am currently researching the Transition Year Programme for a thesis to be submitted in part fulfilment of the Masters in Education course at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. The title of the study is "The Transition Year - A Case Study in the Implementation of Curriculum Change". An increase in the rate of change in the curriculum in recent years in the form of new or updated courses for students has prompted interest in how schools cope with innovation and respond to the challenge of introducing new courses. In the case of the Transition Year there is the added dimension of the freedom to plan the programme at school level.

I am teaching in Riversdale Community College, in Blanchardstown and hope to include six schools in the Dublin area in my study. I am writing to ask if you would agree to allow me to administer questionnaires about the Transition Year Programme in your school. This would involve:

1. A brief meeting with the Principal when delivering the questionnaires.

2. A questionnaire to be completed by the Principal.

3. A questionnaire to be completed by the Transition Year Co-ordinator, if one exists.

4. A questionnaire to be completed by the Transition Year teachers - if possible at your next Transition Year/staff meeting.

I appreciate the demands on time for you and your teaching staff. Accordingly, I have designed the questionnaires to facilitate speed of answering.

All information is strictly confidential and for the purposes of research only. I would be very grateful for your co-operation and would be happy to furnish you with the findings of my research if you so wish. I will contact you by telephone on Thursday, March 6th.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane.

Cover letter to contact person (either Principal or co-ordinator) included with box of questionnaires.

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

6th March 1997

Dear (name of contact person),

Thank you for agreeing to circulate these questionnaires to your staff. Please find herein:

1. A questionnaire to be completed by the Principal.

2. A questionnaire to be completed by the Transition Year Co-ordinator, if one exists.

3. Questionnaires to be completed by those teachers teaching Transition Year classes in the academic year 1996/97.

The questionnaires are "user friendly" and are designed to be completed quickly. The questionnaires for Principal and Transition Year co-ordinator should take about 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire for teachers is shorter.

Each questionnaire comes with a covering letter and I have provided an envelope in which each questionnaire can be returned. This box can be used for completed questionnaires. I hope to collect the questionnaires on Wednesday, March 26th.

Thank you again for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane.

Cover letters to Principals, co-ordinators and Transition Year teachers accompanying the questionnaires.

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

6th March 1997

Dear Transition Year Teacher,

I am currently researching the Transition Year Programme in part fulfilment of the Masters in Education course at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. The title of the study is "The Transition Year - A Case Study in the Implementation of Curriculum Change". An increase in the rate of change in the curriculum in recent years in the form of new or updated courses for students has prompted interest in how schools cope with innovation and respond to the challenge of introducing new courses. In the case of the Transition Year there is the added dimension of the freedom to plan the programme at school level.

Your Principal has kindly allowed me circulate this questionnaire to members of the staff. The aim of the research is to gather reactions from teachers on the way in which the Transition Year has been implemented around the country. The research is also collecting information on how schools are responding to change in developing the programme and how teachers feel about their new role in curriculum development.

I appreciate the demands on your time and have designed the questionnaire to facilitate speed of answering. All information is strictly confidential and for the purposes of research only. An envelope has been provided with each questionnaire to ensure confidentiality and I will be collecting the completed questionnaires in person.

I am very grateful for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

6th March 1997

Dear Transition Year Co-ordinator,

I am currently researching the Transition Year Programme in part fulfilment of the Masters in Education course at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. The title of the study is "The Transition Year - A Case Study in the Implementation of Curriculum Change". An increase in the rate of change in the curriculum in recent years in the form of new or updated courses for students has prompted interest in how schools cope with innovation and respond to the challenge of introducing new courses. In the case of the Transition Year there is the added dimension of the freedom to plan the programme at school level.

Your principal has kindly allowed me circulate this questionnaire to members of the staff. The aim of the research is to gather reactions from teachers on the way in which the Transition Year has been implemented around the country. The research is also collecting information on how schools are responding to change in developing the programme and how teachers feel about their new role in curriculum development.

I appreciate the demands on your time and have designed the questionnaire to facilitate speed of answering. All information is strictly confidential and for the purposes of research only. An envelope has been provided with each questionnaire to ensure confidentiality and I will be collecting the completed questionnaires in person from your Principal/Co-ordinator.

I am very grateful for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

6th March 1997

Dear Principal,

I am currently researching the Transition Year Programme in part fulfilment of the Masters in Education course at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. The title of the study is "The Transition Year - A Case Study in the Implementation of Curriculum Change". An increase in the rate of change in the curriculum in recent years in the form of new or updated courses for students has prompted interest in how schools cope with innovation and respond to the challenge of introducing new courses. In the case of the Transition Year there is the added dimension of the freedom to plan the programme at school level.

The aim of the research is to gather reactions from teachers on the way in which the Transition Year has been implemented around the country. The research is also collecting information on how schools are responding to change in developing the programme and how teachers feel about their new role in curriculum development.

I appreciate the demands on your time and have designed the questionnaire to facilitate speed of answering. All information is strictly confidential and for the purposes of research only. An envelope has been provided with each questionnaire to ensure confidentiality and I will be collecting the completed questionnaires in person.

I am very grateful for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane

Thank you letter sent to each school

21 The Nurseries,

Forest Road,

Swords,

Co. Dublin.

11/4/97

Dear (name of contact person),

Please extend my sincere thanks to your staff for their co-operation in completing my questionnaires on the Transition Year Programme. I appreciate how busy you all are and am grateful for your time and effort.

I wish you and your students well for the remainder of the school year.

Yours faithfully,

Patricia Deane.

Appendix Five

The Questionnaires

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE - GENERAL INFORMATION

Q.1 School details *(please tick)*

(a) Type of school:

Community school ____
V.E.C./Community college ____
Comprehensive School ____
Secondary school ____
Other ____

(b) In what year did this school open? ____

(c) In what year did you become Principal of this school? ____

(d) In what year did this school begin offering the Transition Year Programme? ____

(e) Has there been any period since in which the school did not offer the programme?
Yes ____
No ____
If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(f) Is the Transition Year compulsory for students after third year ?
Yes ____
No ____
If no, how are students selected?

_____

_____

Questions (g) to (k) refer to **this academic year** 1996/97.

(g) How many students are there in total in the school? ____

(h) How many students are there in the Transition Year in total? ____

(i) How many Transition Year classes does your school have? ____

(j) How many teachers are teaching Transition Year classes? ____

(k) Which of the following programmes is your school offering?
(please tick)

    LCAP _____ LCVP _____ The Junior Certificate Elementary Programme _____

    CSPE _____ A social / personal development programme _____

PART TWO - NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME

If you were appointed as Principal after the reintroduction of the Transition Year Programme in 1993 and feel unable to answer the questions in this section, please consult another member of staff.

Q. 2 Dissemination

(a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the programme?

Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(b) Do you, as Principal, have reason to refer to the guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes _____
No _____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purpose:

_____

_____

(c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?

Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(d) Do you, as Principal, have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in the day-to-day running of the programme?

Yes _____
No _____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purpose:

_____

_____

Q. 3 Inservice training/activity

(a) How **important** do you think inservice training/activity for Principals is **in the following areas**, when a new course such as the Transition Year is introduced? *(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)*

Inservice topic	Unimportant ....Important				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to staff	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Implementing change in the school	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups (banded/mixed etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordination of new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development	1	2	3	4	5
Other _____ *(please specify and rate)*	1	2	3	4	5

(b) Did you, as Principal, receive inservice training on the Transition Year Programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please answer part (c) and part (d) if no, please proceed to part (e)

(c) If yes, how would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of a new programme into your school?

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(d) Specifically, please rate the inservice training you received in relation to the following areas:

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

Inservice topic	Very Poor...............Very Good
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1 2 3 4 5
Curricular content of the new programme	1 2 3 4 5
Timetabling requirements	1 2 3 4 5
Resources for the new programme	1 2 3 4 5
Funding/budgeting	1 2 3 4 5
Introducing the new programme to staff	1 2 3 4 5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1 2 3 4 5
Implementing change in the school	1 2 3 4 5
Organising student groups	1 2 3 4 5
Co-ordination of new programme	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development	1 2 3 4 5
Other _____ *(please specify and rate)*	1 2 3 4 5

(e) In which areas would you like to receive inservice training if any?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) Do you think Department of Education support in the form of resources: teaching materials, extra teachers, extra time allocation, curriculum development assistance and funding is **adequate**?

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

	Very Poor..........................Very Good
Resource	
Teaching materials:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra teachers:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development assistance:	1 2 3 4 5
Funding:	1 2 3 4 5

(b) Do you think support of this type is **important** for the successful implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level?
(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)

	Unimportant ....Important
Resource	
Teaching materials:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra teachers:	1 2 3 4 5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development assistance:	1 2 3 4 5
Funding:	1 2 3 4 5

(c) Has your school used the services of the Transition Year Support Team?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, in what capacity?

_____

_____

PART THREE - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME AT SCHOOL LEVEL

Q. 5 Initial Planning

(a) What process was undertaken at school level in deciding to offer the programme initially?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Was there any parental participation in the initial decision to offer the programme?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(c) Was there community involvement in the initial decision to offer the programme?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, please specify

_____

_____

(d) Who is involved in making the following curriculum decisions for the Transition Year?

(i) Decisions regarding the format of the course: - e.g.. whether there will be modules and core subjects, modules only, core subjects only, length of modules, no. of periods per week, etc.

(please tick - you may tick more than one)

Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others (*please specify*)

(ii) Decisions regarding the **curricular content**: - which subjects and/or activities will be included in the timetable:

(please tick - you may tick more than one)

Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others (*please specify*)

(iii) Decisions regarding the organisation of student groups:

(please tick - you may tick more than one)

Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others (*please specify*)

(iv) Decisions regarding assessment of students' progress
(please tick - you may tick more than one)
Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others *(please specify)*

_____

_____

Q. 6 Teachers

How are those teachers teaching the Transition Year classes
chosen? *(please tick)*
They are volunteers who have expressed an interest in teaching the programme

____

They are chosen by the principal / vice principal when the timetable is drawn up

____

A mixture of the two above ____

Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

Q. 7 Co-ordination of the programme

(a) Is there a Transition Year co-ordinator in your school? Yes ____

No ____

(b) If there is a co-ordinator, how was he/she chosen? *(please tick)*
Asked by the Principal ____
Took on duties as part of a post of responsibility ____
Elected by staff members ____
Assumed the role voluntarily ____
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(c) If the position of co-ordinator is a post of responsibility, is it:
An "A" Post ____
A "B" Post ____

(d) Is there a Transition Year core team in your school? Yes ____

No ____

(e) How were the members of the core team chosen?
Asked by the principal ____
Volunteers ____
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(f) What are the main functions of the core team?

_____

_____

Q. 8 Evaluation

(a) Is the programme evaluated at school level?
Yes ____
No ____
If yes, how often is it evaluated?
Once every two years (or less) ____
Once a year ____
More than once a year ____ *(please specify)* _____

(b) If the programme is evaluated, who takes part in this evaluation?
The whole staff ____
All the Transition Year Teachers of that year ____
The Transition Year Core Team only ____
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(c) What form does this evaluation take?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.8

(a) What difficulties were anticipated when planning the programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Which, if any, of these difficulties materialised?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(c) What difficulties, if any, have arisen since the introduction of the programme which were not anticipated?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(d) Which forms of support have been most beneficial in running the Transition Year Programme in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(e) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.
Please place it in the envelope provided and seal it.

CO-ORDINATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE

Q.1 General information
(in each question, please tick one)

(a) Age   21 - 29 _____
30 - 45 _____
over 45 _____

(b) Sex   Male _____
Female _____

(c) Number of years you have been teaching   1 - 5 _____
6 - 10 _____
11 - 20 _____
over 20 _____

(d) How long have you been a Transition Year co-ordinator? _____

(e) How did you come to have the post?
Asked by the Principal _____
Took on duties as part of a post of responsibility _____
Elected by staff members _____
Assumed the role voluntarily _____
Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(f) Do you think timetabled time to carry out your duties is necessary ?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how much time do you think is required, per week? _____

(g) Are you allowed timetabled time to carry out your duties?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how much time per week? _____

(h) Do you think the post should be a post of responsibility?
Yes _____
No _____

(i) If yes, should it be
An "A" post _____
A "B" post _____

PART TWO - National implementation of the Transition Year Programme

Q. 2 Dissemination

(a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(b) Do you, as co-ordinator, have reason to refer to the *Guidelines* in the day-to-day running of the programme?
Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

(c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?

Yes ____
No ____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor ____ Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Very Good ____

(d) Do you have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in the day-to-day running of the programme?
Yes ____
No ____

If yes, please specify, how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

Q.3 Inservice Training

(a) Do you think inservice training for the post of co-ordinator is necessary?
Yes _____
No _____

(b) Did you receive inservice training for this position?
Yes _____
No _____
If yes, please answer part (c) and (d). If no, please proceed to part (e).

(c) If yes, how would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of a new programme into your school?
(please tick)

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(d) Specifically, how would you rate the training you received in relation to the following areas:
Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Funding/budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Organising student groups	1	2	3	4	5
Co-ordination of new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development/design	1	2	3	4	5

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good
Programme Evaluation	1　2　3　4　5
Organising work experience	1　2　3　4　5
Team work strategies	1　2　3　4　5
Teaching methodology	1　2　3　4　5
Other _____ *(please specify and rate)*	1　2　3　4　5

Please proceed to Question 4.

(e) If you did not receive inservice training, in which areas would you like inservice training activities?

_____

_____

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) How would you rate Department of Education support for the Transition Year Programme in the following areas ?
Please rate by circling one number where　1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

	Very Poor.........................Very Good
Resource	
Teaching materials:	1　2　3　4　5
Extra teachers:	1　2　3　4　5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1　2　3　4　5
Curriculum development assistance:	1　2　3　4　5
Funding:	1　2　3　4　5

(b) Do you think support of this type is **important** for the successful implementation of new programmes at school level?
(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)

Unimportant ....Important

Resource

Teaching Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(c) Have you availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, in what capacity?

_____
_____
_____
_____

PART THREE - Implementation of the Transition Year programme at school level

Q.5 Co-ordination of the programme *(please tick)*

(a) Does your school have a Transition Year core team?
Yes _____
No _____

(b) If not, do you think a team would be beneficial?
Yes _____
No _____

(c) Does your school have any contact with other schools in the area about the Transition Year Programme?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, what form does it take and for what purpose?

_____

_____

_____

_____

If no, would you welcome contact with other schools while planning and implementing the programme in your school?

    Yes _____

    No _____

(d) What would you describe as the main duties of the Transition Year co-ordinator?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q. 6 Planning

(a) Who is involved in making the following curriculum decisions for the Transition Year?

(i) Decisions regarding the format of the course: - e.g.. whether there will be modules and core subjects, modules only, core subjects only, length of modules, no. of periods per week, etc.

(please tick - you may tick more than one)

Principal _____

Senior staff members _____

Transition Year co-ordinator _____

Transition Year core team _____

Transition Year teachers _____

Other teaching staff _____

Parents _____

Community members _____

Local employers _____

Others *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(ii) Decisions regarding the curricular content: - which subjects and/or activities will be included in the timetable

(please tick - you may tick more than one)

Principal _____

Senior staff members _____

Transition Year co-ordinator _____

Transition Year core team _____

Transition Year teachers _____

Other teaching staff _____

Parents _____

Community members _____

Local employers _____

Others *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(iii) Decisions regarding the organisation of student groups: (eg. streaming, banding, mixed ability groups etc.)
(please tick - you may tick more than one)
Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team ____
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others *(please specify)*

(iv) Decisions regarding assessment of students' progress
(please tick - you may tick more than one)
Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team ____
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others *(please specify)*

(v) Decisions regarding what is taught within a module at classroom level: teaching methodology and content.
(please tick - you may tick more than one)
Principal ____
Senior staff members ____
Transition Year co-ordinator ____
Transition Year core team ____
Transition Year teachers ____
Other teaching staff ____
Parents ____
Community members ____
Local employers ____
Others *(please specify)*

If more than one person is involved, how are decisions made? (e.g.. at whole staff meetings, meetings of TY teachers, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) What difficulties in running the Transition Year Programme were anticipated in advance?

_____

_____

_____

(c) Which, if any, of these difficulties have materialised?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(d)What difficulties if any, have arisen which were not anticipated?

_____

_____

_____

(e) Which forms of support have been most beneficial in running the Transition Year programme in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(f) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.7 Factors affecting implementation
How important are the following features/factors in the implementation of the
Transition Year Programme at school level? *(please circle one number, where 1 is
unimportant and 5 is very important)*

Unimportant ....Important

Team work among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Size of school	1	2	3	4	5
Support of Principal	1	2	3	4	5
Support of other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Average age of teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Academic success of school	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching experience of staff	1	2	3	4	5
Funding	1	2	3	4	5
Support of parents	1	2	3	4	5
Whether or not the school is accustomed to change	1	2	3	4	5
Public status of new course	1	2	3	4	5
Support of community members	1	2	3	4	5
Academic ability of students	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Willingness of staff to change	1	2	3	4	5
Department of Education support	1	2	3	4	5
Social background of students	1	2	3	4	5
Pupil perception of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers' attitude to change	1	2	3	4	5

	Unimportant ....Important
Teacher motivation	1 2 3 4 5
Inservice training	1 2 3 4 5
Equipment available in school building	1 2 3 4 5

If there are any other factors you would regard as important in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme, please state them and rate 1-5.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q. 8 Evaluation

(a) Is the Transition Year Programme in your school evaluated?
    Yes ____
    No ____

If yes, how often is it evaluated?
More than once a year ____ *(please specify)* _____
Once a year ____
Once every two years (or less) ____

(b) If the programme is evaluated, who takes part in this evaluation?
    The whole staff ____
    All the Transition Year Teachers of that year ____
    The Transition Year Core Team only ____
    Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

(c) What form does this evaluation take?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.
Please place it in the envelope provided and seal it.

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE

Q.1 General information *(please tick)*

(a) Age   21 - 29 _____
               30 - 45 _____
               over 45 _____

(b) Sex   Male _____
               Female _____

(c) Number of years you have been teaching   1 - 5 _____
                                              6 - 10 _____
                                              over 10 _____

(d) How many years have you been teaching Transition Year classes? _____

PART TWO - National implementation of the Transition Year Programme

Q. 2 Dissemination

(a) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme in your school?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Department of Education Transition Year Guidelines 1994/95* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(b) Do you have reason to refer to the guidelines in the day-to-day running of the programme?
Yes _____
No _____
If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

(c) Do you refer to the *Department of Education Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the programme?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, how would you rate the value of the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* while planning the Transition Year Programme? *(please tick one)*

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(d) Do you have reason to refer to the *Transition Year Programme Resource Material Folder* in teaching the programme day-to-day?
Yes _____
No _____

If yes, please specify how often and for what purposes:

_____

_____

Q.3 Inservice Training

(a) Did you receive inservice training in 1994/95 for the Transition Year Programme
Yes _____
No _____

If no, please proceed to part (d), if yes, please answer part (b) and (c) before proceeding to question 4.

(b) How would you rate it **overall** as preparation for the implementation of the new Transition Year Programme in your school?
(please tick)

Very Poor _____ Poor _____ Fair _____ Good _____ Very Good _____

(c) Specifically, how would you rate the training you received in relation to the following areas:

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

Inservice topic	Very Poor .... Very Good				
Rationale and philosophy of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Curricular content of the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Timetabling requirements	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching Materials for the programme	1	2	3	4	5

Inservice topic	Very Poor ....Very Good
Funding/budgeting	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum development/design	1 2 3 4 5
Programme Management	1 2 3 4 5
Introducing the new programme to parents	1 2 3 4 5
Assessment	1 2 3 4 5
Organising student groups	1 2 3 4 5
Co-ordination of new programme	1 2 3 4 5
Programme Evaluation	1 2 3 4 5
Organising work experience	1 2 3 4 5
Team work strategies	1 2 3 4 5
Teaching methodology	1 2 3 4 5
Other _____ *(please specify and rate)*	1 2 3 4 5

Please proceed to part (e)

(d) If you did not attend inservice training, which areas would you like some training in?

_____

_____

_____

(e) Do you think inservice training should be ongoing?

Yes ____

No ____

Q. 4 Department of Education support for the programme

(a) How would you rate Department of Education support for the Transition Year programme in the following areas?

Please rate by circling one number where 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = fair
4 = good
5 = very good

	Very Poor.........................Very Good				
Resource					
Teaching materials:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning and meetings	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(b) Do you think support of this type is **important** for the successful implementation of new programmes at school level?

(please circle one number, 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important)

	Unimportant ....Important				
Resource					
Teaching Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Extra teachers:	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Funding:	1	2	3	4	5

(c) Have you availed of the services of the Transition Year Support Team?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, in what capacity?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART THREE - Implementation of the Transition Year Programme at school level

Q.5 Co-ordination of the programme

(a) Is there a Transition Year core team in your school?

Yes _____

No _____

If not, do you think a team would be beneficial?

Yes _____

No _____

(b) Does your school have any contact with other schools on the area about the Transition Year Programme?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, what from does it take and for what purpose

_____

_____

_____

_____

If no, would you welcome contact with other schools while planning and implementing the programme in your school?

Yes _____

No _____

Q. 6

(a) How do you personally feel about planning a Transition Year programme for your students? *Please rate the following statements by circling one number on each line*

disagree...................agree

I found planning a programme daunting at the beginning	1	2	3	4	5
I **still** find planning a programme daunting	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme challenging	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme difficult	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme a nuisance	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme rewarding	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme a pleasant change from teaching mandated programmes	1	2	3	4	5
I find planning a programme encourages teamwork in my school	1	2	3	4	5
I would rather stick to the Traditional Leaving Certificate	1	2	3	4	5

(b) What extra resources/help in teaching the Transition Year programme would you like?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(c) What advice would you give to a school which is starting a Transition Year Programme?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.7 Factors affecting implementation of the Transition Year Programme

(a) How important are the following features/factors in the implementation of the
Transition Year Programme at school level? *(please circle one number, where 1 is
unimportant and 5 is very important)*

Unimportant ....Important

Team work among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Size of school	1	2	3	4	5
Support of Principal	1	2	3	4	5
Support of other staff members	1	2	3	4	5
Average age of teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5
Resources for the new programme	1	2	3	4	5
Academic success of school	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching experience of staff	1	2	3	4	5
Funding	1	2	3	4	5
Support of parents	1	2	3	4	5
Whether or not the school is accustomed to change	1	2	3	4	5
Public status of new course	1	2	3	4	5
Support of community members	1	2	3	4	5
Academic ability of students	1	2	3	4	5
Extra time for planning	1	2	3	4	5
Curriculum development assistance:	1	2	3	4	5
Willingness of staff to change	1	2	3	4	5
Department of Education support	1	2	3	4	5
Social background of students	1	2	3	4	5

	Unimportant ....Important
Pupil perception of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers' attitude to change	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher motivation	1	2	3	4	5
Inservice training	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment available in school building	1	2	3	4	5

If there are any other factors you would regard as important in the implementation of the Transition Year Programme, please state them and rate 1-5.

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) Do you find that your teaching methods are different in Transition Year classes?
Yes, very different ____
Quite different ____
Slightly different ____
Not very different ____
Much the same ____
It varies from class to class ____

Additional Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.
Please place it in the envelope provided and seal it.

Appendix Six

Additional Results Tables

Table (i)

Department of Education Guidelines - Rated by Co-ordinators as a

Resource while Planning a Transition Year Programme

	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	0	0
Good	3	75
Fair	1	25
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Totals	4	100

Figure (a)

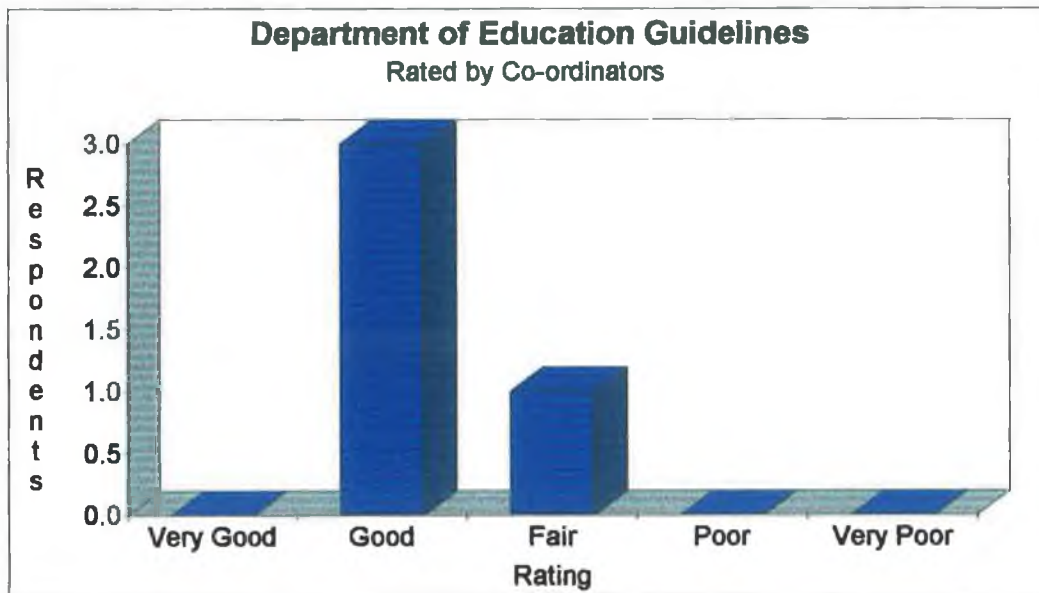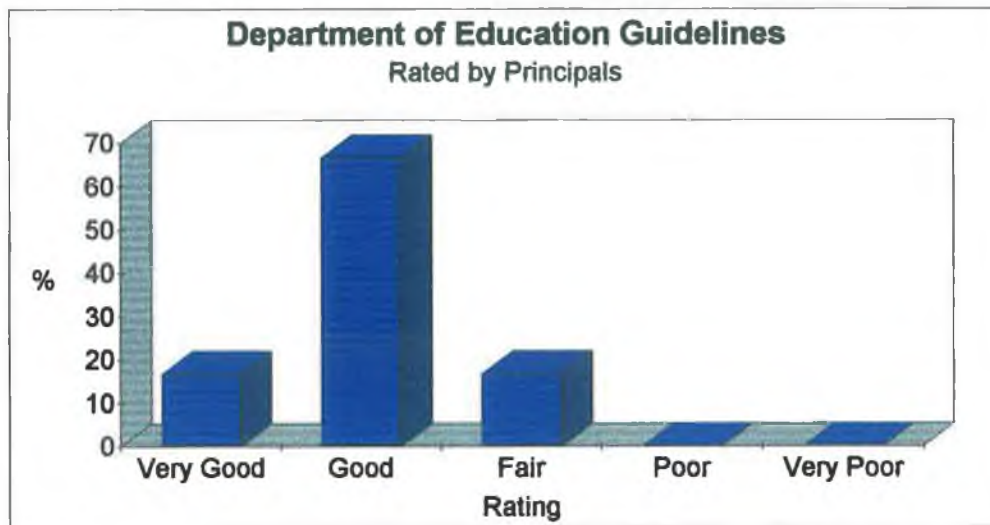Department of Education Guidelines — Rated by Co-ordinators

Table (ii)

Department of Education Guidelines - Rated by

Principals as a Resource while Planning a Transition Year Programme

	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	1	16.7
Good	4	66.6
Fair	1	16.7
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Totals	6	100

Figure (b)

Department of Education Guidelines
Rated by Principals

Table (iii)

Department of Education Resource Folder

- Rated by Co-ordinators as a Resource while Planning a Programme

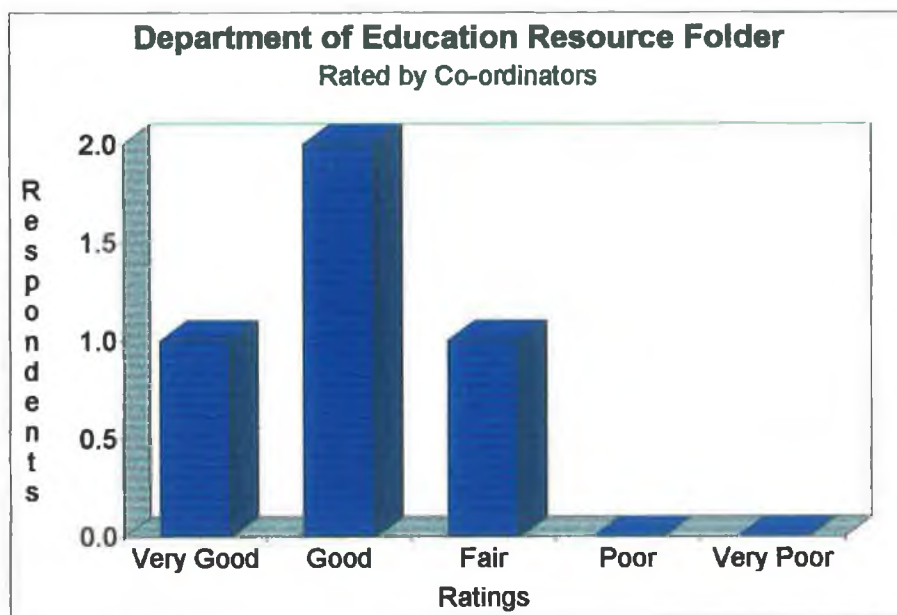|	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	1	25
Good	2	50
Fair	1	25
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Totals	4	100

Figure (c)

Table (iv)

Department of Education Resource Folder

- Rated by Principals as a Resource while Planning a Programme

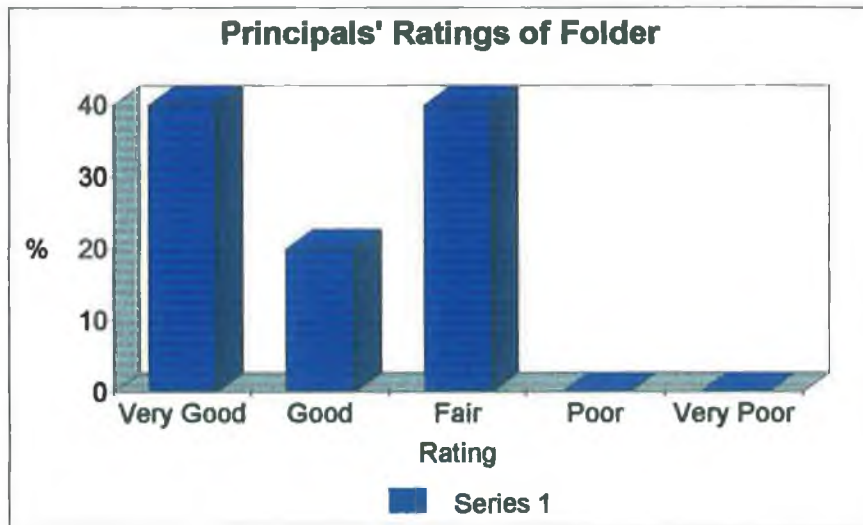|	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Very Good	2	40
Good	1	20
Fair	2	40
Poor	0	0
Very Poor	0	0
Totals	5	100

Figure (d)

Table (v)

Co-ordinators' Ratings of Inservice Training

Inservice Topic	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor	Total Rating	Mean Rating
						Max=15	
Resources for the new programme	0	2	1	0	0	11	3.67
Assessment	0	2	1	0	0	11	3.67
Programme Evaluation	0	1	2	0	0	10	3.33
Rationale and Philosophy of TY	0	2	0	0	1	9	3
Curriculum development/design	0	0	3	0	0	9	3
Introducing TY to Parents	0	1	1	0	1	8	2.67
Organising Student Groups	0	1	1	0	1	8	2.67
Co-ordination of TY Programme	0	1	1	0	1	8	2.67
Organising Work Experience	0	1	1	0	1	8	2.67
Curricular Content	0	0	2	0	1	7	2.33
Timetabling Requirements	0	1	0	1	1	7	2.33
Teaching Methodology	0	0	1	2	0	7	2.33
Teamwork Strategies	0	0	1	2	0	7	2.33
Funding/budgeting	0	0	0	2	1	5	1.67

Table (vi)

Principals' Ratings of their Inservice Training

Inservice Topic	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor	Total Rating	Mean Ratings
						Max=10	
Rationale and Philosophy of TY	1	0	1	0	0	8	4
Curricular Content	1	0	0	1	0	7	3.5
Introducing the programme to staff	0	1	1	0	0	7	3.5
Resources for the programme	0	0	2	0	0	6	3
Introducing TY to Parents	0	1	0	0	1	5	2.5
Implementing change in the school	0	1	0	0	1	5	2.5
Co-ordination of TY Programme	0	0	1	1	0	5	2.5
Curriculum Development	0	0	1	1	0	5	2.5
Timetabling Requirements	0	2	0	2	0	4	2
Funding/budgeting	0	0	1	0	1	4	2
Organising Student Groups	0	0	1	0	1	4	2

Table (vii)

Principals' Ratings of the Importance of Different Inservice Topics

Inservice Topic	Unimportant........Important					Total Rating	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	Max = 30	
Introducing the programme to staff	0	0	0	1	5	29	4.83
Timetabling Requirements	0	0	1	0	5	28	4.67
Resources for the programme	0	0	1	0	5	28	4.67
Funding/budgeting	0	0	1	0	5	28	4.67
Curriculum Development	0	0	1	1	4	27	4.5
Introducing TY to Parents	0	0	0	4	2	26	4.3
Rationale and Philosophy of TY	0	0	1	3	2	25	4.17
Implementing change in the school	0	0	0	5	1	25	4.17
Co-ordination of TY Programme	0	0	1	3	2	25	4.17
Curricular Content	0	0	2	3	1	23	3.83
Organising Student Groups	0	1	3	2	0	19	3.17

Table (viii)

Department of Education Support for the Programme

- Rated by Transition Year Co-ordinators

Type of Support	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor	Total Rating	Mean Rating
	5	4	3	2	1	Max = 25	
Curriculum Assistance	0	2	3	0	0	17	3.4
Teaching Materials	1	1	1	2	0	16	3.2
Funding	0	0	3	2	0	13	2.6
Extra Teachers	0	0	1	3	1	10	2
Extra Planning Time	0	0	0	3	2	8	1.6

Table (ix)

The Importance of Different Types of Department of Education Support

- Rated by Transition Year Co-ordinators

Type of Support	Unimportant........................Important					Total Ratings	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max = 25	
Curriculum Assistance	0	0	0	1	4	24	4.8
Funding	0	0	0	1	4	24	4.8
Extra Planning Time	0	0	1	1	3	22	4.4
Extra Teachers	0	0	1	3	1	20	4
Teaching Materials	0	0	2	2	1	19	3.8

Table (x)

Department of Education Support for the Programme

- Rated by Principals

Type of Support	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor	Totals	Mean Ratings
						Max = 30	
Teaching Materials	0	2	2	1	1	17	2.83
Curriculum Assistance	0	2	2	1	1	17	2.83
Funding	0	0	2	2	2	12	2
Extra Teachers	0	0	1	1	4	9	1.5
Extra Planning Time	0	0	0	0	6	6	1

Table (xi)

The Importance of Different Types of Department of Education Support

- Rated by Principals

Type of Support	Unimportant....................Important					Totals	Mean Ratings
	1	2	3	4	5	Max = 30	
Curriculum Assistance	0	0	0	1	5	29	4.83
Funding	0	0	0	1	5	29	4.83
Teaching Materials	0	0	0	2	4	28	4.67
Extra Planning Time	0	0	0	2	4	28	4.67
Extra Teachers	0	0	0	3	3	27	4.5

Appendix Seven

The Development of the Transition Year Programme

- Comparing the Guidelines

Comparison is broken into two tables. Table One compares the three sets of guidelines under the headings Introduction, Rationale/Aims and Organisation/Roles. Table Two discusses the headings Programme Structure/Curriculum, Assessment/Certification and Evaluation.

Table One

	1986 C.E.B. Guidelines	1987/88 "Notes for Schools"	1994/95 Guidelines
Introduction	Issued to assist Principals and staff in the initial introduction of the programme. Issued soon after Ages for Learning - outlines a TY as an optional year between junior and senior cycles.	No mention of C.E.B. guidelines. Refers the reader to Ages for Learning and stresses that it is not permitted to use the year as an extra Leaving Cert. year	TY is recognised as the 1st year of a 3 year cycle.Guidelines are said to "update" previous guidelines" and to facilitate those schools offering the programme for the first time
Rationale/ Aims	Described as acting as a bridge "from a state of dependence to a more autonomous and participative role in regard to thier own future". Training for jobs is not a principal aim but a list of 15 skills competencies the student should reach is given.	Designed to cater for students who are "too young and immature" to proceed to the Leaving Cert., third level or work. Education for Maturity and social and personal development are principal aims.	A broad range of educational experiences are offered with increased maturity and responsibility as main aims. A mission statement is given which stresses the importance of work experience. The involvement of Parent and the community is also highlighted.
Organisation/ Roles	Lots of information on the role of the Principal and co-ordinator. Little mention of TY teachers. Communication with parents and students is stressed.	Notes on planning and resources. A team of teachers and a co-ordinator is recommended as is the inclusion of all staff.	Whole school approach is recommended. Co-ordination and planning, teamwork and staff development are all discussed.

Table Two

	1986 C.E.B. Guidelines	1987/88 "Notes for Schools"	1994/95 Guidelines
Curriculum	Elements of academic/ technical/aesthetic studies and social and personal development and careers education. Learning strategies such as discovery learning and personal responsibility for learning are discussed.	Study Areas such as communication skills, functional maths, environmental studies, practical subjects, P.E., Philosophy and Religion are included. A work Experience element is suggested separately. Learner activity is stressed.	Remediation Studies, Interdisciplinary work and Work Experience are suggested. An appendix outlines suggested curricular areas, new additions include information technology and business and enterprise skills. Negotiated and activity based learning are among suggested teaching methods.
Assessment/ certification	A variety of assessment methods suggested with emphasis on self assessment and continuous assessment. Student record/profile is suggested.It is suggested that the CEB may provide certification in the future.	Continuous and self assessment are stressed. No Dept. of Ed. certification School certification is suggested.	Student involvement in formative and diagnostic assessment is stressed. The idea of a student profile by way of final certification is expanded.
Evaluation	Internal school-based evaluation as an integral part of the programme is suggested. An annual evaluation report is requested.	Regular review and ongoing planning are suggested with fundamental changes reported to the Dept. of Ed.	Regular internal evaluation by the TY team is suggested with monitring and external evaluation of the programme given as the responsibility of the inspectorate and the psychological service.

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