

Teachers Speak: Impact of Restructuring on the Daily Lives
of Elementary Educators

by


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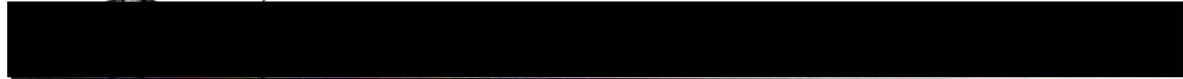
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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard


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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines the impact of restructuring on the daily lives of eleven educators across three elementary schools in two rural coastal communities of British Columbia. Specifically, the study explores the changes that have taken place in these communities and elementary schools over the past five or six years. The study also examines the effects on both the professional and personal dimensions of the educators' lives. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups provided the data for this inquiry. Results of a within-case analysis of the each school or "case" are presented. A cross-case analysis then identifies common themes across participants. These themes include continuous change, altered accessibility, and increasing pressures, and heightened concerns and uncertainties. Educators also describe specific behavioral, emotional, and health responses to restructuring. Findings of this inquiry suggest that elementary educators are influenced by restructuring initiatives. Implications for educators, school districts, and educational policy are discussed as well as directions for future research.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The lives of Canadians have been significantly affected by political, economic and social change over the past decade (Brodie, 1995). These changes and the processes they engender are typically referred to as “restructuring.” Hanly (1998) defines restructuring as “an array of processes including downsizing, deregulation, privatization, and the reorganization of companies or government services to reduce debt and to increase their competitiveness or efficiency” (p. 43). Restructuring has been characterized by government cutbacks, and the closing, or merging of businesses, and/or re-organizing hospitals, boards of education, schools, and health care services (Groarke, 1998). Although there appears to be consensus in academic circles that restructuring is occurring across Canada and in other parts of the world, perspectives on restructuring are mixed (Groarke, 1998, Leach & Winson, 1995).

Writers such as Hanley (1998), for instance, describe restructuring as a route to eliminating budget deficits, reducing debt loads, and creating a “leaner, meaner” economy (p. 42). Groarke (1998) describes changes such as downsizing or “rightsizing” as a means of heightening organizational efficiency and securing a competitive position for Canada in the twenty-first century globalized economy. Reports also indicate that restructuring creates opportunities for individuals and communities to develop new ways of working, including the development of exciting new industries and community partnerships (Coastal Community Network, 2002).

On the other hand, Bakker (1996) and Leach and Winson (1995) emphasize that economic restructuring brings about unemployment, underemployment and job uncertainty. Indeed, a host of authors (Brodie, 1995; Cohen, 1994; Leach, 2000; Neis &

Grzetic, 2001; Neysmith, 2000) point out that restructuring affects individuals, public and private organizations, and communities. These scholars highlight ethical concerns created by restructuring and the new post-industrial economy (Groarke, 1998).

Writers and researchers in the field of education also express concern for the immediate and long term consequences of restructuring on education, educational institutions, and educators. Academics from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada have addressed the changing nature of schools and of teachers' work (Acker, 1999; Apple, 1996; Cheng & Couture, 2000; Smyth, 2001). This academic discourse focuses on self-managing schools (Smyth, 1993), the intensification of teachers' work (Acker, 1999; Apple, 1996; Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid & Shacklock, 2000), the deprofessionalization of teaching (Blackmore, 1999; Seddon, 1997), devolution of responsibility and increasing choice in education (Daun, 2002; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998), decreasing expenditure to public education despite rising standards or expectations (McGuire & Ball, 1994), and curricular change and standardized testing (Apple, 1996; Cheng & Couture, 2000). Canadian studies on teachers' work and working conditions further suggest that recent educational changes are increasing educators' stress levels and reducing their quality of life (Harvey & Spinney, 2000; Naylor, 2001).

In Canada, as well as other countries of the Western world, teachers' work is being characterized by writers in the field as increasingly difficult Smyth (2000) and Hargreaves (1994a) describe teachers' work as becoming more and more "intensified" from increased workloads and the need for greater amounts of documentation. Apple (1996) questions the reasons behind recent curricular changes in our schools.

Complementing Apple's work, Cheng and Couture (2000) cast doubt on the use of standardized testing to increase teacher accountability in schools today, arguing that teachers are expected to increase their students' performance while resources are being reduced. Blackmore (1999) describes an increase in "emotional labor" that occurs from changes taking place in educational systems. While scholars differ in focus on the impacts of educational restructuring on teachers' work, their messages are similar. Schools and educators are being influenced by factors such as market choice, efficiency and competition (Bates, 2000; Blackmore, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994a, 1994b; Smyth et al., 2000).

Situating the Study

Since I began teaching in the mid 1990s, I have been increasingly concerned about the changes taking place in elementary schools and the influence of these changes on teacher wellness. Coincidentally, as this study was being formulated, an opportunity arose to situate the research within a larger study entitled the "Coasts under Stress Project" (<http://www.coastsunderstress.ca/>). This bi-coastal interdisciplinary research project, based at the University of Victoria in British Columbia and Memorial University in Newfoundland, explores the impact of social and environmental restructuring on environmental and human health in Canada, specifically in coastal Newfoundland, Labrador, and British Columbia.

The Coasts under Stress Project adopted the metaphor of a starfish as its organizational model, with five "arms." Arm Five focuses on social and political restructuring and the health of individuals, families and communities. As I was interested in educators and the changing nature of their work, my study fit best within Arm five of

the project. More specifically, Case Study Two of Arm Five examines issues in employment and education as they relate to restructuring and the social determinants of human and community health.

Although a study of teachers' work could take place in many different contexts, a rural coastal community setting is particularly timely. Rural resource-based communities located along the west coast of British Columbia are currently experiencing changes in local industries such as fishing, forestry and mining (Coastal Community Network, 2002; Demyen, 2001; Marshall, Shephard & Roberts, 2001; Statistics Canada, 2002). Some of the consequences of these economic changes include unemployment, underemployment and depopulation. Although such changes may appear to affect only community members and families who are *directly* involved with local resource-based industries, the impacts of economic restructuring inevitably shape the experiences of other people who live and work in the same geographical space.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of social and economic restructuring on elementary educators living and working in rural, resource-based communities on the west coast of British Columbia. More specifically, the intent was to explore influences on the professional and personal lives and health of elementary educators. Therefore, the objectives of the research were (1) to understand, from educators' perspectives, what forms of restructuring were taking place in two rural coastal communities and three rural coastal elementary schools in British Columbia, and (2) to examine how restructuring affects the daily lives of elementary educators.

Research Questions

Questions addressed in the research included:

- 1) From the educators' perspective, what changes have occurred as a result of restructuring in the past five or six years in their rural coastal community?
- 2) From the educators' perspective, what changes have occurred in their local elementary schools over the past five or six years?
- 3) How are changes identified within the communities and schools influencing the professional and personal lives of elementary educators living and working in rural coastal communities?
- 4) How do educators perceive that their health is affected by restructuring?
- 5) How are elementary educators located in rural, coastal communities responding to the above identified changes resulting from restructuring?

Overview of Methodology and Design

A qualitative case study of descriptive nature was chosen as the method for this study. Case studies are an appropriate strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed, and are an appropriate method of inquiry to use when a researcher has the “desire to understand complex social phenomena” (Yin, 1994, p. 3). Creswell (1998) also suggests that case studies allow researchers to explore a specific phenomenon with multiple sources of information, and Yin (1994) describes how this tradition of inquiry retains “the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries” (p. 3). For these reasons, the case study approach emerged as the best choice for understanding the changes taking place in the

communities and schools under study and what these changes meant to elementary educators.

This multi-case study involved 11 educators, purposefully selected (Patton, 1990) from three elementary schools in two rural coastal communities on the west coast of British Columbia. The inquiry took place between February and April 2002. The principal data collection strategies were individual interviews and focus groups. Data were analysed using a specific procedure based on the works of Colaizzi (1978) and Haase (1987) (see Chapter 3 for a detailed description of the data analysis procedure). I made every effort to ensure a high level of ethical practice throughout this inquiry, for example, by ensuring the anonymity of study participants by using pseudonyms for all people, organizations and communities involved.

Significance of the Study

This research was designed to contribute to the developing knowledge of the social dimensions of restructuring in rural, resource-based communities located on the west coast of British Columbia. The findings and insights gleaned from this study add to ongoing academic discourse on educational restructuring and the changing nature of teachers' work. Although studies on educational restructuring and teachers' work broadly identify many of these changes, a large amount of this research has been conducted in urban settings. By exploring restructuring in the rural coastal community context, this study is intended to enrich and expand academic discourse in this area. As Ommer (2002) points out, "not everyone will be an urban dweller in the twenty-first century" (p. 21).

Delimitations

As with any research, methodological restrictions influence the design, and consequently, the outcomes of the investigation. It is, therefore, crucial to acknowledge these delimitations and explain them at the outset of the study so that readers have a framework within which to understand the results. For this inquiry, I imposed several delimitations.

The study was limited to 11 elementary school educators living in two rural coastal communities of British Columbia. These educators were mostly full-time teachers and principals. Educators who worked in the local school district office were not included in the study. The temporal parameters of the data collected were February 2002 to April 2002. Educators were interviewed individually and then were invited, but not required, to participate in a focus group. All variables, conditions or populations not specified in this study will be beyond the scope of this investigation.

Benefits and Implications of the Research

The restructuring of workplaces in general, and in resource-based industry communities in particular, has changed many people's lives (Leach, 2000; Leach & Winson, 1995, 1999). The purpose of this study was to create opportunities for teachers to describe their experiences with restructuring. The study also provided educators with opportunities to reflect upon and discuss these changes both individually and collectively. By highlighting elementary educators' experiences, I intend to provide educational policy makers, school district personnel and educational administrators with information relevant to promoting healthier work environments and school communities.

Summary

In this chapter, I have presented introductory information and the rationale for this study, which explores elementary educators' experiences with restructuring in rural coastal communities of British Columbia. In Chapter Two, I will provide a review of select literature on restructuring, educational restructuring, and health.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature chosen for discussion in this chapter was selected for its relevance to the research questions and background information on restructuring and health. Specific attention is given to research that illuminates the social dimensions of restructuring. Chapter Two is divided into three parts: Restructuring, Educational Restructuring, and Perspectives on Health. For each of these parts, pertinent literature is presented and critiqued in a “Summary” section.

Part I discusses the term “restructuring,” providing a recent historical overview of this phenomenon. Then, as a framework for understanding the scales and dimensions of restructuring, the Geographic Restructuring Model (Britton, LeHeron & Pawson, 1992) is explained. In this section, three themes are presented which emerge from literature on restructuring, supported with findings from scholarly writings and studies on the topic. These themes include changes in public and private sectors, changes in employment, and implications for regions and population groups. Part II focuses on educational restructuring, discussing the societal context within which it has developed and identifying a key characteristic: devolution. Next, local and national studies on teachers’ work are discussed. In the final part of the chapter, there is an examination of two perspectives on health, both of which were influential in this study’s design: the social ecological theory (Stokols, 1996) and the Mandala of Public Health (Hancock & Perkins, 1985). The chapter concludes with a summary, highlighting the need for additional research on the impacts of restructuring.

Part I: Restructuring

The term “restructuring,” in its broadest sense, refers to a complex series of inter-related economic, environmental, and social processes and their consequences or outcomes (Neis, Taylor, Dolan, Montevecchi, Eyles et al., 2002). Although these processes have taken place in several countries around the world since World War II, Le Heron and Pawson (1996) suggest that the term “restructuring” was not widely used until the mid 1970s. At that time, the expression described economic measures taken by industries to adjust to global trade conditions (Knight & Joseph, 1999).

During the 1980s, restructuring commonly referred to changes intended to make countries more internationally and economically competitive (Cocklin & Furuseth, 1994). Le Heron and Pawson (1996) describe how New Zealand economically restructured to align the country with shifts in global capitalism. In this context, restructuring initiatives were directed towards restoring competitiveness, reintroducing the free market, and giving investors greater autonomy. By the mid 1980s, there was a broadening of academic discourse on restructuring away from its origins in private-sector industry and towards one which encompassed changes taking place in the service sector. (Knight & Joseph, 1999). During this time, people began to lose confidence in the government as a producer of services and regulator of private spheres (Knight & Joseph, 1999). Nevertheless, restructuring was still considered primarily economic and typically discussed in abstract terms with little attention given to its social outcomes (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996).

Since the 1990s, as studies on restructuring have proliferated, scholars have begun to consider the social and environmental effects of restructuring (Neysmith, 2000). There

is not, however, complete agreement in recent academic literature about its consequences (Groarke, 1998, Leach & Winson, 1995). Some authors, for example, argue that restructuring creates “a more efficient, competitive and market driven economy” and suggest that these changes will result in less debt, and a “brighter future with more and better jobs” (Groarke, 1998, p. 4). Other writers such as Neysmith (2000) question whether there actually is a genuine economic crisis, and view restructuring as a political agenda of powerful interests which seek to reduce gains made by the welfare state (e.g. rights, services, and income levels) within Western industrial states since World War II. Debates on this topic are ongoing and remain deeply divided (Leach & Winson, 1995).

Confusion surrounding the meaning of the term “restructuring” has also been acknowledged. Knight and Joseph (1999) suggest that although the word restructuring has attained widespread use, its meaning is not always clear. Similarly, Pinch (1989) describes the term restructuring as having a “high level of use and a low level of meaning” (p. 905). Wolfe-Keddie (1999) characterizes restructuring as a plastic word or ‘buzz word’ which has had its meaning blurred through repetition and overuse. This may be, at least in part, because restructuring and the impact on institutions and people are not well understood (Knight & Joseph, 1999).

Despite the debates on restructuring, there appears to be some agreement amongst writers about the breadth of its influence. Restructuring is typically reported to be connected to broader, global economic changes or globalization (Ellwood, 2001). Restructuring is also described as creating complex and interrelated economic, political and social changes which take place over time and in different places (Neiss et al., 2002; Neysmith, 2000). Further, there seems to be agreement in academic circles that

restructuring involves economic and social changes which occur in capitalist societies (Knight & Joseph, 1999). These “ideologically driven adjustments” are also believed to be made in response to changing national and international circumstances (Kearnes & Joseph, 1997). The idea that restructuring is tied to the global economy forms the basis of the Geographic Restructuring (GR) Model.

The Geographic Restructuring (GR) Model

The Geographic Restructuring Model was developed by Britton, LeHeron and Pawson (1992) as a way to describe the restructuring process and to illustrate its geographical implications and its socio-economic dimensions. Based on the example of New Zealand and the changes there in the 1970s and 1980s, the GR model proposes that restructuring occurs at the local level but contributes simultaneously to processes operating at national and international levels. Because it takes into account these different levels of influence, the GR model is useful for examining the influences of restructuring in various contexts. This model points to the wider historical context of capitalist accumulation (Cocklin & Furuseth, 1994) and, as Le Heron and Pawson (1996) argue, helps us to “keep an eye on the generality of events and the wider processes behind them without losing sight of the individuality of the form of their occurrence” (p. 15).

The Geographic Restructuring Model emphasizes six points about restructuring which warrant mentioning. First, periods of restructuring are times of intensified change. Second, changes to regions, industries and organizations arise from influences at all geographic scales (local, national and international). Third, changes brought about by restructuring are a combination of economic, cultural, and environmental processes. Fourth, restructuring processes are mediated by policies or regulations prevailing over

different regions or areas. Fifth, the resulting changes in organizations, industries and regions come from a mix of processes and regulatory structures operating within a nation. Finally, the particular crisis conditions that lead to restructuring differ between nations (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996). Knight and Joseph (1999) further argue that restructuring has situated meanings, suggesting that the impacts of restructuring initiatives vary according to the contexts in which they occur. One context in which restructuring is documented to have taken place is Canada.

Restructuring – The Canadian Context

Canadians are living in a time of considerable change and rapid restructuring. As Groarke (1998) argues, “restructuring and its effects surround us” (p. 3). Recent newspaper media reports, such as McLintock and Tanner (2002) indicate that “restructuring, layoffs are a reality in the public sector, in the private sector” (The Province, p. A8). In academic circles, Leach and Winson (1995) explain that, “contemporary capitalism is radically altering the structure of business enterprise, the organization of labour, the quality of life on and off the job...in Canadian society” (p. 341). Hoffman (1998) emphasizes the pervasiveness of restructuring, stating that “few individuals, institutions, and communities will be left unscathed by ‘restructuring’ of the public and private domains of society” (p. 25).

Three themes emerge from a review of literature on restructuring in Canada. These themes illustrate that restructuring brings about changes in both public and private sectors, alters employment relationships and conditions, and affects specific regions and population groups.

Changes in Public and Private Sectors

Several writers describe the impacts of restructuring on public and private sectors in Canada. Carson (1998), for instance, explains that the economy is changing and that “characteristic of this economic transition is the restructuring of the public and private sectors” (p. 9). Groarke (1998) has found that changes creating this “new economy” are fueled by technological developments, government attempts to eliminate budget deficits, and pressures of globalization (p. 3). A few examples follow.

Regarding the private sector, Chrominksa (1998) explains that changes to the banking industry are driven by “technology, consumer demand, and new sources of competition” (p. 279). She reports that due to innovations such as ATM machines and the Internet, employment in this industry has declined 4 to 5 percent between 1991 and 1996. A case study by Collins (1998) further suggests that restructuring has brought about changes to companies in Canada that have specific implications for workers. During major changes at Bell Canada, while some employees were laid off, others were able to keep their jobs but were required to relocate from smaller centers to major cities like Toronto. Employees’ lives were significantly affected because they and their families had to adjust to longer daily commutes, higher mortgages, and new friendships.

Turning to literature on restructuring in the public sector, Baumann and Silverman (1998) suggest that restructuring changes have been so extensive in health care that the process could be called “destructuring” (p. 203). Services have been decreased, re-organized or eliminated, affecting both the employment and conditions of health care workers. Yeo, Williams and Hooper (1998) report that “regionalization” is taking place in the Canadian health sector and describe several ethical issues that have arisen. Looking at

the positive side of health care restructuring, Groarke (1998) has studied hospital amalgamation in Canadian communities. He suggests that merging or amalgamating has several benefits, such as reducing duplicated services and promoting administrative efficiencies. He also suggests that by reducing middle managers in hospitals, amalgamation can “minimize ‘front line’ job losses” which would otherwise accompany restructuring (p. 114).

As the above examples have illustrated, considerable changes in the public and private sectors have taken place in Canada. Many of these changes, while aimed at increased efficiency, also demonstrate that restructuring affects employees and their work conditions.

Changes in Employment

Recent literature suggests that restructuring increases part-time employment and alters working conditions. Barling (1999) reports that part-time jobs more than doubled in Canada between 1975 and 1993 and that self employment grew 29 percent between 1981 and 1990. Workers today, this author states, are “losing opportunities to exert control over their work, their work places, and their work lives” (p. 77). Barling further argues that Canadians are living in an “age of insecurity” in which “chronic uncertainty for employees is quite possibly the norm” (p. 69). Unsure of their employment stability, she explains that such feelings are associated with health-related problems as well as decreased productivity and job satisfaction.

Cohen (1994) suggests that part-time work and temporary work have increased for women as a consequence of restructuring. She observes that, “there appears to be a reversion to older forms of work organization, such as contracting-out and home-work”

(p. 108). Similarly, Armstrong (1996) makes the case that restructuring for a global economy has meant a reduction in some full-time jobs (in all but non-commercial services and services to businesses), and particularly in primary industries where men dominate. She argues that hours, shift work, and job insecurity have increased and that “work has intensified, whether or not people have full-time or part-time employment”

(p. 52). Armstrong concludes that “job insecurity, less union representation, less opportunity for promotion or skill development, lower wages, and more unemployment and underemployment have come with globalization” (p. 53).

Implications for Regions and Population Groups

Studies show that restructuring strongly affects rural communities in Canada (Coastal Community Network, 2002; Demyen, 2001; Leach & Winson 1995). For example, in their qualitative study, Leach and Winson (1995; 1999; 2000) examine the working lives of men and women who had been laid off from manufacturing jobs in rural communities in Wellington County, Ontario due to restructuring. Findings from this study indicate that effects of restructuring in this rural area were a higher incidence of part-time work at a lower wage in the service sector and employment changes that were particularly disadvantageous for women and older workers.

Recent writings confirm that restructuring has affected rural coastal communities on the west coast of British Columbia. Presentations at the tenth annual Coastal Community Network (2002) indicate that changes are taking place in these communities. Milne (2002), for instance, indicates that the population on the rural coast of British Columbia has declined by 2.6% in the last decade compared to an overall provincial growth rate of 4.9%. In the forest industry, there have been “job losses since 1990 of 5%

in logging, 36% in pulp mills and 40% in saw mills” (p. 123). In fisheries, there has been a 28% drop in jobs from 1990 to 1999. Sport fishing, one of the largest sectors in the ocean economy, has also dropped in employment by 46.7% between 1990 and 1999. One of the major reasons Carson (1998) provides for changes in these resource-based industries is that “knowledge based industries are growing rapidly and manufacturing sectors that emphasize manual rather than technological skills are in decline” (p. 9).

Literature also shows that restructuring affects specific population groups. For instance, recent work by feminist scholars suggests that restructuring is a gendered process (Brodie, 1995) that affects women differently than men (Bakker, 1996; Brodie, 1994, 1995; Cohen, 1994). This is, at least in part, because related initiatives reduce funding to social services and, consequently, more responsibilities are placed on women to provide services to family members that are no longer available from social services (Neysmith, 2000). Interestingly, research conducted on the eastern coast of Canada also suggests restructuring has negative health implications for women in the fisheries and in fish processing plants (MacDonald, 1994; Neis & Grzetic, 2001).

Summary of Part I

Restructuring is a complex phenomenon that involves large-scale economic and social change. Kearnes and Joseph describe restructuring as a “transformative agent” (p. 21). As the Geographic Restructuring Model demonstrates, although restructuring plays out in local areas, it is connected to broader national and global initiatives. Recent literature indicates that restructuring affects organizations, communities, and individuals. Specific studies on restructuring in Canada reveal that restructuring initiatives influence the private and public sectors, change employment relationships and conditions, and

affect specific regions and population groups such as rural communities and women disproportionately. While research indicates that changes are occurring in rural coastal communities in Canada, there is little research to date using qualitative methodologies to understand the impact of restructuring on professionals living in rural coastal communities in British Columbia. In Part II of this chapter, I address educational restructuring and discuss its influences on schools and educators.

Part II: Educational Restructuring

Historically, the education of children was the province of family, the kinship group, and/or the local community. In some countries, education became a task for religious institutions. During the 19th century, in developing countries such as Canada, Australia and the United States, the state made education a public responsibility (Daun, 2002). Educational systems during this time were decentralized, and national curricula were rare. After the Second World War, however, the structure of education followed changes in economies, which were restructured in three ways. First, there was a transition from agriculture to industrial production and from industry to provision of service. Second, from the 1950s to the 1980s, state ownership and regulation of some economies increased. Third, companies and their subsidiaries were reorganized to become more efficient and competitive (Daun, 2002). In the 1990s there have been further changes to educational systems and institutions. Collectively, these changes are referred to as “educational restructuring.”

The term “restructuring” is borrowed from economics for use in the field of education. Daun (2002) claims that although the concept is referred to frequently in educational discourse, there is no agreed-upon definition. In broad terms, educational

restructuring refers to changes in “strategic educational variables such as governance, decision-making, resource generation or resources allocation, and value orientation” (p. 73). Before discussing the characteristics of educational restructuring in more detail, however, it is crucial to understand the societal context in which educational restructuring initiatives have developed.

Context of Educational Restructuring

Kenway, Bigum and Fitzclarence (1993) argue, “education is not a field of practice that stands outside its context” (p. 105). Similarly, Levin (2001) explains that “education cannot be understood independently of more general developments in society over time” (p. 7). Indeed, educational restructuring occurs within a wider social, economic and political context which needs to be considered when trying to appreciate its effects (Hargreaves, 1994; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998).

Young and Levin (1994) argue that there have been and continue to be, key societal changes in Canada over the past few decades that have influenced schools and educators. These changes include: (1) population demographics; (2) technology; (3) the economy and the labour market; and (4) changing societal values. Although these influences will be addressed separately, they are interconnected.

Demographic Change

Significant demographic changes have recently taken place in Canada (Young & Levin, 1994). First, the overall school-aged population has decreased and school enrollments have dropped. This means that there are more people paying taxes who have less of an “investment” in the school system (Young & Levin). Since the population is also aging, there is greater demand for governments to provide public services such as

health care and pensions. Furthermore, increasing numbers of women have entered the work force, making the child care function of schools increasingly important (Young & Levin).

The structure of Canadian families has also changed (Young & Levin, 1994; Statistics Canada, 2001). There are fewer children in each family than there were a few decades ago. There are also increasing numbers of lone parent families (Statistics Canada). This affects schools because many children who live in single parent families in Canada live in poverty (Young & Levin). Finally, the ethnic composition of Canada has changed (Statistics Canada). For instance, the aboriginal population is growing, and more people have come to Canada in recent years from Asia, Africa, and South America than from Europe (Young & Levin). This shift from European to non-European countries as the sources of immigrants to Canada is creating a more ethnically varied population and higher proportions of visible minorities (Statistics Canada). These demographic changes are particularly evident in British Columbia, especially the presence of immigrants from Asia. Linguistic and cultural differences are presenting new challenges and opportunities for schools and their educators.

Technology

Along with demographic changes, dramatic changes in technology have occurred in Canada (Young & Levin, 1994). These technological changes have altered the ways in which people and schools are able to communicate. Computer and video technology have increased and sped up our access to information, and computers have changed the manner in which we handle, store, and manipulate information. Hargreaves (1994) argues that the compression of time and space created by our information society creates accelerated

change. On the positive side, technology has also created opportunities for individualized programming and distance learning in schools (Young & Levin, 1994).

Economic and Labour Force

Another important societal change that has implications for schools is the changing global economy, Canada's economy, and in particular its labour force. At the beginning of the 20th century, Canada was still a largely agricultural nation whose citizens did not require extensive education for the majority of jobs. Today, agriculture is only a small part of the economy (Statistics Canada, 2001). Manufacturing has also declined in relative importance as the service industry has grown. These economic changes have shifted the educational needs of the labour force, which have implications for schools. For instance, in our information knowledge-based society, jobs require higher levels of skill and, therefore, more education. Adding to this complexity, the workplace is changing. There is a greater emphasis on team work and working cooperatively. As Livingstone and Hart (2001) state, "most periods of economic restructuring have been associated with calls for educational reforms to produce smarter, more disciplined students and workers" (p. 32). Schools are expected to respond to such changes and prepare students for the job market in the 21st century.

The Canadian economy and the labour market are also highly regional. The economy can be booming in Alberta and slumping in Newfoundland at the same time. The requirement for skilled workers and the availability of jobs can be different from region to region placing different demands on schools.

Changing Societal Values.

Young and Levin (1994) identify two major shifts in thinking which have influenced educational trends in Canada. These are an emerging conception of “rights” and a shift toward “market policies” and “choice.” Educational literature also suggests that there is an increasing emphasis on “efficiency” in Canadian society today. Stein (2001), in her book *The Cult of Efficiency*, argues that “the demand for efficiency is everywhere,” (p. 10) noting that in the past three decades, political, economic, and social forces have converged to “elevate efficiency to a central value” (p. 46).

In sum, societal changes in Canada have influenced educational organizations considerably in the past few decades. As Levin (2001) puts it, “schools are under continuing pressure to change as other aspects of society change” (p. 3). These changes, often labeled “educational reforms,” have, according to Levin (2001), been decidedly controversial and politically contentious. While Levin explains that educational reforms are intended to improve standards and outcomes and to help make countries socially and economically successful. He further notes that they have been condemned for demoralizing teachers. Levin also suggests that discussions of educational reform have created “more heat than light,” and that there is a “great deal of polemical literature, claiming that particular policies will bring the promised land or, alternatively, will destroy everything we value” (Levin, 2001, p. 2). What is lacking, he says, is careful empirical work looking at the nature and consequences of reforms in various settings.

Characteristics of Educational Restructuring

Literature on educational restructuring indicates that educational institutions have become increasingly devolved. Scholars in the field of educational restructuring

(Blackmore, 1999; Daun, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994; Smyth, 1993; Whitty, Halpin, & Power, 1998) appear to agree that these changes are occurring. They emphasize, however, that changes play out in different ways depending on the context in which they are implemented.

“Devolution” is identified in educational literature as a common characteristic of educational restructuring (Blackmore, 1999; Daun, 2002; Smyth, 1993; Whitty, Halpin, & Power, 1998). Simply put, devolution involves the transfer of power or authority to (1) autonomous units (i.e., schools) which can operate more independently, and (2) from individual schools to their clients (i.e. parents and students). Whitty et al. and Smyth (1993) report on moves to dismantle centralized educational bureaucracies and replace them with school-based management and administration. Devolution, according to Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry (1997) has “both centralizing and decentralizing characteristics” (p. 85). There are a “bewildering amount of terms” such as “site-based management,” “school based management, “school-site autonomy” and “devolution” – all of which are used to describe a similar concept which involves shifting responsibilities to schools (Smyth; Whitty et al.).

According to Daun (2002), decentralization has become the most commonly implemented restructuring policy. Decentralization is often assumed to create more flexibility, more accountability and higher productivity. It is also expected to improve educational services, to generate more resources at the local level, and to be more cost efficient. Devolution has been viewed as a way of reducing some duplicated costs, and achieving more predictable and effective outcomes (Taylor et al., 1997). Although the idea of devolution is to decentralize, scholars in the field (such as Apple, 1996, and

Cheng & Couture, 2001) maintain that it has actually increased some centralized aspects, for example, standardized testing and control of curricula. Critical theorists such as Smyth (1993) question the development of self-managing schools, arguing that this organizational approach may give the impression of increased participation but does “absolutely the reverse” (p. 4).

Impacts of Educational Restructuring on Educators

Educational research indicates that restructuring initiatives affect educators and their work. Thiessen and Cole (1993) describe several ways in which educational change has influenced educators’ professional lives. They argue that educational change has set out “an array of new expectations and demands which essentially require them to change how they work with students, other teachers, and in their organizations” (p. 208). First, curricular reforms have created expectations for more use of computers, individualized programs and a focus on stimulating creative and critical thought. Second, as Thiessen and Cole explain, demands for personally, culturally and socially responsive education require teachers to accommodate a spectrum of student needs and differences. Third, changes in organizational patterns demand that educators connect with professionals within and outside of the school system. Finally, Thiessen and Cole argue that pressures of accountability are requiring teachers to “open their classroom doors and admit those who help, seek information about, and scrutinize what they do” (p. 208).

Cheng and Couture (2000) also argue that Canadian teachers face pressures of accountability. They explain that teachers are increasingly caught in a “contradictory demand for greater accountability through high-stakes testing and decreased expenditures on public education” (p. 65). Cheng and Couture further explain that pressures to

measure what schools do has led to the development of a “testing culture” which increasingly pervades classroom life.

Teaching Workload

Several studies on teachers’ work indicate that teachers are experiencing an increased workload. The British Columbia Teachers’ Federation recently conducted a study in British Columbia on teacher workload and stress in which 1500 elementary and high school teachers from across the province of British Columbia were randomly surveyed (Naylor, 2001). Findings from the 644 responses suggest that there are three key sources of stress in teachers’ professional lives. These are: a) the increasing difficulty and complexity of teaching, b) the volume of work during a teacher’s day, and c) the expectations that teachers will address a wide range of tasks. Teachers identified that the difficulty of the work is related to changing class compositions (including ESL students and students with special needs), seasonal pressures in addition to regular workloads, and curriculum change. Teachers also reported a shortage of time, resources, support, and respect.

Naylor (2001) further explains that several responses to stress were identified by the participants. These included coping with the workload and stress by working excessively, opting for part-time employment, and considering quitting teaching. A number of respondents described becoming sick -- either taking sick leave or being at work while ill. Many teachers reported negative effects on their own family life as a result of high workload and stress. Naylor concludes that most teachers in British Columbia have too high a workload and that many are suffering from stress. One of his most insightful comments was a suggestion that “teachers’ disillusionment stems from

the fact that though they care deeply about the *students* in our schools, they increasingly believe that nobody appears to care greatly about *teachers*, as no effort has been made to consider their workload” (p. 15, his emphases).

Findings from a national study by King and Peart (1992) also suggest that British Columbia teachers experience high stress levels. In fact, this comprehensive study on the quality of life of teachers in Canada indicates that they report the highest stress levels among teachers in Canada and that they report the lowest job satisfaction of teachers in the seven provinces considered. Interestingly, this study also indicates that rural and urban teachers in Canada experience similar stress levels.

Another study conducted by the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation (1995) on the workload and work life of full-time Saskatchewan teachers suggests that teachers feel like they “wear many hats” in their job. Some of these roles included that of a counsellor, social worker, nurse, chauffeur, fund-raiser, mediator, public relations officer and entertainer” (p. xxxi). Further, it was found that when teachers are continually pressed for time, they were forced to make difficult choices about what roles should be occupying their time.

Emotional Nature of Educators’ Work

Several academics suggest that the rapid rate of educational restructuring is altering the emotional nature of educators’ work (Adams, 2002; Acker, 1999; Blackmore, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994a). Blackmore’s (1996; 1999) study of women in educational leadership, for example, found that female principals working in self-managing schools in Victoria, Australia were faced with managing their own and other people’s emotions. Blackmore describes restructured schools as “greedy organizations” (emotionally,

physically, and intellectually). Blackmore suggests that leadership in a period of educational change is about emotions – “desire, fear, despair, caring, disillusionment, pain, anger, stress, anxiety and loneliness” (p. 346). The women she studied adopt strategies such as becoming task-oriented, depersonalizing, disengaging or “detaching” themselves from their staff. Sometimes they even left their organization.

Hargreaves (1994a) also addresses the emotional nature of teachers’ work, suggesting that guilt is a central emotional preoccupation for teachers. He explains two types of guilt: persecutory and depressive. Persecutory guilt, Hargreaves explains, arises from doing something which is forbidden or failing to do something which is expected. Depressive guilt, on the other hand, stems from realizing that we may be harming or neglecting those for whom we care by not meeting their needs or giving them sufficient attention. Hargreaves puts forward that commitment to care and to the open-ended nature of teaching are major sources of depressive guilt among teachers and other helping professionals. Accountability and intensification of workload, on the other hand, are prime determinants of persecutory guilt, causing “pervasive worries and fears that mounting expectations have not or will not be met” (p. 149). Hargreaves adds that pressing demands of accountability and work intensification can fill up scheduled time demands for teaching to such an extent that little time is left for moments to show care and concern – “to fulfil the very purpose that many teachers feel to be at the heart of their work” (p. 149).

A final example of a study that addresses the emotional nature of educators’ work is research by Adams (2002) on the effects of educational restructuring on the waking and dream lives of primary school teachers in England. In this study, 10 teachers and 4

head teachers from a variety of rural and urban primary schools across England reported that frequent changes to the education system had resulted in negative emotions for many teachers. One of the negative feelings reported by teachers in this study was a loss of control over the content and methodology of their work. The author of this study argues that these negative emotions have implications for the children's well-being. The author concludes that educational managers need to ensure that the spiritual and emotional lives of teachers are safeguarded in order to protect children.

Morale of Teachers

A recent study on teachers' work, aptly titled, *The Realities of Teachers' Work: Never a Dull Moment*, suggests that primary school teaching is difficult work, which is generally unrecognized and unrewarded (Acker, 1999). From exploring teachers' experiences in a middle-sized city in the southwest of England, Acker claims that teachers not only feel underappreciated by the population at large, but also by the parents and even by the children. Palmer (1998) also expresses concerns about the morale of today's educator. He recommends that the teacher wellness should become a legitimate topic in education and be discussed in dialogues on educational reform. Palmer argues that "we blame teachers for being unable to cure social ills that no one knows how to treat; we insist that they instantly adopt whatever solution has most recently been concocted by our national panacea machine; and in the process, we demoralize, even paralyze, the very teachers who could help us find our way" (p. 3).

Summary of Part II

In this section, I have examined literature pertaining to restructuring, educational restructuring and teachers' work. Although there has been considerable writing on

educational restructuring, relatively few studies on the topic provide empirical data. As these studies make clear, restructuring is altering educational institutions, and local and national studies on teachers' work contribute to a greater understanding of some of these changes. Stress is a concern for teachers, and the changes brought on by educational restructuring indicate that it is increasing.

Part III: Perspectives on Health

Because one of the objectives of this study is to understand how restructuring influences the health of elementary educators in rural coastal communities, I reviewed literature on health that was relevant to the study. In this section, I propose a definition of health, describe two theoretical models, and discuss how these frameworks influenced the design of the study. The first health model discussed is the "social ecological perspective" (Stokols, 1996) because it presents multiple interconnected factors that influence health. The second model is the Mandala of Public Health (Hancock & Perkins, 1985), which complements the first one by situating an individual within a broad setting and identifying factors that influence a person's health experience.

Defining Health

Health is a complex phenomenon that holds different meanings for individuals and communities, depending on historical, cultural, social, personal, scientific, philosophical, and spiritual contexts (Edelman & Mandle, 1998). Indeed, an array of concepts, models, and perspectives on health and health care has existed for centuries. Until recently, however, the practice of western biomedicine has been the dominant voice in the health arena and has shaped definitions and philosophies of health and health care

(Armstrong & Armstrong, 1996). Consequently, definitions of health have been primarily concerned with “the absence of disease” (Rootman & Raeburn, 1994).

One of the most commonly quoted and influential definitions of health is that of the World Health Organization (1947), which maintains that “health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1996; Rootman & Raeburn, 1994). This definition recognizes health for more than simply physiological aspects. Health is viewed as a multidimensional, holistic phenomenon with multiple determinants (Green & Raeburn, 1990). Two perspectives which are consistent with such a holistic approach are social ecological theory (Stokols, 1996) and the Mandala of Public Health (Hancock & Perkins, 1985).

Social Ecological Theory

Social ecological theory, as described by Stokols (1996), considers the ways in which biological factors, personal behaviors and attitudes contribute to an individual’s health. This perspective also considers the effects of environmental influences on a person’s health experience and acknowledges the interrelation of environmental and personal factors. Personal factors include such considerations as genetic makeup and predisposition, habits and health behaviors, level of education, and economic status. Because social ecological theory is based on a combination of several disciplinary perspectives (primarily the psychological and ecological), it is described by Stokols as inherently interdisciplinary.

This theory is rooted in several core principles, four of which are particularly relevant to this study. The relevant principles are concerned with environmental

conditions, human behavior and well-being. The first of these principles is that environmental settings (such as physical and social surroundings) can influence an individual's state of health. Environmental settings, in Stokols's words, have "multiple physical, social and cultural dimensions which can influence a variety of health outcomes" (p. 285). Some of these health outcomes are physical health status, developmental maturation, emotional well-being and social cohesion. The health of an environment is, therefore, understood in terms of the cumulative impact that multiple environmental conditions may have on a person's physical, emotional and social well-being over a specified period of time.

The second principle is that "human health is influenced by a variety of personal attributes" (p. 285). These attributes include genetic heritage, psychological disposition, and behavioral patterns. Social ecological theory, therefore, emphasizes the interplay between situational and personal factors rather than focusing exclusively on environmental, biological or behavioral determinants of well-being. With this in mind, Stokols also states that "the same environmental conditions (e.g., population density, change of residence, or economic recession) may affect a person's health differently depending on his or her personality, perceptions of environmental control, health practices and financial resources" (p. 286). From this perspective, the level of compatibility between people, their individual personal outlooks, and their surroundings is viewed as an important predictor of well-being.

The third principle of social ecological theory is that people and their environments are mutually influential. Not only can the physical and social features of a setting influence a person's health, but people can individually or collectively modify the

healthfulness of their surroundings. This is also believed to be the case with roles and behavior patterns in organizational settings such as schools. For example, a teacher can choose to “improve” his or her classroom setting by creating a more colorful and positive atmosphere for students through decorating the walls with children’s art.

The fourth principle of the social ecological theory emphasizes that social and environmental conditions within a particular setting are interdependent. That is, physical and social aspects of a setting are connected and capable of independently or jointly influencing an individual’s well-being. Moreover, this approach considers connections between multiple settings and “life domains.” Different domains of human activity (e.g., home, neighborhood, workplace, and surrounding communities) are perceived to be “nested structures” located within larger regions. As a result, Stokols suggests that efforts to promote human health must “take into account the interdependencies between immediate and more distant environments” (p. 286). For instance, provincial and federal policies establish required parameters for the healthfulness of occupational settings. Another example would be the “spillover” of work related stress into home environments.

In summary, the social ecological theory demonstrates the complexity of health and the ways in which numerous factors influence individuals and, subsequently, their well-being. A connection between health and health-related influences is important to consider. As Neis et al. (2002) suggest, when restructuring occurs, several factors that influence human health (such as physical and social environments) can be altered. This relationship between individual health and the environment is also highlighted in the Mandala of Public Health model.

Mandala of Public Health

As with social ecological theory, the Mandala of Public Health model presents factors that influence individual health. The Mandala of Public Health (Hancock & Perkins, 1985) is a bio-psycho-socio-environmental model of health. This public health model considers the natural and social sciences, the individual, the family, the community and society. Similar to the social ecological approach, this model is dynamic and holistic, but it conceptualizes health slightly differently than the social ecological theory and provides a pictorial representation (see article).

The Mandala places the individual, by him- or herself, in a central sphere, which is enveloped by another larger circle representing his or her family. In this way, the framework emphasizes the key role of family in establishing an individual's health values and habits. Hancock and Perkins describe the family as a "mediating structure" which can buffer an individual by providing "shelter from the effects of the community and culture" (p. 8). Other mediating structures between the private life of an individual and large institutions of public life include community groups such as neighbourhoods, churches and voluntary associations. An individual's family and his or her community can act as buffers between the individual and the larger culture.

The Mandala of Public Health, as described by Hancock and Perkins (1985), identifies four factors that influence the health of an individual and his or her family: human biology, personal behavior, the psycho-social environment and the physical environment. By human biology, they are referring to the "genetic traits and predispositions, the competence of the immune system, and the biochemical, physiological and anatomical state of the individual and family" (p. 8). Personal

behaviors include specific dietary habits, smoking and drinking, and “more general risk taking and preventative behaviors” (p. 8). The psychosocial environment encompasses factors such as the individual’s social and financial status, influences from school and/or work and social support systems. Finally, the physical environment refers to housing, the physical state of the workplace, and the physical state of the local neighbourhood.

Hancock and Perkins’s (1985) model specifically differentiates between lifestyle and physical behavior. “Lifestyle” is described as being “personal behavior as influenced and modified by, and constrained by, a lifelong socialization process, and by the psychosocial environment, including cultural and community values and standards” (p. 8). Since lifestyle is defined as a combination of personal behavior and the influence of the psychosocial environment, a person is, therefore, not viewed as solely responsible for his or her health condition.

Returning to the model, the Mandala of Public Health indicates that personal behavior and psychosocial environment in the upper half of the circle and human biology and the physical environment in the lower half of the circle are equally important in determining our state of health. In addition, the model draws attention to medicine as being a combination of human biology and psychology. The interaction between culture and environment is also represented in the Mandala, showing that not only are individuals affected by their culture and environment, but that by acting through their family and community and upon their environment, they can influence social and physical surroundings. The Mandala also illustrates the political nature of health, showing that culture, community and psychosocial environment all have an impact on individual

health. In other words, the model identifies policies and political action as a means of influencing human health.

As health care plays an important part in maintaining individual well-being, the Mandala of Public Health addresses health care delivery. According to Hancock and Perkins, the medical system exists within the community and is viewed as a component that influences human health. Hancock and Perkins (1985) describe the community as having “values, standards, support systems and networks” which exert a major influence on individual health (p. 9). Part of the community is the human-made or human modified environment. This includes urban and rural settings, transportation, energy, communication systems and other systems created by people. Finally, the Mandala of Public Health shows that an individual exists within a broader culture. How people react to situations is, as Hancock and Perkins explain, heavily influenced by their cultural attitudes and beliefs.

Summary of Part III

Social ecological theory and Mandala of Public Health offer perspectives on health and, together, illustrate its complexity. Social ecological theory emphasizes numerous and interconnected health-related factors. A major strength of this model lies in the breadth of its framework. The Mandala of Public Health, on the other hand, highlights the important role family plays in both influencing health values and providing shelter from the effects of community and culture. These two health perspectives influenced the interview structure and form designed for this study. Ideas gleaned from these health perspectives prompted me to ask educators about environmental changes (social, economic, cultural) in their rural communities and local work-places. Additionally, the

models inspired me to determine the ways in which the educators themselves actively coped with and responded to changes in their surroundings.

Summary

Chapter Two has provided an overview of select literature on restructuring, educational restructuring, and health. Several studies have been conducted on restructuring and its effects on individuals. However, this literature review suggests that, to date, there is a dearth of research on the impact of restructuring initiatives on rural educators. While there is some research published on educational restructuring in rural communities of eastern Canada (Canning & Strong, 2002; Harris, 2002), little was found which focused on educators' experiences with rural community restructuring in British Columbia.

Recent literature on educational restructuring and teachers' work suggests that considerable change is taking place in educational systems around the world. How these changes are playing out in rural community contexts is not well understood. Further study of the impacts of restructuring on elementary educators in rural coastal communities of British Columbia is warranted and this topic is the focus of the present research. In Chapter Three, I discuss the methodology and design of this study, including its conceptual framework and the adopted qualitative paradigm.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I present the conceptual framework and methodology used in this inquiry. The conceptual framework consists of the theoretical frameworks outlined at the end of Chapter 2 and by my entering assumptions. Following the conceptual framework, a section on methodology offers a rationale for conducting qualitative research and using a case study approach. The next part outlines data collection and analysis procedures. The last section addresses issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability, as well as the ethical considerations of this study.

Conceptual Framework

A combination of my entering assumptions, GR model and the ecological model, as well as an appreciation for qualitative research guided the design of this study.

Entering Assumptions

Creswell (1998) asserts that qualitative researchers should clarify their assumptions at the outset of an inquiry. My assumptions are based on a combination of life experience, family upbringing, values and work as an elementary educator in British Columbia. These ideas have also been influenced by literature on restructuring, educational change, and adult education.

My first assumption is that elementary educators' wellness is important and that restructuring initiatives may negatively affect educators' well-being. Elementary educators, especially Kindergarten to Grade Three classroom teachers, typically spend five hours a day, five days a week for ten months a year with the same group of children. These professionals are responsible for providing educational programs to enhance the intellectual, social and emotional capabilities of their students. In addition to their

instructional responsibilities, educators work with colleagues, parents and other members of the school community. Teachers and principals can play a key role in advocating for and supporting children and their families. If an educator is not well, he or she may not have the energy and/or may lack the motivation to address the needs of students, parents and colleagues. An educator who is not well may also be frequently absent from work.

While working as an elementary teacher for the Vancouver School Board from the mid 1990s to the year 2001, I observed a gradual decrease in the level of service and resources available to elementary educators. For example, between 1999 and 2001, the number of school personnel, including librarians, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, child care workers, and district consultants, was reduced. Over this same period of time, there were also closures to special education programs and fewer services available to children with English as their second language.

I observed that the work of an elementary teacher became increasingly difficult as a result of these changes. Several colleagues became ill, took increasing numbers of sick days (especially during report card “season”), and were generally anxious and “stressed out.” There also seemed to be more interpersonal conflicts in the workplace. From these experiences, I became concerned about wellness of educators across British Columbia and interested in investigating the extent to which workplace changes influenced educators’ health as well as other dimensions of their lives.

My second assumption is that people’s lives have multiple dimensions – that is, a variety of life roles, interests and responsibilities. The interconnection of life dimensions is something I have observed throughout my life and is an idea supported by the work of Ribbens and Edwards (1998). These feminist scholars emphasize the importance of

considering people's life domains and argue that individuals have private and public lives which are distinct but can influence each other.

Outside of instructional hours, for example, elementary educators are often involved in a variety of school activities. Elementary educators sit on committees, coach sports teams, and organize clubs and events such as fundraisers, school assemblies, and concerts. They may also contribute to district committee work and curriculum development. In addition, some educators are involved in provincial accreditation teams and associations, unions, university courses, and with provincial Ministry of Education initiatives. The level of involvement in a school or district differs among educators and is often influenced by factors in their personal lives.

My third initial assumption is that the restructuring in rural coastal communities of British Columbia and in their educational institutions tends to have negative outcomes. Much of the literature I have studied on restructuring tends to emphasize the disadvantages and negative aspects of restructuring rather than its advantages. With few exceptions, academic literature on rural community restructuring focuses on job loss, environmental degradation, and gender inequities caused by restructuring. Those writing about educational restructuring tend to focus on the negative effects of current educational change. Other than cost saving measures and reduced duplication of services, benefits of educational restructuring are rarely, if at all, discussed.

My professional experiences have reinforced this rather dim view of restructuring. Although I have experienced some positive changes resulting from reductions to educational services and resources, such as new ideas and the initiation of creative ways

of working, most of the changes I have witnessed have tended to make teachers' work more difficult and have appeared to reduce opportunities for children.

Thus, a combination of personal experiences and literature on restructuring has led me to believe that outcomes of restructuring can be negative. However, I have been very careful in each phase of this study to acknowledge this assumption and to avoid, as much as possible, letting it "color" the study design, data collection, findings or conclusions. I tried throughout each phase of the study to remain as neutral as possible and to understand both the positive and negative impacts of restructuring on the daily lives of elementary educators in rural coastal communities of British Columbia.

Methodology

In this section, I review the purpose of the study and explain the methodology selected for it. Next, I offer a detailed description of the research setting and procedures and address issues of reliability, validity and generalization. In the last part of the section, I outline the ethical considerations of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to investigate what restructuring means to elementary educators and to their perceptions of their wellbeing in rural, resource-based communities on the west coast of British Columbia. To this end, I sought out experiences of community and school changes and how educators perceived the effects of these changes on their daily lives. My objectives were (1) to understand more fully what forms of restructuring were taking place in rural coastal communities and specifically in rural coastal elementary schools in British Columbia, and (2) to examine how restructuring affects elementary educators' daily lives. I have focused on educators' perceived changes

to their local and school communities over the past five to six years. With these purposes in mind, I selected a suitable research method for the study.

Choice of Research Method

A qualitative approach was chosen for this inquiry, with the research questions focused on in depth and detailed personal understandings. Marshall and Rossman (1999) define qualitative research as “a broad approach to the study of social phenomena; its various genres are naturalistic and interpretive, and they draw on multiple methods of inquiry” (p. 2). Qualitative approaches can help researchers understand “the meaning for participants in the study of the events, situations, and actions they experience and are involved with, and of the accounts that they relate of their lives and experiences” as well as the “particular context within which the participants act, and the influence that this context has on their actions” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 17). This approach provides an effective tool for identifying changes that educators perceived were taking place as well as the meaning these perceived changes had for them (Leach & Winson, 1995). There are many distinct traditions within qualitative research (Creswell, 1998). For this study, a case study design seemed most appropriate.

Case Study Approach

A case study is an exploration of a “bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). I chose the case study approach as a “strategy of inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) because it allowed me to engage with the study participants in different ways and to explore the phenomenon of restructuring. Creswell (1998) and Yin (1994) suggest that when using the case study approach, researchers must decide on the boundaries of a case. Creswell

specifically suggests that case boundaries should include when the case study takes place and who or what the cases will be.

This study was located in two rural British Columbian coastal communities and three elementary schools. The elementary schools were the study “cases” (see Figure 1). The coastal communities were previously established as sites for other “Coasts under Stress” research in British Columbia. The elementary schools were specifically chosen as they had been recommended as demographically representative of elementary schools in the district, they were in different geographic locations, and because they were known to have experienced changes in their student populations. I carried out the fieldwork or data collection between February and April 2002.

Individual interviews were the primary source of data collection in this study. These interviews enabled the educators to share their experiences with me on a one-to-one basis. As Kvale (1996) explains, interviews are construction sites of knowledge that help the researcher to understand the world from the participant’s point of view and to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences. Although individual interviews constituted the primary method of data collection in this study, I also used focus groups.

Morgan (1998) defines a focus group as a method for gathering qualitative data through small group discussion around a specific topic. Focus groups helped to relay findings of this study to participants and prompted further discussion among educators on restructuring. Focus groups also enriched and added to data derived from individual interviews. This method fostered a more reciprocal researcher-participant relationship because findings were shared, discussed and debated with participants rather than determined in isolation by the researcher. Focus groups were also important because I

Research Design

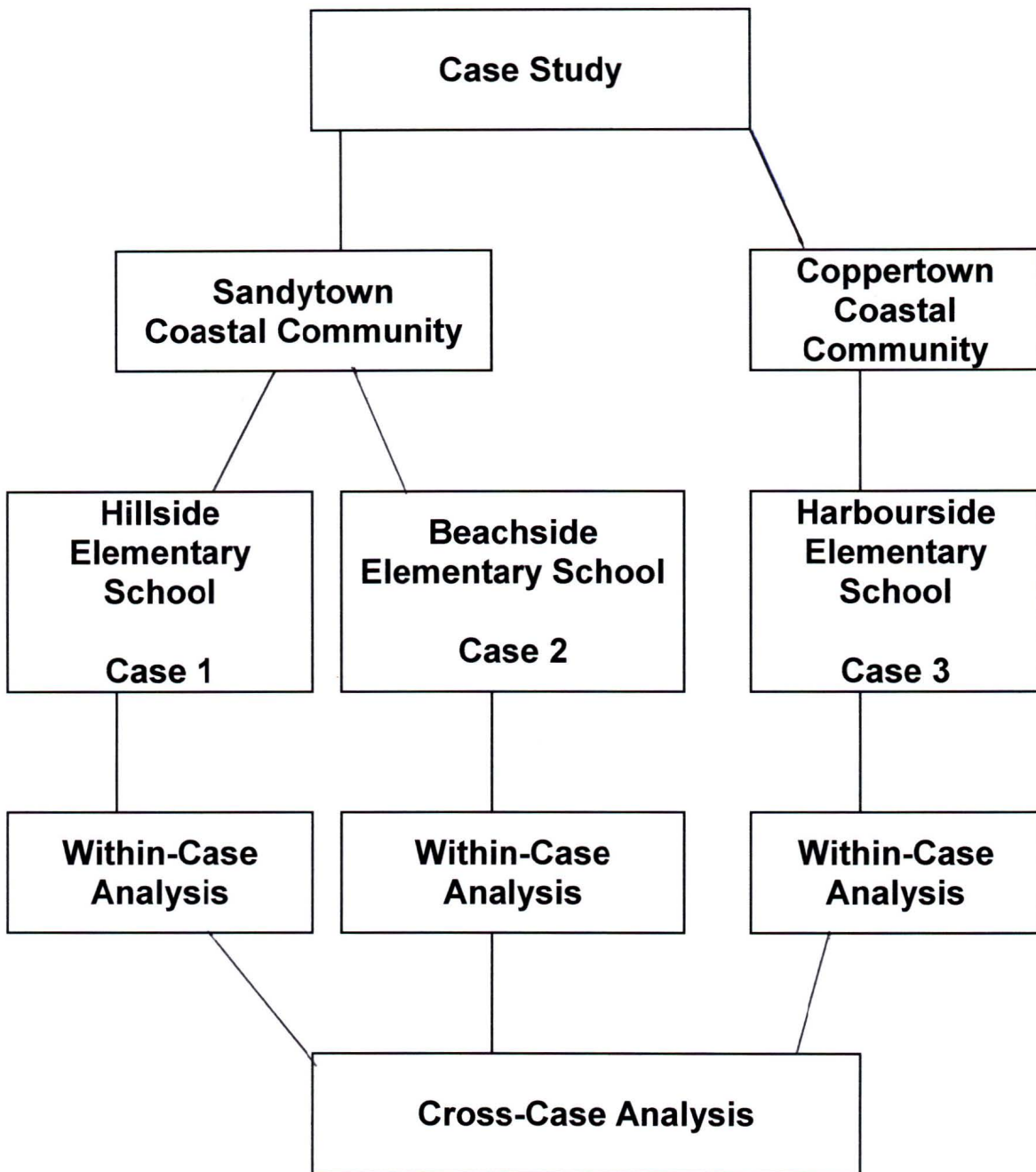


Figure 1: Research Design

intended not to “parachute” in and out of the communities but instead to return and share information about the study findings with participants. Finally, focus groups enabled me to follow up with further questions about data collected during individual interviews.

Research Setting

The setting chosen for this study was integral to the research inquiry. As part of the “Coasts under Stress” project, this study was undertaken to contribute to a broader understanding and knowledge of recent changes taking place in rural communities on the west coast of Canada. The “Seaview” School District (a pseudonym) was specifically chosen as the setting for this inquiry because of its location on the west coast of British Columbia. As Creswell (1998) points out, it is important to describe the “context of a case” in a case study approach. For this reason, information about the district and region in which the research took place is provided below.

Seaview School District serves approximately 2, 900 Kindergarten to Grade 12 students in 13 elementary schools and two secondary schools in ten rural coastal communities. In September 2001, the district employed 182 educators. The smallest one-room school has eight students, and the largest school has just over 500 students. Although the district appears to serve a relatively small number of schools, it covers a total of 8,655 square miles and several rural coastal communities. Many families living in different communities, however, have similar employers in the major industries. For instance, the one copper mine, when it was operating, was a major employer of parents in different communities of the school district. The district also has three remote elementary schools which are located in communities connected to larger centers by logging roads, ferry, and water taxi services.

Forestry is the most important economic activity in this region, although fishing and tourism also play important roles. Mining was originally an active industry, but the open-pit copper molybdenum mine in the region was closed in 1995 after 23 years of operation. Recently, however, changes to the forestry sector, reductions to the commercial fishing fleets, and downsizing by the provincial and Canadian federal government in health, education and other social services have diminished employment opportunities in the area, causing people to leave the region. For instance, the geographical region in which the study was carried out experienced a drop in its population by 10.2% between 1996 and 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2001). In contrast, during the same period, the population for the province of British Columbia grew by 4.9%. This region had the second lowest regional growth rate in the province of British Columbia for the period (Statistics Canada).

Family structures in this geographical region have also changed. The number of families with children decreased from 60.3% in 1996 to 42.5% in 2001. The number of lone parent families has increased from 13.7% to 17.6% between 1996 and 2001 respectively (Statistics Canada, 2001). In terms of ethnic origin, the regional population is reported to be composed of primarily Caucasian and First Nations peoples. According to the most current census data, in 2001, 5% of the region's population was aboriginal (Statistics Canada)

Similar to other school districts in British Columbia in the spring of 2002, Seaview School District was facing financial challenges. In February 2002, the Superintendent of Schools announced that Seaview School District was facing a 1.4 million dollar deficit for the upcoming 2002-2003 school year. This was because the

current government had reduced educational funding to school districts. As a result, schools around the province needed to consider cost saving measures. At the time of the inquiry, Seaview school district was considering cutting back special school programs, reducing staffing levels and closing smaller schools.

This same year, the British Columbia Teachers Federation (BCTF) initiated a job action. Between November 2001 and January 2002, teachers were disputing salaries and government legislation around class sizes. As teachers were declared an essential service in August 2002, they were prohibited from conducting a general strike. Instead, teachers around British Columbia, including those in Seaview School District, implemented a within-school job action plan. For three months, teachers carried out their instructional responsibilities but withdrew from a range of non-teaching duties. During the job action, teachers did not write report cards or participate in meetings or activities outside of instructional hours. For example, teachers did not attend staff meetings or coach extra-curricular sports teams. These contextual details are important to highlight because they made the 2001-2002 school year in Seaview District unusual.

Procedure

Research Sites Selected

Of the 13 elementary schools in Seaview School District, three elementary schools were specifically chosen as research sites for this study. The three chosen elementary schools were selected because of their variable sizes and locations in different geographical areas (Patton, 1990). The largest school, "Hillside Elementary School," which had a student population of 165, was chosen because of its location in the center of "Sandytown," the largest town (population of approximately 5, 000) in the district. The

second largest school, “Beachside Elementary School,” with a student population of 110 and was selected as it was located on the outskirts of Sandytown and near a First Nations reserve. The third school, “Harbourside Elementary School,” had a student population of 29 was chosen because it was a small school located in a more rural coastal community (population of 500) named “Coppertown.” Several educators interviewed reported that about 50 percent of the students in each of the participating schools were First Nations. Geographically, Sandytown and Coppertown were located within 30 kilometers of each other. Parents of children enrolled in the three elementary schools were, consequently, employed by the same mine when it was operating and hired by the same forestry companies. They also shared similar waters for fishing and employers in fish processing plants.

Permission to approach these schools was granted by the Superintendent of the Seaview School District in December 2001. The Superintendent forwarded a one-page project summary I had compiled (see Appendix A) to the three elementary school principals. Next, these principals provided information about the study to teachers in the selected schools and collected the names of those interested in being involved in the study. The principals sent me the names and contact information of those interested teachers. A research trip was scheduled for January 2002, but postponed until the end of the job action on the advice of the union president.

Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were held in mid-February, 2002. The week I was in the area collecting data, I stayed in the home of graduate student colleague. Upon arrival, I phoned participants to arrange times for individual interviews, to provide additional

information on the study, and to respond to any questions or concerns that participants had at the time. Interviews were arranged at mutually convenient times throughout the week. My goal was to interview six to ten male and female educators of various ages, years of teaching experiences, and life stages. Creswell (1998) suggests interviewing four participants in a case study, but I decided that it was important to interview at least two teachers at each research site as well to interview all other educators who offered to participate in the inquiry. Ultimately, 11 participants were interviewed and nine participated in focus groups.

Participants Selected

Individual interviews were conducted with eight elementary school teachers and the three principals (11 people in total – see Table 1). Seven of the educators were women and four were men. These educators taught from Kindergarten to grade seven and had between three and 30 years of teaching experience. Participants ranged from approximately 26 to 53 years of age. Some of the educators had no children, others had toddlers, some had school aged children and teenagers, and others had adult children.

For the sake of confidentiality, I gave the participants the option of meeting away from their schools. However, the participants chose to be interviewed in their classrooms or confidential meeting rooms in their school. All interviews were arranged outside of instructional time. At the start of each interview, I obtained the informed consent, in writing, of each participant. Ten of the 11 interviews were audio recorded with the full knowledge and permission of the participants. When one of the participants chose not to

Table 1

Participant Profiles

Participant	Gender	Teaching Assignment	Elementary School	# of Years Teaching Experience
Norma	F	K, Gr. 1/2/3/4 Teacher	Harbourside	28
Frank	M	District Band Teacher	Beachside/Hillside	5
Karen	F	Grade 5/6 Teacher	Beachside	3
Corrine	F	Principal, .5 Teacher	Harbourside	8
David	M	Grade 6/7 Teach	Beachside	8
Robert	M	Principal, .5 Teacher	Hillside	30
Mark	M	Principal, .5 Teacher	Beachside	18
Christine	F	Grade 1 Teacher	Hillside	28
Dianne	F	Grade 1/2/3 Teacher	Beachside	26
Sarah	F	Grade 3 Teacher	Beachside	10
Louise	F	Special Education Teacher	Hillside	30
Total Male Participants	4			
Total Female Participants	7			
Total Number of Participants	11			

be audio recorded, I took detailed notes. The interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes.

Interview Questions

The interview questions were divided into three parts (see Appendix B). The first section included questions about the participants' personal and professional backgrounds. The second part included questions about community changes and how they were affecting the educators. The questions in the third section addressed school changes and their impact on educators. I asked about participants' personal and professional interests and involvements at the beginning of the interview to gather contextual information about the participants and their schools. Other questions were chosen in accordance with the conceptual framework of this study. For example, there were inquiries about the changes in the participants' environments (community and workplace), how they thought these changes affected them, and the ways they chose to respond to these changes.

I posed twelve questions during the individual "semi-structured" interviews, so called because, although structured, questions were asked of each participant, the interview style was conversational. The interview questions were designed to be open-ended to encourage participants to relate their experiences freely. I used set probes such as "please elaborate" and "what do you mean?" to develop conversation and to obtain sufficient data. Active listening techniques such as reflecting and paraphrasing helped me clarify terms and any ambiguous information related by the participants. I also encouraged participants to elaborate on their thoughts, experiences and observations throughout the interviews. I analysed the transcripts thematically (see following section on data analysis) and then sent them to participants along with a letter asking the

educators to review the transcribed document for accuracy. The letter also reminded them that they were invited to an upcoming focus group to discuss general findings from the individual interviews.

To facilitate rapport with the study participants and to show my genuine appreciation for their time, effort, and involvement with the study, I sent thank you cards to each of the participants after leaving Sandytown. In the six weeks following the initial field work, I transcribed the audio-recorded interviews verbatim, indicating vocal intonations as I went along. This process allowed me to listen to the tapes repeatedly and to focus deeply on information the participants relayed during their interviews.

Focus Groups

From the transcripts, I developed a summary of general findings to present to the focus groups. In April 2002, I returned to Sandytown for three days and conducted two focus group sessions. The purpose of these focus groups was to promote discussion about the educators' experiences with restructuring, to clarify the accuracy of the general findings, and to collect further information about participants' experiences. The six teachers and principal from Beachside School attended the first focus group session which was held after school in one of the classrooms and lasted about an hour and a half. It was audio-recorded with permission of the participants. The second focus group was conducted before instructional hours at Hillside School in the principal's office with the principal and two participating teachers. Due to time constraints, the Hillside focus group was limited to 30 minutes. I decided to present less information to allow more time for discussion. At the request of one of the participants, I refrained from audio-taping the conversation and instead took detailed notes throughout the discussion. The focus groups proved to be a valuable opportunity to obtain feedback on the general study findings.

Since participants in the Harbourside School were not available to meet when I was in the community, the two participants from the school were sent a copy of the general findings and invited to respond.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a complex process in which the researcher brings order, structure and meaning to the collected data. As Marshall and Rossman (1995) attest, it is a “messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative and fascinating process” (p. 111). Data analysis for this study involved analysing the ten transcripts and one set of notes from the eleven individual interviews and two focus groups. Specifically, the taped interviews and notes were analyzed for themes and patterns of experience under a protocol analysis procedure influenced by Colaizzi (1978) and Haase (1987). Although originally designed for phenomenological inquiry, this protocol analysis procedure was chosen because it is a logical and systematic analytical procedure. I carefully adapted the procedure to fit the requirements of case study research. The exact steps involved:

1. Gathering a sense of each transcript’s or note’s meaning through repeatedly listening to the interviews and reading the transcripts;
2. Extracting statements from each paragraph;
3. Formulating statements of meaning and/or themes from these extracted statements; and
4. Organizing themes into clusters and categories according to their most central meaning.

During the data analysis phase, I listed the meaning statements derived from the interview responses of each participant onto sheets of paper. I then cut the meaning

statements into strips of paper, sorting them into three distinct piles according to the participants' school or case. Next, I conducted a within-case analysis for each school, grouping meaning statements for each case into themes according to their most central meaning. Similar meaning statements had to occur across at least 75% of the school participants in order for them to be considered a theme. Themes were then grouped into theme clusters, and theme clusters into larger categories.

A cross-case analysis was then carried out, whereby themes repeated across all cases were grouped. These overarching themes common to each case or school were identified as meta-themes. During the writing of the final report a qualitative software tool called NVivo (Bazeley & Richards, 2000) allowed me to efficiently search for and retrieve participant quotations from transcripts and notes. This proved to be a logical and efficient way of retrieving the data.

Reliability

When conducting qualitative research studies, researchers are concerned with the “comprehensiveness of their data” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 36). Yin (1994) argues that in qualitative research, the “goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study” (p. 36). With these concerns in mind, I took several steps to ensure the reliability of the inquiry in question.

First, I used the same framework for each of the eleven interviews and a similar format for the two focus groups. I submitted the interview and focus group guides for my supervisory committee to review. Second, I conducted and transcribed all of the taped interviews myself to ensure consistency. Transcripts were later sent to the participants for them to check for accuracy as well. The final step in ensuring the study's reliability was

to leave an “audit trail” to make explicit the procedures I had used throughout the study in my final report (Rogers & Cowles, 1993).

Validity

According to Maxwell (1992), there are two types of validity in qualitative research: descriptive and interpretive. Descriptive validity refers to the factual accuracy of a qualitative researcher’s account. Simply put, descriptive validity ensures researchers “are not making up or distorting the things that they saw or heard” (p. 285). Interpretive validity, on the other hand, refers to the accuracy of the researcher’s interpretation of what “objects, events and behaviors mean to the people engaged in and with them” (p. 288). Maxwell suggests that this is an important consideration for qualitative researchers who typically seek to comprehend phenomena not on the basis of their own perspectives and categories, but from those of the participants in the study.

Descriptive and interpretative validity were both priorities in this inquiry. I audio-taped the interviews and one of the two focus groups. Notes were taken at one of the interviews and one focus group where I did not obtain permission to audio-tape the conversations. I transcribed the interviews verbatim, including voice intonations and pauses. Moreover, I sent all interview transcripts and notes to the study participants to further confirm their accuracy. In the case where the participant did not want to be audio-taped, I sent the notes to the participant for review. Finally, I presented the general study findings to nine out of the 11 study participants to consider and discuss in a focus group. The findings were mailed to the other two participants who could not attend the focus groups.

To maintain the interpretive validity of the study, I included the meaning statements in the margins when I returned the transcripts to the participants. This way, the study participants were able to check how I initially analysed their transcribed interview and how I derived meaning from what was said. Moreover, throughout the focus groups, I noted suggestions or clarifications made by the participants about the general research findings. Finally, throughout this research report I have used the words of the participants as much as possible to explain or describe their experiences, insights and observations.

Generalizability

Generalizability is “the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times or settings than those directly studied” (Maxwell, 1992, p. 293). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative studies are not designed to be systematically generalized to a wider population. The intent of this qualitative inquiry was, therefore, not to generalize the findings to other elementary educators’ experiences in rural, coastal communities of British Columbia. Instead, the purpose of the study was to draw attention to the unique experiences of a variety of educators living and working in three schools in two rural coastal communities of British Columbia. The findings and conclusions are intended to contribute to a better understanding of rural educators, restructuring (both community restructuring and educational restructuring) and education in rural coastal communities of British Columbia. The information gleaned from this inquiry can also inform practice, policy and knowledge development in this area as well as inform future research.

Ethical Considerations

Standard ethical practices of research guided this study. Before commencing, I sought and received permission from the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix C). Access to the school district, as previously mentioned, was obtained from the Superintendent of Schools before the project began. All participants involved in the study signed a consent form (see Appendix D) prior to the initial individual interview to acknowledge their participation in the study, and all were informed about the time required to participate as well as of issues of confidentiality and anonymity. The consent letter explained the purpose of the study, procedures, and the right to withdraw at any time. Pseudonyms are used throughout this report to protect the identity of the participants. To further guarantee confidentiality, all transcriptions, notes and tapes are being stored in a locked filing cabinet for five years, after which time they will be destroyed.

Summary

A case study approach within a qualitative paradigm was used in this study to investigate the impact of restructuring on the lives of elementary educators in rural coastal British Columbia. In the belief that a researcher should acknowledge her own assumptions and all other influences that come to bear on her inquiry, I have described the theoretical, experiential, and methodological bases of this study. The interview results are outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter conveys the findings from individual interviews and focus groups with participants from Hillside, Beachside and Harbourside Elementary Schools. Within-case analysis for each of the three schools is presented. For each within-case analysis, a context is provided to give a sense of the school and individual participants. Results are presented for each of the three schools in categories. The categories are further broken down into theme clusters and themes. Quotations from participants are used to illuminate the participants' experiences with restructuring, and how the changes impact their daily lives. The second part of the chapter offers a concise cross-case analysis which discusses overarching themes common to all three cases.

Within-Case Analysis of Hillside Elementary School

The following section presents findings from a within-case analysis of data collected with three participants from Hillside Elementary School. The section begins with contextual information about the school and participants. Results are then discussed thematically.

Context of the Case

Hillside Elementary was the oldest of three elementary schools in the coastal community of Sandytown. In mid-February 2002, there were 164 students in Kindergarten to Grade Seven at Hillside Elementary School and ten teachers. Three educators from the school volunteered to participate in this study, including the principal.

Robert, the school principal, had worked at Hillside School and in the district for 16 years. His position involved administering the school and teaching 50 percent of the time. He had taught in other parts of British Columbia and Canada, and had a wife and

two teenagers. His personal interests were music and hockey. Robert was also involved in local and provincial boards and associations. He characterized himself as “an impassioned person.”

Nancy, a Grade 1/2 teacher, had worked at Hillside School since 1986 and in Seaview District since 1982. She was married with two teenaged children. Her personal interests were reading, and spending time with family and friends. Nancy appeared to have a good sense of fun. She described Grade 1 as her favorite grade to teach.

Louise, a Special Education Teacher, had lived in the community of Sandytown for just over 30 years, and had taught at Hillside Elementary School for her entire career. The educator reported that she had originally come to the community because she “wanted adventure,” and because Seaview District (at the time) was one of the highest paying districts in British Columbia. Since the individual interview with Louise was not audio-recorded there are not as many direct quotations from her in the analysis.

Within-Case Analysis

The case analysis of data collected from Hillside Elementary School has been divided into three categories: Community Changes, School Changes, and Impact of Changes on Educators (see Table 2). Within each category there are several theme clusters. For each theme cluster, related themes are discussed in detail.

Category 1: Community Changes

Educators at Hillside School described several changes in their community. Specifically, participants described economic and social changes that had taken place in Sandytown since the mid 1990s. Many of the demographic and social changes were attributed by participants to a shift in the local economy. These economic changes

Table 2

Within-Case Analysis of Hillside Elementary School

CATEGORY 1: Community Changes
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change Primary Industries Households</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Social Change Demographics Availability of Community Leaders Social Issues Community Outlook</p>
CATEGORY 2: School Changes
<p>Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics School Population Family Changes Student Needs</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Educational Programs and Services Curriculum Resources and Support Services</p> <p>Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators' Work Multi-Dimensional Role Expectations</p>
CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Changes in Accessibility Friendships Goods and Services Travel</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Work-Related Pressures Workload Time</p> <p>Theme Cluster 3: Responses by Educators Affective Behavioral</p>

were clearly illustrated by these educators, who were also long-term residents of Sandytown.

Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change

Primary Industries. All of the educators from Hillside School reported that Sandytown had experienced significant changes to three of its primary resource industries since the mid 1990s. These industries were forestry, fishing and mining (see Table 3).

As the primary teacher described it, Sandytown experienced a “triple whammy through the nineties” in economic terms. During that period, the mine closed, and forestry and fishing industries declined. According to this participant, the mine closure took a few years to affect the community because people “would get their UI [unemployment insurance]” and “pick up a few odd jobs,” enabling them to remain in the community for a while longer.

Robert, the school principal, also reported community economic change. He explained that in the 16 years that he had lived in the community there had “been a *steady* period of decline” in the local economy. He recalled times when for “twenty-four hours a day you could see fishing boats coming and going and coming and going... There would be boats anchored side-by-side six deep all up and down the floating docks.” He described this former economic state of the community as “incredible.” “It was a sign of prosperity, of wealth, of things that were productive.” In addition to change in the fishing industry, the school principal mentioned the closure of the mine. He reported that when the mine was active, that it employed 800 people and “poured tons of money” into the

Table 3

Category 1 of Hillside Elementary School

CATEGORY 1: Community Changes
Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change
<p>Theme 1: Primary Industries Mine closure Fishing decline Forestry decline</p> <p>Theme 2: Households Fewer Consumables Unemployment Retraining Houses selling for less</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Social Change
<p>Theme 1: Demographics Fewer People Older People Different people in the community</p> <p>Theme 2: Availability of Leaders Fewer community volunteers</p> <p>Theme 3: Social Issues Hunger Youth Involvement with drugs Teenage pregnancies Some family "disorder"</p> <p>Theme 4: Community Outlook Community members less positive Many peoples' lives are "on hold"</p>

community. At the same time, the principal explained that “the forest industry was booming.”

Robert suggested that when the local economy was booming, the general community outlook was very positive. He stated that there was “a strong mentality of big money, easy money – I’ll be cared for by the company – that kind of thing.” Today, he noted, the fish packing industry or local fish processing plant “is probably the largest employer in the community.”

Louise, the Special Education Teacher, also described having seen the community go economically from “boom to bust.” Louise, like Nancy, felt that the economic change in Sandytown was unique because of the simultaneous decline of the three primary industries. In her words: “the mine closed,” “it became harder to find trees,” and “fishing declined.”

Households. Changes in primary industries influenced the economic state of local households. Specifically, the educators noticed that as the local industries declined, some community members had “fewer consumables.” Nancy put it simply: “there are families that are working and those that aren’t.” She described how members of the local gym were composed mainly of bank employees and teachers, the “only ones with steady incomes.” Louise reported that people in the community of Sandytown were selling homes for “less than they want to.”

Theme Cluster 2: Social Change

Demographics. Educators from Hillside School reported that the population of Sandytown had changed in three distinct ways: the number of people, the age of people, and the types of people in the community. Each of the educators described a reduction in

the community population. Participants attributed this population decrease to out-migration related to fewer employment opportunities. When I asked the primary teacher where people were going, she replied, “Just wherever there’s work. Wherever there’s rumours of work.”

An age change in the community was also noted by the school principal. Specifically, he had observed that the youngest people with the youngest families tend to leave the area first. As a result, he explained, elementary schools in the area were losing many of their students.

I would say that we are losing a lot of children out of elementary schools right now because the first people to get laid off in a point of decline are the people with the least seniority and those are often the youngest people with the youngest families.

Educators also reported that the type of people living in the community had changed over time. The principal used the metaphor of a face to describe the change in community members. In his words, over a “ten-year period you could see the face of the community slowly changing.” He explained that the mine had brought professionals from all over the world to the community, giving the place an “international flavor.” When the mining professionals left the community, he reported, “the people that did come in often brought sets of problems rather than sets of solutions.”

Availability of Community Leaders. Two of the three educators at Hillside School reported that over the past several years fewer people were willing and able to take up community leadership roles. The primary teacher, for example, noted that there were increasingly fewer people available to run activities for children (such as hockey and

swimming) and to assume leadership roles in her church. As she described, it became difficult to find “parents willing to volunteer” and “parents with the skills and aptitude to be able to do it, too.” This comment was echoed by the principal, who said that there were “fewer of those sort of *involved* community people.”

Social Issues. Several social issues or community concerns were reported by the educators. These included hunger, youth involvement with drugs, and a perceived state of “disorder” in some families. Louise remarked that there is “more hunger in town than there used to be.” The principal expressed concerns about young adults (19-28 year olds) and their involvement in what he called the “drug culture.” He attributed this involvement to boredom and the ability of some youth to make “good money” at the local fish processing plant.

I think there are lots of young singles up here still. But they too have their issues.

What do you do if you are twenty-three up here and you are single? What’s happening in this town? Not a whole lot!

Another social concern related to youth in the community, which Nancy raised was a high incidence of teenaged mothers. With notable concern, she commented that students were having children at 16 and 17 years of age. Two of the educators also reported that changes in employment were creating relationship issues within families. Louise explained that because some fathers have to leave the community to find work, leaving women home alone with children, pressure can be put on familial relationships. This educator perceived people’s lives to be “in disorder” from all of the community change.

Community Outlook. Another social change identified by the educators from Hillside Elementary School was a shift in the general outlook of community members. As previously mentioned, the principal described the psychological state of Sandytown in earlier years as positive. He reported that when he arrived in the community that the three primary industries appeared to be in a “good state” and that the “markets looked good for everything, so people were happy.” In present times, however, Louise explained that people in Sandytown seemed “discontent.” She added that community members appeared to be experiencing “upheaval” in their lives, and that others seemed to have their “lives on hold,” “treading water, marking time.” Financial stress was also identified by study participants as difficult for local community members.

Category 2: School Changes

Several changes in the school and school district were noted by the educators at Hillside Elementary School (see Table 4). In particular, participants reported changes to school demographics, educational programs, resources and support services, and the nature of educators’ work. The most surprising change was the change in the overall school population.

Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics

School Population. Participants explained that the two main changes to the population of Hillside Elementary School were the number of students and the number of teachers. Although this study focuses on the past five to six years, school population trends between 1986 and 2002 are interesting to note. The principal reported that the school population increased from 240 to 352 students between 1986 and 1994. The

Table 4

Category 2 of Hillside Elementary School

CATEGORY 2: School Changes
Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics
<p>Theme 1: School Population Fewer students Turnover in students Fewer teachers</p> <p>Theme 2: Family Changes Family "break ups" Lone parents "Dysfunctional" families</p> <p>Theme 3: Student Needs Socio-emotional needs Physical needs</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Educational Programs and Services
<p>Theme 1: Curriculum One of the biggest school changes Overwhelming for teachers Many changes, consistently little in-service</p> <p>Theme 2: Resources and Support Services Reduced educational resources Reduced support services</p>
Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators' Work
<p>Theme 1: Multi-Dimensional Role "Jack of all trades and specialist at none" Greater role responsibilities Involvement in professional associations Involvement in school-based activities</p> <p>Theme 2: Expectations Time allotted and tasks required are mismatched Increased Accountability Expectation of many subjects taught</p>

educator then explained that between 1994 and 2002 the school enrollment dropped from 352 to 164 in students.

The primary teacher also commented on the school population change and explained that school size was “probably one of the biggest changes” over the past five to six years. This teacher recalled that when she came to the town (in 1986) that there was “a class and a half of each grade level.” She described how the school later “swelled to two and a half, almost 350 kids” and then diminished. “We’re really small now,” she said. “We have a class of each grade and some of those classes are very small.” Nancy also commented that the school population changes throughout the course of the year, as families move in and out of the community.

People will come for three or four months and move on, families will. So we have a lot of in and out during the year quite often. You know, the class I’ll start with in Grade 1, in Grade 4 will have only half the children in it that I had originally taught -- just in that space of time.

The educators attributed a great deal of the school population flux to community economic change. Robert attested to an “interconnectedness” between Sandytown and the school community, in terms of students and teachers. As the student population decreased, he said, the teaching staff followed suit. “In June of ’94 we had 20 teachers on staff. Today we have ten.” He also mentioned a shift in the overall age of teachers, explaining that there are a lot of teachers in the 45 to 55 year old age range who are starting to retire and “newer, younger people coming into the system.”

Family Changes. The educators at Hillside Elementary School spoke with sincere concern about changes in the structure and ways in which families were functioning.

Specifically, they reported that there were more single (or lone) parents. Nancy noted that within the last five years there had been “a lot more family breakups.” I asked her why she thought this was occurring. The educator replied, “Jobs aren’t available -- dad goes off to look for work. You know, marriages break down with separations.”

Robert expressed his respect for single parents and how hard they work:

I have so much respect for a lot of our single parents...it’s usually moms that are raising children on their own and working full-time and trying to sustain things. You know, very prideful people just doing their darndest. You know they appear to be the calm duck on the surface of the water but the feet are just paddling as fast as they can underneath.

The two female teachers said that they had observed an increase over time in “dysfunctional” families and in “parental disorganization.” Nancy provided several examples of students in her class who were experiencing family separations. In her words, “I have several kids just going through it right now and it’s tough.” The same teacher described an incident where a child came in upset at the beginning of a school day because he was afraid that his “mother would throw his father in jail.” She also mentioned a child in her class who “won’t sleep at *all* during the night because he’s worried his dad has just left.”

Robert explained that some families are adjusting to living with less money and that some children “tend to carry” stress to school with them. “Consequently,” he stated, “when things aren’t going well at home it makes it tough here.” He added that substance abuse issues were part of the school community and that social issues from the “drug culture” affect the school and its students.

Student Needs. Each of the educators at Hillside School described changes over time in the needs of their students, specifically, changes in the socio-emotional and physical needs. They attributed some of these changes to the overall shift in family structure and the way they function. The most worrisome change that they had observed was the increasing levels of emotional upset demonstrated by students over family breakups. She added that family break-ups can lead to forgetting to bring lunches and to return library books. The participants also mentioned that the school and teachers were providing support to help some children. For example, Nancy explained that the Parental Advisory Committee provides funds to some students for swimming lessons.

Additionally, Louise and Nancy both mentioned that the school provides peanut butter and jam sandwiches to some children for lunch, and cereal for recess snack. As Nancy explained, “we’re providing a lot of lunches for children right now. I keep a box of cereal in my cupboard.” Nancy also reported providing needy students with school supplies. “If they don’t bring them, you just kind of supply them yourself.”

Theme Cluster 2: Educational Programs and Services

Curriculum. The administrator of Hillside School spoke passionately about curricular changes, describing them as one of the “biggest changes” in the school over the past several years. According to Robert, “change seems to be the standard.” He explained that the rapid nature of curricular change is “overwhelming” for teachers, and thinks that these curricular pressures should stop. As he put it, “we have gurus that are creating new programs and new programs and new programs and new progr - for crying out loud stop, stop!” Robert also expressed concerns with regards to computer technology. Although he described technological training as important for children, he reported that related teacher

training to support the changes had been insufficient, and that providing computers to schools without adequate teacher in-service was “*good* intent but gone awry.”

Nancy concurred about the many curricular changes. She mentioned that there had been curricular change every five or ten years over the last twenty years. Like Robert, she noted that there had been little in-service to accompany such changes.

Resources and Support Services. All of the educators reported a decline in educational resources and support services at the Hillside Elementary School and in the local school district in general. Participants attributed these changes to decreased district funding and reduced student enrollment.

Robert, for example, explained that educational resources in Seaview District had been significantly reduced in recent years. In his words, “the resources in this district have declined. The funding has declined significantly and that’s pinched just about everywhere from transportation to Special Education.” Nancy further explained that when the school had a larger population, the teachers received more support for students with Special Needs. “When we were a bigger school we had more LA [Learning Assistance Teacher] time...and now with the declining enrollment our LA time goes down.”

To complicate matters further, Robert explained, student population drives program funding. He reported that in Seaview District itinerant teachers spend valuable service time covering geographical distances, a rural issue that this principal believes should be recognized by the provincial government and policy makers.

They [the government and policy makers] don’t take in the rural distances and water taxis and ferries and those kinds of things. You get a full-time worker in

any field of human service - they spend 60 percent of their time [traveling] and 40 percent of their time with clients.

Robert also spoke emphatically about the need to reduce the number of adults working with some students. His apparent frustration with the lack of coordinated social services is expressed in the following passage.

We have children here that have up to nine adults involved in their lives. They are in care and these little children are an industry for people. Something's wrong still with a system that allows that many people be involved in a life of a child. We haven't quite got it right yet.

Considering the bigger picture, however, the principal described British Columbia as having quite a few educational resources. In his words, "British Columbia, in terms of education, still is a -- contrary to what others might say -- is a have province, I believe."

The teachers' sentiments seemed to differ on this point. Nancy and Louise spoke at length about the decreased support services, despite high student needs. Nancy made several points in this regard. First, she emphasized her concern about the reduced availability of the district counselor. Specifically, she described how the counselor no longer has time to teach anger management or to provide service to "borderline at-risk students." Next, she described a reduction in service by the Speech Therapist. In her words, "we have a Speech Therapist that comes in once every two weeks which really isn't enough to really do much for their [the students'] language development." Finally, the classroom teacher explained the need for greater intervention in the primary grades. In her words, "we've got to get help --lots of it -- earlier."

Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators' Work

Multi-Dimensional Role. Participants at Hillside School repeatedly described being involved in several roles as educators. Comments suggested that the role has increased in part because of changes in the size and nature of the school population.

Nancy, for instance, described the role of primary teachers as “the jack of all trades and specialist at none.” She also compared teaching to acting – “it’s like you are on stage all day.” Louise explained that the nature of her role has changed since the mid 1990s when enrollment started to drop. Before then, she was entirely responsible for the school Learning Assistance program; over time, she had to assume the Resource Teacher role as well. Robert described that his role now involves teaching a range of subjects as well as being a school administrator.

The three educators also described themselves as having fingers in different ‘professional pies.’ Robert was involved with associations and boards at local and provincial levels. The Special Education teacher has worked on several accreditation teams in the province, and has arranged for food to be donated from a community food bank to feed children who come to school without breakfast or lunch. Nancy described being a fundraiser as well as her involvements in numerous school-based activities, such as the Student Council, Track and Field, and the annual Christmas concert.

I’ve helped with Student Council for quite a few years. Usually we do Track and Field - we all have a team that we coach. I usually am responsible for doing the Christmas concert at Christmas time, which entails a lot of organization. I’m the one that stands up there and goes *please* stay with me! (roar of laughter).

Expectations. The three educators from Hillside Elementary School explained that there are an increased number of expectations currently required of schools and their educators. The principal of Hillside School spoke passionately about the mismatch between expectations of his administrative role and the time given to complete the tasks. He explained, “I see more jobs being handed over to the schools to be done and no additional time to come to do them.” Louise also described an increase in “accountability and expectations” that teachers currently face. Nancy mentioned that she is expected to teach increasing number of subjects. “It’s very busy especially when you think of the number of subjects that you have.” She specifically mentioned the very high expectations of the Grade 1 program.

In sum, a range of changes at the community and school level were described by the educators. Next, the impact of these changes on educators is discussed.

Category 3: Impact of Changes on Educators

The educators at Hillside Elementary School clearly described the impact of the community and school changes on their daily lives (see Table 5). Specifically, they described changes in accessibility of friendships, goods and services, and travel; work-related pressures; and their affective and behavioral responses to the change.

Theme Cluster 1: Changes in Accessibility

Friendships. Educators described a loss of friendships because of out migration. Nancy explained that many of her children’s friends have left the community:

Table 5

Category 3 of Hillside Elementary School

CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators
Theme Cluster 1: Changes in Accessibility
<p>Theme 1: Friendships Loss of friends from out-migration Fewer friends to socialize with</p> <p>Theme 2: Goods and Services Health services have changed or left the community Changes in doctors, dentists, and orthodontists Facility changes Harder to access certain goods from stores</p> <p>Theme 3: Travel Rising cost of transportation Higher cost of air travel Travel costs reduces accessibility of Professional Development No more Northern Allowance</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Work-related Pressures
<p>Theme 1: Workload Heavier workload - "extreme" Many meetings</p> <p>Theme 2: Time Work pace is "frantic" Time constraints Less time to consult with colleagues and consultants Less administrative time</p>
Theme Cluster 3: Responses by Educators
<p>Theme 1: Affective Frustration and hope Excitement and anticipation</p> <p>Theme 2: Behavioral Provision of food and supplies to students Purchasing some of their own instructional materials Fitness Hiring help Support from friends, families, and colleagues Considering leaving community</p>

A lot of my kids' best friends have gone. Okay. Every couple of years they have to make a new circle of friends because the people that they kind of teamed up with and coalesced into a nice little group have moved on to various points.

The principal also described the difficulty of his children finding friends with similar family values.

Goods and Services. Each of the educators at Hillside School described a change in their ability to obtain goods and services in Sandytown, and the impact this change has had on their daily lives. The services in question included those of health professionals such as doctors, dentists, and orthodontists. Nancy specifically indicated that health services have either left the community entirely or change every few years. "You'll have a doctor for five or six years and then they'll move on and out and then you are dealing with a new medical person." She added that there are now travel costs involved with these services, a change which affects her family.

When you are running a family it's a major impact on what you can do. Orthodontal work -- which we had with one of our kids -- you were down to Town Z [2 ¼ hr drive away] once a month which really adds to the cost.

Nancy further stated that one of the deciding factors in where she and her husband choose to retire is the accessibility of responsive, good quality health care facilities.

The educators also commented on the uncertainty of public services and supplies in the community. Nancy brought up the example of the local swimming pool commenting that "when those types of facilities are threatened with closure you really stop and think whether this is where you want to be."

In addition to community services, these educators had found it more difficult to get their supplies locally. As one of them explained, there are “a couple of hardware stores and things but, you know, you’ll go looking for something specific and you just you can’t locate it.” Robert also identified problems with accessibility. In particular, he mentioned a notable change in the selection of goods available in the local grocery store where, he said, “we don’t have a lot of selection in terms of even grocery stores -- the daily kinds of things.” His comments resonated with the others. Louise, for example, said that she would consider moving out of the community because of these difficulties.

Travel. All of the educators interviewed at Hillside Elementary School reported that travel had become increasingly time consuming and expensive, making it prohibitive. This appeared to be, in part, because of rising costs of transportation (e.g. fuel, plane tickets). Both of the female educators from Hillside School noted a change in the cost of air travel. Louise recalled a time when air travel was less expensive and there were three flights a day out of Sandytown compared to the one flight per day that she can currently access. The primary teacher also explained the change in the cost of air travel time.

You could fly out really cheaply... then. I mean now it’s almost \$400 return for one person, you don’t fly a family out anymore. When my husband flew back east for a funeral it cost us \$1500. Ya. And that’s just *getting* there.

This educator further explained that travel costs mount when one has to leave Sandytown for goods and services.

Holidays are extremely expensive because you’ll go down to Vancouver and you’ll buy everything that you kind of haven’t been able to get your hands on and spend

the rest of the year paying it off (laughter) and go down and do the same thing again.

Another dimension of travel that one of the three educators mentioned was travel for professional development. Nancy explained that the support given for professional development does not cover the cost of trips outside of the community. “We get \$250 a year. Most workshops cost that. Okay. So, that’s not even your travel expenses.” Nancy also mentioned that she funds some of the professional development trips out of her own pocket.

Finally, the educators commented on the removal of the Northern Allowance. The school principal, for example, described the removal of the isolated communities Northern Allowance tax break as being a “huge loss.” The primary teacher echoed this sentiment, stating that “losing that Northern Allowance was a major blow” because it had “kind of equaled things out.”

Theme Cluster 2: Work-Related Pressures

Workload. The educators from Hillside School described their teaching workload as getting heavier and becoming harder. Nancy explained how the teaching workload “has gotten to be extreme.” The Special Education teacher, Louise, described her career as an educator as “all consuming.” The principal confessed that he is “married” to his work.

Interestingly, Nancy felt that she was working just as hard as she was when she started in the early 1970s and tends to work a six-day week.

Because I have family at home I usually work kind of around quarter after eight, eight thirty ‘til about five thirty or six and then I’ll often spend all day Sunday just kind of

getting set up for the week so that I don't take much home with me. Most of my work's done at school but it takes a lot of hours to do.

Participants also spoke of an increase in the number of meetings that they are expected to attend. When asked what kind of meetings, the primary teacher explained.

One's a Literacy Meeting, one's a Staff Meeting and another is a Primary Teachers meeting. Okay. And then I still have to do my marking and planning some time around that and report cards, which are due the following week and Student Leds [Student Led Conferences] which we are doing the following week too.

The principal also mentioned that he worked evenings, after school, on holidays and on weekends. For the Special Education teacher, the recent three month job action was a "real eye opener." During the interview, she took out her day timer to illustrate how many more meetings she had to attend in February 2003 compared to during the Teacher Job Action in November 2002.

Time. Educators repeatedly described a lack of time in the school day. Nancy explained that teaching today is "much more frantic, much more frantic." This educator described a real sense of urgency that she experiences on a daily basis. "You face the next morning - you come in and - Ahhh! Okay. I've gotta rush now. What am I going to do here? What am I going to do? You know. Just boom, boom, boom, boom, boom." Nancy indicated that all of her planning is done after instructional hours because during the day "it's patrol, it's monitor, it's mark." This primary teacher appeared visibly frustrated when she discussed these time constraints.

Nancy also reported having very little time to meet with her Special Education colleagues (such as the Learning Assistance Teacher and Special Education Workers) to

discuss teaching practices and student programs. In her words, “there’s just no - no consult time.” The educator also explained that she had little time to meet with consultants such as occupational therapists and speech and language pathologists. Nancy explained that because school enrollment has dropped, that there is less time allocated to the school for special education services.

Robert repeatedly mentioned a lack of time. He described feeling very pulled as a consequence of the lack of time currently allotted to do his job.

We simply don’t have enough time to do what we need to do. So when my feet are in the classroom my head is in the office. When my feet are in the office my head’s in the classroom -- I am not being as good a teacher for my students as I know that I can be and I don’t feel that I am providing enough leadership because I am way behind in my marking or something in the classroom.

The school principal described this issue of time as an “unfortunate part of the reality of where we are right now” and explained that “it’s probably only going to get worse” because of increasingly reduced funds to public education. Robert appeared particularly concerned about this because, he explained, “to be a leader, at whatever level, you need time.”

Theme Cluster 3: Responses by Educators

Affective. Four emotional responses expressed by the three educators from Hillside School were frustration, excitement, hope, and anticipation. The Grade 1 teacher described being frustrated with the computer lab. She explained, “It’s very, very frustrating for a primary teacher whose children cry when their computer’s broken down and they don’t get to print something off and ‘five other kids have’ (sounding like a child

crying). You know, it's terribly frustrating." As a teacher and a parent, this educator also mentioned being frustrated with the lack of early intervention or support services for primary students. The principal demonstrated frustration through his tone and body language when he discussed issues of time and rapid curriculum change.

More positively, the Grade 1 teacher described how she favors teaching primary because of how exciting it is to see her students learn to read and write. The principal also explained how he has "great hope" for upcoming teachers to fill future educational leadership positions in the district. Both the primary teacher and principal described enjoying what rural life has to offer. Both teachers mentioned that they were looking forward to retirement.

Behavioral. Educators described varying behavioral responses to their changing circumstances. Nancy described how she would provide food and school supplies to some of her students and would buy instructional materials with her own money. She further revealed that she manages a six day work week by hiring a cleaning person, setting priorities, and going on long walks and to the gym for fitness classes. She described coping with the job by reading so she "doesn't have to talk," and by having regular "bitch sessions" with her colleagues to "help get it off your chest." Some years, especially when the "kids are tough" or demanding academically and/or behaviorally she described how she gets "uptight," "clenches her jaw" and consequently needs to "take the entire summer off to regroup."

The principal explained that his family, staff and people at the school board office are supportive of his work. In his words, "I am truly blessed. I have a wonderful

supportive staff here.” The principal added that he cannot possibly do all the work expected of him. He explained that “some pieces fall off the desk and you let ‘em fall.”

Finally, Louise described how she would eventually like to move out of the community. Being two and a half years from retirement, she explained that she would like to have some things more accessible, where it is “not such a production to leave.” She added that after living for so many years in the community, “I just need a change.”

The next part of this section is a within-case analysis of Beachside School.

Within-Case Analysis of Beachside Elementary School

This section presents the case analysis of Beachside Elementary School. Findings from individual interviews and one focus group with the six educators are discussed in categories, theme clusters, and themes. The section begins with contextual information about the school community and participants.

Context of the Case

Unlike Hillside Elementary School which was located in the center of Sandytown, Beachside Elementary School was situated on the outskirts of town beside the Pacific Ocean. In mid-February 2002, there were 112 students enrolled in the school from Kindergarten to Grade 7. The principal explained that the school population was “diverse” because it was located near three distinctly different neighborhoods.

We have students that live along the beachfront in homes with double income professional families. We have students that live in a trailer park that is just down the road, which has people on social assistance programs. And with the First Nations, as well, the reserve is a very distinct part of our population.

Indeed, the school principal reported that 42% of the Beachside School population was First Nations students.

The principal, Mark, explained that it was his third year at Beachside School and 18th year working for Seaview District. In addition to being the principal of Beachside School, he supervised a one-room school in the district and taught 60% of the time (library, math and social studies). His personal interests were the arts and sports. He was also involved with several community organizations. Mark lived with his wife and said that “these are my children here at the school.” Three intermediate teachers and two primary teachers also volunteered to take part in the study.

David, a Grade 6/7 and French teacher, had worked for eight years in the community and had taught at the school for five years. He reported that he was married, played in a local band, and was involved in the union business. Down the hall from David was Karen, the Grade 5/6 teacher. Karen had lived with her partner in the community for three and a half years and had taught in two different schools. She enjoyed outdoor activities such as skiing, hiking, and kayaking. This was Karen’s first year with her “own class.” Frank, the District Band Teacher, worked in four different schools in Seaview District including the local high school. He was married with three children. Frank’s personal interests included playing outside with his children and watching hockey.

The two primary teachers appeared to be quite different. The Grade 1/2/3 teacher, Dianne, had taught in the district for 26 years, 24 of which had been at Beachside School. She reported living a “balanced” life with her partner in Sandytown. She was active in sports, and enjoyed travel and a local book club. Dianne was also involved in community boards and associations. Her colleague, another Grade 3 Teacher, had worked at the

school for two-and-a-half years and had been teaching in the district since 1990. Sarah lived in the community with her husband and two children. Although she reported that work consumed most of her time, she identified her interests as spending time with family and friends and practicing Tai Chi.

Within-Case Analysis

The analysis of data collected from Beachside Elementary School has been divided into three categories: Community Changes, School Changes, and Impact of Changes on Educators (see Table 6). Within each category there are theme clusters. For each category in which several related themes are discussed in detail.

Category 1: Community Changes

Educators at Beachside School described numerous changes that had taken place in the community of Sandytown. Specifically, they described economic and social changes (see Table 7). The following themes describe these changes in more detail.

Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change

Primary Industries. All of the educators at Beachside Elementary School indicated that the resource-based industries of Sandytown had undergone significant change in the past five to six years. Specifically, participants reported that the mine had closed, fishing had declined, and that the forestry industry was “volatile.” Several participants described local forestry jobs as “uncertain.” Mills were explained to be “experiencing many shut downs,” and having been “down more times than...up” in the past few years. Frank, the District Band Teacher, succinctly described the considerable economic change in the region.

Table 6

Within-Case Analysis of Beachside Elementary School

CATEGORY 1: Community Changes
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change Primary Industries Local Businesses/Community Households</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Social Change Demographics Social Issues Community Outlook</p>
CATEGORY 2: School Changes
<p>Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics School Population Family Changes</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Student Needs Physical Socio-emotional Academic Material</p> <p>Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators' Work Multi-Dimensional Role Curriculum Documentation</p> <p>Theme Cluster 4: Accessibility Professional Development and Support Services Educational Resources Parental Involvement</p>
CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Concerns and Uncertainties School-Related Financial Personal</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Work-Related Pressures Workload Classroom Management Interpersonal Tensions</p> <p>Theme Cluster 3: Health Physical On Being Tired Stress</p> <p>Theme Cluster 4: Responses by Educators Affective Attitude or Morale of Educators Behavioral</p>

Table 7

Category 1 of Beachside Elementary School

CATEGORY 1: Community Changes
Theme Cluster 1: Economic Change
<p>Theme 1: Primary Industries Mine closure Fishing decline; except fish farming Forestry decline</p> <p>Theme 2: Local Businesses/ Community Fewer stores Less money available for aesthetic improvements Depressed property values</p> <p>Theme 3: Households Some lifestyle changes Shift in traditional gender roles People increasingly careful with their finances Changes in day-to-day living Economic gap in community</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Social Change
<p>Theme 1: Demographics Out-migration from mine closure Exit of professionals from community when the mine closed Families splitting to find employment</p> <p>Theme 2: Social Issues Drug and alcohol use Alcohol and drugs - "an escape from pressures" Teenage pregnancies</p> <p>Theme 3: Community Outlook Change in community "energy" Some people feeling "stuck" People not getting out and enjoying the area as much There does not seem to be "a lot of hope in the community" Some people and children are not happy Need to "dig deep" to be positive about living in the community</p>

Economically speaking our communities are a lot poorer now than they were two years ago. The forest industry is virtually dead in the water up here right now. The fishing, of course, has been in decline for years. There's no mining anymore -- that's been gone for a couple of years now. In fact, it was gone before I came up here, so I didn't see that major impact happen.

In the place of the ailing industries, participants mentioned that fish farming was on the rise, and tourism was strong in the summer months. In the focus group, a participant added that home businesses were beginning to emerge.

Local Businesses/Community. The majority of participants at Beachside School indicated that economic change was taking place at the community level, affecting local businesses and the housing market. David, for example, reported that there were fewer stores in the local mall. "The mall is so boring to walk through now there's not that many stores in it anymore." Dianne added that there was less money in the community and in businesses for aesthetic improvements.

Within our whole community there are very few dollars for any extras in our community, and so things like flower baskets and all of those little goodies - those kinds of obvious things are really getting less and less as the years go by. Things are *not* improving in any way. You don't see any businesses, downtown businesses, doing updates or any aesthetic things -- I mean they are getting by, lots of them end up closing -- they just can't make a go of it.

The two primary teachers reported that property values were depreciating. Referring to her own home, Sarah said, "Oh did we get nailed -- our assessment value went from

\$148,000 to like -- I think it's \$104,000 in three years." Dianne, who had lived in the community for over 25 years, also mentioned that houses were selling for a low price.

What I see happening is -- just looking out my window -- I see a lot of houses getting really run down. The houses are selling at a fairly low price. People are coming in and not taking that same pride in their community.

Households. Five of the six educators at Beachside Elementary School described a range of responses at the household level. Specifically, participants noted that some people's lifestyles were changing, with some becoming increasingly frugal with their money, and others undergoing retraining. Mark explained that he knows lots of people in the forestry industry who "don't know from month to month that they are going to be working." Frank also commented on changes among friends.

It's like their whole lifestyle is changing -- when you are used to bringing in a huge income and then all of a sudden you are bringing in nothing. And it's like, oh geeze, well, his wife's working full-time now and the child is in daycare longer.

This reference to a shift in traditional gender roles was also noted by the Karen. She explained that as men were out of work, women were increasingly being employed in the community.

Several of the educators also remarked that people in the community of Sandytown were careful with their money. Frank's observations reflected this trend:

Things are definitely tighter with the money so people aren't spending as much. They don't seem to be enjoying life as much as they used to. When your sole

focus is how am I going to get to the next pay cheque -- that has a huge impact on people. I have *been* there -- I know what it's like.

This tenuous situation was also recognized by one of the primary teachers, who explained that "it's day-by-day kind of living and you are not -- you are not planning for your future -- you are just trying to get by."

More optimistically, the participants explained that while some people are on social assistance, others had turned to retraining for employment opportunities. Karen provided the example of a friend.

Participant: One of our *really* closest friends used to be a fisherman.

Interviewed: And *now* does?

Participant: He's now a mechanic. He's gone through Ford and he's done a lot of training and he's totally changed occupations. I have seen that with a lot of people.

Dianne, however, described retraining as an expensive option. As she put it, "there are some people talking about going back to school -- not a lot because, again, that costs so much money... they couldn't afford it." Two of the teachers expressed concern about the growing economic gap in the community. In Dianne's words:

I see there becoming a bigger gap between the people that have in this community and the people that don't have and the don't haves is becoming a bigger pool and that's not healthy.

This educator expressed concern that this economic gap may eventually create a "separation" in community and wondered if economic "discrimination" may arise. This

sentiment was echoed by Sarah, who said, “I wonder when everybody is fighting for the same small piece of the pie if people resent people more.”

Theme Cluster 2: Social Change

Demographics. The majority of educators at Beachside Elementary School reported that demographic change had taken place in the coastal community of Sandytown. Specifically, participants spoke of community out-migration from the mine closure. The mine closure was described as having caused a reduction in the number of people in the community. Dianne and David explained that once the mine closed that professionals “left gracefully” to Alberta, and to other countries around the world. The mining professionals departure was described by Dianne as having “left a huge hole” in the community. As she recalled,

When the mine was here we drew on a lot of...very talented people who lived in lots of international communities and these people were very well educated, volunteered a lot in the community – they were the kinds of people that coached the hockey, had the music teachers, figure skating all these extra little clubs and so on and they brought a lot of energy to this community and those people are gone.

This out-migration, however, did not occur all at once. As David explained, many of the mining employees were given severance packages or were able to live on Unemployment Insurance for some time before leaving. The educators also mentioned that while people were moving out of the community, not all of the community members wanted to move. In some cases, Mark noted, families are temporarily splitting as they seek employment.

Social Issues. Four educators at Beachside School expressed concerns about social issues in the community. Two educators specifically explained that there is a lot of

drug and alcohol use. One of these educators described this phenomenon as “an escape from pressures for people.” Sarah described the situation in the following way: “It’s bleak you know and people are depressed because things are bad, so they drink more and do more drugs and it’s just a really vicious cycle.” Participants also shared concerns about the number of teenage pregnancies in the community.

Community Outlook. Five of the six educators from Beachside Elementary School commented on a change in the attitude of some community members. One of the longer-term educators at Beachside School observed that the community had previously shown “a *very* different bit of energy” and that these days, people in the community were feeling “stuck.” Interestingly, another of the educators described this very feeling.

Participant: It’s [Sandytown is] a totally bleak and depressing place to live and I would *leave* if I could.

Interviewer: Really?

Participant: But, I don’t *feel* like we can leave.

Another teacher felt that people were isolating themselves from their surroundings. “I think a lot of people are getting lost in their video machines and their computers and the television – as a bit of escapism. So, they are not really enjoying this area as they might.”

Two of the educators commented on a lack of hope among community members. Frank remarked that “people don’t see that there is a positive light at the end of the tunnel right now.” The observations of Sarah were consistent with this view.

What I see is that people aren’t happy, the kids aren’t happy. You know children will be happy no matter what’s happening but really the older kids don’t seem as hopeful, as the kids used to when I started teaching.

Some of this perceived unhappiness may have been related to the winter weather. Indeed, half of the educators attested to the fact that rainy weather, particularly in the winter months, affects people and their attitudes. One way or the other, as Dianne explained, “You *really* need to kind of dig deep and be very positive right now about living here.”

Category 2: School Changes

Educators at Beachside School described several changes that had taken place in the Beachside School and school community (see Table 8). This section outlines the school changes reported by participants. These include school demographic change, changes in student needs, changes in the nature of educators’ work, and changes in the accessibility of educational resources and student services.

Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics

School Population. The educators described an overall decline in the number of students and staff at Beachside Elementary School. The principal explained that many of the students left around the time the mine closed. He and David also mentioned that students were leaving the school throughout the year. This comment resonated with the principal, who added,

We do have a turn over in our students - I mean - I have got one family that’s leaving in about a month from now. He’s a pilot for one of the helicopter companies and he works overseas a lot. He works six weeks in six weeks out sort of thing.

Table 8

Category 2 of Beachside Elementary School

CATEGORY 2: School Changes Theme Clusters 1 and 2
Theme Cluster 1: School Demographics
<p>Theme 1: School Population Decline in the number of students; turnover in students Fewer staff members First Nations students are not leaving as often More split classes</p> <p>Theme 2: Family Changes Some families living with financial concerns Some parents out of work; others applying "out" for work Some families "under stress" "Broken" families Drinking and substance abuse by parents and children</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Student Needs
<p>Theme 1: Physical Some students lack food and nutrition Students coming to school without breakfast Some students without lunches Some students consistently tired</p> <p>Theme 2: Socio-emotional Anger Sadness and upset Some older students "defiant" Some students having difficulty focusing on school work Some nice kids and families; some resilient children</p> <p>Theme 3: Academic Some students "academically needy" Wide range of student abilities Many students with special needs (FAS, FAE) Some students lack exposure to different experiences</p> <p>Theme 4: Material Some students lack supplies for school Some students have limited clothing for school Some students do not have telephones in their home</p>

However, David also mentioned that while there was a decline in the overall school population, new students were still coming into the school.

Furthermore, not all community groups were described by educators to be leaving the area. David explained that the First Nation student population was “more stable.” The explanation he provided for this was that the majority of First Nations people are not as connected to industries such as forestry and mining. The principal also mentioned that the local high school population had not been as affected as the elementary schools.

Participants also described a decrease in the number of teachers at Beachside School. The Grade 7 teacher and the principal both explained that teachers have been laid off due to decreased school enrollment. The principal did mention, however, that attrition and retirements allowed some teachers to remain working in the area.

Participants also commented on changes in school structure, for example, an increased number of split classes. As Dianne (who had taught at the school for 24 years) explained, “our population has decreased and because we are such a small school, we sometimes have to have splits. It’s my first year here I’ve [had] three grades in one class.” The topic of split classes came up in the focus group. Participants clarified that while there had always been split classes in the school, the decrease in school size had meant that there were more of them.

Family Changes. Changes in the families connected to Beachside School were noted by participants. Educators explained that some families live with serious financial concerns related to employment loss and uncertainty. Indeed, parents were described by educators as out of work, and others were noted to be applying “out” for work. It was noted by two educators that parents who did have work were working all the time or are

working longer hours for less money. David explained that even families that were usually “well off” were experiencing lifestyle changes and employment uncertainty.

Specific examples of economic hardship were provided by educators. The Band Teacher noted that over a two year period that there were few parents able to afford the school band program. It was also mentioned by educators that parents appeared to have less disposable income to donate to fundraising initiatives and to pay for school fees. For instance, a participant explained that fewer people were buy books from the annual book fair. The principal reported that some families had given up their telephone service to reduce expenses.

Some families were described by the school principal as “under stress” due to both financial strains and uncertainties about leaving the community. Two of the educators spoke with sincere concern about the number of “broken families” and incidences of neglect and abuse in the community. The Grade 7 teacher noted that he has witnessed drinking and substance use by both parents and students. The principal specified that some families were separating because of alcohol and drug related problems.

Theme Cluster 2: Student Needs

Physical. Five of the six educators at Beachside School commented on a change in the physical needs of their students. David’s experience was that some children did not have enough food at home and, consequently, came to school without breakfast. The principal and one of the primary teachers further reported that some children either do not have lunches at all or lack nutritious one. Four of the teachers also mentioned that some

students come to school tired. Dianne suggested that the reason for this is that that some students stay up late, and do not get enough sleep for school.

Some of them [students] live in really stressful homes -- really stressful homes with some partying, some drinking and they come in really tired, they come in late. I've got a number of people that show up at ten o'clock in the morning -- we start school at 8:30. One of our biggest things is to learn to read and we do it first thing in the morning -- and they come in, they're tired and *that* to me is a big difference than it was years ago.

David also mentioned that he sometimes needs to let students sleep at school if they are tired, otherwise the children become very disruptive in class.

Socio-emotional. Several of the educators from Beachside School noted a rise in the socio-emotional needs of their students. Perhaps the most worrisome was the anger and sadness they observed in their students. Sarah described the Grade 7's as "pretty angry" and "closed." Dianne used the term "defiant" to describe some intermediate students. Similarly, David also said that some older students have that "little spark of defiance" and that some students tend to get "more belligerent as they age."

The educators connected some of the student upset to parental job uncertainty and out-migration. David provided an example from his class.

The child comes to school quite angry and upset sometimes because he thinks they're moving and doesn't want to leave his friends. So, one day everything is great -- the dad's back to work, mom's working. The next day, dad's off and things are stressful at home for them.

On the topic of student anger, the Grade 7 teacher also shared a disturbing story about a boy who repeatedly jammed “scissors into the top of his head.”

In terms of student behavior, educators at Beachside Elementary School repeatedly noted that children tend to have a hard time focusing. One of the primary teachers described her students as either very “talkative” or “lethargic,” and explained that they have difficulty attending in class. Karen, the Grade 5/6 teacher, said that some students in her class cannot focus without explicit direction or assistance from an adult. On a more positive note, Sarah maintained that there are “strong kids, nice kids and families” in the community. She described some of the children she had worked with as “very resilient.”

Academic. Educators mentioned that Beachside School had many “academically needy” students. In particular, the participants emphasized the diversity of learners within a wide range of student abilities. A female intermediate teacher, for instance, noted that in her grade 5/6 class she had reading levels that ranged from grade two to grade eight. The Grade 1/2/3 Teacher said that she has a range of reading abilities in her primary classroom from level four to level 21.

Educators repeatedly commented on the number of students with special needs. The Grade 5/6 Teacher, for instance, described having several designated students in her class with designations and Individual Education Plans (IEP’s). She explained, “I have one, two, three, four [students] with IEP’s. One is severely learning disabled – so that one has a half-time aid.” Three of the six educators also mentioned having students with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE). The principal indicated that the number of children with these conditions may be related to alcohol and drug use

in the community. The principal also suggested that many students in the school have histories of school moves which can affect their learning. Finally, three of six educators commented that students appeared to lack exposure to different life experiences and opportunities. One of the younger educators wondered how this affected student learning.

Material. Four of the six educators at Beachside School described that students material needs have changed. As the principal stated, many children have to deal with difficult economic situations. Two of the teachers mentioned that some children lack the supplies they need for school. The Grade 7 teacher explained that some children cannot afford to join field trips without the additional fundraising support. This teacher also stated that he does not ask parents to provide gym strip since many students do not have two pairs of shoes. He added that after hours contact is often difficult to make. “There are two or three [students] in my class that don’t have phones so I can’t phone them.”

Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators’ Work

Multi-Dimensional Role. Participants from Beachside School explained that there are an increasing number of roles associated with being an educator (see Table 9). As one of the educators stated, teaching is “probably the smallest part of my job.” Indeed, the variety of roles of an elementary educator was explained by participants to be both a joy and a stressor.

One of the main roles that the educators explained that they were performing was that of a counselor. David reported that he spent a lot of time talking to the students. In his words, “I spend a lot of time just talking with kids on-on-one at recess, lunch and after school.” He also mentioned that part of this role is contacting social services to report child abuse and other student issues. Karen explained that she coordinates the bully

Table 9

Category 2 of Beachside Elementary School – Theme Clusters 3 and 4

CATEGORY 2: School Changes Theme Clusters 3 and 4
Theme Cluster 3: Nature of Educators' Work
<p>Theme 1: Multi-Dimensional Role Increasing number of roles required Teaching as the "smallest part of the job" Teacher as counselor Fundraising District and school responsibilities</p> <p>Theme 2: Curriculum More curricular expectations each year "Massive" curricular changes over a short time Teachers are not always supplied with materials Standardized testing</p> <p>Theme 3: Documentation Increasing amounts of documentation required Many different types of forms need to be completed Increased bureaucracy and accountability</p>
Theme Cluster 4: Accessibility
<p>Theme 1: Professional Development and Support Services Principal believes there are many opportunities for Professional Development Teachers see less of a "push" around Professional Development Fewer opportunities to exchange ideas among colleagues Decreased ability to access support services for students Fewer staff to work with students with special needs</p> <p>Theme 2: Educational Resources Fewer funds to access Musical instruments need repair Possible school program closures (e.g. band) Possible policy changes</p> <p>Theme 3: Parental Involvement Decreased parental involvement in school Fewer parents available to help with fundraising Teachers used to give workshops to parents; parents busy with their work Decreased home support for the Band Program</p>

proofing program at the school. The principal shared that parents often call him at home on the telephone to discuss their children. The teachers explained that there was a district counselor, school paraprofessionals such as the home school coordinator and some of the Special Education Workers available (albeit reduced amounts) to support them.

Another role that the teachers described was fundraising. David explained that he organizes bottle drives and bingo events to assist in paying for year-end field trip. The principal said that he is involved in finding funds for the school and the school district for the performing arts. Educators described a host of other activities they were involved in at both the school and district level. For instance, Karen and Dianne were involved in providing district professional development. David was involved in union activities as well as coaching sports, and running clubs and other school programs. Dianne mentioned that she organized a volunteer “grandparent council” so that older folks in the community could give students much needed one-on-one time with their school work. The Band Teacher organized a regular band and a jazz band in addition to his teaching assignment. Participants also described being involved in community activities related to the performing arts, and community services and development.

Curriculum. Increased curricular demands were noted by four of six educators at Beachside Elementary School. Dianne explained that more curricular expectations are being placed on teachers every year.

Participant: There’s more and more dumped on us to teach every year and we are getting further and further away from learning to read and giving some time to practice because we keep adding more and more to the curriculum.

Interviewer: More?

Participant: More. Bully programs, fire safety, personal planning and it goes on and on and on.

The school principal noted that there had been “massive curricular changes” over a short period of time. He specifically explained that the changes, which had been taking place since 1994, were overwhelming for teachers. The Grade 6/7 teacher appeared frustrated when he was describing the curricular changes. He explained that that the changes are expected, and that teachers are not always supported with necessary materials. “They changed *every* curriculum in the last six, seven years now...they don’t even send you the book anymore.” Sarah also mentioned that teachers are pressured to focus on academics due to the recently expected standardized testing (Foundation Skills Assessment).

Documentation. Five of the six educators from Beachside Elementary School noted an increase in the amount of paper work required of them. The majority of participants indicated that much of this documentation was related to students with special needs. Specifically, they described filling out counselor referral forms and forms for school based team, Individual Education Plans (IEP), and student transfer forms.

The paper trail is another one. You are filling out a form for everything. There’s school based team meetings, there’s counselor referral forms, there’s student transfer forms – there’s all these forms you fill out. There’s just this *huge* amount of paper work to do.

While the Band Teacher described this documentation as related to increased “bureaucracy,” one of the primary teachers considered the increased amounts of paperwork connected to a push for greater accountability.

Theme Cluster 4: Accessibility

Professional Development and Support Services. Participants differed in their perspectives on Professional Development. The principal explained that there were many Professional Development opportunities for teachers. One of the teachers, on the other hand, explained that there is “less of a push” around Professional Development in schools. Both of the educators, however, explained that there were fewer opportunities available for exchanging ideas with colleagues. There was also agreement among participants in an overall decrease in the accessibility of student support services.

In particular, the majority of participants from Beachside Elementary School had found that there were fewer services for students with special needs. The educators reported decreased access to counselors, Speech Therapists, and Special Education Workers. Dianne explained that there was not a lot of special education support despite the high number of students with special needs in her class. She described the job of the local speech therapist as an impossible job. In her words, “we have a Speech Therapist. That’s *another* impossible position. I really admire the fact that she continues to do that job. She has an *impossible* job description. She further added that “we see her [Speech Therapist] so rarely that I forget who she even sees. So, if I am forgetting, how effective can it [the service] be? Really?” She said that specialists tend to come to the community for “quick fixes.” The youngest teacher was very concerned about the reduced support by Special Education Workers. She described the change as hard on the children and on herself.

Educational Resources. Because of decreased student enrolment, the principal explained that there were fewer funds to access. The Band Teacher, for instance,

explained that many of the musical instruments needed to be repaired. This educator also spoke emphatically about school program closures, including the district band program.

The primary teacher described the lack of money in the school system as “depressing.” She explained the need for classroom furniture, paint, and attention to the school ground gardens. The youngest teacher was concerned about upcoming policy changes related to class size, and funding for students with special needs.

Parental Involvement. Five of the six educators described a notable change in the past five to seven years with the availability of parents at Beachside Elementary School. Dianne, a long-time teacher at the school, described how parents used to volunteer in the school and support classrooms with materials. Presently, she explained, there were fewer parents available to volunteer. Two participants remarked on the lack of parental presence in the school, and explained that it was related to people working hard. David described a lack of parental involvement with some fundraising initiatives. Dianne reported that she had stopped giving parent workshops and requesting that parents send things to school with their kids. David also explained that he has taught some children for four years without having met their parents. The other intermediate teacher described a lack of home support for children with their school work. In keeping with this observation, the Band Teacher identified a 50% decline in home practice over the two years at the school.

Category 3: Impact of Changes on Educators

Educators at Beachside School described the ways in which school and community changes affected them. Specifically, participants described concerns, uncertainties and work-related pressures.

Theme Cluster 1: Concerns and Uncertainties

School-Related. Several participants at Beachside School, notably the younger teachers, expressed concerns about employment uncertainties (see Table 10). One of the intermediate teachers, for instance, was worried about her “minimal seniority” in the district, and about not having a job for the following school year. The Band Teacher also expressed employment-related concerns as his music program was subject to reductions. This young man explained that he was, as a consequence, not feeling as patient with his students.

Participants at Beachside School also related concerns about the impact of the district deficit and reductions to the budget. David feared that the district deficit was “going to really hurt” and expressed concerns about reduction to Special Education teachers (non-enrolling staff). One of the primary teachers was worried about the future of the public education system and expressed particular concern about reduced counseling time and reduced access to Child Care Workers. The Band Teacher was concerned that at-risk students would be harmed by such changes. The principal explained that leadership is needed from all educator groups in tough times.

Three of the six educators described concerns related to possible small school closures and changes to class size policies. One of the teachers said that he was preoccupied with the potential size of his class for the following school year. “I am already losing sleep over what my class is going to look like next year. It’s only February.” One of the primary teachers described a concern about what she perceives as a trend towards reduced amounts of professional development. The two younger female teachers were concerned about sending their own children to schools in the district.

Table 10

Category 3 of Beachside Elementary School – Theme Clusters 1 and 2

CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators Theme Clusters 1 and 2
Theme Cluster 1: Concerns and Uncertainties
<p>Theme 1: School-Related Concerns related to employment Concerns related to budget deficit and budget reductions Concerns related to reduced Special Education staffing Concerns about reduced availability of counselling time Concerns about reductions to Child Care Workers Concerns about at-risk students Concerns about class-size policies Concerns about a perceived trend towards less Professional Development</p> <p>Theme 2: Financial Community changes not perceived to financially affect some teachers Money does not go as far in the community Educators "set a little apart" from the community Some teachers' families are connected to resource-based industries Travel costs are more than they were previously Personal finances spent on school</p> <p>Theme 3: Personal Concerns Home ownership Remaining in the community Friendships</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Work-Related Pressures
<p>Theme 1: Workload More than a nine to three o'clock job Being an educator is "not just a job - it's a life" Computers add to educators' workloads Workload goes in "cycles" Workload is harder because of high student needs Meetings and paperwork; "Too much to do" Life as a teacher is "busy"; Time is a "huge factor" Lack of time to share ideas with colleagues and to consult with district staff Pressure to fit curricula into busy schedules</p> <p>Theme 2: Classroom Management Student behaviors connected to difficulties at home Students are bullying, name calling and fighting</p> <p>Theme 3: Interpersonal Tensions "Major tension" and "infighting"; staff room and meetings more stressful Reduced effort by staff to socialize outside of school hours Tension connected to political climate</p>

Financial. The majority of the participants from Beachside Elementary School commented that the community change influenced their personal finances. Perspectives, however, greatly differed. One of the teachers did not feel the changes had financially affected him. In fact, he stated that he receives a pay increase every year. He did note, however, that his money does not go as far in the community. Another teacher also mentioned that teachers were “set a little apart” from the community because they had jobs. The principal also commented that many educators live a sheltered life with money and benefits and do not fully understand the experiences of the students at Beachside School. At the same time, he explained that many teachers were connected to the resource-based industries because of their partners and in some cases might be the only bread-winner in their families.

Dianne noted that because of increases in travel costs fewer teachers go “out” for professional development. The school principal mentioned that he spends his own money to make ends meet at school and that, as a result his wife, gets upset with him. One of the youngest teachers interviewed, whose husband lost his job when the mine closed, described that it is financially tight for her family. She explained that she and her partner seemed to be working harder for less money. She added that her husband worked long hours and sometimes has to leave town for some jobs. Sarah is also concerned about the declining value of her home and property, and about the lack of money available to fix the house.

Indeed, the impact of community change on participants’ financial status clearly differed. This difference seemed due in part to the age of the participant (the older the

participant, the more financially secure they seemed) and also seemed to differ according to how closely their family was connected with resource-based industries.

Personal Concerns. Three main personal concerns that the educators shared were related to homeownership, remaining in the community, and friendships. Two of the younger educators expressed concern about investing in a home in Sandytown. One of the educators was hesitant to buy a home because of employment uncertainties. The other educator was concerned about the trend of property value depreciation and about how long he would remain in the community. This sentiment was also echoed by an older educator who stated:

For the first time in my life I have started to think that maybe I don't want to retire here -- and that's a (pause) sad little feeling -- it's almost like I might be the only person here when we blow out the candle sort of thing.

Three of the six educators expressed concerns about losing friends. One of the educators described losing friends as frustrating. Another said that she misses her friends who moved when the mine closed. This educator also explained that clubs (such as women's curling) are much smaller than they used to be. One of the young teachers describes how she tends to keep up her "boundaries" as people come and go.

Theme Cluster 2: Work-Related Pressures

Workload. All of the educators interviewed at Beachside School commented on their workload. The Band Teacher explained that his job is more than nine to three o'clock. The principal explained that being an educator, to him, is not just a job. "It's a life. It's something I love doing." He commented that computers appear to add to the workloads of educators. He also described his workload as tending to go in cycles. Two

of the teachers also mentioned that the workload becomes harder if there are more student concerns. As the Band Teacher explained, “when the kids come to school with the baggage of not being fed properly or feeling insecure because they don’t know when mom or dad are going to be working it makes my job harder.”

The educators also reported an increasing number of meetings that they are expected to attend. Karen described the number of meetings as overwhelming. From her perspective, she said, there is just “too much to do.” Mark and David described that there is more to do in a small school with a reduced number of teachers. A primary teacher and mother of two children mentioned that the workload affects the quality of the teacher’s family life. The principal described completing much paper work in evenings and on weekends. David said that he does paper work in the first two weeks of July. Three of the participants specifically described their work or life as a teacher as “busy”. The Grade 1/2/3 teacher explained, “time is a *huge* factor – *huge* factor. We have a number of meetings – like staff meetings and so on and *just* keeping the pace in a classroom these days – all the things that you need to do.” Teachers were concerned about the lack of time available to share ideas among colleagues, to consult with itinerant or district staff, and to fit the expected curricula into their schedules.

Classroom Management. Four of the six educators at Beachside School reported difficulties with student behavior and classroom management. The two teachers that repeatedly commented on student behavior were the two intermediate classroom teachers. David reported that the behavior of students had gotten worse over time, and felt this was due to difficulties at home. He added that getting to know the families helps him to understand student behavior.

The two primary classroom teachers also reported were more behavioral difficulties with students in the classroom. Sarah, for instance, expressed concerns that students were not doing their school work, and Karen described the students as “bouncing off the walls.” She expressed concerns about bullying problems, name calling, as well as fighting and arguing. She said that students “bicker like family” as they travel together grade to grade. The noted difficulty was made worse by the reduced number of classes due to the smaller school size.

Interpersonal Tensions. Interpersonal tensions, however, were not limited to classrooms or relationships with and between children. Four out of the six educators at Beachside Elementary School described “major tension” and “infighting” between staff members at the school. The youngest teacher described that the staff room and staff meetings were stressful. David said that the politics and infighting were so tense that he had felt like quitting. He also explained that there were fewer efforts among staff members to socialize outside of school hours. While one of the teachers explained that interpersonal tensions on staff were related to perspectives on the environment, another felt that it was related to the recent teacher job action. A third educator described the tension as related to the current uncertain climate with regards to the potential budget reductions. The principal and the more experienced primary teacher did not comment on interpersonal tensions at school. In fact, Dianne mentioned that the educators at the school get along well.

Theme Cluster 3: Health

Physical. Four of six educators at Beachside School mentioned concerns about their physical health (see Table 11). Indeed, the school principal noted that the health of

Beachside School staff was at the lowest level in three years. The youngest teacher reported that she experiences headaches at work, comes to school when she is sick, and that she often gets sick over the holidays. This teacher explained that when she is sick that she cannot give her 100 percent and, consequently, her educational program is compromised (e.g. fewer hands-on activities). Karen also mentioned that when she is ill, she becomes more irritable and less patient with her students. This young educator added that she has observed her colleagues taking more sick days. Frank and David shared that they had been sick more often. The classroom teacher explained, “it’s pretty bad when you have to take almost a day off almost every week.” One of the primary teachers perceives health as a “big issue” for teachers in the community. She described that personally she fights dehydration, regularly experiences body aches, and is concerned about her eating habits (both what she eats and the time of day that she eats it). The principal and the more senior classroom teacher did not comment on their physical health.

On Being Tired. Four of the participants at Beachside School reported that they were tired or “exhausted.” David, for instance, described that he was so tired that he recently missed a professional development day and stayed home ‘sick.’ The principal described how he gets grumpy and loses sleep during times where his workload is heavy. Two of the younger teachers mentioned that they worried about the principal being tired, particularly after the teacher Job Action. Another teacher described her work as “emotionally exhausting” and explained that, as a result, she takes a nap right after work.

Table 11

Category 3 of Beachside Elementary School – Theme Cluster 3

CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators Theme Cluster 3
Theme Cluster 3: Health
<p>Theme 1: Physical Staff health perceived by principal to be at the "lowest level" in three years Educator experiences headaches; comes to school sick Educator more irritable and less patient with students Colleagues observed to be taking more sick days "A day off almost every week" Health is perceived to be a "big issue" for teachers Concerns about eating habits; experiences body aches More senior teachers did not comment on their health</p> <p>Theme 2: On Being Tired Many teachers are tired Principal loses sleep during times of heavy workload Teachers are worried about the school principal being tired Educators work described as "emotionally exhausting"</p> <p>Theme 3: Stress Stress connected to job uncertainties Educator feeling consistently tense Perceived personality change Teacher is increasingly "irritable" and "more stressed" Colleagues are taking more sick days Stress goes in "cycles" Fundraising makes the work more stressful</p>

Stress. A few of the participants discussed stress. Frank, for instance, explained that he had been experiencing stress as a result of job uncertainty. More specifically, he stated “I am feeling *tense* all the time and I don’t normally do that.” Sarah also noted a change in her behavior as a consequence of the pressures and stressors in her life. In her words, “I used to be really, really nice to people... and now I am snappy, you know, like I am snappy and bitchy and harsh – I’m like really harsh and I didn’t used to be like this.”

The other young female teacher was visibly upset when she shared how her partner describes her as increasingly “irritable” and “more stressed this year.” This educator also shared that the reduced Special Education Worker support was causing her “little panics.” In addition, she mentioned that her colleagues were taking more sick days. In her words, “I think a lot of people have been taking more sick days. When you are mentally stressed you need a sick – just a mental health day.”

The principal noted that stress of his work changes throughout the course of the year or in “cycles.” Karen mentioned that she found report card time to be stressful. Although David said that he did not feel the same way about report cards, he reported that his job is more stressful because fundraising in the community is difficult.

Theme Cluster 4: Responses by Educators

Affective. A range of emotions were expressed by educators at Beachside School in response to changes in the community and school system (see Table 12). The youngest teacher described feeling “overwhelmed with everything” and described her work as an “emotional roller coaster.” Despite this, she mentioned that she is happy at Beachside School and that she does not want to leave. Two of the educators also described feeling guilty asking for more money during difficult economic times. In addition, one of the

educators said that she feels angry when she goes shopping and sees the price increases. She also reported working with needy students to be “rewarding.”

The Band Teacher, and father of three children, was notably frustrated about the provincial funding reductions to education. In his words, “the school system is one of the most important parts of a community and if the school system is ailing we need to be asking ourselves where our priorities are.” While expressing concern about potential reductions to drama and band programs he explained that “the human experience *has* to be more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic.”

Attitude or Morale of Educators. Several comments were made by educators from Beachside School related to a change in the attitude or morale of educators. Karen and David remarked that teachers who were usually passionate were becoming increasingly frustrated and negative. They also observed that some colleagues were taking more time off. David noted that teachers were talking about retiring and about changing their jobs. He also revealed that his wife was considering leaving the profession and he was considering teaching alternatives such as exchange programs and working in Japan. Some of this change in morale may have been due to the teacher job action or what some educators described as a change in attitude of some community members towards teachers. Sarah, for instance, had perceived “hostility” towards teachers in the community. She felt that members of the community lacked respect for teachers and teachers were “targeted” because they have jobs. David also mentioned that teachers were “fairly scrutinized” in the town. Although the principal did not mention community attitudes towards teachers, he did note that people do not get enough positive feedback.

Table 12

Category 3 of Beachside Elementary School – Theme Cluster 4

CATEGORY 3: Impact of Changes on Educators Theme Cluster 4
Theme Cluster 4: Responses by Educators
<p>Theme 1: Affective Range of emotions expressed Educator "overwhelmed with everything" Work is like an "emotional roller coaster" Happy at the school and does not want to leave Feeling guilty for asking for more money in tight times Working with needy students is rewarding Frustrated with reductions to educational funding</p> <p>Theme 2: Attitude or Morale of Educators Changes in some teachers' attitudes - less optimistic Teachers are taking more time off Talk of retiring among teachers Some teachers considering employment alternatives Perceived community "hostility" towards teachers</p> <p>Theme 3: Behavioral "Venting" to partners and colleagues Contacting friends and family for support Spending more time at work Establishing clear boundaries Creative problem-solving Being optimistic; avoiding conflict Getting out and doing things Lowering expectations of students Eating Taking time off Spending money on students</p>

As a result, he liked to celebrate students and staff with lunches and student reward programs.

Behavioral. The educators from Beachside Elementary school described several behavioral responses to managing changes in the school and community. Three of the six educators reported having vented to partners and colleagues as a response. As David explained, “I vent at school a *lot*. There’s a couple of teachers – we sit together and we vent a bit.” Sarah described how she and other staff members would “get together and every once and a while it’s like AAAHHHHH!” She also explained that she contacted family and friends over the telephone for support. Two of the educators noted that they have to be careful about expressing frustrations at home or “bombarding” their partners with work-related issues. As David stated “I don’t like venting to my wife because I know she has a stressful time...I don’t want to vent my vent on top of hers and add *my* stresses to her stress.” This teacher also explained that he is supported in his work by the principal and the Special Education staff. Mark mentioned that he is supported by an “understanding wife” and staff members who “do special things for me.”

Two of the participants described spending more time at work as a response to the workload. The principal, for instance, noted how he worked long hours and that some staff members at his school are concerned about the long hours he worked.

Participant: I know some of them do worry at times as to how many hours I am putting in or that I am doing some of these things. I am not leaving the school it seems ever between maybe one in the morning to five in the morning. I am gone for maybe four hours or something you know – not all the time but at certain critical times and that bothers some of them.

Interviewer: Why do you think it bothers them?

Participant: Oh they worry about my health and my well-being. You know it's not a healthy thing to be doing all those hours -

Interviewer: Are you worried about it?

Participant: No. No. That's just my personality. I have never been a person to shy away from a challenge or from work or from putting in my maximum effort. If I see something that needs being done, I am going to do it. Ya. The pay cheque's there and it's nice and stuff, but I'm not doing it for the paycheck. It's a *love* for what I do.

Sarah said that she works "all the time" and described work as her "way to escape."

In her words, "I work on the weekends, I work at night and I work in the day." This primary teacher, like a participant at Hillside School, described needing the summer off to restore herself from some of the work pressures.

There's no way you can meet everybody's needs. But you try and you go crazy trying. And then you have a summer off and get better and then you go back and you go crazy again for a year.

The female intermediate teacher also noted that many teachers at the school work late into the evenings. This, however, was not the case with all of the participants.

Some study participants described setting clear boundaries around the time they spend at work. David, for instance, explained that he limits the time he spends at school, and that sometimes his classroom creativity is sacrificed. Conversely, two of the female educators relayed that they use creative problem-solving to meet the demands of the job. For example, Dianne revealed that she uses themes and "creative scheduling" to manage

the curricular demands and “fit everything into a day.” Karen mentioned that she had to be very creative in her approach to supporting children with special needs in her class, particularly when the Special Education Worker is not in her classroom.

There were also behavioral responses unique to specific participants. One of the educators, for example, stated that she tries to be optimistic, avoid staff conflicts, and makes an effort to “get out and do things” like ski trips and treasure hunts on the beach. David said that he intentionally keeps teaching French to maintain the specialized skill in case he decides to leave the community. Another said that although she tries not to, that sometimes she reduces expectations of children. A primary teacher explained, “My expectations are less than they use to be and I work hard *not* to allow that to happen but my students now are *not* where my students would have been when I first started teaching.” Another educator described how she responded to students who do not have school supplies.

A new student will come along – no supplies. No supplies. I end up just giving them [students] supplies because it is easier. Last week was Valentine’s – I had two kids that had no Valentine cards. And so we just gave them some so they could do that. I have had one of those kids say my family is poor, we have no money. And that says it all. Right?

The principal reported a similar strategy. As he put it, “I tend to spend my *own* money to try and make ends meet.”

Within Case Analysis of Harbourside School

This section presents the within-case analysis of Harbourside Elementary School. Findings from individual interviews with two educators are discussed thematically. The section begins with contextual information about the community, school and participants.

Context of the Case

Harbourside Elementary School, located in the small coastal community of Coppertown, lies nestled at the top of a street overlooking the ocean. The school building is two stories with large windows. In mid-February 2002, three educators and a school secretary served a student population of 29. The principal and one of the two teachers at the school volunteered to be individually interviewed for this inquiry.

At the time of the individual interviews, the school principal, Corrine, had been working at Harbourside School for just over two years. This First Nations school administrator had taught for eight years and recently relocated from a northern and more remote community on the west coast of British Columbia. Corrine's personal interests were taking long walks, "spending time on the beach," and community events where she was able to discover connections with her First Nations heritage. She and her partner lived in the nearby community of Sandytown.

Norma, an experienced Kindergarten to Grade 4 teacher, had lived in the community for 27 years and had taught at Harbourside School for nine years. For the first part of her career, she had worked in another elementary school in Seaview District. Norma was married with adult children, and all of her children had left the community. Norma explained that life in the coastal community was "quiet."

Within-Case Analysis

The data collected from Harbourside Elementary School participants has been divided into two main categories: Community and School Changes and Impact of Changes on Educators (see Table 13). Within each category there are several theme clusters. In this section, themes are discussed in detail.

Category 1: Community and School Changes

Educators at Harbourside School described several changes to both the local community of Coppertown and surrounding area, and in the elementary school within which they worked (see Table 14).

Theme Cluster 1: Community Changes

Economic. Similar to the educators in Sandytown, the two educators at Harbourside School reported economic change in the community of Coppertown. Both educators described that the only local grocery store in the community had announced its closure.

Corrine described this as “a reflection of the economy in the community.” The educators said that there was originally a restaurant in the area, but that it too had closed. Business closures were not, however, the only change the educators described. This principal, having recently moved into the area, reported that there were many houses for sale in the area but there were few rental houses. Corrine also commented on the financial status of community members. “I think, economically...people are really strapped for money.” She had noticed that fewer dollars were being donated from the community to the school due to the economic downturn. The educator also explained how she believed continued economic change would affect the school system in the future.

Table 13

Within-Case Analysis of Harbourside School

CATEGORY 1: Community and School Changes
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Community Changes Economic Demographic Social</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: School Changes School Population Student Needs Breakfast Program Technology Support for Students and Teachers Resources</p>
CATEGORY 2: Impact of Changes on Educators
<p>Theme Cluster 1: Nature of Educators' Work Multi-Dimensional Role Workload</p> <p>Theme Cluster 2: Uncertainties Employment School Closures School Programs, Policies, and Services</p>

Table 14

Category 1 of Harbourside Elementary School

CATEGORY 1: Community and School Changes
Theme Cluster 1: Community Changes
<p>Theme 1: Economic Restaurant closure Many houses for sale in the area; few rental properties Many people are economically "strapped"</p> <p>Theme 2: Demographic In- and out-migration Decline in numbers of local First Nations students Some people leaving community to find work Feels like a "ghost town" Retirees coming to the community</p> <p>Theme 3: Social Changes in families Many "unstable homes" and "dysfunctional" families Increasing numbers of family break ups Difficulties at home are affecting students Less communication with parents than previously People are generally discouraged and frustrated School plays a key role in community events</p>
Theme Cluster 2: School Changes
<p>Theme 1: School Population Population has decreased over time Some students who leave, come back</p> <p>Theme 2: Student Needs Academic, physical, and socio-emotional needs</p> <p>Theme 3: Breakfast Program School received a grant to buy a freezer for the food Local community donates food to the school</p> <p>Theme 4: Technology Good computer lab; district provides technical support Internet has "really helped up here"</p> <p>Theme 5: Support for Students and Teachers Student support services have been decreasing Limited psychological testing; need more counselling time Reduced Professional Development and in-service time for teacher training Less library time allotted; general lack of support for teachers</p> <p>Theme 6: Resources Reduced funds available for transportation Efforts made by educators to fundraise People in the community are "giving beyond their means" Teachers still have the same jobs, despite reduced school size</p>

Demographic. Community demographic change was also noted by the educators. The principal and teacher at Harbourside School reported that people were migrating both in and out of Coppertown affecting both the number of community members and the kinds of people in the community. The principal described that a local First Nation's Band was experiencing a decline in numbers, but that out-migration is not uncommon for First Nations communities. Norma described that people were moving out of the community and nearby areas to find work, and consequently there were fewer people around town. As she put it, "You just don't see people around like in the bank or the stores. There's just not -- there's just not a lot of people around." In an explanation these recent demographic changes, Norma used the metaphor of a ghost town.

When we go into Sandytown, which we call 'going to town', it's very quiet. I mean the population has changed so much that it's very quiet in town. It really feels almost like a ghost town. And it seems worse, like the last I'd say two or three years, it's really been worse.

On the other hand, retirees were reported by Norma to be moving into the community of Coppertown. "People that have moved in are mostly retired people that have bought some of the nicer homes down on the water and so they bought retirement homes here."

Social. The teacher and principal at Harbourside Elementary School both described changing social aspects of Coppertown community. They did, however, hold quite different perspectives. Norma repeatedly mentioned changes in the families of Coppertown. She described how there were many "unstable homes" and "dysfunctional

families” in the local community and that she had observed and increasing number of family break-ups.

Norma described how students in her class would witness their parents fighting. She explained that she believes home troubles affect students’ ability to focus at school. She also mentioned the drugs and alcohol in the community and added that family troubles make home-school communication (between parents and teachers) more challenging. “At this school there’s not as good of a parent communication because there’s so many families with so many problems.” Norma also reported that people in the community are generally discouraged and frustrated.

Well, most of the people I talk to are really discouraged and frustrated. And I think - I think it comes from not just within our community but I think that a lot of people - you know - when September 11 happened I think that had an impact. Even with the children in my class, one of the little boys keeps saying to me “I hope those terrorists don’t come to Coppertown”. And I have tried to - the first time he said it, “I hope those *tourists* don’t come to Coppertown and bomb us”. So, I explained the difference between *terrorist* and *tourist* (Laughter).

The principal, on the other hand, described having had a very positive experience socially in the community over the two years she had worked there. Corrine described the long history of the school in the community, and how many parents had attended Harbourside Elementary School. She explained the important role that the school plays in hosting community events.

The community events that happen here are basically, I think, the events that happen at the school. They tried to have a Craft Fair and other things where they

bring the community together, and at the school we have the potluck suppers and we actually fill the gym up and those are really important events and really nice things to bring the people together.

Norma, the teacher, also mentioned the key role that the school plays in the community after instructional hours. In her words, the school “is like a Community Center in a way because on the weekends and on sunny days and after school the kids are always up here playing.”

Theme Cluster 2: School Changes

The educators described several changes to Harbourside Elementary School. Specifically, the teacher and principal described changes to the school population, student needs, the addition of a breakfast program, increased accessibility of technology, change in support for students and teachers, a change in resources or funding for the school. In this section, these themes are illustrated with direct quotes from participants.

School Population. Both educators at Harbourside Elementary School reported having witnessed a reduction in the school population over time. Norma thought it had decreased from over 100 students to 28 since she was hired. The principal also reported that students had left the school even in the two years that she had been working there. Corrine explained that students are just not coming in at the Kindergarten level. The principal emphasized that when even one or two students leave the school through the school year that their loss can really affect the school’s social dynamic.

We have had a number of families move in this community over even just the last two years that I’ve been here. So quite a - for a small school it’s a lot. So, even if we have two children move it’s a lot. It impacts you know a school with 30

children, 29 children ...It really makes a difference like it impacts the classroom and the dynamics and then, you know, that sense of uh, just belonging, you know, is shaken up a little bit so it really makes a huge impact.

Student Needs. The teacher and principal described how student needs had changed in Harbourside Elementary School. Norma repeatedly described that the academic, socio-emotional and physical needs of students had changed in the past several years. Specifically, the educator described a wide range of academic skill levels among students. She also reported that some children have not been exposed a wide-variety of literacy experiences when they enter Kindergarten, and that there is a high incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects in students.

We have a high incidence of FAS [Fetal Alcohol Syndrome] that haven't been, um...it's not been documented. They haven't been tested for it but I know, you know, it's obviously FAS and FAE [Fetal Alcohol Effects] and then a lot of children that just haven't been read to, haven't been talked to, haven't had some of the types of things -- the advantages, you know, that many children have.

The teacher also described how the socio-emotional needs of the school children have changed.

There are more children that have more emotional problems regardless of the families they seem to come from. It seems like they just have more emotional problems today. And you know they have more difficulty at focusing and they have more difficulty in um getting along with other children. So, there is a lot of teaching going on there just to try to teach, you know, cooperation and respect.

In terms of socio-emotional change, Norma repeatedly mentioned that the children she works with are full of anger.

Some of these children are so angry with things they've seen in their homes and from the, you know, certain types of abuse that they've either witnessed or received and they don't know how to deal with it. And it's this anger. And it'll start to build, you'll see it some when they are younger and you'll see a child and they're really - on one side there is a kind giving child and the other side is just filled with anger. But as you watch them, it's sad but the anger part seems to win over - especially with the boys, but not only with the boys.

The teacher also described how some students have a hard time focusing at school.

Norma illustrated her point with stories of students in her class:

One of the girls yesterday just didn't seem interested in working at all, and so I took some time to talk to her and she had had -- and I know she comes from a very dysfunctional family -- and had had a really bad dream and she said she can't stop thinking about it and she thinks it's going to come true, which is quite frightening and so she can't -- she's not focusing at all.

Norma stated that she believes a rise in socio-emotional needs creates discipline problems in the classroom. As she described it, "There are children in some of the classrooms that are so disruptive that I think it's hard for the other children to get an education." Finally, she observed that some children are tired, lack nutrition and "don't have school supplies."

Although the principal did not mention student needs as repeatedly as the teacher, she also mentioned that youth "do not have a lot to do in the community." Consequently,

she explained, they can get bored and in trouble. For instance, the day the interview was held with this principal youth had vandalized the school property. One student need that the principal repeatedly mentioned was hunger.

Breakfast Program. The importance of Harbourside School's breakfast program was noted by both educators. The principal explained that the breakfast program is "to provide students with some toast and some healthy foods - and basically for the students to socialize in the morning." The teacher explained the reason for the program and that the breakfast program was implemented since she was hired at the school.

We started noticing that a lot of kids were coming in with no breakfast. And it wasn't it wasn't just kids whose parents didn't have the money - it just seemed to be that nobody was feeding them. They'd just come to school and they'd say, you know, say by eleven o'clock they didn't feel well or that they were tired or dizzy and you'd find out well they hadn't had anything to eat.

Both the teacher and the principal mentioned that school had recently received a grant that allowed the staff to purchase a freezer for storing bread. The principal added that the school also receives donations of foods, such as jam, from the local community to feed the students. "We got a grant from Breakfasts for Learning and we get donations from, basically, Harvest Food Bank and donations from the community."

Technology. Increased access to technology was noted by both participants at Harbourside School. The teacher and principal at this elementary school both reported that the school had a good computer lab, provided by "targeted" funds for First Nation's students. Norma, the primary teacher, further added that the district provides technical support for the computers. The teacher described having a computer on her desk which

was hooked up to the internet. Indeed, Norma appeared very positive about the changes in the school's computer technology.

The one thing I can say that has really helped up here though is the internet. It's really opened up the door. So, if I want to do any kind of research or I'm looking for a different idea or something I can just go in and for me it's been wonderful.

Support for Students and Teachers. Although computer technology was increasing other support services for students and teachers were described by the teacher and the administrator at Harbourside School as decreasing. More specifically, the primary teacher explained that there was limited psychological testing for children with special needs. She also reported that a need for more counseling service at the school. "We have a Counselor for the District that tries to come in every Friday; however, because she has a lot of other needs, she's only one person for the whole district -- she doesn't always make it."

The teacher also commented on the counseling in Seaview District, "Honestly, a lot more is needed. Like for some of the emotional problems and things that happen to the children they really need someone to talk to -- certainly more than once a week. But that's not happening." The principal did not mention the need for additional counseling support, but reported that, "the amount of time in the library is minimal. So, it's really been chunked back. And that's really very, very hard."

Norma also reported that in-service for professional development had been reduced in the district over time. "We've had a bit of in-service but I think it's gone downhill the last few years and I assume it'll probably stop." Interestingly, the teacher also reported a general lack of support for teachers.

I don't think we get much support or much help and, uh, I think that we've learned to just keep going and do the best we can. And you know, I know a lot of teachers that I talk to say this

Later in the interview, Norma added:

In my job, no matter how hard I work or how much I do or all the little extra things, it's very unusual to get some, like, sincere positive feedback. I know the principal makes an effort but she has a big job too... you just you don't get that unless, you know, you are pleased yourself with something you've done, and you see the changes, but as far as other people unless it's another teacher, there's not really a lot.

The teacher reported that, "teachers - are feeling kind of a mixture of anger and, you know, um, sort of a worthlessness type feeling like you know you've done a good job and you work hard, but complete lack of appreciation."

Resources. Several changes with regards to school resources were mentioned by the principal and teacher at Harbourside School. Transportation was primarily raised by both educators as an issue for remote coastal community schools. Both educators also mentioned that they fundraise to raise money for field trips. The principal said, however, that although people in the community are "really, really giving beyond their means" that they do not generate enough funds to have two Book Fairs held at the school any more. The principal also emphasized that even though the school may be smaller in size than most, that the teachers have all the same jobs and are, consequently, "spread very thin."

Category 2: Impact of Changes on Educators

The educators at Harbourside School described several ways in which the changes they described affected their personal and professional lives. Specifically, the participants described how their work as educators had changed (see Table 15).

Theme Cluster 1: Nature of Educators' Work

When describing changes to their work as educators, the principal and teacher at Harbourside Elementary School specifically discussed two themes: the multi-dimensional role and a change in the workload.

Multi-Dimensional Role. Both educators at Harbourside School described their work as having multiple roles or dimensions. One of the roles mentioned by Norma and Corrine was that of a counselor. Indeed, the teacher reported that “some of them [the students] have so many emotional problems that -- you know -- as a teacher you are also counselor – that you are constantly having someone come aside and talk to them trying to find out what’s wrong.” The school administrator also reported counseling as one of her roles.

If a child has a problem, you know, like if they’re emotionally distressed then I will take them out and provide some counseling or find the appropriate person for them to speak to. Or if somebody’s hungry, I will bring them in and I’ll feed them and I’ll sit down and have a nice talk.

Corrine described her role as being made up of many roles -- a teacher, First Nations cultural educator, an administration officer (AO), and the school librarian. She mentioned her involvement in developing a First Nations-oriented curriculum and also

Table 15

Category 2 of Harbourside Elementary School

Theme Cluster 1: Nature of Educators' Work
<p>Theme 1: Multi-Dimensional Role Teacher as counsellor Educators feeding students Many roles of the school administrator Cooking with students</p> <p>Theme 2: Workload Educators pressed for time; feeling "spread thin" Work done on evenings and weekends Rapid curricular change Increasing curricular expectations "Impossible" to meet the curricular demands Educator prioritizes and creatively organizes schedule</p>
Theme Cluster 2: Uncertainties
<p>Theme 1: Employment Uncertain about having a position for the following year Unemployment concerns Concern with regards to job placement</p> <p>Theme 2: School Closures Possibility of upcoming school closure</p> <p>Theme 3: School Programs, Policies, and Services Uncertainties related to district cutbacks Concerns regarding school programs Concerns regarding class-sizes Uncertainty related to reduced Child Care Workers Uncertain whether a local band school would be opening</p>

that she cooks with the students at Harbourside School to make snacks for outings and to model nutritional eating habits.

So, we'll make healthy cookies or healthy muffins and then when we go swimming -that's another thing we fundraise for - when we go swimming the cooking club will have made healthy snacks for the kids. So, we are promoting healthy eating 'cause we just find the kids sometimes tend to eat pop and chips.

Workload. Both participants reported how busy their jobs were as educators.

Although the principal did mention that they have fewer report cards to write, she described that "when you are working in a job like this there's very, very little time to stop." Corrine also reported being "really strapped for time." She stated that she would like to visit other schools to see what exciting things they are doing, but that "it's impossible." She emphasized that because Harbourside Elementary School is smaller, does not mean that they have less work. "We're small but we're busy. We still have all the same jobs as the big schools -- all the same jobs."

Norma reported that she worked on evenings and weekends and that her work weeks tended to be longer due to the needs of the children. She repeatedly emphasized how it is "difficult to keep up with all the curriculum." "It seems like every time you turn around there's something new coming in that you're expected to teach." She also reported the difficulty managing the demands of a multi-grade class. "Just trying to meet all the curricular demands for five different grades – it's impossible."

Norma explained that she responds to these demands by prioritizing and grouping topics or subjects she teaches. She stated, "I group as many things as I can and I try to, you know, make the kids feel as positive as they can about themselves and I really focus

a lot on reading and math.” The teacher also said that in order to manage, she has to “pick and choose, basically, because it’s impossible to do it.” She also mentioned having to creatively organize her weekly schedule with the other teacher in the school so that the grade 4’s could be with the older students and so that she could attend to the younger ones.

Theme Cluster 2: Uncertainties

The educators at Harbourside School described how the changes in the school and community created an environment of uncertainty. Educators described three main uncertainties - employment, school closures, and school programs, policies and services. It is important to note that at the time of the individual interviews, it was uncertain whether Harbourside Elementary School would remain open for September 2002.

Employment. Both of participants were uncertain about their employment in the school for the following September. The principal said that she was uncertain about her job due to the reduced budget of Seaview District and provincial freezes to funding public education. The teacher, having many years of seniority in the district, was uncertain about the location of future employment. “I have a lot of seniority, so I would go into town to a job there. But still, it’s a nice little school - it’s a good building, a good location.” Much of the employment uncertainty that the educators described was related to the possibility of the school closing.

School Closures. As with other remote and small schools in the province of British Columbia, Harbourside School was facing the possibility of closing its doors in September 2002. As the teacher reported:

We don't know what's going to happen with our school next year with all the budget cut backs we could - this community school could be closed. So, you know, nobody knows - which makes your working conditions a little bit stressful.

The principal mentioned that the possibilities of school closures were "very nerve wracking."

School Programs, Policies, and Services. Uncertainties related to school programs, policies and services were also discussed by the educators at Harbourside School. As the teacher stated:

Our board at this point is trying to decide how they are going to - they're millions of dollars in debt, in the red, and to try to figure out where to find this money and so they're going to have to cut lots of programs and they obviously don't have any idea what they are going to do. So, they are meeting and starting to make some decisions. But at this point, I don't think anyone knows where the cuts will be - I know all of the isolated schools are concerned that they won't have a school any longer.

Norma also appeared particularly concerned about potentially increasing class sizes. She described that changes to policies around class sizes would affect students:

I know certainly with the children I teach that they have so many learning difficulties that if they are put into a larger class, that they are not going to get the help they need. They also get very easily frustrated even now in a small class with lots of one-to-one help and I'm sure they are going to become frustrated and probably aggressive and give up at some point. So, you know, I can sort of see that as their future. It's pretty sad.

This participant also reported her concerns about uncertain reductions to child care workers in Seaview District. The principal discussed the uncertainty about the opening of a local First Nations Band School. She described being unsure about how this cultural segregation would affect the community and the children.

In the next section, I present a concise cross-case analysis of overarching themes that were repeatedly mentioned by educators in all three schools or cases. The cross-case analysis is brief because the overarching themes will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Cross-Case Analysis

This section of Chapter Four considers interview themes similar across each of the three cases. In keeping with the research question at the outset of this inquiry, this cross-case analysis focuses primarily on the impact of the school and community changes on the educators. Four meta-themes emerged across all three cases: Continuous Change, Altered Accessibility, Added Pressures, and Heightened Concerns and Uncertainties. The purpose of this section is to discuss each meta-theme with examples provided by study participants. Further analysis of these overarching themes will be presented in Chapter 5.

Continuous Change

Participants in all three cases described continuous change in their personal and professional lives. The majority of participants reported that demographic changes had influenced their personal lives. For example, educators' family friends would leave, and community leaders would leave and/or change quite frequently. Participants had also found it more difficult to find people to volunteer for community activities, and to participate in local clubs or sport activities.

All study participants also reported considerable economic change in their community that had altered aspects of both the psychological and physical environment. The community economic changes appeared to be similar, mainly because the parents connected to each of the three elementary schools shared similar employers. The majority of educators described that the general community outlook was less positive than it had once been. In physical terms, there were fewer stores and businesses, and fewer funds available to make local surroundings aesthetically pleasing. Several educators also noted a rise in the cost of goods and services in the community and increased difficulty in obtaining them.

In addition to these personal changes, educators identified numerous professional changes that had taken place in schools over the past five to six years. Participants, for example, repeatedly described an increase in the social-emotional, physical and academic challenges for their students. At the same time, access to educational resources and student services to support these growing needs had been reduced. Constant change in the curriculum was another development that educators noted, and most classroom teachers appeared overwhelmed by it. They also described having insufficient time and in-service to support the rising curricular expectations.

An increased workload was also mentioned by all of the participants, who attributed it to community and district changes. In some cases added documentation and meetings increased workloads, and in other cases student needs, difficulty fundraising, and a smaller school size made their work weeks longer. Whatever the cause, participants described feeling pressed for time, “stretched” and “very busy.”

Altered Accessibility

The majority of educators reported a reduced ability to access certain goods and services as a consequence of the changes. For example, medical and dental services became more remote. Daily supplies (such as food, clothes and hardware items) were also found to be more expensive and more difficult to find locally. The only exception was a principal who had just recently moved from a more remote community on the northern coast of British Columbia and was quite pleased with the availability of activities and services.

With regard to their professional sphere, all educators reported reduced access to support services for students and teachers. Specifically, they described having less consultation time and less access to direct student service such as counselors, speech therapists, special education educators and paraprofessionals (such as Special Education Workers). Most educators also expressed sincere concern reduced access to provincial government educational funds. Educators feared that this would mean more programs and more isolated schools would be at risk for reduction or closure.

Finally, most educators reported that there were fewer funds available in local communities to support school programs and activities. A number of educators mentioned that although communities are still providing goods and funds to schools, these are harder to obtain. Consequently, participants had to seek other means to fund school events or work harder to fundraise.

Added Pressures

Participants in each case reported experiencing increased amounts of pressure in their personal and/or professional lives as a result of community and school changes.

Although there was notable variety in how people responded to the additional pressures, all participants reported that there were either greater professional or personal pressures. In some instances there were both.

Younger educators seemed to speak in greater detail about personal financial pressures and employment uncertainties. Many young educators described concerns about investing or having property in the depressed and uncertain housing market. On the other hand, the more experienced educators frequently mentioned the difficulty of finding responsive and local medical and dental services.

There was greater similarity between participants when it came to their experience of the work place. All of the educators described increased workloads and commented on the multiple dimensions of their role as an educator. Indeed, the majority of the teachers described being tired and working long hours, and the younger educators mentioned it as frequently as the older educators. Educators also described heightened concerns and uncertainties that had developed as a result of the community and school changes.

Heightened Concerns and Uncertainties

Participants in all three cases expressed concerns and uncertainties about their local or school communities. As previously mentioned educators also shared concerns about investing locally in property. Many of the young educators wondered if investing in a home would be financially wise. Others were not sure if their jobs were secure enough to make such a serious financial commitment. Employment uncertainties were expressed by many of the educators. The least experienced educators (or at least those with the least seniority) appeared to be the most concerned about whether they would have a job in the

community the following year. The educators at Harbourside Elementary School were particularly concerned about their positions because their small school was under threat of closure. Participants also discussed uncertainties related to increasing class size, and the state of present and future educational programs and services.

Educators' Responses to the Change

While responses to school and community change differed among participants, the majority of participants described affective and behavioral responses. A few educators also described experiencing embodied or health-related changes. The most common emotion described or displayed by educators was frustration, the roots of which appeared to differ. The most common source, however, was a reduction in the quality and provision of student support services.

Behaviorally, many educators increased their time at work and/or worked harder to adjust to the changes taking place in the schools from reduced enrollment, increased expectations or district reductions to funding. Many of the educators described being tense or experiencing stress. They also described observing this in their school colleagues. A few educators noted changes in their health. Two of the younger teachers described being dehydrated at work while a more senior teacher described having high blood pressure and arthritis. Most of the teachers described feeling tired. A number of teachers noticed that they and their colleagues were taking increasing numbers of sick days because they were sick more often, tired or needed a "mental health day."

Effects of Restructuring

Educators described several significant changes to their communities and schools and the ways in which these changes influenced their personal and professional lives.

From an in-depth analysis of participant responses, the elementary educators in this study seemed to be experiencing stress created by restructuring initiatives both in the educational system and their local communities. Changes related to economic resource restructuring appeared to include economic change from the decline and closures of local industries, social change from local demographic change and employment uncertainties, and professional changes related to shrinking school sizes and subsequent reductions to school resources and personnel. Changes brought about by educational restructuring appeared to be provincial reductions to district funding, changes to provincial policies around class sizes, and increasing curricular expectations. These effects appeared to be intensifying educator workloads by increasing the number of dimensions of their work, increasing curricular demands and expectations while reducing their capacity to meet a growing number of student needs. This will be further elaborated on in Chapter 5.

Summary

In this chapter, the results of this inquiry were presented in the form of within-case and cross-case analyses. The chapter began with an in-depth analysis of participant responses from each of the elementary schools: Hillside, Beachside and Harbourside. The findings were organized into categories which were composed of theme clusters. For each theme cluster, themes were described in detail with supporting direct examples and quotations from participants. The chapter concluded with a concise cross-case analysis highlighting the meta-themes or overarching themes across each of the three cases. The next chapter discusses the findings of this study in relation to pertinent literature and outlines the implications of this inquiry and further directions for research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In this chapter I discuss study results, beginning with a summary of the major study findings reported in Chapter Four. The summary is organized according to the five original research questions introduced at the outset of the study, and the findings are discussed in the context of pertinent literature. In the second part of the chapter the limitations of the study, its broader implications, and its potential for theoretical and practical applications are addressed. The last part of the chapter concludes with directions for future research.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this research project was to examine the effects of restructuring on the daily lives of elementary educators living in rural coastal communities of British Columbia. This study also explored educators' perceptions of changes to their rural coastal communities and associated elementary schools over the past five or six years. Using a qualitative case design, I gathered information from participants in semi-structured interviews and two focus groups. I adapted a procedure from the works of Colaizzi (1978) and Haase (1987) to analyze the perceptions, meanings, and insights of the educators. For each of the three elementary schools, I carried out a within-case analysis and then did a cross-case analysis to summarize the data and to identify overarching themes.

*Responses to Research Questions**Question 1*

From the perspectives of elementary educators, what changes have occurred in their rural coastal communities as a result of restructuring initiatives over the past five or six years?

The eleven educators interviewed for this study described considerable economic and social change in their rural, resource-based coastal communities since the mid-1990s. Although participants described many changes in their schools and local communities, they did not specifically refer to these changes as restructuring. Educators did, however, recognize that rural coastal communities were experiencing an economic downturn and resultant social changes. They were also aware of the wide-spread educational changes occurring across the province of British Columbia and how they were influencing their schools. Restructuring initiatives were perceived by educators as intertwined with the economic changes taking place in the community. These economic changes were exacerbating decreases in educational funding and contributing to social change.

Perceived economic changes included a decline in primary industries (including fishing, forestry and mining), store and restaurant closures, and increased rates of unemployment in community households. Participants had observed community members pursuing job-retraining, small businesses emerging, and more fish farming taking place. Participants also reported that school parents appeared to be working “more for less.”

The major social changes perceived by the participants involved community demographics and a related loss of social cohesion. They expressed sincere concern about

social issues in their communities such as changes to the general community outlook, family stability, alcohol and drug use, and teenage pregnancies. Although educators were not able to identify the specific origins of social changes, the educators made it clear that rural economic downturn and educational changes exacerbated them.

Major economic changes described by study participants are reflected in recent literature. Academic literature and rural coastal community reports show that resource-based industries are dramatically changing (Coastal Community Network, 2002; Ommer, 2002). Demyen (2001) has documented business closures in rural coastal communities. Statistics Canada (2001) confirms the industrial decline noted by participants and demonstrates that unemployment in these areas is increasing. A Canadian researcher, Veenstra (2002), is currently trying to establish whether there is a significant relationship between economic change in coastal communities and health or morbidity levels.

Interestingly, two of the educators reported concerns about a widening economic “gap” and developing “resentment” in their community between those who “have” and those who “have not”, with one of the participants characterizing this gap as “not healthy.” There is an interesting parallel between the growing economic gap in these coastal communities and the widening economic inequities at national and international levels. Ellwood (2001) describes the paradox of globalization, suggesting that although the purpose of the global phenomenon is to manifest wealth, it actually creates economic inequity, a “widening gap both within and between rich and poor countries” (p. 101). In a similar vein, Yalnizyan (2000) explains that the “growing gap” of the 1980s (towards greater affluence and greater poverty) is becoming more of a “slippery slope” (p. ii) down which total household incomes are sliding. Like this study’s participants, Yalnizyan

points out that “more families raising children in the 1990s have found their earned incomes are falling, despite working longer hours” (p. 1). Yalnizyan further explains that the debate should no longer be whether there is economic inequity in Canada. Rather, she suggests that we take action to reduce the imbalance.

An additional and noteworthy finding related to social change was the perception that the general outlooks of communities had altered since the mid 1990s. Participants, Frank and Sarah, described community members as “lacking hope” and “unhappy.” This finding is of considerable concern since Fitchen (1991) suggests that for rural places to endure economically and socially, “local will and determination are necessary” (p. 266). This scholar further argues that national and international changes can jeopardize efforts at a local level and that, consequently, rural communities need to be on national and political agendas to ensure their continued existence.

Question 2

From the perspectives of educators, what changes have occurred in their local elementary schools over the past five or six years?

The educators interviewed for this study described several changes that had occurred in their elementary schools since the mid-1990s. They reported an overall decrease in school populations for each of the schools and explained that decreased enrollment meant fewer classrooms for each grade level, fewer educators at each school, and less educational funding. Participants also explained that student needs had risen over time. Students were described as having increased socio-emotional, physical, and special needs (e.g. FAS, FAE), changes that were attributed to economic decline and family upheavals. Educators from all three schools including Norma, Christine and Dianne

perceived families to be struggling financially, reporting that they had witnessed more family “breakups” and “disorder” than they had previously.

Despite these rising needs, educators indicated that fewer resources were being made available in the school district and in communities to run elementary schools. The participants expressed anxiety about reduced levels of support for students and teachers. These included fewer support personnel (i.e. counsellors, Speech Therapists, Special Education Assistants, Special Education teachers), professionals and paraprofessionals who are hired to work with students at risk and those with special needs. Educators appeared anxious about reduced resources in schools because, from their perspective, they would not be able to help students in need of the support. The educators also described curricular pressures and increasing amounts of meetings and paperwork for themselves, which added to their workloads and made it harder for them to attend to their students’ needs.

In their works on Albertan schools and teachers, scholars Cheng and Couture (2000) and Harrison and Kachur (1999) argue that educators face greater expectations with increasingly fewer educational resources and services. Hargreaves (1994a), Klette (1998), and Smyth (2001) report changes in teachers’ work. These scholars have found that educators face increasing requirements for documentation, participation in more meetings and more curricular demands. Apple (1996) and Helsby and McCulloch (1996) attest to the extent and speed of curricular changes over the past decade.

In contrast, findings from a longitudinal study on the east coasts of Canada differ from the educators’ perceptions of children and families reported in this study. Canning and Strong (2002) have examined adjustments by children and families to the 1992 cod

moratorium in Newfoundland suggesting that there were no significant changes in children's school achievement and in their well-being over time. They found that families were positively adjusting to the changes in the traditional resource-based industry and demonstrating resilience. An explanation for the divergence of these findings could be that during the years following the moratorium on cod fishing, families were financially supported by the Atlantic Groundfish strategy (TAGS). This suggests that economic standard is important when considering the impacts of restructuring on communities and individuals.

Finally, the participants drew connections between the changes taking place in the rural coastal communities and those changes occurring in coastal community elementary schools. Indeed, recent changes in rural elementary schools seem to mirror many of the rural coastal community changes. This relationship is reflected in writings by Young and Levin (2001), who suggest that schools, classrooms and teachers are "inextricably linked to the wider social settings within which they are embedded" (p. 246).

Question 3.

How are changes identified within the communities and schools influencing the professional and personal lives of elementary educators living and working in rural coastal communities?

The educators interviewed in this study indicated that their professional and personal lives were negatively affected by community and school changes. In terms of their professional lives, participants reported longer and harder work days and consistent time demands. They attributed changes in their workloads to the decreasing sizes of their schools, the increasing diversity in student abilities and needs, reduced educational

funding, and to an overall change in role expectations (such as the curricular demands previously mentioned). Participants such as Sarah, Frank, Norma and David also explained that community and school changes brought about considerable uncertainty around potential program reductions and school closures, employment concerns, policy changes (e.g. class sizes, funding), and other employment concerns. The majority of educators also revealed that they spent their own money on food and supplies for students, and on instructional materials and professional development to enhance their teaching programs.

Accumulated changes, both in the community and in the work place, that were creating a great deal of uncertainty in the daily lives of educators, were described as increasing stress levels of these professionals. Additional hours required to do the work of an elementary educator, combined with the “busy” or fast pace of the day were reducing the time educators have to sleep, eat nutritious meals and maintain an active lifestyle. Community changes also contributed to increasing levels of uncertainty as they were altering the costs of living and educators’ social support networks.

In their personal lives, most of the educators explained that the changes had reduced accessibility of friendships, travel, and goods and services, including services by health professionals. Travel costs were rising and local goods and services were increasingly harder to find. Friends had left the communities in search of employment and were “missed.” Pressures and uncertainties related to the buying and selling of homes and businesses, the security of employment, and work conditions (e.g. stress and workload increases) were also described as influencing educators’ personal lives.

Time (or lack thereof) is a recurring theme in educational literature on teachers' work. Studies by Naylor (2001) and Klette (1998) demonstrate that teachers are working longer hours. Smyth (2001) and Hargreaves (1994a) describe teachers' increasing workloads and the mounting expectations they have to address. A study by Adams (2002) on the wake and dream lives of teachers confirms that restructuring affects teachers. King and Peart (1992) indicate that rural and urban teachers across Canada experience job stress, but that the stress of British Columbian teachers is the highest in the country. Indeed, the elementary teachers interviewed in this study were challenged by educational restructuring initiatives common to many districts across Canada.

Question 4

How do educators perceive that their health is affected by restructuring?

The educators described a variety of health experiences. They described feeling physically tired, and age did not seem to be related to how often this was mentioned. Many of the younger elementary educators revealed that they were experiencing noteworthy amounts of stress and health-related challenges. A few younger educators revealed that they were taking increasing numbers of sick days due to ill health. They also described needing and taking "mental health" days to manage the stress and regain perspective on their work. One of the younger participants also described health as a "big issue" for teachers in the community.

Some of the more experienced and senior educators did not mention concerns about their health. Participants such as David, Sarah, and Karen were quick to mention worries about colleagues on stress and sick-leaves. Norma and Christine commented on the decreased availability and quality of local health services, a factor they were taking

into consideration when thinking about their retirement location. It was obvious that the restructuring of health care systems in these rural communities, particularly for older educators and those considering having children, were adding to some educators' stress levels.

Participants Frank and Sarah described themselves as tense and irritable. Educators such as Christine, Norma, Sarah and Karen commented on health concerns such as blood pressure, arthritis, dehydration, having poor nutrition, and headaches. Karen, Frank and David, three of the younger participants, noted that they were taking more sick days, getting "sicker more often," and that their colds seemed to linger for longer. The majority of educators mentioned the stress involved in their work, although the source of the stressors seemed to differ. Some participants described their work with students as stressful; others described fundraising pressures, curricular demands and time pressures as being taxing.

The majority of educators explained that negative health related experiences were influenced by work and work pressures. It is difficult to identify the extent to which these problems were related to the changes brought about by restructuring. Interestingly, participants appeared much more comfortable discussing health-related experiences in individual interviews rather than in focus groups. Health and the other ways in which people respond to the changing environment (physical and psychological) in which they live appears to be a complex and personal experience. In keeping with the social ecological theory (Stokols, 1996), participants described different health responses to environmental changes. Although the majority of participants described being tired, health-related conditions differed among participants.

The social ecological theory suggests that the level of compatibility between people and their environments is important for health. For instance, the one participant who did not report concerns about his health perceived the increased workload of his job as a challenge. A younger participant seemed consumed with the workload and described several ways in which she had embodied the stressors, rather than letting them wash over her. The primary teacher described being anxious, consistently worrying about the students, her workload, and the educational system. The young woman explained that she was perpetually tired, experienced dehydration and was often frustrated with herself. In contrast, another participant described herself as being “well matched” to her work as an elementary educator. She appeared to enjoy her work and described living an active life of physical, cultural and intellectual activities.

Stokols’s (1996) theory also holds that people and their environments are mutually influential, and the examples in this study confirm this. Several of the participants also described efforts to improve the quality of their school and community environments. For instance, one educator arranged social events for staff and another organized luncheons for students and staff. Many of the educators were actively involved in community organizations, helping to develop their communities economically, socially and culturally. They described running fall fairs, and being involved in community musical and economic development initiatives. One participant also mentioned a staff member who personally attended to the school grounds, creating a garden for the staff and students.

Health is a complex phenomenon with many interconnected factors. Although eastern Canadian researchers Neis and Grzetic (2001) are currently exploring

occupational health concerns and restructuring (e.g. women in fish processing), recent restructuring changes and their influence on professional work environments are less well understood (Lowe, 2002). Most educators reported worrisome health concerns and high stress levels. In-depth, longitudinal research on this topic is needed to better understand educators' health experiences in rural coastal communities, the personal costs of restructuring to educators, and the financial costs to educational systems and institutions (e.g. sick days, attrition rates).

Question 5

How are elementary educators located in rural, coastal communities responding to the above-identified changes resulting from restructuring?

The educators revealed a variety of affective and behavioral responses to the changes taking places in their schools and communities. Most commonly, participants explained that they drew on support from friends, families, and colleagues. Many reported “venting” to partners and colleagues as a strategy for managing work-related pressures. Participants also described being involved in sport and cultural activities. To cope with the economic inequities between children in their schools and classrooms, many educators described supporting needy students with school supplies and food. Educators also reported purchasing their own instructional materials and funding some of their professional development.

Affective responses to the school and community changes were shared by educators including Christine, Frank, Robert, and Louise. These ranged from sadness and frustration to excitement and anticipation. The educators, most commonly, expressed their frustration with decreased services to students. Two of the educators (Sarah and

David) also described feeling guilty. Sarah described guilt related to two factors: asking for a higher salary during an economic decline in her community and not being a good enough as a teacher. While other educators did not refer to this, I have personally experienced guilt that comes with feeling not good enough as a teacher.

Hargreaves (1994a) explains that teachers, as well as people in other helping professions, experience guilt when they are not able to make things better for their students. For Sarah this guilt appeared to manifest as feeling ‘not good enough.’ Many of the participants also appeared upset about at-risk children who were no longer receiving counseling services. Educators including Karen, Norma, Sarah and Dianne also seemed somewhat distressed by the student needs, diversity of academic abilities and increasing curricular demands and time pressures.

The comments and experiences of this study’s participants about their workplaces are consistent with those conveyed in literature on education and nursing. Blackmore (1999), for instance, describes the “emotional labour” that educators experience. She describes today’s restructured school organizations as emotionally “greedy” explaining that schools create emotions such as fear, anxiety, pain and frustration amongst educators. This scholar notes that, in many cases, female educators are called upon to provide care and compensate for the reductions resulting from restructuring initiatives. However, the findings from this study indicate that both male and female elementary educators are “doing emotional labour” (p. 337). Male educators also described feeling guilt, as well as counselling and caring for children on an emotional level. In her study on female administrators, Blackmore (1996) also identified several coping strategies by educators. These included resisting, controlling, distancing

and exiting in educational institutions. None of these terms were mentioned by educators in this study. Educators in this inquiry did, however, describe wanting to leave or retire from the profession, finding ways to get work off their minds, avoiding situations of conflict, and trying to stay organized. One comment by a female administrator in Blackmore's study was echoed almost verbatim by an administrator in a focus group of this study who stated that his work was about "doing the 'right' things rather than doing things 'right.'" Educators' emotional responses in restructured school organizations warrant further investigation.

Rodney (2001) examines how stresses in the health care system have led to moral distress for nurses in British Columbia. In essence, restricted amounts of time and resources in hospitals prevent them from treating and caring for their patients in ways they consider ethical or moral. I see similarities between the experiences of nurses with the health care system and those of this study's participants with the educational system. As Frase and Coumont (1995) point out, most educators go into the profession to care for children and are motivated in environments in which they are able to achieve success in helping young people learn. When this capacity is taken away, it can be upsetting.

Limitations of the Study

There were limitations to the present study. First and foremost, only eleven full-time educators were interviewed. Certainly, a larger and more varied sample, representative of educators from other rural coastal communities and their elementary schools, would have helped to enrich the data. Because only two rural coastal communities and three local elementary schools were involved in this inquiry, it is difficult to assess which experiences were unique to these settings. There was also

considerable overlap in some of the background economic factors as people from all three communities once worked at the mine, and the fishery and forest were also common employers. Experiences of part-time educators would have also added considerably to this study. The addition of these educators would be particularly interesting because Canadian scholars such as Barling (1999), Brodie (1994), and Cohen (1994) suggest that part-time work is a phenomenon associated with restructuring.

A second limitation of this study was with regards to the timing of the study. Data collection for this inquiry took place shortly after a provincial teacher job action. Because of this, the climates in schools around the province were particularly tense. Teachers were upset about reductions to educational funding imposed by the provincial government. Many of these educators were also angered at the proposed increases to class-size scheduled for September 2002. For three months, teachers across British Columbia did not participate in extra curricular activities, write report cards or attend meetings outside of instructional hours. Consequently, many special activities for students were cancelled such as sports competitions, music and cultural events. Whether or not the timing of the study influenced participant responses is uncertain. The year that the data was collected, however, should be acknowledged as unique for elementary and high schools across British Columbia.

A final limitation of this study was that I was born and raised in an urban setting. Most of my elementary teaching experience, apart from one year in a northern rural community of British Columbia, was in urban settings. Although I had studied and reviewed literature on rural communities, my tacit knowledge of life as a rural community educator was limited. My understandings of the nuances of participant

responses may have differed if I had been raised or had spent time teaching in a rural coastal community setting. This was one reason I returned to the communities to conduct the two focus groups. Being an “outsider” may also have influenced what the participants decided to offer in the way of a response to the questions asked.

Although results of this study were not intended to be generalized (in the quantitative sense) to other rural coastal community contexts, certain findings may resonate with the experiences of educators living in other rural communities (both coastal and inland) in British Columbia, and implications of the findings may be applicable to other contexts. As such, there are important implications of some of these findings that warrant further discussion.

Implications

The major study findings may inform the discussion on educational theory and practice in this area. Interview themes from the changes taking place both in the rural coastal communities and local elementary schools, as well as the impacts on educators have implications for theory on educational restructuring and practice. Findings also contribute to the larger “Coast under Stress” project (which funded this inquiry) by providing insights on the perspectives of elementary educators in rural coastal communities on restructuring and its effects on themselves, their schools, students and communities.

Three implications can be constructed from the study results which are important for presentation and discussion. In this section, these implications are outlined and illustrative examples are provided.

Implication 1

Restructuring, particularly when combined with massive economic downturns in key industries, has a significantly negative impact on individuals (including students, teachers, and principals), families, and rural coastal communities.

Some rural coastal community educators, like many of the other people in their communities, are facing both challenging and exciting times. Elementary educators from these communities are influenced by the changes taking place in the British Columbia educational systems, and the economic and social changes taking place in their communities. As such, educational policy makers and decision-makers at provincial, district and school levels should be sensitive to the contextual factors that make the work of elementary educators in rural coastal communities particularly challenging at this time. Policies may need to be specifically created for rural coastal community contexts in order to guarantee that children are fed properly, able to access opportunities similar to their counterparts in other rural and urban areas, and that their teachers are able to provide quality educational programs with support for students with special needs and accessible professional development.

Implication 2

Elementary educators in rural coastal communities need more support for their work with students with special needs, including students whose parents are unemployed and/or and experiencing other life transitions.

The majority of educators interviewed in this study faced considerable challenges meeting the needs of their students. The volume and diversity of student needs were overwhelming and distressing for many of the educators. Elementary educators in rural

coastal communities should be supported in their work with students. This is particularly the case when, as educators indicate, student socio-emotional and academic needs are rising. Rural coastal community contexts are isolated and typically lack secondary manufacturing and other industries. When resource-based economies in these communities fail (especially all at the same time), there are few alternatives for people in terms of work and not as many social services available as in urban environments to support educators with increasing student needs. Consequently, educators need additional support including more counseling time to support “at-risk” students who are angry and sad about life changes such as parental unemployment and familial troubles. It may also include further training or professional development for elementary educators. Teachers need additional time and money to travel to training opportunities and to share their findings with colleagues both within and between schools.

As behavioral difficulties are rising in classes, teachers should also be supported by school administrators. Resources given to school administrators in rural coastal communities are clearly inadequate to what they are expected to do. The amount the rural coastal community administrators are expected to teach should be decreased in order for them to support teachers and students. Resources should be made available for educators to develop leadership skills they can use in their schools and communities to face the challenges of the present times.

Implication 3

Rural coastal community elementary schools and school districts face unique challenges that need to be considered by educational policy and decision-makers at district and provincial levels.

Educational restructuring often accompanies financial, structural, and curricular changes to schools and school districts (Daun, 2002). Many educational changes are made at a provincial level -- away from rural communities. The particular challenges that educators face should be taken into account by provincial educational authorities and decision-makers before they change policies. For example, transportation is a significant issue in rural areas, where much of the service time of itinerant district educators or consultants is taken up in travel time. Small schools need greater access to funding for them to provide equitable opportunities for their students. Small school closures, or even the possibility of such closures, have a considerable impact on rural schools and communities.

Future Directions for Research

Several possibilities emerge as future directions for research from this study. First, a larger study could be conducted examining the same topic with a greater number of educators. Further, a comparison of how educational restructuring plays out in rural versus urban schools or how coastal communities compare to other remote rural elementary schools in British Columbia could be conducted. Studies such as these may indicate, more specifically, the needs of educators in these different areas. Selecting schools in rural areas with a stable economic base but also facing restructuring would help tease out the relative impacts of each.

A longitudinal study examining how children and families are adjusting to the current changes, similar to the east coast study by Canning and Strong (2002) could also be carried out on the west coast of British Columbia. This type of study would identify the accuracy of educators' perceptions on changes in families and in student needs. It

may also identify whether or not children and their families need additional or different services to support the recent community changes.

Finally, there is potential for a study of how restructuring affects community groups like the First Nations people. It would be interesting to determine how a this particular cultural group who have had to cope with tremendous and imposed change for many generations are adjusting to the changes brought about by present restructuring initiatives. This could also develop our understanding of the notions of determination and resiliency which, as previously mentioned, are identified as being important to sustaining rural communities (Fitchen, 1991). These understandings could be made available to rural coastal communities across British Columbia.

In terms of educational practice, it would be of great value to explore how the current reductions to funding of schools and school programs influence the quality of educational programs and students' school experiences. I think that educational changes are made quickly, with not a lot of time for deep consideration. At times, educational policies are implemented without understanding their short and long term effects on teachers, students and their families. It would be crucial, for instance, to understand the implications of small school closures in rural coastal communities. Remote school closures have been contentious in the past two years, and further research would illuminate specific effects on communities and families.

Research into how elementary educators can support families and students experiencing major life changes, including employment transitions and marital separations, would also be beneficial. Literature on social and demographic changes in Canada and reports from the elementary educators suggest that families are changing,

counselors are being reduced and teachers are expected to counsel children facing difficult times. It would be interesting to find out from parents and children what their expectations are of educators during such life changes and how they think they could work together with and be supported by school teachers and administrators. Finally, research on how elementary schools can better accommodate the academic and future career needs of children should take into account the economic change in rural coastal communities of British Columbia.

It would also be important to continue research on restructuring and health on the west coast of Canada. Different methodologies, however, would need to be considered. An approach that would allow community members to describe their health experiences with more anonymity would be beneficial. Focus groups did not reveal a lot of information on health in this study. It would be advised then that other methodologies (or at least focus groups be used in combination with individual interviews) be used in gathering data on human health in rural coastal communities. People may be reluctant to talk about their health problems in a focus group as health issues are typically personal.

Final Summary

This qualitative inquiry is an initial step in understanding the changes that have taken place in rural coastal communities and their elementary schools since the mid 1990s and the impact of the changes on elementary educators. This study is significant because it reveals information about the changing context of two rural coastal communities, three local elementary schools, and the impacts on eleven educators. The findings from this study suggest that considerable changes brought about by rural coastal

community restructuring initiatives influence both local elementary schools and their educators.

This inquiry illuminated some of the effects of the community and workplace changes on the professional and personal lives of educators and documented some of their responses to the change. Participants were found to be affected in four main ways by the community and school changes. These educators reported that they experienced continuous change in their personal and professional lives. They also experienced additional work and personal pressures related to community and school changes such as curricular changes, changing student needs and resultant workloads. The educators indicated that the accessibility to goods, services (including health care) and friendships had decreased. Finally, the educators reported experiencing heightened concerns and uncertainties related to changes in employment, educational programs and policies, property values. The educators responded to the community and school changes in a variety of ways. Findings from this study concur with others on the human dimension of restructuring; in other words, restructuring evokes emotional and health responses.

This study highlights that rural coastal elementary schools and their educators have particular needs that should be seriously considered by educational decision and policy-makers. Further research into the area is needed to develop a broader scope of implications for theory and educational policy and practice and to deeply understand long-term social consequences, including health related impacts, to economic restructuring initiatives in the context of rural coastal communities.

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APPENDIX A

Summary of Study Provided to School District



Teachers Speak: Impacts of Economic Restructuring on the Daily Lives of Elementary Educators in Coastal Communities

Researcher: Lani Maxwell, University of Victoria, (250) 370-9988; lanimax_2000@yahoo.com

Purpose and Objectives:

The purpose of this study is to investigate what economic restructuring means to elementary school teachers living in a coastal, resource-based community. More specifically, it explores the impacts of economic restructuring on elementary school teachers. The objective is to more fully understand what forms of restructuring are taking place in coastal communities, and their elementary schools, and how the benefits and strains of restructuring are played out in the daily lives of elementary educators.

Research Questions:

1. What changes have occurred as a result of economic restructuring in the past five or six years in coastal communities of British Columbia and their local elementary schools?
2. How do these changes shape the professional and personal lives of elementary educators living in coastal communities?
2. How have the elementary educators responded to the changes resulting from economic restructuring?

Method and Design:

In answering the questions above, I will describe the meaning of economic restructuring as held by elementary teachers living in a coastal community. All findings will be interpreted more broadly according to literature on restructuring, health and change. Data of six to ten teachers' experiences will be collected through semi-structured interviews and a focus group. Each confidential interview, which is expected to take approximately forty-five minutes, will be transcribed and returned to the participant for approval. The purpose of the one-hour focus group is to determine the accuracy of the general findings or themes the researcher identifies from the individual interviews. It is also a space created for teachers to collectively discuss strategies they use and could use to face change created by restructuring. In this way, the researcher and participants will build an accurate description of what economic restructuring means to elementary educators and how it affects their professional and personal lives on a daily basis. In all reports, pseudonyms will be used for all names of people and places involved in the study.

Anticipated Benefits:

This research is particularly relevant to communities experiencing a down-turn in their forestry and fishing industries. With the loss of jobs, growing unemployment and underemployment and an out-migration of people, community resources are seriously strained. In the last decade, our education system has also experienced drastic changes. The literature on educational restructuring and resource-based communities identifies many of these changes. However, what needs to be more fully examined is how these changes affect the daily lives of teachers.

The study creates opportunities for teachers to describe their experiences with economic restructuring and identify their needs in the present environment. It also enables educators to reflect, discuss and plan how they can meet these changes, individually and collectively. By highlighting these experiences, School District personnel and educational administrators will be better provided with current information required to implement policies that create more sustainable, healthy work environments and communities.

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

PART I: Educator's Background

1. Please tell me a bit about your background.
Interviewer to probe for:
 - Educational background
 - Teaching experience
 - Time lived and taught in the community
2. What 'called' you to teaching?
Interviewer to probe for:
 - Reasons for going into the teaching profession
3. Tell me about your roles and responsibilities as an educator.
Interviewer to probe for:
 - Current job assignment
 - Involvements in school and/or district
4. Describe your interests and responsibilities outside of your job as an educator.
Interviewer to probe for:
 - Relationships with family, partner, friends
 - Responsibilities as a parent
 - Role (s) in community
 - Community involvements
 - Sports and hobbies
 - Recreational interests

PART II: Community Changes

Many changes have taken place in rural coastal communities over the past five or six years.

5. Can you describe the changes that you have seen in your community?
Interviewer to probe for:
 - Economic, social, political, and cultural changes
6. How have these changes affected you (and your family)?
7. From your perspective, how have these changes affected students and their families?

Interview Questions (cont'd)

PART III: School Changes

8. What kinds of changes have you seen in your school community?

Interviewer to probe for:

- Services to students and teachers
- Curriculum changes
- School and/or school district organization
- Work with colleagues
- Professional Development opportunities

9. How have these affected students and their educational programs?

10. How have these changes affected your work as an educator?

11. In what ways have these changes affected you personally?

Interviewer to probe for:

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Mentally
- Changes in health

12. Who or what helps you cope?

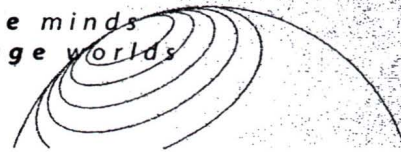
13. Is there anything else that you would like to add or clarify?

Thank you for participating in this research study.

APPENDIX C

University of Victoria – Human Research Ethics Committee
Certificate of Approval

challenge minds
change worlds



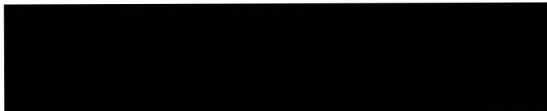
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA - HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

<u>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR</u> Lani Maxwell Graduate Student	<u>DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL</u> EPLS	<u>SUPERVISOR</u> Dr. Carol E. Harris	
<u>CO-INVESTIGATOR(S)</u> :			
<u>TITLE</u> : Teachers Speak: Restructuring within Coastal Communities as an Embedded Phenomenon			
<u>PROJECT No.</u> 330-01	<u>START DATE</u> 11/16/2001	<u>END DATE</u> 11/15/2002	<u>APPROVAL</u> 11/16/2001

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the University of Victoria Ethics Review Committee on Research and Other Activities Involving Human Subjects has examined the research proposal and concludes that, in all respects, the proposed research meets appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Subjects.



J. Howard Brunt,
Associate Vice-President, Research

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the procedures. Extensions/minor amendments may be granted upon receipt of "Request for Continuing Review or Amendment of an Approved Project" form.

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330-01

APPENDIX D

Human Research Ethics Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Participant Consent Form

Teachers Speak: Impacts of Economic Restructuring on the Daily Lives of Elementary Educators in Coastal Communities

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled “Teachers Speak: Impacts of Economic Restructuring on the Daily Lives of Elementary Educators in Communities” that is being conducted by Ms. Lani Maxwell, a Graduate student in the Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, Faculty of Education, at the University of Victoria. She is conducting this research as part of the requirements for a degree in Leadership Studies. Please contact her if you have further questions by calling (250) 370-9988 or by e-mail at lanimax_2000@yahoo.com. This study is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Carol E. Harris. Dr. Harris can be reached at (250) 721-7823 or by e-mail at harrisce@uvic.ca.

This research is part of and funded by the “Coasts under Stress” Project. The purpose of Lani Maxwell’s study is to investigate what economic restructuring means to elementary educators in a coastal, resource-based community. More specifically, it explores the impacts of economic restructuring on elementary educators. The overall objective is to understand more fully, both what forms of restructuring are taking place in the community of _____ and in _____ School, and how the benefits and strains of restructuring are played out in the daily lives of elementary educators.

This research creates opportunities for teachers to describe their experiences with restructuring and identify their needs in the present environment. It also gives them a chance to reflect, discuss and plan how they can meet these changes, individually and collectively. By highlighting these experiences, School District personnel and educational administrators will be better provided with current information to implement policies that create more sustainable, healthy work environments and communities.

As a staff member of _____ Elementary School, you have been selected for the study because of your knowledge about the features of recent school and/or community restructuring (such as district amalgamations, curriculum and structural changes, and changes in decision-making, funding, parental involvement, class sizes, course loads, and job security). You also hold important views about how recent economic changes affect your work and that of the families in your community. Your insights will contribute to a greater overall understanding of restructuring of workplaces in general, and more specifically in resource-based industry communities.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include an individual interview, checking a transcript and, if agreeable, participation in a later focus group. Most meetings between us will be on an individual basis, with the exception of one focus group. The purpose of the focus group is for the participants of the study to discuss general findings from the individual interviews.

The only inconvenience to you in participating in this study will be the time involved. This includes approximately one hour for the individual interview, thirty minutes to review the transcriptions for accuracy of meaning and any necessary changes to ensure your anonymity in the study and, if agreeable, approximately another hour to participate in a focus group. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. However, your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. You may decline to answer any given question during the interview. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do choose to withdraw from the study, you may either allow your data to be used, or have it excluded. To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, each time you meet with me, you will be asked if you are still willing to participate in the study.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, code names or pseudonyms will be used in this study for all people and places. After our interview has been transcribed, you will have the opportunity to review the transcription to check that it is accurate and make any necessary changes to ensure your anonymity. Further, the researcher will be extremely careful that words (especially about sensitive issues) will be dissociated from their speakers. As part of the research design includes a focus group, anonymity of participants will be revealed to other participants in the group. However, I will request that the confidential nature of the study be maintained by asking you and the other participants not to discuss the names of the people who attend the focus group, or the specific content of the discussions. With these measures of confidentiality and anonymity in place, there should be no risk to your employment by participating in this study.

All individual interviews will be held in strict confidentiality and you will meet with me in the place(s) of your choosing. The audio-tapes of interviews will be kept in securely locked filing cabinets in my home. Each tape, once transcribed and checked by my supervisor (if necessary), will be erased. The transcripts themselves --- using code names for participants --- will be shredded within five years of the completion of the study.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in paper presentations (at conferences and on the internet), journal articles, and possibly a book. Generalized findings will be reported to participants and to school personnel (if possible).

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and her supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

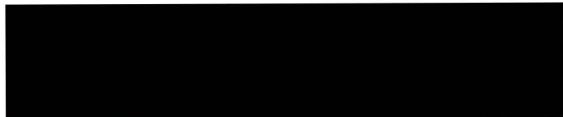
A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

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Title of Thesis: Teachers Speak: Impact of Restructuring on the Daily Lives of Elementary Educators

Author


Lani L. Maxwell
August 25, 2003

VITA

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