Inducting Newly Qualified Primary Level Teachers in the Republic of Ireland: Rhetoric and Reality

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Thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of Lincoln for the degree of
Doctor of Education – Education Leadership and Management

Centre for Educational Research and Development,

University of Lincoln

June 2013

Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank my supervisors, Emeritus Professor Angela Thody and Professor Howard Stevenson, for their invaluable guidance, infinite patience and constructive criticism during the course of this research. I truly could not have wished for better supervisors and I really appreciate the fact that I could always count on their support and understanding.

I am deeply indebted to the participants of this multi-case study who so willingly gave of their free time to allow me to undertake the data collection for this research. Without them making this personal sacrifice, this thesis would not have been possible.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank my husband, Derrick, for his unwavering belief in me and for doing everything possible to support me on this journey.

Abstract

This study concerned the concept of teacher induction, understood globally as the process of initiating newly qualified teachers (NQTs) into their roles as effective teachers and members of a school organisation. Despite longstanding proposals advocating change for teacher induction in the Republic of Ireland, Ireland has no statutory provision for this and there remains a significant gap in the Irish literature about how induction is currently functioning. The research investigated primary level NQT induction using a qualitative multi-case study, interviewing principals and NQTs in eight schools. These interviews explored principals' rationales for providing induction and what they made available for their NQTs. NQTs' perceptions were then sought about the effectiveness of their induction. A conceptual framework for evaluating the components of an effective induction programme was adapted from the literature to enable focused critique of Ireland's provision and guidance for future developments.

Four typologies of school-based induction were chosen to categorise the data: laissez faire, collegial, competency based, and self-directing professional. In all but the last of these, a rhetoric–reality gap was found; resulting in unforeseen consequences such as conflicts of interest between principals and NQTs. Evolving from the critique and the typologies, a reconstructed framework of the components of effective induction was devised to align with perceived needs of principals and NQTs. This can aid policymakers and stakeholders in future planning for NQT induction in Ireland.

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Abbreviations

CAQDAS   Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software

CEPP   Career Entry Professional Programme

CPD   Continuing Professional Development

DES   Department of Education and Skills [formerly Department of Education; Department of Education and Science] (Ireland)

DEST   Department of Education, Science and Training (Australia)

EAL   English as an Additional Language

INTO   Irish National Teachers' Organisation

IPPN   Irish Primary Principals' Network

ITE   Initial Teaching Education

ITT   Initial Teacher Training

NTIPP   National Teacher Induction Pilot Project

NIPT   National Induction Programme for Teachers

NQT   Newly Qualified Teacher

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

OERI   Office of Educational Research and Improvement

ROI   Republic of Ireland

SEN   Special Educational Needs

TCI   Teaching Council of Ireland

UK   United Kingdom

USA   United States of America

Chapter 1   NQT induction: introducing its challenges

The induction year is such an eye-opener –
not the comfortable start you imagine.
(Pamela, NQT, 17 November 2011).

Introduction

This thesis investigates the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) in the absence of statutory induction provisions. Considering Pamela's rather negative interview response above, this thesis seeks to explore the cause and effect of such interpretation. The absence of statutory induction for Irish NQTs raises concerns that are common in other countries too (Day and Lee, 2011; Schollaert, 2011). Induction programmes can make a significant contribution in ensuring that NQTs fulfil their potential in meeting current expectations as teachers in a knowledge-based society (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Cherubini, 2007). While considerable amounts of money have been spent on facilitating induction, the link between induction and the components of an effective induction programme is far from automatic: 'We need to discover which [induction] components and in what forms they are most likely to produce the outcomes of interest' (Wang, Odell, and Clift, 2010, 9).

Intrinsic to this dilemma are conflicting perceptions of the 'effectiveness' of an induction programme, with some viewing effectiveness related to NQTs' satisfaction (Johnson, Harrison Berg, and Donaldson, 2005) and others viewing it in terms of pupil achievement (Day, Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Smees, and

Mujtaba, 2006). This comment from one of the principals interviewed for this research highlights the predicament as being particularly challenging:

> *Every school situation is unique, so the notion of effective induction components here will look different to those in a school over the road. We all expect different things in terms of effectiveness; it's impossible to pin it down as we all have different wants dependent on our particular school and community needs* (John, Principal).

This first chapter sets the scene for addressing these issues by providing the rationale and aims of the research, before leading on to the research questions that form the focus of this study. Definitions of teacher induction are then explored and located within the Irish context, noting how contextual particularities have shaped this study. The chapter then discusses the underlying philosophical approach that has informed the research, which includes a personal biography clarifying my interests and positions within the study.

Rationale

Over the past decade, there has been a marked increase in international research regarding the support provided to NQTs during their first years of service (Moir, 2009; Main, 2008a; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004). However, in the ROI, interest in supporting and assisting NQTs has only recently received attention, in line with the Teaching Council of Ireland (TCI) deeming participation in induction workshops to be a condition of teacher registration from September 2012:

> The Council has decided that participation in a programme of NIPT [National Induction Programme for Teachers] induction workshops will be a requirement for all NQTs who complete their teacher education qualification in 2012 and subsequently (TCI, 2012, *online*).

Indeed, this development has brought about significant change, as prior to this, participation by NQTs in the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) had been voluntary. The anticipations and interests surrounding these developments contributed greatly to the timely and pertinent focus of this research.

Immediate prioritisation of NQT induction is required in the ROI as research reveals detrimental outcomes as a direct consequent of poor induction experiences (Bezzina, 2006; Freiberg, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that the comprehensiveness of induction programmes could be used as a predictor of the probability of turnover of NQTs after the first year: the turnover rate was 41% for teachers receiving no induction, 39% for teachers receiving only mentor and principal support, and only 18% for teachers receiving all the components of a comprehensive package (Ingersoll and Smith, 2004). Therefore, if the absence of induction in the ROI continues, Irish NQTs will not achieve the same professional competency as NQTs in receipt of comprehensive induction while its absence may even contribute to NQT attrition. Findings analysed from a nationwide database revealed that when effective assistance was provided during induction, there was a 92% lower chance of NQT attrition (Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004). Such findings instil a sense of urgency to remediate the ROI's lack of NQT induction.

In the absence of statutory school-based induction in the ROI, NQTs are one way or another inducted informally into the prevailing dominant culture of teaching and learning. However, there remains a significant gap in Irish literature as to how induction is operationalised in schools. Key to the rationale for undertaking this

research was to develop an understanding of why principals adopt certain induction provisions, simultaneously revealing whether provisions are serendipitous or systematic. Although the framing of school-based support and NIPT induction workshops as central tenets of induction has been on the agenda of Irish policymakers for many years, limited evidence is available, apart from studies conducted by the NIPT itself, regarding the perceptions of Irish stakeholders of the effectiveness of such provisions.

This research was undertaken using a conceptual framework for evaluation based on categories of effective induction advocated by induction theorist Andrea Squirrel Main (2008a), developed further in accordance with the literature review and discussed in detail on pages 65 to 70. Justification for using Main's framework is attributed to its highly distinctive nature, incorporating an extremely multifaceted approach to induction; advocated by induction experts as being vital to effectively support NQTs (Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010; Fulton, Yoon and Lee, 2005; Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). While other induction theorists simply posit that NQTs' professional practice can be increased by combining induction elements (Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010; Greenlee and DeDeugd, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998), Main's framework firmly delineates four particular components of effective induction, which other theorists appear not to have undertaken to the same categorical extent. Consequently, Main's framework was used as a conceptual lens to investigate and evaluate the components of induction in this study and was then critiqued for its suitability in developing the components of an effective induction programme in the ROI.

Research aims and questions

The research encompassed an interpretative, qualitative multi-case study drawing on sixteen interviews conducted with principals and NQTs in the eight case study schools. While this thesis explored the rhetoric and reality of induction provisions, it sought to:

- identify the range of induction practices for NQTs that were being used across the sample of Irish primary schools;

- explore rationales and justifications for the adoption of induction practices within the schools in the sample;

- ascertain NQTs' perceptions of these induction practices and the extent to which they deemed them supportive of their professional development;

- evaluate the efficacy of the conceptual framework originating from Main's (2008a) components of effective induction as a means of providing NQTs in Ireland with an effective induction experience.

It addressed the following issues as outlined in the research questions:

1. How were induction practices being operationalised in the sample of Irish primary schools?

2. Why were induction practices, in the sample of Irish primary schools, being undertaken in this way?

3. What did NQTs identify as being effective and ineffective in their induction?

4. In what ways and to what extent did these induction practices reflect the key components of the conceptual framework originating from Main's (2008a) categories of effective induction? *[Pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance.]*

Definitions of Teacher Induction

Teacher induction is 'the process of initiating beginning teachers into their new role as both a teacher and a member of the school organisation' (Beijaard, Buitink, and Kessels, 2010, 563). Teacher induction has been defined as 'the period of transition from student to professional when beginning teachers need supervision and support to adjust to their new roles' (Blair-Larsen and Bercik, 1992, 25). Notably, NQTs are not considered fully proficient in teaching and they need guidance and support to cope with the problems that they will face during their first years of teaching (Moir, 2009).

Induction is seen as the crucial phase of teacher development, which links Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and in-service education for established teachers. In the same way, induction is seen as 'a critical phase within a continuum of professional learning, beginning with pre-service education and extending throughout the teaching career' (DEST, 2002, 11).

Teacher induction, it is important to clarify, is distinct from both pre-service and in-service teacher training:

> Pre-service refers to the training and preparation that candidates receive before employment. In-service refers to periodic upgrading and additional training received on the job during employment. . . . These [induction] programmes are often conceived as a bridge, enabling the student of teaching to become a teacher of students (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004, 682–683).

Induction should also support NQTs to become more effective by developing their self-esteem. Earley and Kinder (1994, 146) define induction as 'the process enabling new teachers to become effective'. This definition implies that the process of inducting NQTs into the profession must be effective, while 'induction should help NQTs to become confident and competent as rapidly as possible' (Lee, 1997, 16). Similar is the definition that views induction as 'a process which enables all new entrants to the profession to build their competence and confidence quickly' (Tolley, Biddulph, and Fisher, 1996, 18). This definition argues that all NQTs should be supported during the first years of appointment and they should have access to induction programmes, irrespective of the degree of competence that they have.

Conversely, Schlechty defines induction as 'the implantation of school standards and norms so deeply within the teacher that the teacher's conduct completely and spontaneously reflects those forms' (OERI, 1986). Schlechty suggests that induction should focus on orientation to the organisation and on fitting into an organisational culture. However, the focus on orientation to the school can mean that induction consists of little more than providing information about school procedures to the NQT at the beginning of the appointment (Grant, 2009). A process of bringing NQTs into line with existing practice, standards and norms, in order to reproduce the status quo, does not adopt a developmental focus. In addition, merely adjusting to the school's culture does not necessarily lead to effective teaching and pupil learning. Therefore, induction should be an extended process:

> . . . which aims to provide NQTs with orientation to the profession and the school, personal and professional support and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for effective teaching (DEST, 2002, 11).

As the previous definitions show, there are different and sometimes diverging opinions about the purpose of induction programmes for NQTs. Definitions of induction carry assumptions about its purpose, which consequently influences the design and emphasis of support programmes for NQTs. Induction can focus on orientation to the organisation and the profession, on fitting into organisational culture, on pedagogical skill development, on integration of induction and assessment for probation, and on personal and professional development. Those responsible for the planning and implementation of an induction programme for NQTs will set different priorities depending on whether they think induction primarily focuses on assessment or on personal and professional development.

Ireland's development of NQT induction

The first part of this section of the chapter discusses background issues which somewhat explain why Ireland's path towards NQT induction has emerged more slowly than that of some other countries. The second part outlines the policy developments which have now brought NQT induction to the centre stage of educational developments in Ireland. Finally, the third part provides an account of how proposals for the future of induction in Ireland have shaped this research study.

Irish teachers have traditionally enjoyed a relatively high status (OECD, 2003; OECD, 1991). In the prosperity of the late 1990s, those entering teaching were among the most successful of those leaving secondary school (OECD, 2003). Recent studies continue to highlight a high academic calibre of student entering teacher education programmes in Ireland (Heinz, 2008). While Drudy (2006, 5) writes that 'the retention of teachers is not really a matter of concern in Ireland', Morgan and Burke (in Picard and Ria, 2011, 147) confirm that 'Ireland has always had more candidates for teaching than actual places'. This has also been heightened by the economic situation since 2011, which 'has resulted in a decline in the number of teaching posts' (ibid.).

For a variety of reasons, including the strength of teacher unions and relative success in international comparative tests, NQTs and teachers in Ireland in the past may not have encountered the pressures associated with test scores and additional paperwork to the same extent as peers elsewhere, with legislation such as *No Child Left Behind* in the USA or *National Literacy/Numeracy Strategies* in the UK (Looney, 2006). This is not to suggest for a moment that education in Ireland has escaped notions of performance activity and accountability. Notably, what it means to teach in Ireland has changed considerably in recent years, with *Whole School Evaluations* being made publicly available by the DES in 2006, *Literacy/Numeracy Strategies* in 2011, and *Reporting Standardised Test Scores* to the DES in 2012 (Kitching, Morgan, and O'Leary, 2009, 46). Such changes in recent years have accordingly brought about diverse challenges for today's NQTs, resulting in greater attention being paid to teacher induction.

The National Teacher Induction Pilot Project (NTIPP), established in 2002, was expected to lead to the implementation of declared government policy. However, the formulation of a policy of teacher induction remained under development. In 2005, induction support for NQTs in Ireland was put under scrutiny as a result of the publication *Beginning to Teach: Newly Qualified Teachers in Irish Primary Schools*. This inspectorate report confirmed the noticeable lack of induction programmes for supporting NQTs by revealing that one in three NQTs are in need of significant support and expertise. Similarly, '29% of NQTs felt that their teacher education course did not prepare them adequately for classroom management and organisation' (DES, 2005, 47). Nevertheless, Ireland's path towards national induction remained in its infancy, as participation in any form of induction provision was not mandatory for NQTs in Ireland until late 2012.

In 2007, the IPPN's statement, *Teacher Initial Education, Induction and Probation*, on the quality of teaching practice in a sample of final year students, revealed stark realities – if accurate and reflective – that 'one in three NQTs in their first year of teaching would actually fail their probation' (IPPN, 2009, 1, *online*). This further initiated a period of unrest surrounding the issue of NQT induction in Ireland. The NIPT, established in 2010 as a result of the pilot project, posits that 'the main objective of induction in Ireland is towards promoting the professional development of NQTs' (2012, *online*). The NIPT is described as 'a professional development support programme for NQTs who are undertaking probation' (NIPT, 2012, *online*). Today, in line with the TCI having responsibility from September 2012 for the induction of teachers, the TCI has decided that participation in a programme

of NIPT induction workshops is a requirement for all NQTs who complete their teacher education qualification in 2012 and subsequently (TCI, 2012, *online*).

The NIPT workshop programme, funded by the DES, consists of twelve two-hour workshops, facilitated by practising teachers at local education centres. No release time is available to NQTs. Workshops are scheduled after school, in twenty-one full-time education centres around the country. This may mean travelling an hour or more to the nearest full-time education centre, if the local education centre operates on a part-time basis. The types of workshop topics usually addressed can be seen in the examples of 2012–13: *Working as a Professional, Planning and Preparation, Classroom Management and Organisation, Working with Parents, Child Protection, Practical Assessment, Behaviour Management, Literacy, Numeracy, Differentiation, Gaeilge (Irish)* and *Inclusion* (NIPT, 2012, *online*).

How proposals for induction in Ireland have shaped this study

At the time the interviews for this research were administered, in October to December 2011, there were no statutory induction arrangements in Ireland, with participation in NIPT workshops being optional for NQTs rather than mandatory. To date, school-based induction is still not a statutory provision. At the time of planning this study, there were intimations of changes in the pipeline for induction in Ireland. These intimations eventually resulted in the TCI being given responsibility for induction in September 2012 and in the publication of a consultation document by the TCI entitled *Career Entry Professional Programme* (CEPP) in January 2012. The TCI is proposing that CEPP will replace current arrangements for the induction and probation of NQTs for registration purposes in Ireland. Notable changes to induction are proposed in this CEPP consultation document, advocating full implementation of a school-based induction strand and principals assuming responsibility for evaluation in NQT induction, which is currently undertaken by the Inspectorate of the DES. With full implementation of CEPP not proposed until 2015/2016, proposals in this consultation document remained under review for the duration of this research project.

Many stakeholder consultations, including those facilitated by the INTO (Irish National Teachers' Organisation) and IPPN (Irish Primary Principals' Network), were submitted to the TCI in relation to the above CEPP proposals. There were 232 individual written submissions in addition to eighteen submissions from representative groups. A number of the individual submissions represented the

views of groups such as school staffs, so a relatively large set of individuals was represented in the consultation process. To date, the TCI has not formally enacted CEPP proposals, stating that:

> In light of the views expressed by many respondents, and to take particular account of the viewpoint of principals and mentors as expressed individually and collectively, the Council is currently revising its proposals, and a further draft document will issue for consultation in due course (TCI, December 2012, *online*).

Thus, it is acknowledged that this study has been shaped by these longstanding proposals, as the research aims to ascertain perceptions of induction that would support future professional development for NQTs, while including opportunities for participants to provide their views regarding current proposals for induction in Ireland.

Philosophical Approach and Positionality

The philosophical foundations of this research are based on an underlying ontological position that the reality of the social world is constructed by the participants engaged with it, their intentions and behaviours (McIntosh, 2008). Intrinsic to this is the epistemological position that this reality or knowledge of the social world can be constructed through individuals' perceptions or understandings, which may be influenced in different ways according to context, time, circumstances and experiences (Crotty, 1998). The correlation between the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of this study is further reflected in the qualitative research methodology, which involved interviews with individual

participants, namely principals and NQTs, to gain insights into their perceptions of induction. However, just as individuals' experiences and understandings are influenced by their values and beliefs, this research is subject to the influence of my own values (Bryman, 2008) or positionality in relation to this study.

> Research is always carried out by an individual with a life and a lifeworld . . . a personality, a social context, and various personal and practical challenges and conflicts, all of which affect the research (Anfara and Mertz, 2006, 4).

Many writers give personal accounts of aspects of their experiences to explain their current position in their professional or research lives (Eisner, 2001). Aligned with McIntosh's definition of ontology as 'the study of being, that is to say, what we are', the following narrative gives some insight into my career journey to explain my current position. This is done not to exorcise subjectivity (Anfara and Mertz, 2006) but to let the reader know what they might expect in terms of dispositions and expertise, and to explain the motivation for undertaking research into the area of NQT induction. Creswell (2008) posits that a professional biography as a means of adopting a reflexive approach will make potential biases, values and assumptions more transparent.

I graduated as an NQT in 2003 and completed my induction year in a large primary school in Dublin, where I had access to a designated mentor within a very supportive school environment. Having undergone the process of induction myself, I also had first-hand experiences of the stresses and challenges of the induction year. In 2005, I became teaching principal of a rural primary school in County Cavan

in Ireland. In my current role as a principal who is involved in the induction of NQTs, I was struck by the acute variance that appeared to exist between Irish primary schools regarding approaches and implementations of induction provisions, coupled with wide-ranging perspectives and expectations of the induction year. The variance in approach I noted appeared to range from limited or no support in some schools to the piloting of induction programmes at whole-school level in others, thus inspiring the focus of this research study on the operationalisation of induction provisions.

In my career to date, I have undertaken postgraduate work in the area of induction, which led to the award of M.Sc. from the University of Ulster. My beliefs and understandings in relation to induction developed through these experiences, and through my professional work as a principal undertaking the induction of NQTs in my school, advancing a keen interest in the rhetoric and reality of induction provision. Disclosing positionality in relation to this study is important, as research is not value free; and it is important to demonstrate my own experiences, as they have an influence throughout the research process, from its inception in terms of choosing induction as an area of study, to the formulation of research questions, the methodology, data analysis and conclusions that ensued (Bryman, 2008). I am conscious that data analysis may be open to many interpretations; therefore it is imperative that data is not chosen to suit my own agenda (King, 2012). In line with the University of Lincoln's ethical guidelines (University of Lincoln, 2011, *online*), all data analysis documentation has been kept in case the bias needs to be investigated by another party.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the rationale, aims and research questions of this study while providing an overview regarding definitions of teacher induction. An account of Ireland's development of NQT induction has been given, outlining why Ireland's path towards induction has been different to that of some other countries. The factors which have contributed to a need for induction in Ireland were explored, followed by an outline of the situation regarding current and future proposals for NQT induction. An account of the foundations of the research has been given, making explicit the context in which the investigation took place, its philosophical underpinnings and the position of the researcher in this process.

Chapter 2 provides a critical analysis of the literature, from which the research questions and the conceptual framework for the evaluation of effective induction components in Ireland evolved. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the methodology and data analysis procedures employed in this study. Chapters 4 and 5 report the findings of the research questions and briefly discuss these in relation to the literature. The findings are then synthesised and explored in Chapter 6 along with a critique of the conceptual framework. Finally, Chapter 7 draws all of this together and presents the new contribution to knowledge that has emerged from this research.

Chapter 2   The contributions of literature to induction challenges

Introduction

The four sections of this chapter review the literature that has informed this research project, with regard to both the focus on the voices of NQTs and principals, and the key questions investigated. The first section explores what light the literature can shed on the potential influence of ranges of induction practices for NQTs, utilising the induction component framework of induction theorist Andrea Squirrel Main (2008a). The second section explores particular rationales for induction practices, while the third section discusses induction practices and their support for NQTs' professional development. The final section discusses Main's (2008a) conceptual framework of the components of effective induction, and considers its efficacy. Overall, the four sections of this chapter explain how the current literature justified the four research areas for primary data collection.

While this review will demonstrate that the literature is informative, it will also reveal that the literature is limited in a number of ways. Firstly, there is a wealth of sources that explore the context of teacher induction and the contributors to effective induction programme development; these are often skewed to teacher and learning practice. Yet the literature and research that explicitly consider what NQTs need in induction for individualised professional growth are less comprehensive. Where the more specific knowledge exists, it is drawn largely from

one particular position: assuming that strong induction programmes are beneficial in contributing to higher retention rates and cost-efficiency (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). Moreover, the voices of Irish NQTs and Irish principals are predominantly absent from the dominant discourses about induction, and there is therefore an emerging need for inclusive, participative research that enables the Irish perspective to enter this debate.

Ranges of Induction Practices for NQT induction

In a systematic review of induction frameworks and integrated professional development, Andrea Squirrel Main (2008a) described the components underpinning effective induction practices as 'pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance' (2008a, 8), with the absence of any component being a critical deficiency (Main, 2009, 115).

Pedagogical Development	Professional Agency
Effective Induction	
Socio-emotional Support	Structured Balance
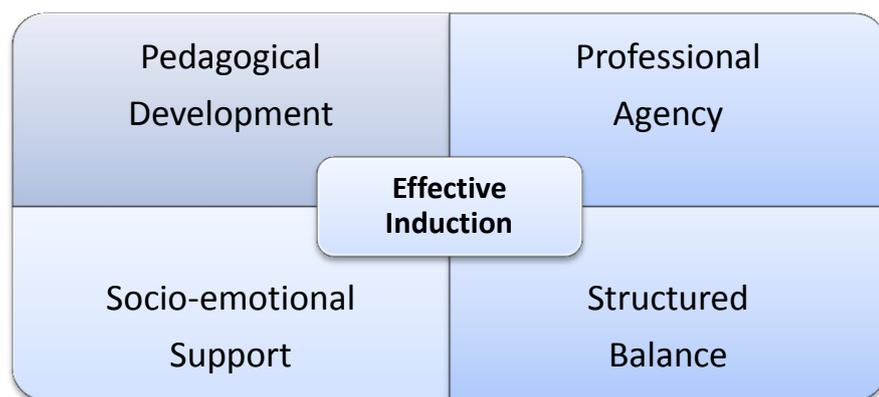
Figure 2.1: Components of effective induction, adapted from Main (2008a, 31).

This section of the chapter uses the above framework as a conceptual lens to structure a comprehensive review of the potential influences of ranges of induction practices for NQTs' induction. Each component of Main's framework of effective induction (2008a), namely pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance, will be addressed with references throughout to ranges of exemplar induction practices internationally.

Pedagogical Development

Analysis of the literature reveals that pedagogical development includes extending thinking strategies through professional development, engaging in student data inquiry, and fostering a sense of pedagogical achievement in NQTs via professional portfolios (Beijaard et al., 2010; Tickle, 2000). To build professional capacity, induction programmes need to assist NQTs in developing their knowledge of underlying theories, applying that knowledge in non-routine circumstances, and finally cultivating a commitment to what is best for the student (Cooper, 1998). Studies show that incorporating capacity-building into high-quality induction and mentoring programmes may lower NQT attrition and strengthen teacher effectiveness (Britton, Paine, Pimm, and Raizen, 2003). Induction programmes work best when capacity-building is provided to NQTs, mentors, and principals (Totterdell, Bubb, Woodroffe, and Hanrahan, 2004).

Research which has been compiled in response to lessons learned from two decades of new teacher induction, supports the perspective that 'learning

communities which bring together experienced and new teachers build teacher capacity while providing a structure for student learning' (Moir, 2009, 17). Earlier research identified that the strongest induction programmes will expend time and resources to prepare mentors for their new role as communicators of their knowledge and experience, affirming that 'training mentors is as important as training the novice teachers they will serve' (Moir, 2003, 6).

Research suggests that professional development should be organised around a clear vision of teaching (Bullock, 2011; Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Villani, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001) via intensive, ongoing professional development (Whisnant, Elliot, and Pynchon, 2005). Theorists consistently referred to the idea that well-designed, off-site professional development courses can help cultivate NQTs' thinking strategies (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006; Bartell, 2005; Wood, 2005; Earley and Bubb, 2004). Several studies commented on the type of learning that occurs during these sessions; most notably, several found that NQT pedagogy can be fostered by active learning via action research projects, learning circles, and active, collaborative, whole-school professional development (Beijaard et al., 2010; Moir, 2009; Harris, 2004; Jones, 2002).

In New Zealand's teacher induction, older NQTs claim that they are not receiving the same intense pedagogical training as their younger counterparts (Main, 2008b). They claim they have 'higher stress levels, claim to have lower effectiveness, and are the least likely to be empowered' (Main, 2008b, 133). Therefore, it is important that induction programmes adapt and grow flexible in using different approaches to

prevent pedagogical oversights. Pedagogical development is deemed crucial regardless of the NQT's age and experience. Howe, in a review of exemplary international induction programmes that contribute to pedagogical development, states:

> The most successful teacher induction programmes include opportunities for experts and neophytes to learn together in a supportive environment promoting time for collaboration, reflection and acculturation into the profession of teaching (2006, 287).

Extensive pedagogical development during the induction phase occurs in France. During their first year after university, French NQTs have only one-third of normal classroom contact time. During their non-contact time, all NQTs are required to attend off-campus sessions at an institution created primarily for teacher education and development. Assignments set by the institution have a particular focus on improving classroom practice. All French NQTs have access to pedagogical advisors who provide support in lesson-planning, data analysis and reflection. At the end of their induction period, French NQTs are required to present a reflective, professional memoir to an examination panel (Wong, Britton, and Ganser, 2005).

Although NQTs are relatively autonomous in their own classrooms in terms of the pedagogical approaches they employ, their adoption of pedagogical practices are subject to a range of internal and external controls (Lynch and Lodge, 2002). Therefore, NQTs need to develop both the capacity for seeking out resources and a framework for making individual decisions about their own practice (Britton et al., 2003). Teacher education has shifted the focus from content and mastery of skills

to inquiry and outcomes (Timperley and Wiseman, 2003). This trend towards teacher as researcher has simultaneously been mirrored during the induction phase (Beijaard et al., 2010; Tickle, 2000). It is widely acknowledged that a reflective stance, both professionally and personally, is important for the development of teacher identity (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Consequently, growing attention is being paid to NQTs inquiring into their own teaching practices as a means to professionally develop themselves (Moir, 2009; Britton et al., 2003).

Inquiry research in induction programmes should be conducted via implicit, reactive and deliberate classroom-focused teacher learning, with a broad range of support services (Main, 2008a; Cameron and Baker, 2004; Williams, 2003). Fullan substantiates this by highlighting that 'sustained success is never just one special event, meeting, or activity; rather, it is a journey of recursive decisions and action' (2001, 128). Britton et al. (2003, 89) support Fullan's statement by highlighting that NQTs require:

> A broad range of support services whereby groups of teachers meet weekly with similar groups of teachers from other schools, expanding their guidance beyond what can be provided by only a single mentor within their own school.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture introduced Japan's induction system in 1989. This compulsory, one-year programme consists of: no fewer than sixty days of in-school training (generally two days a week), no fewer than thirty days at the prefecture education centre (generally one day a week), and a five-day, four-night residential workshop (Myint Myint, 1999, in Main, 2008a). National policy

provisions include the use of guidance teachers and relief teachers to ensure that schools have adequate staffing to compensate for time devoted to NQT training. All NQTs complete an action research project, which is planned and observed by their grade-level team. This project is usually about thirty-five pages in length and includes substantial analysis of student work. The project is submitted to the prefectural education office, although no formal feedback is provided (Wong, Britton, and Ganser, 2005). Instead, there are open houses at national schools to share research, and teacher rotation is a common practice (Fernandez, 2002). Notably, though, the absence of formal feedback in models such as this elicits criticism. Absence of formal feedback is portrayed as a missed opportunity for involving NQTs in co-constructing their professional learning pathways with stakeholders according to their ongoing needs and those of their school cultural context (Harford, Hudson, and Niemi, 2012; Main, 2007).

A sense of pedagogical achievement can be fostered through positive, collaborative, formative assessments of NQTs, observations of teaching practice and the documenting of student achievement in professional portfolios (Totterdell et al., 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). There is widespread consensus on the value of reflection as a professional practice (Wilson, Hall, Davidson and Lewin, 2006; Whisnant et al., 2005). However, to maximise benefits, reflection needs to include reiterative analyses of teaching acts and their impact on student achievement. In essence, reflection helps NQTs develop schemata for making sense of classroom practices (Conway, Murphy, Rath, and Hall, 2009; Bartell, 2005), and without it, current practices tend to stagnate (O'Brien and Christie, 2005). Notably, reflection

assists NQTs in interpreting and modelling the thinking and intentions that drive expert practice (Minogue, 2004). Internationally, portfolios are a common method of scaffolding NQTs' reflection on their pedagogical achievements (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

In Connecticut, USA, there is a structured, two-year induction programme for NQTs. District support consists of portfolios, release time, and mentor support. Inductees create a portfolio containing a seven-day unit, daily lesson logs, videotapes of two lessons, examples of student work, and reflective commentaries. The portfolios are examined and evaluated by pairs of experienced educators with fifty hours of training. NQTs are also given eight half-days of release time to observe, be observed by their mentors, and attend professional development activities. These activities are all documented in portfolios. The mentors, who are district-selected, accomplished teachers in the same grade or discipline as the NQTs, complete a training programme that enables them to assist the NQTs in developing their portfolios (Horn, Sterling, and Subhan, 2002). This Connecticut model of selecting mentors for their expertise, skills and commitment and the matching of mentors and mentees in terms of subject or grade level is one of the recommendations asserted by Conway et al. (2009) and Killeavy (2006) to legitimately address the pedagogical needs of Irish NQTs during their induction.

Socio-emotional Support

While 'the ongoing study and improvement of teaching is difficult to accomplish alone' (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, 1027), New Zealand research describes co-presence and mutual knowledge as a strong induction component (Turnbull, 2002). Just as there is a multiplicity of pedagogical approaches to induction, socio-emotional support differs from one school culture to another, as there are many ways in which teachers can interact as a community. Notably, the most common aspects of socio-emotional support which occurred in the literature were: collaboration, networking, personal support, mentoring, support from school management, and orientation programmes.

Numerous researchers have connected teacher collaboration and support with student learning (Wood, 2005; Jones, 2002; Tickle, 2000). Based on this connection, other researchers have found that fostering a culture of mutual help and expectations via collaboration is a critical component of induction success (Bartell, 2005; Whisnant et al., 2005; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004; Horn et al., 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). In contrast to the historical notion that professional practice is private, tacit, and ephemeral (Argyris and Schön, 1974), quality induction programmes integrate NQTs into a professional community (Moir, 2009; Hargreaves, 2003). At its most basic level, collaboration is recognised as being as simple as observing another teacher (Allen and LeBlanc, 2005; Wong, 2005; Wood, 2005; Totterdell et al., 2004; Arends and Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000). In a survey of five hundred and sixty-seven NQTs, the induction activity rated most highly by all

respondents was lesson observation (Heilbronn, Jones, Bubb, and Totterdell, 2002). Similarly, combining case studies of twenty-four schools and questionnaires to one hundred and fifty local education authorities, lesson observation was found to be the most cost-effective induction activity, the least cost-effective being induction courses (Bubb, 2002). The latter finding does not reflect positively upon Ireland's sole induction provision of mandatory workshops.

Despite observations being beneficial, research attests that to be effective, collaboration must extend beyond mere observation. In essence, creating a successful induction programme involves blending collegiality and autonomy (Beijaard et al., 2010; Devos, 2010; Conway et al., 2009; Earley and Bubb, 2004). Collaboration may occur during common planning time (Johnson et al., 2005; Whisnant et al., 2005; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004), as well as during visits to other schools and classrooms (Department of Science and Training, 2002). Collaborative support can occur via critical friends groups in which members collaboratively examine student work and teacher practice (Gilbert, 2005). It can also occur during guided peer-coaching, study groups, school-based professional learning communities, professional conferences and collegial conversations (Breaux and Wong, 2002). Such communities of collaborative practice will consequently create induction programmes that foster openness, elements of help-seeking and reflective practice (Conway et al., 2009; DEST, 2002).

Many Chinese induction systems are based on systems of communal support (Howe, 2006). For example, in Shanghai there are school-based mentors plus

district workshops and study groups (Britton et al., 2003). Districts are required to offer one hundred hours of support to all teachers. Each teacher, whether new or experienced, is required to observe at least eight lessons a semester. NQTs participate in weekly meetings of lesson preparation groups and teacher research groups, while sharing communal offices. Municipal involvement in induction ensures support is system-wide, rather than limited to districts with sufficient resources (Britton et al., 2003). Notably, this concentrated support is accompanied by intense pressure as NQTs enter teaching competitions in which lessons are videotaped and archived for future use (Wong et al., 2005).

Looking at the social geographies of professional learning, teachers want more collaborative support, 'especially in the form of collaboration among teachers within the school' (Bezzina, 2006, 426). In induction provision, collaborative networks can form via team teaching (Wood, 2005; DEST, 2002), NQT meetings (Murphy, 2006), networking with others teachers outside the school (Britton et al., 2003), and mentoring teams (Fletcher, Strong, and Villar, 2005). Several theorists addressed the fact that, in many communities, the diversity in learning and culture renders collaborative support of minority group NQTs particularly important (Whisnant et al., 2005; Villani, 2002).

In a study entitled *Factors That Make A Teacher Induction Programme Effective in Improving Teacher Retention* (Egal, 2006, 9) a conceptual framework was identified as the foundation for identifying and understanding effective induction programmes as 'learning communities' that support and sustain teacher retention.

Results demonstrated that the establishment of a learning community which actually supports NQTs and values the ideas and experiences of all its members is necessary if school leaders are to retain and develop teachers professionally (Egal, 2006). Watkins (2005, 85) supports Egal's conceptual framework, affirming that 'the lack of a learning community jeopardises teacher retention, curriculum continuity and student achievement'.

With expectations and accountability for NQTs changing and increasing with pressures to improve student performance, NQTs' receipt of professional development during induction is paramount to raising levels of student achievement, especially among student populations that are diverse and low-achieving. Studies report that some induction programmes offer NQTs opportunities to collaborate and socialise with colleagues while providing valuable learning experiences (Fletcher and Barrett, 2004, 323). Studies also attest that 'the nature of teacher collaboration impacts upon teacher learning, professional development and organisational learning' (Fletcher and Barrett, 2004, 323). Adversely, the absence of such valuable learning experiences for NQTs will contribute little towards improved student performance.

One induction programme that incorporates networking is in New Brunswick, Canada (Scott, 2000). The programme has six general goals: orientation, support, acquisition and refinement of teaching skills, development of a philosophy of education, self-assessment and self-evaluation, and finally retention of NQTs (Scott, 2001; Scott, 2000). To accomplish these goals, district coordinators organise

orientation workshops for NQTs and training workshops for mentors. In addition, there are nine district coordinators who facilitate networking and mentoring and conduct additional mentor training. The programme is evaluated annually by principals, mentors, NQTs, and district coordinators, all of whom rate it as very useful (Scott, 2001).

Quality, structured mentoring is a recurring key induction component (Moir, 2009; *Top of the Class*, 2007; Bartell, 2005). Quality mentoring involves interactions with a tutor teacher (mentor) who is carefully selected (Devos, 2010; Conway et al., 2009), has received professional development (Feiman-Nemser, 2003) and is compensated for his or her time (Totterdell et al., 2004). Quality mentoring requires skills such as counselling, being emotionally available, observing, evaluating and providing feedback (Danielson, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Mentor preparation should include instruction in: adult learner styles, stages of teacher development, clinical supervision, classroom observation and conferencing, teacher reflection, and fostering self-esteem and self-reliance in NQTs (Villani, 2002). Remarkably, one study estimated that one thousand hours of professional development were needed for a mentor to be relatively proficient, yet affirmed that a mentor could become 'good enough' with just six days of professional development (Megginson, 2000).

Three studies were examined that focused on mentor teacher beliefs and practices, and discussed the effects of mentoring on NQTs. Feiman-Nemser (2001, in Wang et al., 2008, 134) analysed twenty hours of observations and ten hours of interviews

collected over two years from a mentor teacher with thirty years of experience. She identified mentors' dispositions and skills that were consistent with assumptions of educative mentoring from Dewey's concept of experience (1938), where the educator is primarily responsible for arranging conditions so that learners such as NQTs have growth-producing experiences. Feiman-Nemser's (2001) research argues that mentoring conceptions and skills are crucial in effecting NQTs' teaching, and that learning to teach is an inquiry process contextualised in NQTs' practice that needs to be assisted by an experienced other. For example, Feiman-Nemser maintains that 'mentors' conceptions should focus on co-thinking with NQTs about teaching, instead of being an expert that imposes ideas' (2001, 28). Her research also highlights the importance of focusing NQTs on basic instructional ideas that NQTs may not have recognised, such as how children think, while making deeper connections between theory and practice.

Drawing on surveys conducted with thirty-seven teacher induction programme coordinators, Athanases and Achinstein (2003) reveal that beliefs about children's thinking are vitally important for NQTs to develop effective teaching strategies. Their research attests that mentors need to help focus NQTs' attention on children's thinking. Interviews with two mentor–NQT pairs over one year, accompanied by observations and analysis of mentor–NQT conversations, demonstrated that mentors in this sample were able to focus NQTs' attention on student learning, especially that of low achievers. Skills for mentors to enhance NQT socio-emotional support, identified by Athanases and Achinstein (2003),

included analysing and assessing students using rhetorical questions and acting as co-thinkers during conversations with the NQT.

Research conducted by Wang (2001), on twenty-three mentor teachers in China, the United States and the United Kingdom, explored the relationship between mentoring contexts, mentoring practice and learning opportunities for NQTs. Through comparative analysis, Wang (2001) found that mentors in different countries hold different beliefs about what NQTs need to learn. Mentors in the United States were influenced by the decentralised curriculum and individualistic culture of teaching, and consequently tended to believe that learning about individual students and establishing purposes for teaching were important. Chinese counterparts believed that NQTs should develop a deep understanding of subject matter, curriculum, and professional ethics, as suggested by their centralised curriculum and subject-based teaching. In an unpublished M.Ed. dissertation entitled *Induction through Mentoring of Newly Qualified Primary Teachers in Selected Dublin Schools, Ireland*, conducted by Edge, his case study research revealed that 'good teaching practices of mentors are not automatically transferred into good mentoring practices' (1997, 132). This substantiates Wang's (2001) theory that mentors have their own preconceived agendas – individualistic, cultural or otherwise – about what NQTs need to learn.

Overall, the studies conducted by Feiman-Nemser (2001) and Athanases and Achinstein (2003) aid in conceptualising effective mentoring practice by specifying mentors' beliefs and skills that are consistent with theories of learning and

teaching, while offering a framework for mentoring practices that focuses on NQT development in terms of their learning and teaching. Wang's study (2001) emphasises that mentoring is a contextualised practice shaped by culture, curriculum and teaching organisation. Interestingly, all three studies conducted by Wang (2001), Athanases and Achinstein (2003) and Feiman-Nemser (2001) appear to pay little attention to NQTs' ideas about how they rated the support they received from mentors during their induction process.

In Australia in 2007, an evaluation of the Victorian Institute of Teaching's *Supporting Provisionally Registered Teachers* programme was completed by 792 NQTs, 818 mentors, and 92 principals. Results indicated that 84% of NQTs agreed or strongly agreed that they had made significant improvements in their classroom work as a result of guidance and feedback from their mentors and other colleagues, while 76% of NQTs said they met regularly with their mentor to discuss their progress as teachers (Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, Khoo, and Wilkinson, 2007). Orientation programmes are a common way to include NQTs in the culture of a school (Wong, 2005; Wood, 2005; Earley and Bubb, 2004; DEST, 2002; Horn et al., 2002). Programmes can entail end-of-year meetings, student orientations, summer workshops, tours of the local area, and introducing NQTs to other new and existing staff (Sargent, 2003). Schools with effective induction programmes in the United Kingdom give careful consideration to how orientation is structured (Bubb, Earley, and Totterdell, 2005) and present information in clear ways (often in the form of a handbook) to foster NQTs' understanding of complex school systems and policies (Wonacott, 2002; Joerger and Bremer, 2001). Contradictory to the notion of

acculturation through orientation handbooks, Kelchtermans (in Day and Lee, 2011, 77) posits the politics of identity, 'a struggle for recognition by others and for self-recognition . . . the micro-politics of the school', as being entirely beyond the scope of handbook material. The NQT's self-esteem flourishes when nurtured by relationships built upon encouragement, mutual respect and positive outcomes. Likewise though, adverse experiences can have lasting negative effects upon NQT sensitivity and self-recognition. In essence, operational practice will override any internalisation of written acculturation policy.

The principal and other members of the management team are important members of NQTs' social networks (Menon, 2012; Youngs, 2007; Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, and Liu, 2001). In a conference addressing *Effective Principal Leadership for Teacher Induction*, McGraner (2008, 1) presented a conceptual framework on principal leadership for NQT induction that integrated two lines of inquiry. The first examined teacher knowledge, learning and development; the second examined instructional modes of leadership that have been shown to facilitate teacher development and build instructional capacity. Ultimately, McGraner (2008, 2) argues that effective principal leadership that succeeds in encouraging NQT development during induction must begin with a clear understanding of NQT knowledge and learning of content and how students learn.

Relying on knowledge of NQT development, content and pedagogy, a principal who effectively provides leadership for induction develops, manages and refines school structures to facilitate the professional development of NQTs. Research carried out

by Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman and Yoon (2001), Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) and Youngs and King (2002) concurs that school structures supportive of organisational learning and NQT development include time for collaborative opportunities, effective resource distribution mechanisms, access to curricular resources and the necessary expertise to increase NQT development and promote reflective practice. Research suggests that the principal plays a key role in fostering a school culture to support NQT development. Notably, the structures that a principal develops to support induction will not suffice if the school management culture does not reinforce them. The principal thoughtfully guides social relations among teachers and other stakeholders in induction that strengthen commitment to the school and the work of teaching (Youngs and King, 2002).

In a longitudinal study conducted by McGraner (2008), which examines the induction experiences of first-year middle-school mathematics teachers and the effects thereof on their instruction and knowledge, findings reveal that 'principals held underdeveloped conceptualisations of induction and provided only vague articulations of their vision and goals for NQT induction' (McGraner, 2008, 3). Interestingly, none of the principals in the sample viewed induction according to McGraner's theoretical framework, meaning they did not conceptualise it as a critical phase of teacher development or socialisation into the profession, nor did principals conceive of themselves as active participants in induction. In the absence of this realisation, principals and management authorities are underperforming in their fulfilment of socio-emotional support to NQTs during induction. Menon's

(2012) research on the supports NQTs in Cyprus received from their headteachers substantiates findings of underperformance by principals in NQT induction. Respondents pointed to 'the need for greater support on behalf of the headteacher through better and more frequent communication, and openness in the organisational climate' (Menon, 2012, 217). Findings revealed that NQTs in Cyprus did not receive sufficient support from their headteachers, and in some cases considered the culture at the school to be antagonistic.

Professional Agency

Another component of effective induction programmes is that NQTs' sense of professional agency is cultivated; that is, that NQTs develop a sense of themselves as purposeful agents in the educational setting (Rots, Kelchtermans, and Aelterman, 2012; Trenta, Newman, Newman, Salzman, Lenigan, and Newman, 2002; Achinstein, 2001). In his writings on fulfilment, Gewirth (1998) explained Rawls' 'Aristotelian Principle': all other things being equal, human beings enjoy the exercise of their realised capacities. Gewirth explained that agency involved having the double capacity to reflect on and control what ends or purposes one sets for oneself. He concluded that a human being needed rational autonomy in the sense of being:

> . . . a self-controlling, self-developing agent who can relate to other persons on a basis of mutual respect and cooperation, in contrast to being a dependent, passive recipient of the agency of others (Gewirth, 1998, 208).

Literature focusing on NQTs' professional agency included references to enhancing teacher efficacy, enabling NQTs to hold leadership roles, and promoting a reciprocal status for NQTs within an integrated culture (Main, 2008a).

Numerous references to teacher efficacy were found through the literature (de la Torre Cruz and Casanova Arias, 2007; Murshidi, Konting, and Elias, 2006; Riggs, 2000). Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, and Hoy (1998) defined a teacher's sense of efficacy as the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organise and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context. Teachers' efficacy beliefs helped determine their effort, perseverance, and resilience (Bandura, 1997). Teachers' sense of efficacy has been shown to be positively related to their goals for students, the effort they invest in teaching, their behaviour in the classroom, and student achievement (Mulford, 2003; Timperley, 2003; Rust, 2002; Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy, 2000). Researchers show links between efficacy and retention (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow, 2002). Highly efficacious NQTs were found to have high satisfaction in teaching, thus they had a more positive reaction to teaching and experienced less stress (Rots et al., 2012; Murshidi et al., 2006). However, when teachers' self-efficacy was threatened, they taught and expected less (Johnson et al., 2005). Several dimensions to teacher efficacy were indicated in the literature, including personal vision (Hammerness, 2006; Villani, 2002), confidence (Saffold, 2006), risk-taking, self-actualisation and self-direction (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009).

Literature conveyed a number of influences on NQT efficacy, including assistance with problem-solving (Block, Mangieri, and Barnes, 1994), relationships within a school (Peeler and Jane, 2003), the operation of power and authority in schools (Lynch and Lodge, 2002) and an NQT's verbal persuasion, exposure to modelling, and personal mastery experience (Vandenberghe and Huberman, 1999). An internet survey of five hundred and forty-two Australian teachers found efficacy was related to student academic achievement and growth (Lokan, 2003). In New Zealand, Timperley and Parr (2004) conducted research on teachers that focused on efficacy. They defined teacher self-efficacy as understanding what needs to be learnt. Their research team examined how New Zealand teachers' expectations of low-income students' achievement changed during a six-month professional development in literacy effort. Post-survey data and interview data in the small-scale study highlighted changes in teachers' expectations and self-efficacy as compared to student reading scores (Timperley and Phillips, 2003).

The philosophy in Switzerland rejects a deficit model of induction that assumes NQTs lack training and competence, and instead relies on an 'individualised, developmental induction programme' (Wong et al., 2005, 380). NQTs' efficacy is examined and enhanced as they engage in critical reflection on curricular practices as individuals, in NQT groups, and with their tutor teachers. Many Swiss NQTs participate in voluntary counselling programmes, and practice groups conclude with a form of self-evaluation that emphasises a holistic approach to developing NQT efficacy. This philosophy views NQTs as professionals with a high degree of curricular and pedagogical choice (Wong et al., 2005).

In addition to efficacy, a second component of cultivating NQT agency is that of fostering leadership. Leadership has been cited as an important component of strong induction (Beijaard et al., 2010; Moir, 2009; Conway et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2005; Wood, 2005). Although there has been limited research specific to NQTs, all teachers undertaking leadership roles are more committed and report higher levels of job satisfaction (Harris and Muijs, 2005). They are less likely to leave both particular schools and the teaching profession, when they perceive themselves as having more influence over school-wide policy (Ingersoll, 2001). Using structured equation modelling, Rosenblatt (2001) demonstrated that teachers who held multiple roles reported significantly higher organisational commitment than those who did not. However, some theorists have suggested that such leadership roles within the school were balanced with support so that the NQT was not overwhelmed, as measured by data on stress levels and work rate (Kardos, 2005).

Muijs and Harris (2007) argue that the concept of teacher leadership comprises both formal leadership roles and informal roles such as peer-coaching and setting up action research groups. As curricular leaders, NQTs can create new channels of communication, thereby changing the instructional climate of a school (Fletcher and Barrett, 2003). NQTs have been found to have adaptive expertise in the field of pedagogy (Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden, 2005). Moreover, 'their capacity to handle uncertainty and bring about change, given appropriately supportive circumstances, can be equal to or better than more senior colleagues' (Tickle, 2000, 15). Effective induction programmes enable NQTs to challenge existing beliefs, particularly in curriculum areas (Timperley, 2001).

Remarkably, some researchers reported that NQTs' fresh approach to teaching was often treated as deficient by principals and experienced colleagues (Murphy, 2006; Martinez, 2004). However, NQTs can be viewed as knowledgeable, imaginative problem-solvers, leaders, and curriculum innovators (Tickle, 2000). Tickle says that NQTs can become curriculum subject coordinators with leadership responsibilities, and that with appropriate induction they could be equipped to lead the way for a research-based profession. Winkler (2002) confirms that NQTs' recent training could help them assist more expert teachers, making them an asset to any collaborative action research endeavour. Therefore, reconceptualising NQTs as thinkers will enhance their professionalism (Harris and Muijs, 2005). Consequently, NQTs can assist in the re-creation of policy responsive to the dynamic, social, cultural, and political contexts of schools. Schools which have high levels of teacher attrition may confer benefits as 'new blood' continually revitalises them (Herrington, Herrington, Kervin, and Ferry, 2006).

Researchers at Australia's Queensland University of Technology conducted a study to develop, trial, and evaluate participatory action research as a means of NQT professional agency (Ginns, Heirdsfield, Atweh, and Watters, 2001, in Main, 2008a). Participant NQTs collaborated with each other and with staff from the university in action research projects within their schools. Five of the NQTs were located in rural and outer suburban Queensland schools, two were in the Northern Territory, and one was in New South Wales. Hence, most of the NQTs were separated from each other and the university staff by two to three thousand kilometres. Significantly, NQTs chose to become research leaders in one of three areas, namely: inclusivity,

assessment, and giftedness. Network meetings took place before the school year commenced, after one month and after one term. Email and telephone meetings were also used. In their schools, NQTs gathered data related to their topics and participated in leadership roles in implementing the new techniques (Ginns et al., 2001, in Main, 2008a).

Some induction theorists suggest that enculturation implies passive adjustment for NQTs (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). In school cultural settings, NQTs often engage in socially constructed interactions in which established teachers exert and maintain their senior position (Rippon and Martin, 2006). Hargreaves and Fullan (1992, 13) write, 'This danger of control masquerading as care is an ever-present one, which requires continued vigilance'. Mentorship may have a conservative aspect propagating obsolete models of practice which may actually impede NQT growth (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Whisnant et al., 2005). The term 'collateral damage' can be used to refer to the negative impact on both the mentor and the NQT during the mentoring process (Kilburg and Hancock, 2006). Similarly, Main (2008a) emphasises danger in that NQTs have the potential to bypass engaging in reflective, pedagogical practices by cloning the behaviours of what they perceive to be 'more knowledgeable' teachers. Conversely, other theorists have concurred with the view of mentoring as a dynamic, reciprocal, dialectical relationship (Conway et al., 2009; Carter, 2001). Dever, Johnson, and Hobbs (2000) developed the concept of a 'dynamic, dyadic status' in which both parties in a mentoring relationship engage in a balance of support and growth.

One in-depth study of four Californian mentoring pairs found that NQTs who experienced a reciprocal mentoring relationship measured higher on California's NQT standards (Achinstein and Villar, 2004). In her New Zealand–based study, interviewing student teachers about professional agency, Turnbull (2002) noted that an effective framework for induction utilises the principles of adult learning. She found that effective support structures are reflective, equitable, and inclusive while incorporating effective teamwork and self-directed learning. During interviews with eleven teachers, McCann and Johannessen (2004) found that reciprocity included NQT involvement in scheduling meetings and selecting mentors. One large-scale research project on reciprocity in induction programmes described an 'integrated professional culture' in which:

> . . . mentoring was organised to benefit both the novice and the experienced teachers, and structures were in place that further facilitate teacher interaction and reinforce interdependence. The 'novice status' was held in high regard, and novices and experienced teachers shared responsibility for growth (Johnson et al., 2004, 159).

In a reciprocal culture, NQTs adjusted without complete internalisation of the status quo. Such adjustment was facilitated by context, the induction process and the peers extending far beyond mere tokenistic NQT involvement in group meetings (DEST, 2002). Such practices reflect exemplary components of professional agency in an integral professional culture.

In the Harvard-based *Project on the Next Generation of Teachers*, researchers interviewed fifty Boston-area NQTs as they began their teaching career. Findings revealed that NQTs were more likely to stay in schools with integrated professional

cultures organised around collegial efforts rather than schools organised around veteran or novice oriented activities. In these schools, NQTs were provided with sustained support and ongoing exchange across experience levels for all teachers: 'there were no separate camps of veteran and novice teachers' (Kardos, 2004, 4). Findings from Kardos' (2005) survey, featuring NQTs in four states, revealed that mentoring itself had no statistical relationship to NQT job satisfaction. Nevertheless, working in a school with an integrated professional culture was strongly and positively related to NQT job satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2004).

Structured Balance

In addition to pedagogical development, socio-emotional support and professional agency, the literature review indicated that structuring the balance of an induction programme is vital. Structured balance included a reduced workload, a clear programme vision, and programme evaluation balanced by an emphasis on the personal life and well-being of the NQT (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009).

The most prominently cited examples of reduced workload were a reduced teaching load (*Top of the Class*, 2007; Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Wood, 2005; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004; DEST, 2002; Horn et al., 2002). Additional release time has also been highly endorsed (Timperley and Wiseman, 2003; Horn et al., 2002; Villani, 2002; Joerger and Bremer, 2001). Notably, it was also found that high workload demands with low time allocation led to programme

failure (Peeler and Jane, 2003). Researchers found benefit in both reducing the total contact hours and increasing the duration of induction activities over time (Bartell, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005).

Within a standardised framework, Scotland has designed an induction system incorporating a reduced workload. In the late 1990s, support for NQTs became a priority of the Scottish Executive Education Department through the 'excellence fund' scheme, used by local authorities to introduce a variety of induction programmes and practices (McNally, 2002). This support began a tradition of multi-support systems with coordination between levels (O'Brien and Christie, 2005). In 2002, the new Scottish Teacher Induction Scheme began a one-year, government-funded training placement for all NQTs. The scheme was mandatory for all NQTs who wished to attain full registration with the national professional body and become eligible for permanent employment in Scotland's public schools. Each NQT was placed with one or two schools to undertake 70% of normal timetabled teaching duties (Conway et al., 2009). The NQT was expected to attend weekly meetings to receive feedback from observations and to plan development targets. For one and a half days per week, each NQT was freed from timetabled commitments to take part in a range of development activities individually, with other NQTs, and with colleagues. On-site teachers were funded and released from their role as tutor teachers (Rippon and Martin, 2006).

Research attests the importance for induction provision to assist NQTs in managing stress. Stressors for NQTs included accountability, being unprepared to work

together (Power and Hine, 2003), and timetables that did not allow teachers to meet (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Scott, 2000; National Education Commission on Time and Learning, 1994). References to stress management included appropriate assignments and less challenging classrooms (Howe, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001), providing instruction on effective time management, and limiting the number and scope of extra teaching duties (Joerger and Bremer, 2001). Attendance at stress-reduction workshops was also advocated (Wilkins-Canter, Edwards, Young, Ramanathan, and McDougle, 2000). Stress was reported to fluctuate over the course of the year (Grudnoff and Tuck, 2005), with comments made during the second term being by far the most negative (O'Brien and Goddard, 2006). This indicates that NQTs' needs change in the course of the year, resulting in variance of stressors at different times.

Significantly, it is not only NQTs that need a clear sense of purpose, but programmes as well. Successful induction programmes have a clear rationale and vision (Moir, 2009; Bartell, 2005; Wong et al., 2005). Purpose is achieved via a coherent, planned structure (Main, 2008a; Portner, 2005; Wonacott, 2002; Roberts, 2000) that is piloted and refined (Totterdell et al., 2004). Programmes should take place for multiple years (Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Horn et al., 2002; Trenta et al., 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001) and should include evaluation (Bartell, 2005; DEST, 2002; Claycomb and Hawley, 2000). Overall, induction programmes are now beginning to focus on long-term support. NQTs obviously need adequate time to learn what they need to know:

> Long term support goes beyond helping NQTs feel comfortable in their school culture; it addresses their development process of building confidence and heightening confidence (Feiman-Nemser, 2003, 33).

The New Teacher Centre in Santa Cruz, California, trains and supports full-time mentor teachers for surrounding districts. The research division of the centre focuses on evaluating the programme's success. Researchers at the centre have designed an online evaluation survey for NQTs in the programme (Barrett, 2005). They also utilise state standardised tests to attempt to find a positive relationship between NQT support and teacher retention (Strong, 2006). Their researchers have analysed the link between induction and the financial benefits of teacher retention (Villar and Strong, 2005). Results of evaluations, although relatively small-scale, look encouraging in linking the achievement of students in the classrooms of Californian NQTs with the trained mentoring NQTs have experienced (Main, 2008a).

This review of ranges of induction practices notes the importance of balancing practices within components of induction programmes, in addition to acknowledging their interdependent nature. Ingersoll and Kralik (2004) conducted reviews of the literature on mentoring and teacher retention, and Ingersoll's meta-analysis of forty-six U.S. studies found that mentoring and induction programmes appeared to play a prominent role in teachers' decisions to quit or remain on the job. The types of induction support that had the strongest positive association with retention were: having a mentor in the same field, having common planning time with other teachers of the same subject, having regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and finally, being part of an external network of teachers. By

integrating multiple components in an induction programme, its effectiveness appeared to be increased (Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004).

Significant gaps were revealed surrounding practices in the ROI in this analysis and synthesis of ranges of induction practices for NQT induction. While such gaps are attributed to the absence of statutory provisions they are more notably due to the lack of research on current practice. The lack of any form of statutory school-based induction in the ROI appears as a cornerstone for change in light of the literature demonstrating the high levels of effectiveness of wide-ranging induction practices internationally. This further substantiated the necessity to establish how induction practices are currently operationalised in Irish schools. Awareness that this information is currently unavailable highlighted the need to supplement the existing knowledge, while such insights will provide the necessary discourse required to allow the Irish perspective to enter this debate on the challenges and influences of NQT induction practices.

Finally, this section of the chapter used Main's (2008a) framework components of effective induction as a conceptual lens to structure this comprehensive review of NQT induction practices. As a result, the components of Main's framework, namely pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance, are now presented in Figure 2.2, illustrated further in additional sub-components reflective of this review of literature. Figure 2.2 will be used as a conceptual framework for evaluating the components of effective induction when presenting and analysing the research data.

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework for Evaluating the Components of Effective Induction

(Based on Main's (2008a) components, sub-components further developed from literature review)

Pedagogical Development	Professional Agency	Socio-emotional Support	Structured Balance
Professional development of thinking strategies • education centres • workshops • university relationship • school-wide curricular focus **Inquiry using student data** • peer coaching **Professional portfolios** • systematic review	**Teacher efficacy** • feelings of value and self-worth **Leadership roles** • NQTs lead • post of responsibility • technology fields • passing on new skills to colleagues • team teaching **Reciprocal status within an integrated culture** • NQTs voice opinions in staff meetings	**Collaboration** • frequent observation • systematic planning • teaching feedback **Mentoring** • liaise with management • lesson modelling **Orientation** • pre-meetings • handbook • induction policy **Management support** • monitor mentor • mentor accountable **NQT networks** • on-site and off-site networks • management co-ordinates areas for development • meetings have clear purpose	**Reduced workload** • additional funding • substitute cover • release time used for induction-related activities **Life balance** • emphasis on physical health • employee assistance service for teachers **Programme vision and evaluation** • clear programme vision • formal, written evaluation presented to the board of management **Balancing practices within induction components** • integrating multiple components

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Particular rationales for induction practices

Evident in the literature on rationales for induction is a common belief that a well-managed process can provide a basis for ongoing employee development, reduce labour turnover and make new staff more effective in a shorter period of time (Beardwell and Holden, 2001; Meighan, 2000; Newell and Shackleton, in Bach and Sisson, 2000). Meighan (2000, 7) states that appropriate induction 'can be a motivating factor for new staff'. Cadwell (1998, 11) observes in the early stages of employment an opportunity to 'develop perceptions about the organisation', a point that is echoed by El-Shamy (2003, 4), who speaks of making 'an effective organisation advocate'.

Watkins (2005, 83) states that the average yearly turnover rate in education is thirteen percent, compared to eleven percent in other professions. According to Howe (2006, 289), the '*sink or swim*' metaphor is so ingrained in the teaching profession, that it would be difficult to find a teacher unfamiliar with this cliché. This is not a surprising revelation as 'novice teachers are typically given the most difficult classes, have more courses to teach and more extracurricular duties imposed on them' (Weiss and Weiss, 1999, 865). Apart from the mere struggle for survival, NQTs face multiple challenges during the induction period, such as the clash between theory and practice, the shift in the teacher's role from provider of knowledge to facilitator of learning, and the deployment of one's starter competences in the specific context of a particular school (Schollaert, 2011, 11). In relation to the processes of acquiring professional learning, Clarke, Lodge and

Shevlin (2012) suggest that fragmentation currently exists in teacher education in the ROI, particularly between the university and school contexts. Therefore, programme development and evaluation are of fundamental importance not only to teacher education but to NQT induction in order to facilitate professional development practices rather than induction practices evolving as a process towards fulfilling probationary requirements.

Research demonstrates that the rationale for induction programmes is generally relevant to the NQT's well-being (Kelley, 2004; Chubbuck, Clift, Allard, and Quinlan, 2001; Reiman, Bostick, Lassiter, and Cooper, 1995). Studies have shown that induction programmes contribute to NQTs' feelings of being supported and being part of the school community. Beijaard et al. state that 'even an online support community contributes to the well-being of teachers (2010, 12). Helsel DeWert, Babinski, and Jones (2003) reported a positive effect on a number of variables related to well-being, such as confidence in teaching, reduced feelings of isolation and enthusiasm for work.

Cuban concurs that 'the preparation, induction, and career development of teachers remain the Archimedean lever for both short-term and long-term improvement of public schools' (2003, 1). It is clear from a synthesis of the findings of other researchers (Strong, 2006; Bartell, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005; Bubb, 2002) that underlying their research is the assumption that teachers benefit more from a planned, coherent, integrated programme of induction than from scattered attempts by many groups and individuals. This assumption is based on research

that indicates that strong induction programmes diminish both teacher migration within and departure from the profession in the initial years of employment (Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley, 2006; Smith and Ingersoll, 2004; Blackwell, 2002; Tushnet, Briggs, Elliot, Esch, and Haviland, 2002). However, there has only been one control-group study testing this hypothesis (Lopez, Lash, Schaffner, Shields, and Wagner, 2004). In addition to analysing departures, other researchers have linked induction to higher retention rates (Wilson, Hall, Davidson, and Lewin, 2006; Grant, 2004; Smith and Ingersoll, 2004; Horn, Sterling, and Subhan, 2002). Moreover, considering the money saved on teacher retention, providing NQTs with induction programmes was found to be cost-efficient (Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin, 2004; Fullan, 1993).

In spite of the acknowledged potential and importance of employee induction, it is often characterised as 'the Cinderella of staff development, full of missed opportunities' (Hughes and Thackwray, 1996, 1). Fowler contrasts the time and money organisations devote to the correct installation and operation of new equipment with 'the often haphazard manner by which new employees are inducted into their jobs' (1996, vii). Poorly conducted induction may be little more than an 'information dump', as miscellaneous information is hastily presented to 'a confused but suitably grateful new starter' (Hughes and Thackwray, 1996, 3). Conscious of this, both Cadwell (1998, 36), and Gunnigle and Flood (1990, 94) propose that induction should be spread over an appropriate time period with essential information given at the outset, and when assimilated, further areas covered later. Meighan attests that the involvement of a range of individuals and

departments is considered critical to any form of effective induction: 'This issue, more than any other, dictates the success or failure of an induction programme' (2000, 101).

The assumption that induction is beneficial is also based on research concerning teacher performance. Feiman-Nemser writes that the conditions under which a person carries out the first years of teaching have a strong influence on the level of effectiveness which that teacher is able to achieve and sustain over the years (2001, 1026). At its most basic level, teacher quality can be determined by changes in class-level student achievement (Moir, 2009). However, the relationship between teaching and learning is one of the most difficult to establish in all educational research (Hattie, 2006). Linking teacher practice to pupil outcomes presents various problems, including: substantial intervening variables, questions about appropriate measures of student learning, issues regarding the lack of test standardisation between schools, problems in the mechanics of tracking candidates, and difficulty in accessing data (Wineburg, 2006; Zeichner and Conklin, 2005). The elusive nature of 'effective practices' in schools has prompted several researchers to conclude that the lack of empirical, quantitative data leaves conclusive, data-rich analysis of the impact of induction beyond reach (Whisnant, Elliot, and Pynchon, 2005; Lopez et al., 2004; Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004).

In order to provide a critical overview of induction programme implementation, limitations of standardisation of practice must be addressed. In relation to the context of this study, it would be wrong to assume that the implementation of

statutory induction arrangements in Ireland would automatically be a good thing. Referring to Israel, Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija note that 'despite good intentions and seemingly well-designed induction activities, most programs encounter difficulties when they are put into practice on a large scale' (2009, 282). They indicate that irrespective of induction programmes being tried out and potential difficulties being known in advance, large-scale implementation carried out at national level often results in partial implementation.

Earley and Bubb (2004, 133) reveal that there is still variability of NQTs' experiences in spite of statutory regulations. They contend that one of the benefits of England's induction policy is that it should help standardise the provision that NQTs receive across and within schools. Their research showed that although induction provision seemed to have improved, there were still a significant proportion of NQTs (twenty percent) who did not get the ten percent reduced timetable to which they were entitled. Schools' interpretation of what is a 'good enough' meeting of the induction standards varies, and this is felt to be unfair by NQTs (Earley and Bubb, 2004, 103). This appears as a flaw in a statutory standardised system, that decisions can be made so subjectively by induction tutors and principal teachers, with only limited input from specialists in the induction field.

A significant gap may exist between government bodies which embody the induction policy and the actual manner in which the programme is implemented. Nicoll and Harrison (2003) point to the impossibility of any one set of standards pertaining equally at all times across all disciplines and contexts of primary

education. Due consideration must be given to vastly different sites of practice, and the differing conditions under which NQTs and schools operate. Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija say programme evaluators are essential 'to point out what aspects of induction programmes are not realistic, given objective constraints' (2009, 284).

There is also a wider question which relates to statutory induction schemes being too centralised and controlling, perhaps imposing a managerial approach not reflecting adequate space for professional judgement. In an evaluation of the effectiveness of statutory induction arrangements for NQTs, carried out by Totterdell, Heilbronn, Bubb, and Jones (2002), there was widespread consensus among NQTs that statutory systems resulted in a lack of opportunities to engage with their individual objectives, resulting in 'inadequate needs assessment and tailoring of courses to individual needs' (2002, 2). NQTs also made strong calls for their school's induction provision to be 'monitored by appropriate bodies much more tightly than at present' (Totterdell et al., 2002, 3).

It would be unrealistic for induction providers to wholeheartedly embrace the notion of an induction programme inclusive of compulsory organisation and content. Whereas elements of standardisation have their merits, a standardisation overhaul would not be viable in that evolution of induction features are often based on the standards established during university training. With a range of Irish teacher training institutes and NQT graduates working in Irish schools trained in the UK and beyond, NQTs' induction needs would differ somewhat in terms of

professional competency-based objectives, some of which would derive from the different teacher training institutes:

> The fact is that the various training programmes may differ in how well they prepare budding teachers for the many and diverse demands of the job, and that teachers in this stage differ greatly in how they adjust to the stresses involved (Vögeli-Mantovani, Bachmann, Wälchli, and Hofmaier, 2011, 175).

Autonomy presents its own advantages and disadvantages in the standardisation of induction provision. Autonomy is celebrated in that it provides 'diversity of offerings and organisational structures' to provide desired support, but conversely autonomy without accountability can be associated with loopholes. For instance, induction programme providers with autonomy may ensure that internal evaluation is a systematic process, but external evaluation of services and their impact may not be undertaken to the same extent (Vögeli-Mantovani et al., 2011, 171). This reflects the potential diverging results of autonomy versus standardisation.

A paradox to the rationales for, and ideals of, teacher induction, emerges in the form of policy developments regarding academy schools in England. On 27 July 2012, it was announced that academy schools in the future were to be provided with the freedom to recruit people into teaching roles who do not possess Qualified Teacher Status. In its press statement announcing this new policy, the Department for Education (2012, *online*) described the change as 'minor' and argued that 'this new freedom for academies will allow them to bring in professionals who will bring a wealth of knowledge and new skills into our state schools'. In essence, this questions whether a professional qualification for teachers is deemed necessary,

whilst clouding the role and value of wider professional development for teachers such as induction and in-service. It hardly seemed plausible that statutory bodies such as The Teaching Council of Ireland (appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills) have spent considerable time developing directives regulating teaching as a professional body and providing assurances of educational quality, whilst in England, such limited value has now been placed on the same norms.

Critics of such deregulation say it is intended to cheapen the labour process of teaching and is an ideologically driven challenge to the professional culture of teaching (Stevenson, 2011). Surely ignoring the concepts of professionalism and pedagogy in a modern day society rejects the importance of pedagogy, and by implication is a denial of teachers' claim to a professional status (Stevenson, 2012). For many of us working as teaching professionals, this development is entirely alien to our way of thinking. Bearing in mind the disproportionate influence that countries such as England have on education policy in many other countries (Ball, 2012), this policy development consequently acts as a foil to developments in teacher induction questioning whether or not investments in such initiatives are any longer a fundamental basis for teacher development.

Overall, literature in this section of the chapter endorses the idea that at its most basic level the rationale for implementing induction practices is directly related to NQTs' well-being (Kelley, 2004), providing an essential basis for NQTs' ongoing development and thus preventing NQT turnover (Beardwell and Holden, 2001; Meighan, 2000). However, this analysis of literature failed to shed any light on the

rationale for the ways in which induction practices may be undertaken in Irish primary schools. While the literature drew attention to the manner in which statutory induction schemes may be perceived as too centralised and controlling (Totterdell et al., 2002), it simultaneously attested that NQTs benefit more from a planned, coherent, integrated programme (Strong, 2006; Bartell, 2005). Bearing this in mind, the second research question specifically addresses this gap in knowledge in the ROI, focusing upon the rationale of school principals for the NQT induction provisions they employ.

Induction practices and their support for NQTs' professional development

There has been a marked increase in international research regarding the support provided to teachers during their first years of service (Ingersoll and Smith, 2004; Johnson et al., 2004; Totterdell et al., 2004; DEST, 2002). Internationally, the research covers a wide spectrum. In Australia, New Zealand, some states within the United States, and some European and Asian countries, induction programmes are part of national policy and conform to statutory arrangements within the education system (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006, 117). Conversely, this may not ultimately result in the provision of a comprehensive induction programme of professional development, as less than a quarter of all Australian NQTs had access to a tutor teacher (DEST, 2002). At the other end of the spectrum, Scottish NQTs have a 30% reduction in their contact time as part of a university-supported induction system (Rippon and Martin, 2006), and virtually all Japanese beginning teachers are

supported in completing a thirty-to-forty-page action research project during their first year of teaching (Moskowitz and Stephens, 1997).

'The quality of a teacher's experience in the initial years of teaching,' writes Bezzina (2006, 414) 'is critical to developing and applying the knowledge and skills acquired during initial teacher training', aiming to form positive attitudes to enhance teacher development. Although there is a general acceptance of the value of good induction programmes for NQTs, Coolahan (2002) argues that there has tended to be a lack of coherent policy on their implementation despite 'the high probability that solid induction programmes represent one of the most cost-effective strategies around' (Fullan, 1993, 106). NQTs are often 'thrown in at the deep end' (ibid.), with a full teaching load and associated responsibilities. The entry of NQTs into full-time teaching is widely acknowledged as problematic (Moir, 2009). Induction is a process of initiating NQTs into their new roles, both as teachers and as members of the school organisation. As new members of the school organisation, they often have to compete for a place amongst the more experienced teachers, adjust to the predominant school culture, and earn the appreciation of colleagues (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002; Zeichner and Gore, 1990). NQTs' induction period is very important in view of their career development. Teachers form their professional identity, construct a professional practice and often decide to stay in the profession or to leave it in the very early stages of their career (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Research demonstrates that poor induction can have serious consequences for teacher development (Freiberg, 2002). NQTs who have few support structures to

draw upon can feel 'isolated, stressed and anxious' (Bezzina, 2006, 415). On the other hand, research shows that NQTs who are provided with an induction programme for teacher development are able to overcome initial problems of class management and planning and focus on student learning much earlier than others (Breaux and Wong, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Lieberman, 1995).

A more differentiated picture arises from studies in which the effects of induction programmes upon the professional development of NQTs were investigated. Several of these studies have demonstrated positive effects of support within an induction programme on the professional development of NQTs (Achinstein and Barrett, 2004; Athanases and Achinstein, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The findings of these studies showed how NQTs reframed their thinking on several teaching issues, changed their instruction methods, were able to redirect their attention to individual students, and gained more awareness of the students' thinking and understanding.

In direct contrast, a study conducted by Strong and Barron (2004) revealed a very limited influence of support experienced by NQTs. Based on an analysis of thirty hours of conversation, on average, between mentors and teachers, they identified ten instances of direct suggestions from the mentor, which elicited an elaborate response from the NQTs on only three occasions. Carver and Katz (2004) also found that a mentor was not able to truly contribute to the professional development of three NQTs. A recent large-scale experimental study revealed no differences in a number of variables between teachers supported by a comprehensive induction

programme and teachers supported by a standard induction programme with limited content (Glazerman, Dolfin, Bleeker, Johnson, Isenberg, and Julieta, 2008). In relation to teachers' professional development, no differences were found in teachers' classroom practices or student achievement.

NQTs are faced with a number of challenges as soon as they take on full-time teaching in a school. Research affirms that NQTs are often overwhelmed and exhausted dealing with non-teaching duties (Cherubini, 2007; Humphrey, 2000). They develop a realisation of just how difficult it is to address students' diverse learning needs (Grudnoff and Tuck, 2001). Consequently, they feel inadequate about their lack of understanding of pupils they are about to teach, reflecting different backgrounds, views and expectations about education (Schernpp, Tan, Manross, and Fineer, 1998). These findings provide an informed picture of the professional needs of NQTs and in turn justify induction programme implementation to further teacher development.

In the absence of a formal programme of induction into the profession, NQTs are inducted informally into the prevailing dominant culture of teaching and learning practices. 'This prevailing culture runs counter to what is needed for the new professional in meeting current expectations in a knowledge-based society' (Conway et al., 2009, 139). It is increasingly acknowledged that induction programmes are essential, for even a very comprehensive teacher education programme cannot prepare teachers for their job completely (Britton et al., 2003).

Exemplary programmes strategically and deliberately provide teacher development structures to induct NQTs into new norms of professional engagement.

The teacher induction period refers to the transitional period between pre-service preparation and continuing professional development, encompassing the first few years of teaching (Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay, and Edelfelt, 1989). Increasingly, there is a consensus that learning to teach effectively cannot happen in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) alone. Rather, learning to teach and developing as a professional must occur within a context of a continuum of teacher education often known in Ireland as the '3 I's' – initial, induction, and in-service (Coolahan, 2003).

> We misrepresent the process of learning to teach when we consider new teachers as finished products, when we assume that they mostly need to refine existing skills, or when we treat their learning needs as signs of deficiency in their preparation. Beginning teachers have legitimate learning needs that cannot be grasped in advance or outside the contexts of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2003, 26).

Feiman-Nemser, Schwille, Carver, and Yusko (1999) view the NQT as a Janus-type figure placed at a crucial intersection, looking back on pre-service education and looking forward to in-service education. They argue for the centrality of teacher learning as a key focus, overriding other concerns such as accountability and assessment, in this distinct phase in professional development. NQTs must be supported and assisted in taking responsibility, not only for what goes on in their classrooms, and for the quality of pupil learning for all pupils, but also for their participation in professional learning as a lifelong endeavour (Beijaard et al., 2010; Conway et al., 2009).

Induction practices are progressively viewed as a necessary and critical element in any teacher education reform agenda, and are an important element in retaining NQTs and assisting them, to build productively on the early teaching foundations of ITE (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005; OECD, 2005; Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004; Kelley, 2004; Youngs, 2002; Arends and Rigazio-DiGilio, 2000; OECD, 1998). In Ireland, various reports and reviews have recognised the need for a structured and integrated induction process within this continuum (OECD, 2005; Byrne, 2002; Kellaghan, 2002; Government of Ireland, 1995). It is advocated that within this continuum 'the learning goals and interfaces of each stage be clearly demarcated, interconnected and related to a holistic view of professional practice' (Conway et al., 2009, 126–127). There is a move towards the teaching profession being a lifelong learning profession (OECD, 2005). The best induction programmes induct NQTs into learning cultures that sponsor this orientation (Coolahan, 2003; Wang and Odell, 2002).

Induction into any new role is generally accepted as good practice and productive for the business concerned (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009). Formal acclimatisation sessions, provision of handbooks, shadowing, mentoring and setting targets are all familiar activities that organisations use to ensure that new employees meet the requirement of their new post. Research shows that both teachers and schools through their management of teacher induction (indirectly by creating the supporting conditions) can have a major impact on the learning of the pupils in their care:

> The effectiveness criteria for CPD [Continuing Professional Development] do not only draw heavily upon research on (adult) learning, but also on organisational learning. CPD can only maximise its effect on student learning when individual teacher development goes hand in hand with school development (Schollaert, 2011, 11).

Consequently, induction cannot be viewed as an isolated period that NQTs have to go through in order to advance their status to that of a probated teacher. In essence, induction is a stage in a continuum that starts with initial teacher education and extends into continuing professional development or lifelong learning.

A study by Keay (2007, 15) considers teacher induction as 'a distinct form of professionalism', focusing on professional development with an emphasis on meeting professional standards. She states that NQTs 'must be helped to manage the autonomy they have been given in their new roles and see professional development as an integral part of meeting their own and their line-managers' expectations'. She warns that if a less narrow version of professionalism or managerialism is adopted, it will inevitably lead to the generation of professional development that is based on reflection, which in turn will lead to continuous identification of professional development needs and not merely the search for ways to deal with newly acquired autonomy.

Good induction programmes facilitate ongoing professional development, with an emphasis on assistance, reflection, and collaboration rather than on assessment (Howe, 2006). Nevertheless, despite good intentions and seemingly well-designed

induction activities, difficulties exist because those who are supposed to implement the programmes are still unsure of their role: 'they have difficulty changing their behaviours to suit programme expectations' (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009, 282). Creating stimulating social and professional conditions for career development in the teacher profession should be the responsibility of each of us: schools, educators, school districts, communities, society, and universities in general. Consequently, this will 'change teacher's attitudes to their own professional development, and the development and promotion of students and society as a whole' (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010, 2925–2926).

Heightened expectations of teachers have led to an unprecedented political, professional and stakeholder interest in the theory and practice of teacher education worldwide. This is evident in the number of reviews in various countries and cross-national studies of teaching and teacher education in recent years (McKinsey Report *How the World's Best Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*, Barber and Mourshed, 2007; OECD's *Teachers Matter*, 2005; UNESCO's *Education for All: The Quality Imperative*, 2005; World Bank's *Learning to Teach in the Knowledge Society*, Moreno, 2005). These reports highlighted the need for the emergence of newly extended teacher professionalism, mindful of stakeholder interests and school performativity. Conway et al. argue that such new professionalism is characterised by:

> . . . greater collegiality than typical in the past, by the increasing complexity of professional practice, by the challenges of teaching a more diverse student body to higher levels of academic attainment and by the challenges of equality and inclusion (2009, 2).

Notably, the contemporary policy interest in new professionalism, with regard to teacher induction and continuing professional development, optimally takes into account the whole spectrum of teacher learning, that is, 'teachers' opportunities to learn from their own prior schooling and throughout their own teaching careers' (Schwille and Dembélé, 2007, 29).

This section of the chapter set out to discuss induction practices and their support for NQTs' professional development. Overall, literature affirmed the general acceptance and value of comprehensive induction practices to further NQTs' professionalism (Keay, 2007; Howe, 2006). Research demonstrated that stimulating social and professional induction conditions enhanced NQTs' attitudes to their own professional development in addition to that of their students (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). Although various reports and reviews in the ROI recognise the need for a structured and integrated induction process within the continuum of teaching (OECD, 2005; Byrne, 2002), a gap remains in Irish literature regarding what particular induction practices constitute most or least effectiveness in facilitating NQTs' growth. Hence, this study's third research question seeks to investigate what Irish NQTs identify as their most and least effective induction practices in sponsoring their orientation towards lifelong learning professionals.

Main's Conceptual Framework and its Efficacy

Main formulated her framework from an analysis of induction experts and NQT support in New Zealand primary schools. Main's framework was highly distinctive as it incorporates an extremely multifaceted approach to teacher induction. Using a multifaceted approach to teacher induction is highly advocated by many induction experts as being vital to effectively support NQTs (Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010; Fulton, Yoon, and Lee, 2005; Ingersoll and Kralik, 2004; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). However, what is not as emergent in the literature is an in-depth analysis of the components that should be incorporated into such a multifaceted approach to induction. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) provide evidence that no single element of induction is as effective as combining support processes into 'packages' of induction. Moreover, other researchers conclude that combining induction elements, particularly collaborative practices that reduce NQTs' sense of isolation, provides support for NQTs that may lead to heightened professional practice (Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010; Greenlee and DeDeugd, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998). In this very respect, Main's framework is persuasive as it firmly delineates in detail four particular components of effective induction, which other researchers appear not to have undertaken to the same categorical extent.

In reviewing the works of research theorists who have underpinned components that contribute to a framework of effective induction, it emerges that many of the components are overlapping. For example, in studies which examine successful induction themes, Hatch, White, and Capitelli (2005) advocate cognitive development, social and cultural learning and organisational development, whereas

Conway et al. (2009) advocate professional, pedagogical and cultural components. Whisnant et al. (2005) cite components such as structure, professional learning and collaboration. Main has included all the above categories of other theorists in her framework, and by revisiting and analysing these categories in her research, they emerge more defined as 'pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance'. These components which Main uses to frame effective induction have depth and relevance, as they have emerged from an examination of exemplar induction practices internationally.

Examining the context in which Main's research was conducted, Wong et al. report being 'struck by the variety of the sources of support in New Zealand and by how the schools make use of a range of induction activities' (2005, 381). While other jurisdictions may be waking up to the importance of induction, New Zealand has a history of acquiring, for more than twenty-two years, 'advice and guidance programmes' for NQTs, and its approach has received favourable international commentary (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Britton et al., 2003). This background information added justification to the contextual appropriateness of Main's work.

Main's research was conducted with NQTs who worked in disadvantaged primary schools. It is conceivable that opportunities for professional development in disadvantaged schools would be greater, as principals in the study reported increased funding flexibility, owing to their cultural setting. Remarkably, it appears only an assumption that NQTs in disadvantaged schools would all experience supportive induction, as studies have found that many schools serving low-income

students do not provide NQTs with the support they need to do their jobs well (Johnson et al., 2004). A potential limitation of Main's work is that those considering implementation of her specific induction components will have to rely on the consensus of expert opinion to decide if her framework is sufficiently robust to allow for strong conclusions to be drawn. Key assumptions of her research are that induction is valuable and beneficial, that it diminishes migration and departures, that it is cost-efficient, and that it is linked to positive pupil outcomes. However, it is unclear if these assertions have been rigorously tested.

In considering the efficacy of Main's framework, attention must be given to what constitutes 'effectiveness' or 'success' in an induction programme. However, this remains largely underexplored. 'The most common measure of the effectiveness of induction programmes internationally is relatively low level: whether they reduce the attrition of teachers in the early years of teaching' (Cameron, 2007, *online*). While it would seem that retention should be a relatively easily measured outcome, it can be hard to correlate data on teacher retention with participation in induction activities, given the substantial variability in induction provision. Numerous descriptive studies have documented variations in content and characteristics, duration and intensity; their purposes; approaches to mentoring; and provision of additional resources (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). A second measure of an induction programme's effectiveness or success is the impact of induction on teacher satisfaction and confidence. For example, do NQTs feel that teaching has turned out to be all they hoped; do they think that they have been able to 'make a difference' in the lives and learning of their charges? This is an important measure because

teachers typically enter teaching to 'make a difference' to children's and young persons' learning and life chances (Hall and Langton, 2006; Kane and Mallon, 2006), and a key reason they leave teaching is dissatisfaction resulting from frustrations whilst being unable to achieve these purposes (Johnson et al., 2005).

A third measure of effectiveness is the impact of induction on NQTs' expertise. Specifically, we question if induction has assisted NQTs to become better at helping children and young people to become interested and successful learners. Recently, there has been more interest in research which seeks evidence of impact beyond that obtained from surveys or interviews, and which includes measures of the achievement of students taught by teachers who experienced high-quality induction provision (Isenberg, Glazerman, Johnson, Dolfin, and Bleeker, in Wang et al., 2010). There are few such studies, probably because retention has been the major focus of most studies, and because 'success' and 'effectiveness' in terms of teacher induction are 'notoriously difficult to measure' (Strong, 2006, 12). These notions remain highly problematic to define, as they are highly dependent upon personal interpretations.

Whilst it is highly contestable to attempt, in any consistent manner, an explicit description of the components of an effective or successful induction programme, it must be recognised that the transition to becoming 'effective' extends far beyond immersion in a context which facilitates the professional learning of NQTs (Crosswell, Beutel, and Henderson, 2011). Effective NQTs do not merely transfer behaviours from one context to another, instead 'they reflect on how to apply their

present knowledge and skills in this new context' (Crosswell et al., 2011, 2). When considering the efficacy of Main's framework, it is notable that the development of feelings of 'effectiveness' or 'success' are socially constructed experiences within teaching which are inarguably unique negotiations within various cultural and political contexts, involving highly personalised internalisations for NQTs and induction stakeholders.

Main's model of four structural components of integrated induction is mindful that induction components are often complementary and overlapping. This literature review suggests that there are a myriad of effective induction practices. Numerous theorists have also suggested that practices are complementary and overlapping (Devos, 2010; Moir, 2009; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2005; Wong, 2005; Ingersoll and Smith, 2004; Stansbury and Zimmerman, 2000). Within any one of the four components, induction practices can complement one another. For example, Kardos (2004) found that having a mentor in itself had no statistical relationship to NQT job satisfaction, whereas working in a school with an integrated professional culture was strongly and positively related to job satisfaction. She noted that:

> Our work suggests schools would do better to rely less on one-to-one mentoring, and, instead, develop school-wide structures that promote integrated professional cultures with frequent exchange of information and ideas across experience levels (Kardos, 2004, 28).

The literature also suggested that certain practices within Main's (2008a) components may be more effective than other practices. In their review of induction practices, Stansbury and Zimmerman (2000) coined the terms 'high-

intensity' and 'low-intensity' induction programmes. They found that high-intensity induction programmes contained components such as training and supporting tutor teachers, providing release time, examining student data, formal mentoring, and programme evaluation. Low-intensity programmes simply oriented new teachers, matched NQTs with veteran teachers, and promoted collegial collaboration. As schools are designing induction systems, it is important they bear in mind that high-intensity practices may have a greater impact than low-intensity practices on induction effectiveness and NQT development (Menon, 2012; Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Conway et al., 2009; Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Moir, 2009).

Main (2008a) writes that induction components have taken many forms, many of which involve integrating multiple frameworks. Increased recognition of multiple induction components and their potential impact on induction effectiveness has led to the advocacy for multifaceted programmes, such as Main's. Bickmore and Bickmore's study of two middle-school multifaceted induction programmes notes that the 'successful implementation of each element of the induction contributed to the participants' positive perceptions' (2010, 1012). Anthony, Haigh, and Kane affirm that an advantage of these programmes was that 'if one support system failed to meet a teacher's particular needs, for example the one-to-one mentor, then there was a possibility of another element within the system, such as content or departmental colleague, filling the gap' (2011, 862). Hence, due credence must be given to Main's multifaceted framework of categories, while simultaneously highlighting their worth as a conceptual lens to investigation in this study and to evaluate what gap, if any, is presented in induction in Irish primary schools.

Conclusion

Broadly, the analysis of literature has considered some of the perceived tensions, debates, connections and interactions of NQT induction with regard to a range of political and contextual influences on approaches to induction. The overall picture presented in the literature regarding induction practices for NQTs' induction was uneven, not only because of the differences between programme components, but also due to difficulties in implementation (Conway et al., 2009; Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009). Arguably, the most common underpinning in the literature reviewed was the emphasis on the positive assumption that NQTs benefit from a planned, coherent induction programme (Beijaard et al., 2010; Devos, 2010). Hence, recognising this and creating dialogue to challenge this underpinning was a central feature of this chapter.

Whilst the body of knowledge in this review is valuable and informative, it could be seen as limited in providing knowledge about NQTs' and principals' insights and interpretations of NQT induction, as studies of teacher induction were commonly quantitative in nature. The four sections of this review have each explained how the gaps in literature resulted in the emergence of the four issues that are the basis of the research questions and investigation reported in this qualitative study. The literature clearly exposes the lack of research and relevant literature arising from the voices of Irish NQTs and Irish principals in this international debate. There is consequently a need to supplement the existing knowledge, while making it more inclusive and representative of perspectives in the ROI.

Chapter 3   Investigating Ireland's NQT Induction

Introduction

This qualitative research project was undertaken using a multi-case study approach. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, supported by documentary data, in eight primary schools in a border county in the Republic of Ireland (ROI). This chapter commences by discussing the philosophical underpinnings, with an overview of the ontological and epistemological assumptions influencing this interpretative, qualitative case study. The discussion of the research methodology continues with an overview of the pilot study that furthered the development of the overall research process. The need for a rigorous research methodology is highly pertinent in light of the traditional criticism levelled at qualitative case study concerning its perception as 'soft' research (Yin, 2003, 17). Consequently, the remainder of this chapter focuses on specific methodological decisions made. These include issues pertinent to sampling, data collection, data analysis and trustworthiness. The chapter concludes with an account of the ethical considerations integral to this research methodology.

Philosophical Underpinnings: Qualitative Research Methodology

This study draws on qualitative research methodology situated within the interpretive research paradigm (Bassey, 1999). Authors warn against too rigid an interpretation of the quantitative-versus-qualitative dichotomy (Merriam 1998; Mason, 1996), so a brief overview of the ontological and epistemological

assumptions inherent in this paradigm is useful for explaining my rationale for choosing the qualitative route to investigate the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The element of choice 'presupposes a certain view of the world that in turn defines how a researcher selects a sample, collects data, analyses data, and approaches issues of validity, reliability, and ethics' (Merriam, 1998, 151).

O'Donoghue (2007) outlined what he called the 'big theories' in which to situate research endeavours: positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and postmodernism. Others added feminism to this list of 'theoretical perspectives' (Crotty, 1998). The difficulty for the new researcher is the mire of paradigms, perspectives and theories that can ensnare the unwary (O'Donoghue, 2007). What is clear is that theories inform the research process at a number of levels. At the paradigmatic level, my epistemological stance placed me in the interpretivist 'big theory' as outlined in O'Donoghue's (2007) work. Perspectives and actions are important in the interpretivist paradigm (ibid.), as researchers come to their task with particular perspectives, not least about how knowledge is created. Woods (2006, 2) suggests that quality in research can only be judged on the basis of 'the particular epistemology you work within'. McIntosh (2008, 35) posits that an epistemological stance includes 'what we think we know, and how we know it, including knowing what we don't know', while O'Donoghue (2007) suggests that how knowledge is accepted as valid is an important aspect of any discussion of epistemology. Based on my initial and continuing teacher education endeavours, I believe that knowledge involves active construction by the individual.

There are many interpretivist and constructionist genres but central to all of these has been a concern with subjective meanings – how individuals apprehend, understand and make sense of social events and settings (the idea of interpretation) and how this sense-making produces features of the very settings to which sense-making is responsive (the concern for reflexivity) (Gephart, 1999). Constructionists have also been particularly concerned with the interplay of subjective, objective and intersubjective knowledge. Intersubjectivity is the process of knowing others' minds, although the question of intersubjectivity – how we know others' minds – has been a longstanding challenge in philosophy (Schutz, 1973). Intersubjectivity occurs through language, social interaction, and written texts. A key form of interpretive research is social constructionism (Gephart, 1978), which seeks to understand the social construction dialectic involving objective, intersubjective and subjective knowledge. In a sense, interpretivist constructivism seeks to show how variations in human meanings and sense-making generate and reflect differences in objective realities. Emphasis upon social construction of knowledge sat easily with me, as did the idea of knowledge constructed 'specific to the situation being investigated' (O'Donoghue, 2007, 10).

Unlike the positivist paradigm, which argues that 'there is only one, fixed, agreed-upon reality' (Croker, 2009), the interpretive paradigm emphasises that there exists no single version thereof (Bassey, 1999). Consequently, instead of trying to measure reality 'objectively', the researcher is expected 'to understand these multiple ways of looking at the world – a fascinating, and intriguing, challenge' (Croker, 2009, 7). Central to the purpose of qualitative inquiry is to depict the *emic*

(or research participants') understanding of the phenomenon, rather than the *etic* (or the researcher's) views (Croker, 2009, 8; Merriam, 1998, 6–7), even though the latter's role cannot be underestimated in the research process. Rather than claiming to be neutral observers, qualitative researchers recognise that they themselves are 'potential variables' in the inquiry (Bassey, 1995, 13).

Firstly, our very presence as qualitative researchers may in some ways influence participants' behaviour, a phenomenon referred to as 'the observer effect' (Denscombe, 2003, 39). Secondly, as researchers in a qualitative inquiry we are the instruments through which data is collected and interpreted (Croker, 2009; Merriam, 1998). As researchers, we bring our own set of beliefs and experiences to the field, thus subjectivity is inherent in the process and is deeply influenced by the researcher's positionality (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and by 'deficiencies of the human as analyst' (Robson, 2002, 460). Following the interpretivist paradigm, it must be acknowledged that this research is not value or bias-free, but has been informed by both my own social constructions and beliefs and those of the NQTs and principals who have participated in this research. For this reason, throughout this study, a commitment has been sustained to maximise research objectivity by ensuring clarity in relation to bias and value assumptions and by being open to conflicting evidence, alternative views, participant validation and critique from colleagues.

Research Approach

Case Study

The purpose of this section is to discuss the key features of case study research chosen to investigate the research questions of this study. Case study is among the most widely used types of social research (Swanborn, 2010), and is a common research method in education (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2008; Robson, 2002). However, in spite of its apparent popularity, much confusion still surrounds it in relation to 'what constitutes a case study, how it differs from other forms of qualitative research, and when it is most appropriate to use' (Merriam, 1998, 19). Hood (2009, 68) says that 'a simple definition of case study is elusive', Gerring (2007, 17) confirms it is 'a definitional morass', and Bassey (1999, 22) states that the question '"What is case study?" is a good example of a question easy to ask and difficult to answer'. All three statements point to the difficulty inherent in conceptualising this approach.

This difficulty partly stems from the literature, in that the term 'case study' is used to refer not only to 'the process of investigating a case and the report which is an outcome of such investigation' (Stake, 2000, 436), but also notably to 'the unit of analysis itself' (Merriam, 1998, 34). Gerring's (2007, 17) 'definitional morass' is exacerbated further by case study being sometimes understood as a particular method rather than an overall research approach (Hood, 2009; Simons, 2009), although case study should not be viewed in terms of methodology since it is characterised by 'interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used'

(Stake, 2000, 435). As is evident from the above discussion, the issue of conceptualisation merits more attention, and consequently it will be the focus of this section.

The main intent in case study research is to *understand the particular* (Swanborn, 2010; Simons, 2009; Yin, 2009). Hence for Merriam (1998, 29–30), this approach is respectively 'heuristic' and 'particularistic' in nature (in addition to being 'descriptive'). In relation to the problem of what constitutes a case, many authors agree that a case as a unit of study should be defined by its *boundedness* (Robson, 2002; Pring, 2000; Stake, 2000), where the boundaries of the case refer to its spatial and temporal limits, as well as to what happens inside it (Cousin, 2005, 423). Furthermore, a case is also an 'integrated system' (Stake, 2000, 436), an entity that comprises a number of interrelated parts within its boundaries. In order to depict the *complexity* of a case and the relationships between the different components involved, a case study adopts a *holistic* approach (Denscombe, 2003, 31), examining an issue from multiple, sometimes contradictory, perspectives (Swanborn, 2010; Simons, 2009; Silverman, 2000). Since the diversity of NQTs' strengths and weaknesses, and the diversity in principals' professionalism, were likely to bring a variety of different perspectives into the context of NQT induction in the primary school, a case study approach – with its emphasis on understanding the complexity of the singular and multiplicity of participant views – was therefore a natural methodological choice for this study.

Moreover, a case is not studied in a vacuum, but rather it must be analysed in relation to its context (Yin, 2009). The reason why context is so important in this approach is that a phenomenon which is supposed to be illuminated through the study of a particular case does not possess a universal but rather multiple meanings that depend on a constellation of context-related factors such as the physical setting, what happens in the case, as well as the larger socio-cultural context (Robson, 2002). As far as the current study is concerned, then, the phenomenon of NQT induction may be understood differently from the perspective of an NQT who works in the school and the perspective of a principal who manages the school. Consequently, Simons (2009, 21) defines case study as 'an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a real-life context'.

Other authors (Swanborn, 2010; Cousin, 2005; Bassey, 1999) emphasise the fact that a case takes place in its naturalistic settings, and that it focuses on 'naturalistic social units', such as a primary school classroom in this study. This means that the object of study has not been 'tampered with' by the researcher, unlike in experimental research. Instead, the study aims to achieve so-called 'ecological validity', focusing on 'the ability to interpret the results in as natural a context as possible' (Yu and Ohlund, *online*, 2012). Thus, Yin (2003, 9) explicitly states that a case study is concerned with 'a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control'. Finally, a case study report also employs thick description, understood as 'the complete, literal description of the incident or entity being investigated' (Merriam, 1998, 29–30). Such descriptive language allows

readers to 'vicariously experience what was observed and utilize their tacit knowledge in understanding its significance' (Simons, 2009, 23).

Case Selection: Multiple Case Design

A case study approach requires a two-stage sampling process that involves, firstly, a selection of the case itself, and secondly, a within-the-case sampling whose aim is to determine what particular aspects of the case (e.g., the number of interviewees) the researcher will focus on (Merriam, 1998, 64–65). It is argued that when selecting a case, the researcher needs not only to choose it carefully, but also to be able to justify that choice (Denscombe, 2003, 33). Literature suggests a number of selection criteria to consider (Yin, 2009, 60), but for Stake (2000, 446), the main selection criterion is the 'opportunity to learn' what a case offers. In other words, a case should be selected based on its potential to offer the greatest degree of insight into both the case in question and some broader issue of interest.

In this study, the case in question was NQTs' perspectives on induction, with the broader issue of interest being to ascertain principals' rationale for the adoption of particular induction practices. Through a comparative, multi-case design 'a holistic approach to the exploration of real life situations' can be taken (Cousin, 2009, 132). Case study research provides a 'comprehensive research strategy' (Cousin, 2009, 14) that involves in-depth inquiry into a small number of defined cases (Scott and Morrison, 2006). Consequently, the multi-case design adopted for this study

provided for 'the study of a few cases' in order to 'collect large amounts of data and study it in depth (Scott and Morrison, 2006, 17).

Significantly, this multi-case study was chosen on the basis of its potential to illuminate the research issue of investigating different perceptions of induction practices, 'giving the people of the case "a voice"' (Scott and Morrison, 2006, 17), while being grounded in the 'lived reality' of a primary school setting (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001, 3). A multi-case design was preferred over single case as 'single-case designs are vulnerable if only because you will have put all your eggs in the one basket' (Yin, 2009, 61), while a multi-case study approach also 'adds confidence to the findings' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 29). More importantly, the analytic benefits of a multi-case approach were substantiated by the research question, which sought to explore if variations in induction practices were operationalised across schools.

Selection of cases involves being clear about the basis for comparison and contrast, while dealing with pragmatic considerations and logical constraints (Gerring, 2007). Thus, the eight primary schools in this multi-case study were all under the same management structure (Board of Management under The Constitution for National Schools), all were the same denomination (Roman Catholic), and all eight schools taught the same curriculum (1999 Primary School Curriculum) to the same age range of pupils (4 to 12 year olds). Given my awareness of the issue of objectivity of the research, as questioned by Pring (2000), the school in which I am principal did not feature as one of the schools. Yin (2009, 60) says that 'any use of multiple case

design should follow a replication', so the interview schedules for NQTs and principals were replicated in each of the eight schools over a specified time frame of two months – November and December 2011. Prior to this, rigour was maintained through the use of a single case pilot study carried out in October, which is discussed in the following section of this chapter.

Methods

The Pilot Case Study

Prior to the main data-gathering phase, pilot interviews were conducted in one primary school with an NQT and a principal. The school involved in the pilot was not included in the multi-case selection of schools used for the main research. The amended interview schedules used for the gathering of the main research data can be found in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3. Separate interview schedules were prepared to reflect the different positions held by interviewees, namely principals and NQTs, and sub-questions were generated so as to probe more deeply and enable clear and comprehensive understanding about the issues which made up the four main aims of this research.

Yin (1994) in Robson (2002, 185) views pilot studies as 'helping investigators to refine their data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed'. Data collection plans were refined in that the questions asked of principals were slightly adjusted so as to have greater meaning to principals' rationale for their school's induction practices, including a question on

the impact of school culture on induction. The interview schedule for NQTs was amended to firstly ask NQTs their perceived strengths and weaknesses, before progressing to explore whether their induction provision addressed these areas. Consequently, the interview schedule for principals was similarly amended to ask them their opinions regarding NQTs' strengths and weaknesses during the induction year. During the pilot phase, I researched, then purchased and downloaded *Express Scribe Transcription Software* to transcribe the pilot interviews, as the voice memos player's rewind function on the iPhone 4s did not facilitate this function with ease. Yin writes that pilot case studies result in 'lessons learned for both research design and field procedures' (2009, 94). Necessary modifications were also made with regard to Yin's 'field procedures'. The interviews were digitally recorded using voice memos on the iPhone 4s, but incompatibility issues arose when using the *Express Scribe Transcription Software*, as the recordings were in wav format rather than the desired mp3 format. Consequently, the pilot recordings were transferred to iTunes for conversion to mp3. Using the hot keys on the keyboard for audio-control playback proved very slow and cumbersome, so an AltoEdge USB foot pedal, compatible with Vista, was purchased which greatly increased the speed of transcription of the second pilot interview, giving the feet control of playback and leaving the fingers free to type. With the completion of the pilot case study, the above preparatory tasks became second nature when conducting the main research.

Overall, the pilot interviews led to a clearer focus in the interview questions in the main research. The dual source of information during piloting (principal and NQT),

helped to ensure that the main study reflected significant policy proposals in induction, as both participants expressed desire to comment on the policy framework developed by *CEPP*: that school-based induction in Irish primary schools would be formalised by 2016, with principals taking over the role of the inspectorate in induction. Therefore, opportunities for commentary on future legislative proposals (published three months before the interviews) were included in both interview schedules, allowing the final interview schedules to emerge as a timely prototype for the main case study protocol.

Selection of Participants

A non-probability sampling procedure was employed. This type of sampling allowed the research 'to target a particular group, in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population' (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007, 113). It was obviously important to have participants that fitted the specific criteria of this research; therefore NQTs who had received recognition from the Teaching Council of Ireland (TCI) in respect of their teaching qualifications and who had completed their induction year and were in their second year of full-time teaching were deemed the only suitable respondents. These teacher graduates were better placed to answer the research questions than NQTs beginning their induction year, or in the middle of their induction year, as they had very recently completed their induction in full. For ease of reference in this study, the sample will still be referred to as 'NQTs'. However, it is acknowledged that this sample did not capture the sparse minority of NQTs whose induction experiences may have been so

inadequate that they perhaps 'failed' their induction year, or for other reasons left the teaching profession altogether. The inclusion of the former NQTs was deemed entirely outside the sampling scope and ethical guidelines of this case study. Consequently, the findings are not asserting to prove in any absolute way that they are reflective of any random group of NQTs. Reassurances have been asserted that the qualitative data produced from the sample has been checked in accordance with good practice, ensuring accurate and appropriate credibility of the findings to the reader.

It was deemed equally important to talk to principals about the induction vision they have for NQTs, in order to find out what it is that principals do to induct NQTs, while exploring their rationale behind such induction provision. Purposive sampling allowed 'the selection of specific participants' so that the sample was satisfactory to the needs of the research (Rossman and Rallis, 2003, 137). Purposive sampling also allowed the inclusion of NQTs and principals in eight case study schools that were within reasonable travelling distance for me, all in a border county in the ROI. This border county had no untypical or unusual attributes as regards NQT induction; location of the case study within a single county was chosen purely for manageability reasons and not for any particular impact it would have on the study. It is acknowledged that data from small, rural schools may be somewhat limited as the experiences of NQTs in large, urban schools may be very different. However, small rural schools were included due to their prevalence in this context. An overview of the sixteen participants across the eight schools is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Characteristics of Research participants: Primary Level NQTs and Principals in Ireland, 2011

School	Principal	Years as Principal	Gender of Principal	Principal Post	NQT	Gender of NQT	School Enrol-ment	School Patronage*	Location/ Structure
Oak	Aidan	7	Male	Teaching	Georgina	Female	1-100	Roman Catholic	Urban Co-Ed.
Birch	Iris	8	Female	Teaching	Lorraine	Female	1-100	Roman Catholic	Rural Co-Ed.
Holly	Isla	10	Female	Teaching	Glenn	Male	1-100	Roman Catholic	Rural Co-Ed.
Pine	Sara	20	Female	Teaching	Shane	Male	1-100	Roman Catholic	Rural Co-Ed.
Elm	Áine	15	Female	Teaching	Jane	Female	101-200	Roman Catholic	Rural Co-Ed.
Yew	Norman	3	Male	Admin	Pamela	Female	201-300	Roman Catholic	Urban Co-Ed.
Ash	John	11	Male	Admin	Jessica	Female	401-500	Roman Catholic	Urban Co-Ed.
Hawthorn	Carol	13	Female	Admin	Joanne	Female	401-500	Roman Catholic	Urban Co-Ed.

* The nature of patronage of Irish primary schools is outlined in Appendix 6.

The Data Collection Process

This study, including data collection and analysis, was carried out over an 11-month period, commencing in October 2011. One of the important features of case study approach is the fact that it is 'eclectic' (Bassey, 1999, 69), as far as the process of data collection is concerned. In other words, a case study can draw on multiple methods (Swanborn, 2010; Simons, 2009; Yin, 2009; Merriam, 1998), and multiple data sources are chosen on the basis of their appropriateness for investigation of the case in question (Bryman, 2008). The emphasis on different methods of data collection constitutes one of the strengths of the case study approach as it facilitates triangulation (Denscombe 2003), the aim of which is to provide 'the examination of a social phenomenon from different angles' (Boeije, 2010, 176).

Case studies using more than one source of evidence are rated more highly, in terms of their overall quality, than those relying on single sources of information (Yin, 2009, 117). Principals and NQTs, as respondents in this case, were two sources of information, while documentary analysis added a further source of evidence. Since Robson (2002, 174) attests that the use of more than one method of data collection is a valuable and widely used strategy of triangulation that enhances the rigour of the research, this section will describe in detail the two methods, that is, interviews and documentary analysis that were used to decrease threats to the credibility of the research findings, while outlining the rationale for using them (see Figure 3.1, p. 98, for an overview of the various research methods and data sources used in this study).

Interviews

The literature points to numerous advantages that interviewing, particularly in its more loosely structured format, offers to the researcher in an interpretative, qualitative study. For example, Richards (2009, 187) appreciates the potential of this approach for gaining significant insight into the emic perspectives of interviewees, which does not lend itself to exploration through other methods such as observation or questionnaire. However, the literature also makes it clear that this method is rather demanding as far as the researcher's role and responsibilities are concerned. For Richards (2009, 195), interviews are 'easy to do, but hard to do well'.

The semi-structured interview was utilised, as it contained sets of questions which lent structure to the interview but gave participants the opportunity to provide whatever narrative they felt was important. This approach to data collection succeeded in recognising that different beliefs, perspectives and knowledge influence the way in which people behave and act (Gibbs, 2002). This was in line with the study's aims of developing an understanding of principals' rationale for induction provision and NQTs' perceptions of its worth. The use of structured interviews was considered as an alternative approach. Structured interviews are described as interviews whereby all the interviewees are asked the same set of questions, each of which has been designed to encourage a restricted range of replies (Fontana and Frey, 2000). Adopting such a rigid framework was rejected, as the benefits of using semi-structured interviews within this interpretative study were identified as being able to use a very flexible technique in information gathering, while providing the opportunity to explore the interviewees' thoughts and perceptions.

Two separate semi-structured interview schedules were generated, one for NQTs (Appendix 2) and one for principals (Appendix 3), to reflect the different positions held by the interviewees. Questions in both schedules were formulated so as to probe deeply and enable clear and comprehensive understanding in regard to the issues that informed the four main aims of the research. Thus, the schedule of questions for NQTs centred upon NQTs' experiences of induction practices and their perceptions of the effectiveness of such practices in supporting their professional development. The questions asked of principals were slightly adjusted

so as to have greater meaning to principals' rationale for the induction provisions operationalised in their schools while exploring if principals' vision for induction reflected their adoption of particular induction practices. The formulation of questions in both schedules reflected questions surrounding the components of effective induction in accordance with the literature review. This was integral to the formulation of questions so that the data gathered would meet the research objective of evaluating the efficacy of Main's (2008a) conceptual framework of the components of effective induction as a means of providing NQTs in Ireland with an effective induction experience.

Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with principals and with NQTs in each of the eight case schools. In line with the semi-structured nature of the interviews, I remained flexible about the content and the sequence of the questions. Consequently, the natural flow of the discussion led to some variation in the order of questions asked; questions were explored in more or less depth depending on the interviewees' engagement with them; and unanticipated but significant issues touched upon by the interviewees were pursued further. At the end of the interview, the participants were offered the opportunity to add any additional information, and thanked for their time. All the interviews took place in the case schools; each interview took fifty minutes on average, although the interviews with NQTs tended to be shorter than the interviews with principals.

One interviewee, a principal (Áine), consented to being interviewed but did not wish to be recorded. Note-taking was the only record of this single interview. All the

other fifteen interviews were digitally recorded, on the iPhone 4s. This ensured 'accuracy of reportage' and added to 'the veracity of reporting' (Simons, 2009, 52). The recordings were easily uploaded to a computer, thus facilitating audio transcription (Boeije, 2010, 72), which I did personally using *Express Scribe Transcription Software*, already utilised during piloting. Since the focus of the interviews was the content, rather than the linguistic form of interviewees' utterances, I decided to limit the amount of additional information (coughs, humming) in the transcripts. Although the process was very time-consuming, it was extremely valuable for two reasons. Firstly, it helped to protect confidentiality as no third persons had access to the recordings. Secondly, repeated listening to the recordings allowed me to get 'the intimate familiarity' which this data process ensures (Merriam, 1998, 88).

Documentary Evidence

Although documents are among the six most common data sources in case study research (Yin, 2009, 102), in general their potential appears underestimated (Simons, 2009; May, 2001). This is despite the fact that within this method data often exists prior to data collection; it does not share the weaknesses of interviewing, for example, in relation to the impact of the researcher or participants on the quality of the data gathered (Merriam, 1998, 112). Thus, documents can be a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the researcher. Swanborn (2010, 108) attests that the opportunity to compare subjective data with objective data

should be welcomed. Conversely, Yin warns that although documents are useful, 'they are not always accurate and may not be lacking in bias' (Yin, 2009, 103).

Documents used in this multi-case study research, as mentioned above, existed prior to data collection. They existed during the induction year and were 'produced in the course of inquiry' (Mason, 1996, 71). A variety of different textual data was analysed to contribute to the understanding of the case. These were two NQTs' reflection logs (generated by the two NQTs), two welcome packs for NQTs, one school policy on induction, and various documents provided by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) for all NQTs that attended NIPT-facilitated workshops in the course of the induction year. Documentation collection was systematic rather than random; only one policy on induction was collected because only one school had one. No school refused to give documentation: most simply did not maintain any. Other documents produced by the NIPT that NQTs had mislaid were all available through internet searches on the NIPT website. Although all eight principals were systemically asked for a copy of their school's induction policy, systematic analysis could not be applied to the collected documentation due to its sporadic and haphazard existence. Consequently, school-produced documentary evidence was very much secondary to interview analysis in this study.

May (2001, 176) articulates the historical significance of official documents: 'Documents tell us about the aspirations and intentions of the periods to which they refer'; and Foucault (1989, 7) establishes the historical gravitas that documents assume in due course, when he writes: 'History is that which transforms

documents into monuments!' *The National Induction Programme for Teachers* and

The Teaching Council of Ireland, Career Entry Professional Profile 2012 and *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020* all have proposals and implications for NQT induction in the future, hence providing an important policy context for this research study. In this research exploration of NQT induction, the above policy documents provided a lens from which one could understand the origins of current induction provisions. Analysis of public policy documentation can also facilitate an ongoing reflection on the 'policy–practice debate' and an understanding of the negotiated reality between 'sites of practice' and 'documents of aspiration' (May, 2001, 183). May reminds us of the political insights inherent in documents as records of who the policy makers are and whose voices are heard: 'Documents are now viewed as media through which social power is expressed' (2001, 183).

Overall, whilst the principal source of data for this research was interviews, documentary analysis played a much lesser 'subsidiary or complementary role' (Peräkylä, 2005, 870), due to the sporadic nature of school policy documentation. The purpose was therefore more to investigate the extent to which documentary data verified information from the interviews, as 'such data can illuminate the stories that people tell, providing additional perspectives on the holistic context in which sense making takes place' (Musson, 1998, 16–17).

Data analysis

Data analysis has been described in the literature as a process whose purpose is 'to let the data "speak"' (Richards, 2009, 191). In a qualitative case study it is particularly challenging, as there appears to be relatively little guidance on how to approach it. Not only is there 'no right way to do case study research' in general (Simons, 2009, 7), but also analysis proceeds logically and systematically from decisions made early on; 'it does not begin de novo at some point in the study' (Rossman and Rallis, 2003, 278). There has been much discussion about 'how to analyze the data collected' (Merriam, 1998, 42). Consequently, there is no agreed-upon procedure for analysing qualitative case studies (Bryman, 2008, 367). However, in general, the process of data analysis in qualitative case studies does not appear to differ significantly from the process as conducted in other qualitative research traditions.

It needs to be pointed out, though, that the very nature of this research method with its emphasis on 'an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit' means that the data analysis process places particular emphasis on 'conveying an understanding of the case' (Merriam, 1998, 193). Moreover, the sheer volume of data collected meant that data management was of primary concern. Preparing the data is 'part of data management', a term which refers to 'systematic, adequate storage and retrieval of data and of preliminary analysis' (Boeije, 2010, 72). Hence, the first step in analysing a qualitative case study was to bring together and organise all the information pertinent to the case. This involved the preparation of a 'formal, presentable database', which increases the overall

reliability of a study (Yin, 2003, 102). Only once pertinent data has been brought together can the researcher proceed with the analysis (Swanborn, 2010).

The first stage of data analysis involved the preparation of the case database of files containing my observations, logs, digitally recorded interviews, interview transcripts and documentary data. Denscombe (2003, 275) points to several advantages of electronic management of qualitative data, particularly in relation to storage, coding and retrieval of such data. However, there is much debate for and against the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) in qualitative research. Bergin (2011, 6) cites advantages including easy access to material, the ability to handle large amounts of data with consistent coding schemes, assistance with team research, and the ability to help in theory building. Disadvantages of CAQDAS were also considered. Bryman (2008, 565) observes that although a computer takes over the physical task of writing marginal codes, making copies of transcripts or field notes, cutting out all the chunks of text relating to a code, and pasting them together, CAQDAS does not automatically do these things. It is still the analyst that must interpret the data, code, and then retrieve the data, but the computer takes over the manual labour involved (Bryman, 2008, 565).

As part of my own practical research on CAQDAS, I participated in two days of 'hands-on' computer workshop training on NVivo8 in the University of Lincoln, facilitated by a researcher who had used NVivo8 as CAQDAS in her own doctoral research and other larger studies. I remained unconvinced of its potential for my study during this time, and my base in Ireland made access to further training in the

University of Lincoln particularly difficult. The decision not to use NVivo8 was further strengthened by another doctoral student who had used NVivo8 for analysis purposes. She said CAQDAS was highly time-consuming to get used to, and she felt her lack of skill ultimately meant she was unable to use the software to its full potential. Her opinions are mirrored by Merriam (1998, 159), who confirms that CAQDAS involves 'steep learning curves' (1998, 169). Macer (2008, 47), in his review of NVivo8, similarly confirms one of its disadvantages as not being intuitive to the uninitiated, requiring a steep learning curve to be scaled.

Several researchers contributing to CAQDAS literature (Bryman, 2008; Bhowmick, 2006; Barry, 1998; Fielding and Lee, 1998) have suggested that CAQDAS is good for coding, indexing and searching the data but cannot be called an analysis tool. Bhowmick (2006, 8) highlights the main gaps in CAQDAS as having limited visual exploration abilities, limited interpretive and reflexive abilities, no temporal exploration capabilities and no geographic (spatial) exploration capabilities, sometimes leading to confusion and problems in data management and coding, leading to wrong analysis. Therefore, my above research on CAQDAS, both practical and theory based, further substantiated my decision not to use it, in the belief that the time, expense and inconvenient location of necessary up-skilling could simply not be justified bearing in mind that 'software cannot help you judge the worth of a document. . . . it is the researcher that has to know what it is that the computer needs to do' (Boeije, 2010, 142).

Data analysis included data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions, all of which happened concurrently (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Data reduction happened throughout the analysis and involved studying the data and gleaning meaning from it through editing, summarising and segmenting the data without stripping it from its context (Punch, 2009, 174). Qualitative data analysis is multi-phased and involves several stages of coding from initial or open coding, through category creation, to further conceptual development (Hahn, 2008; Richards, 2003). The purpose of *open* or *initial* coding is to 'to generate a set of labels from which categories can be derived' (Richards, 2003, 273), with the data being coded into 'units of meaning' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 56). This type of research is referred to as 'inductive' research where the categories or codes are not predetermined (Bryman, 2004; Gray, 2004). This step in the coding process was greatly facilitated by the Vista computer database, which aided in the organisational development of coding lists. Consequently, the early stages of analysis involved careful reading of the data sources (interview transcripts, NQTs' reflection logs, etc.) and simultaneous coding of the text (see Table 3.2 for examples of generated codes), bearing in mind the fact that coding at this level should be done rapidly, without spending too much time on perfecting the code phrases (Hahn, 2008, 96).

The next stage of qualitative data analysis involved the development of categories to organise the initial codes (Hahn, 2008, 121; Richards, 2003, 274). In this study, initial coding and category development were interwoven in the sense that once I had read and coded the first few data sources, I began creating first tentative

categories. As pointed out by Richards (2003, 274), even though 'the data themselves provide the main resource for categorisation', the process can also be guided *inter alia* by literature review. This was the case here, as the conceptual framework of the four components of effective induction discussed in Chapter 2 – pedagogical development, professional agency, socio-emotional support and structured balance – provided much intellectual stimulus for this stage of analysis.

Codes were both descriptive and inferential and were altered, refined, changed, and omitted as the analysis developed (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 56). Codes summarised which induction component a paragraph was about, while later inferential codes were used to interpret the elements of induction that fit within a particular induction component (Punch, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Thus, inferential coding contributed greatly to a reconstruction of the framework of the components of effective induction, which will be presented and discussed in Chapter 6. The final stages of data analysis involved further refinement of codes and categories, which were then conceptually arranged into contributors to and impeders of effective induction provision. Finally, through cross-case analysis of this material, a typology of four categories of induction provision emerged as being operationalised across the eight schools in this case study.

Table 3.2 Sample of Coding: themes, categories emerging from transcript analysis

Transcript from Interview	Theme	First Round Coding	Second Round Coding
Tell me then what this school does to induct newly qualified teachers? Well we have quite a young staff and the principal as well works with us. It's not so much formal, more informal support, you know. We do quite a bit of collaborative planning and as there are two of us at the moment doing our Dip, which was fantastic and people who have just done it maybe last year or the year before, there is a lot of just informal chit-chat, whether it's in the hall, any help that we need with resources, chatting at break time about planning and about folders, there have been that many folders exchanged!	Induction Provision	Informal	Unplanned Outcomes
			Vision Lacking
			Principal Involvement
		Collaborative	Peer Coaching
			Collegial Groups
			In-School Networking
			Paperwork Exchange
Tell me how you use the folders for your teaching. It has been brilliant, you know, you're allowed to put your own stamp on it, you know, I've gotten so many folders and spoken with so many different teachers but everybody's different and just as many folders as I've gotten and everybody said to me just get somebody's folder you know, you still put in the work yourself but it's great to have a guide and to know that right, also that we'll say the teacher that had this class last year could give me a low-down of the children and, you know, it's a brilliant support. And then with the principal himself, again, quite informal, you know, he may just come into the room, just observe, sit at the back quietly or he may come in and take part. Which at first, I was terrified.	Lesson Planning	Template Provision	Limited Autonomy
		Mentoring	Classroom Practice
			Knowledge and Skills
		Personalisation	Seeking Clarification
			Seeking Assurance
	Managerial Support	Lesson Observation	Reflection by Principal
		Lesson Modelling	Developing NQT Confidence Levels
			Visibility
			Relationship Building
		Adaptability	Contextualising Confidence

Research Quality

Trustworthiness

The evaluation of qualitative case studies should be seen in the broader context of the ongoing debate on the quality and rigour of qualitative inquiry in general. Educational and social research has tended to be evaluated with reference to concepts developed within the traditional positivist paradigm, that is, validity (both internal and external), reliability, and objectivity (Simons, 2009, 127). However, in recent years this approach has been subject to critical examination, particularly in the literature dedicated to qualitative case study research. For example, it is argued that in qualitative research the two main criteria of validity and reliability should be approached differently than in quantitative (positivist) research to take into account the ontological and epistemological differences between the two paradigms (Merriam, 1998, 200). However, since some of the most common criticism levelled against the case study approach concerns precisely its apparent lack of rigour and potential to make generalisations (Swanborn, 2010; Woodside, 2010; Yin, 2009), a number of strategies have been put forward for ensuring that qualitative case studies meet the criterion of trustworthiness, while also taking into account the distinct nature of qualitative inquiry. How such strategies were employed in this study, to ensure rigorous and robust quality, is the focus of discussion in the remainder of this section of the chapter while a summative overview of the strategies employed is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Strategies used in this research study to ensure its trustworthiness (adapted from: Swanborn, 2010, 36; Yin, 2009, 41)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	(Positivist)	INTERPRETIVIST MEANING	QUALITATIVE STRATEGIES USED IN THIS STUDY
Internal Validity	The 'fit' between the findings and the single and static reality	**Credibility** being faithful to the multiple emic understanding of the phenomenon under study	Triangulation Peer Review Meetings with supervisor Member checks Transcript Validation Reflexivity
Reliability	Replicability of findings	**Rigour** Systematic and rigorous conduct of inquiry	Triangulation Transparency Audit Trail
External Validity	Generalisability	**'Fuzzy Generalisations'** (Bassey, 1999): the reader decides the applicability of findings to other contexts	Rich, thick description to allow relatability and usefulness
Ethics			Ethical Approval Informed Consent Confidentiality Pseudonymisation

Credibility

It is argued that in qualitative research, internal validity, which is traditionally concerned with how research findings match reality, must be approached differently than in quantitative research (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). This is due to the fact that reality is viewed not as 'a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured as in quantitative research' (Merriam, 1998, 202), but rather as subjective and multifaceted, based on 'people's constructions of reality – how they understand the world' (Merriam, 1998, 203); it is through the researcher that those can be made known. Thus, the strategies outlined in this section aim mainly at decreasing the risk of a researcher's misinterpretation of emic perspectives, and as a result, enhancing the 'credibility' of research findings (Rallis and Rossman, 2009). With regard to this study, the following strategies, as advocated by research theorists, were used to ensure its credibility: triangulation; use of member checks (participant validation) for data verification; peer review, that is, consulting colleagues on the progress of inquiry and the findings; and displaying reflexivity, that is, being transparent about role in the research process (Boeije, 2010; Woodside, 2010; Rallis and Rossman, 2009).

Triangulation was directly linked to the data collection procedure, and was discussed in detail in the section of this chapter relating to the data collection process. With regard to member checking, only one participant, a principal with research experience (Aidan), was given the opportunity to comment on the study's findings, for two main reasons. Firstly, I considered it important to gain his

perspective on the data to ensure that my analysis did indeed, in his view, reflect the complexity of the issue and multiple ways of viewing it. Secondly, while member checking has the potential to increase the credibility of case study research and is a sign of respect for participants and their views, this strategy should be used 'if possible and appropriate' (Rallis and Rossman, 2009, 284). One reason for this caveat is that, especially in the case of case study research in education, it assumes that the research participants have cognitive research maturity and competent technical sophistication to understand the complex nature of the analysis in hand. Bryman (2008, 378) says 'it is highly questionable whether research participants can validate a researcher's analysis since this entails inferences being made for an audience of social science peers'. Bearing in mind that the remaining respondents had no experience in the field of educational research, expanding this strategy may have been counterproductive. Each interview participant was provided with a copy of the interview transcript. This sought to enhance respondent validation, as a means of establishing and assessing the quality of qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Respondents made no amendments to transcripts. Moreover, as the current study was not designed with participatory research in mind, greater involvement of the participants throughout the inquiry was not required.

In relation to the final two strategies to enhance credibility, the meetings I held with my supervisor, as well as presentations of findings at an *Irish Primary Principals' Forum* and at the *Irish National Teachers' Organisation* helped to ensure that I engaged with a 'community of practice' (Rallis and Rossman, 2009, 284) on a

regular basis, and in this way had an opportunity to discuss any problems that arose, presenting and critically examining tentative insights, and becoming familiar with publications that were pertinent to the issue. The final issue to be raised in this sub-section concerns recent calls for researcher reflexivity (Boeije, 2010; Stake, 2000; Mason, 1996). It is argued that qualitative researchers need to address personal 'slanting' (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, 32), because of their 'central role' in the process of collection, interpretation and reporting of data in qualitative research (Simons, 2009, 81). Consequently, this implies that researchers 'cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached' (Mason, 1996, 6).

Literature offers a number of suggestions for reducing one's own subjectivity (Silverman, 2000). These range from overarching methodological decisions such as employing triangulation of methods and data sources (Woodside, 2010; Yin, 2009), to more specific techniques such as conducting a 'subjectivity audit' (Peshkin, 1988), memo writing (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), or keeping a research diary and holding 'debriefing' meetings with colleagues (Robson, 2002, 175). With regard to this study, I addressed this issue in a number of ways. Firstly, by drawing on more than one method of data collection (interviews and documents), and different data sources (principals and NQTs), I hoped to be faithful to the participants and their experiences, to 'let the data speak', rather than impose my voice on them. However, mindful of the existence of 'subjective I's' in a research process, prior to data analysis I conducted my own 'subjectivity audit' (Peshkin, 1988). In other words, I spelled out, retrospectively and in writing, my own 'selves' that I thought had surfaced during data collection. Whereas I was aware of them to a greater or

lesser extent while in the field, such formal reflection on their impact, both 'actual and imagined' (Peshkin, 1988, 18), on that stage of the research process was important as it heightened awareness of my own biases and perspectives. Throughout the coding process, I also engaged in memo writing, and discussed any problems I encountered with my supervisor.

Rigour (Reliability)

In qualitative research, fulfilling the criterion of reliability as understood in the positivist paradigm, that is, with its emphasis on the replicability of research findings, 'is not only fanciful but impossible' due to the very nature of qualitative inquiry (Merriam, 1998, 206). Consequently, this particular criterion has been reconceptualised as one that 'is concerned with whether an outsider would agree with your findings, given the data you have collected and written up' (Rallis and Rossman, 2009, 267). Notably, it is recommended that the researcher pay due consideration to, and be transparent about, all the key decisions made throughout the inquiry, from its conception, through data collection and analysis, to dissemination, and which can be achieved by means of triangulation, transparency, and analytical memo writing (Bassey, 1999, 75). Consequently, this chapter provides a detailed account of the decisions I made at the stages of research design, implementation and analysis. The analytic memos written during the data analysis process also contribute to this, as does the case study database created prior to data analysis.

Usefulness/Relatability

Even though the issue of external validity, or generalisability, is 'problematic in qualitative research' (Merriam, 1998, 153), in case study research it is even more contentious since this approach is often concerned with an examination of single cases: in the words of Bassey (1999, 30), 'the familiar criticism facing case study researchers is "How can you generalize when n = 1?"' Consequently, its potential to draw generalisations about phenomena is unsurprisingly met with scepticism (Yin, 2009; Denscombe, 2003), in light of which 'it is good practice for any researcher who decides to choose a case study approach to pre-empt possible criticism by addressing the issue head-on' (Denscombe, 2003, 36). This has been to the fore in this study, resulting in the selection of a multi-case design; 'the evidence from multi-cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust' (Herriott and Firestone, 1983, in Yin, 2009).

The whole concept of generalisability has been redefined to make it compatible with the nature of qualitative inquiry, thus the findings of this qualitative study can add to existing knowledge (Stake, 2006). One such conceptualisation that has found resonance in the literature concerns Bassey's notion of 'fuzzy generalisations', that is, conclusions which are much more tentative in nature, arising from studies of singularities and typically claiming that 'it is possible, or likely, or unlikely that what was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere' (1999, 12). Such 'fuzzy generalisations' are somewhat applicable in this study, as the eight schools in this multi-case allow aspects of relatability to be made across the sample

of schools. However, it is acknowledged that 'fuzzy generalisations' are not automatic, as theories must be tested with direct replication in other schools in different locations, so the results might be accepted as providing strong support for direct relatability of the theory to other school settings.

For other authors, such as Denscombe (2003), it is precisely this similarity with other cases that makes conclusions transferable to different contexts. As Denscombe attests, although each case is distinctive, it can also be viewed as an instance of something else (2003, 36). For Yin (2009, 44), one of the reasons behind the controversy about generalising from case studies stems from the mistaken belief that a case is equivalent with a phenomenon itself, rather than viewing it *as a case of* it, thus neglecting the importance of contextual factors. Therefore, findings of this multi-case study have the potential to be generalisable to other cases or schools of similar criteria, provided that they share key features. Considering that 'external validity has been a major barrier in doing case studies' (Yin, 2009, 43), I felt it was my responsibility as a researcher to ensure usefulness of this study's findings, by providing sufficient description of the induction provisions in schools in this multi-case to allow meaningful comparisons with other cases from similar contexts. Then the reader, in light of this information, can 'make an informed judgement about how far the findings have relevance to other instances' (Denscombe, 2003, 37).

To fulfil the reconceptualised standard of generalisability, the literature recommends first and foremost that case study reports provide 'rich, thick

description' to allow readers to see the commonalities and contrasts between the case and their own contexts, and in this way to decide on the transferability of the research findings for themselves (Swanborn, 2010; Woodside, 2010). This case study report, presented in the following chapters of this thesis, draws explicitly on this strategy.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues associated with qualitative research involve more human interaction and are more complicated and susceptible to risks (Robson, 2002). Researchers are 'guests' in the participants' world and 'manners should be good' and 'code of ethics strict' (Stake, 1995, 447). Ethical issues should always be at the forefront of the researcher's agenda with reference to 'respecting the rights of participants, to honouring research sites that you visit, and to reporting research fully and honestly' (Creswell, 2008, 11), thus ensuring the essential factors of 'integrity and quality and transparency' (Economic and Social Research Council, 2010, 3). Therefore, the study was conducted within BERA's (British Educational Research Association) 2011 revised ethical guidelines for educational research and the University of Lincoln's research ethics policy (University of Lincoln, 2011), and the ethical issues were reflected on throughout the research process (Creswell, 2008).

Before undertaking this research, the University of Lincoln's ethical principles for conducting research with humans and other animals were consulted. *EA2 Ethical Approval Form: Human Research Projects* was completed prior to the administration of this research (Appendix 1). Completion and approval of this form

was a requirement of the University of Lincoln before undertaking any form of research on human subjects. This ethical approval application, which outlined the ethical issues involved and provided a risk assessment of same, was approved by the university's ethics committee before the research was embarked on. Overall, this research was 'ethically viable given the societal norms' (Anderson, 1998, 23) and ethically sound with no significant risks to the participants involved, but there were some potential risks that needed to be mitigated. Methods of mitigation that were employed included: seeking permission and informed consent for interviews, and providing a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity.

After NQTs and principals gave verbal permission for access, they were sent an Information Sheet (Appendix 4) and Consent Form (Appendix 5) outlining the aims of the research, participants' rights, procedures for publication of the findings, and the responsibilities of the researcher to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity (Bassey, 1995; Oliver, 2003) and to ensure that participants were giving informed consent. In this way, respondents were given the opportunity to accept the invitation to participate in the research by signing their consent. Confidentiality, which refers to an agreement between myself as researcher and the participants as to how the information would be used, was guaranteed. Anonymity, which refers to a guarantee from myself to the participants regarding the identity of the latter remaining anonymous and concealed (Anderson, 1998), was also provided. Respondents were made aware of their right to refuse to answer any questions they did not wish to and their right to withdraw altogether. After the interviews, respondents were given the opportunity to check their transcripts, should they wish

to amend, clarify, add or delete something they had said. Respondents made no amendments, whilst transcript accuracy was confirmed.

Participants are only identifiable through reference to the research context (Swanborn, 2010), therefore the specific county location of this research was not revealed. Instead, the research context of this study is described as located within 'a border county', of which there are many in the ROI. Confidentiality was afforded the highest priority throughout the research, with no interviewee being identified or identifiable in the publicly available written materials by anyone other than myself, at any stage of the study. Pseudonyms were used both on the transcripts and in Table 3.1 when presenting the characteristics of the research participants. Similarly, school enrolment figures were also presented in bands to ensure that no individual school can be publicly identifiable from the research.

In accordance with guidelines published by BERA (2011, 4), all educational research should be conducted within the ethic of respect for 'the person, knowledge, democratic values, the quality of educational research and academic freedom'. Consideration was given to the end-use of the research, only the researcher had access to the data gathered; which was at all times stored securely and password protected, while all information collected will be destroyed after the study in order to ensure confidentiality:

> Confidentiality is connected to anonymity, which means that participants' names and other unique identifiers are not attached to the data. Only the research team that conducts the investigation will be able to identify the researched participants (Boeije, 2010, 46).

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed account of the philosophy, strategy, methodology and analytical processes of this research study, in order to show that this qualitative research was 'anything but a soft option' (Richards, 2003, 6). The rationale for undertaking a multi-case study approach of qualitative methods, incorporating semi-structured interviews with principals and NQTs, supported by documentary analysis, has been explicated in order to address the research questions and fulfil the research aims of the study. Whilst the research does not set out to claim that the findings of induction provision could be generalised as being applicable to all primary schools, the depth of study of each case, the methodological coherence and the multi-case comparative analysis do enable learning about the general from the particular. In other words, the findings may be transferable, offering potential 'replication' (Yin, 2009, 54).

Chapter 4   Ireland's NQT induction: school practices and rationales

Introduction

This chapter explores the induction of NQTs in the ROI in the absence of statutory induction provisions, and systematically sets out to answer the first two research questions presented in Chapter 1. The range of induction practices for NQTs in the sample of schools is identified and the particular rationales and justifications for the adoption of these induction practices are explored. The research draws on principals' perceptions to ascertain why induction practices were undertaken in schools in a particular way. The data from each of the eight case study schools is presented and discussed concurrently, to highlight similarities and differences both within and across the eight schools. The data will be descriptive and will facilitate an exploration of any patterns or themes emerging from participants' responses. As indicated in Chapter 3, the evidence is based on interviews with sixteen participants within the eight schools, eight of whom were principals and eight of whom were NQTs.

Induction practices for NQTs within the eight case study schools

Highly informal, ad hoc induction practices that were sporadic in nature arose in three of the eight schools with these schools offering NQTs few or no induction provisions. Another three schools operated collegial based induction practices which encouraged ongoing interaction between NQTs and experienced teachers.

The remaining two schools operated more formal induction practices. One of these two schools focused strongly upon evaluating the NQT's competency to fulfil probationary requirements in order to gain full teacher recognition with the TCI while the final remaining school engaged the NQT in an inquiry community that apprenticed the NQT into becoming a self-directing professional through a staged programme of induction.

The three schools offering ad hoc induction practices did not have a high turnover of NQTs. Where induction practices arose in these particular schools, they were sporadic in nature. NQTs in these schools were given full responsibility for classroom teaching but received no co-ordinated supervisory, consultative or peer support. None of these three schools operating sporadic induction practices had an induction policy or a formal mentoring programme. Professional development programmes for NQTs were not regarded by these principals as being of high priority in terms of whole school planning:

> *Before now, I don't know when the last person who'd done their induction in the school was, so we wouldn't have been used to the whole system of it. So there was no actually really formal system in place whatsoever. We have more pressing issues to plan for now . . .* (Sara, Principal).

Principals prioritised meeting government driven targets over NQT induction. All three principals who operated few induction practices in their schools confirmed that their energy and attention was generally directed towards the most recent

circular or initiative issued by the DES. These principals who were failing to offer induction all made reference to the current pressures of raising pupils' literacy and numeracy standards under *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020*. Though principals were concerned about raising pupils' standards, they did not appear to share this goal with their NQTs. Not including NQTs in policy development is a central contradiction to initiatives such as *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020*, which actually recognises that teachers themselves, irrespective of their experience, have a key role to play in providing quality education, being 'the most powerful resource that we have' (DES, 2011, 27).

Occasionally, a mentor relationship developed informally in the three schools adopting few or no induction practices. For example, NQTs sometimes discussed problems with an experienced teacher or the school principal, but this appeared the exception rather than the rule: *'You just did your own thing, and asked the principal or another teacher for advice if you were genuinely stuck'* (Lorraine, NQT). NQTs working in environments without induction provisions were focused with survival, attending to lesson planning, daily marking and the regular management and administrative activities of their classroom. These NQTs did not ask for additional help or avail of it unless it was directly offered to them. This finding mirrors the literature that NQTs are often thrown in at the deep end, with a full teaching load and associated responsibilities (Menon, 2012; Moir, 2009; Strong, 2006; Johnson et al., 2005). NQTs were overwhelmed by how busy their principal

was and revealed that they did not particularly want to add to their principal's workload: *'My principal has little or basically no time really between different policies and things now that she has to do and different paperwork'* (Shane, NQT). One NQT was so respectful of their principal's workload that they appeared almost understanding about their principal neglecting them during their induction:

> *There wasn't anyone as such to go to for advice – only the principal themselves. It's the principal themselves, they've got maybe twice as much work they have to do themselves, never mind having to worry about what's going on in the different classroom every time an NQT or somebody new comes into the school like. If the NQTs or the newcomers to the school had just someone like they could go to with stuff or problems, or that it wouldn't be as stressful always, if you knew there was someone to help you out* (Glenn, NQT).

Glenn clearly felt he would have benefitted from having the support of another school colleague in his busy principal's absence. The benefits of a collaborative and supportive school culture, as desired by Glenn (NQT), are well documented in literature affirming the positive effects of a supportive school culture on the mitigation of anxiety and stress that NQTs experience during their first year of teaching (Wang et al., 2010; Eisenschmidt, 2006).

Two NQTs stated they avoided pursuing additional support when in need, as they felt it drew unnecessary attention to themselves as possessing elements of incompetency:

Nobody wants to appear inadequate and like add to their principal's headaches (Glenn, NQT).

I tend to keep my head down, and get on with it (Lorraine, NQT).

When NQTs were reluctant to approach principals for help, professional practices consequently seemed to be overlooked, leaving induction to teaching as an exploratory, phenomenological and survivalist experience for the NQT. Elements of collaboration, occurring with colleagues in schools operating little or no induction, were incidental and were in no way embedded in a whole-school approach to induction. NQTs that completed their induction in schools with sparse induction arrangements all agreed that support from school peers who recently completed their induction was the single greatest support shaping their professional development.

Two of the three schools adopting sparse induction encouraged NQTs to attend local NQT meetings, facilitated by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). NQTs perceived this as being a worthwhile, positive experience. Peer networking creates a safe environment in which participants have the same status and in which NQTs can discover that they face many of the same problems (European Commission, 2010). There was a common tendency for NQTs to refer to the positive effects of having opportunities to network with NQTs in other schools, helping to reassure NQTs in their teaching while also clarifying issues that NQTs were unsure of:

The INTO meetings were great in the respect that, well, I think it's important that everyone has someone to talk to. It's nice to know what other people are doing, and that you appear to be on the right track (Shane, NQT).

If you want to clarify something like it's very good, people hear things. You can ask things and they share stuff with you (Glenn, NQT).

Interestingly, two of the three principals operating sporadic induction practices specifically recommended that NQTs participate in out-of-school support. Principals' rationale for recommending that NQTs attend INTO meetings was attributed to being *'a good way of keeping abreast with changes in education, they explain the changes at source'* (Isla, Principal), and also that *'NQTs will learn by attending these meetings that teachers' voices are stronger in a union, a union is a way stronger force of communication for them, you won't be heard on your own'* (Iris, Principal). This out-of-school support was viewed by NQTs as a separate peer network which did not compensate for the lack of socio-emotional and professional support in the school setting. The single NQT who was not encouraged to participate in the INTO network for NQTs, and who received little or no induction provisions within her school, appeared to be professionally and emotionally isolated during her induction:

I didn't know what I was entitled to or not entitled to as a newly qualified teacher. No one recommended anything to me. I think it's very daunting in your first year. It's only now I think maybe I'm just getting used to it (Lorraine, NQT).

Researchers say that when NQTs' sense of professional capacity is motivated, they have high levels of satisfaction, a more positive reaction to teaching, and they

experience less stress (Murshidi et al., 2006). Lorraine's views are reflected in

research which shows that when NQTs' self-efficacy is threatened, they teach and

expect less (Johnson et al., 2005).

Considering that three of the eight NQTs in this study received few or no induction

provisions, this revealed that not all NQTs were receiving the support they needed.

Research attests that many NQTs face added stress and low self-esteem when they

do not receive an induction or when they receive an inadequate induction (Rots et

al., 2012; Sharpe, 2006). This was found as an underlying commonality amongst this

study's NQTs who had received little formal or informal induction; their feelings of

competency diminished rapidly when left to fend for themselves:

> *It's lonely and isolating beginning as a teacher with essentially little or*
> *no help or not much of an induction. Like, you're not sure in yourself*
> *what you're doing, if you're doing right or wrong or going off on a*
> *different path altogether. Even if you got some guidance as to what was*
> *expected for notes and planning at the beginning of the year, it would*
> *give you a boost like* (Glenn, NQT).

> *No, there was nothing, nothing at all. I got nothing at all for induction.*
> *Absolutely nothing. You were totally left to deal with it yourself and get*
> *on with it. No help to you at all when I think of it. I was dependent on my*
> *friends from college to keep me right* (Lorraine, NQT).

For these NQTs, being left entirely to their own devices to fend for themselves

resulted in little more than professional, social and personal isolation.

Mentors existed in five of the eight schools. The experience range among them was

three years, ten years, twelve years, with two mentors having in excess of twenty

years experience. Fostering a culture of mutual help and expectations via collegial

practice (such as that organised through mentors) is a critical component of induction success (Bartell, 2005). That said, it is important to ensure the qualities and competence of the participants involved in this process. In just one school, the mentor had experience with the particular class level being taught by the NQT. It is prevalent in literature that mentors should be carefully selected for NQTs in accordance with their professional development needs (Devos, 2010; *Top of the Class,* 2007; Bartell, 2005). Adverse effects of failing to align mentors and NQTs were evident in elements of professional growth, as well as social development:

> *I was teaching infants at the time and my mentor was in the senior end of the school, so as regards notes and planning for lessons and that, we were like on very different wavelengths. I had to speak to the other infant teacher to help me out instead* (Joanne, NQT).

This opinion was affirmed by Pamela (NQT):

> *I would have preferred to have chosen my own mentor from the staff; if NQTs were given that chance, it would be way better . . . someone you actually gel with and can get on with.*

Information from NQTs suggested that insufficient attention was being attributed to mentor selection. Principals suggested that upon reflection, it may be better if mentors were selected according to more rigorous criteria. Seniority and hierarchical criteria came into play in the majority of cases in mentor selection. The majority of principals admitted that they generally selected mentors from *'our more experienced members of staff or members of our in-school management team'* (Norman, Principal). Given that mentor selection should incorporate qualities such as interpersonal skills, communication and knowledge about the learning of NQTs

(Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010), it was apparent from NQTs that their supervisory mentors sometimes had a conservative influence on their practice. Lack of alignment between mentors and NQTs appeared a major pitfall in the establishment of professional, fluid relationships. NQTs stated that the lack of alignment in mentor selection emerged as a regular strain, while limiting their exposure to aligned experimentation with different teaching approaches and strategies in accordance with the particular needs of pupils under their guidance:

> *My mentor was a totally different generation to me, more like a boss than a mentor, a bit hard to take . . . out of touch with the teaching methodologies that I would have used in college for my class level* (Jane, NQT).

Most schools with mentors provided them with a specific course of training, facilitated by the NIPT. Principals noted that training was useful for improving mentors' supervisory and communication skills. In-service sessions for mentors took place at the beginning of the year, with telephone support available to mentors throughout the year. NQTs who had mentors attended the NIPT workshops provided over the course of the year in their local education centre. No substitute cover, release time or additional funding was available to schools from the DES for induction purposes, though two of the eight schools allocated school funding and resources at their discretion towards induction-related activities. None of the eight schools had requested or received a school-based visit from the NIPT, although three principals demonstrated awareness of this facility. Consequently, this facility emerged as an underutilised resource.

Curriculum assistance, classroom management techniques, organisation of resources and the introduction to school routines formed the basis of mentors' support. Generally, no standards or presubscribed competency levels were placed on the NQT by the mentor. This role was left solely to the Inspectorate of the DES, and to a lesser extent, to the principal. Mentors' assistances were usually an informal arbitration based on the NQTs' requests and mentors' observations. Quality mentoring requires skills such as counselling, being emotionally available, observing, evaluating and providing constant feedback (Danielson, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Although principals very loosely evaluated whether NQTs were satisfactorily coping with their role, three of the five mentors had no specific role to play in an evaluative or assessment capacity.

Five NQTs and six principals were not open-minded or comfortable with the concept of evaluative and assessment practices during induction. The potential value to be had by the introduction of evaluative or assessment practices for NQTs as well as mentors was largely unrecognised:

> *My mentor, she's very flexible and easy-going. She's not there to assess you. That would be awful. She's there to help you out with that sort of stuff* (Jane, NQT).

> *You don't want to appear as if you're anything to do with the inspectorate or anything like that . . . that level of evaluation is difficult and unmanageable for a principal to take on. You're kind of there as a support and guidance, as a resource for them if they need it rather than somebody who is going to be inspecting them in the school. I would see it as an informal way to make them feel comfortable and make sure they're happy* (Carol, Principal).

Although Carol (Principal) clearly expressed her opinion that evaluation is difficult and unmanageable for principals to embrace, it must be acknowledged that undertaking evaluative practices has been commonplace for principals in many other countries for years now, with noteworthy results. High-intensity induction practices which include evaluative components have a greater impact on induction effectiveness and NQT development (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Conway et al., 2009; Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Moir, 2009). Research suggests that personalised assessment is vital to provide NQTs with the ownership skills to further their own professional development (TCI, 2012). The absence of evaluation in six of the eight schools does not align with the TCI's views on quality assurance processes relating to a set of standards that NQTs will be required to fulfil for full registration as recognised teachers, proposed from 2012, to be fully implemented by 2015/2016. Research evidence revealed that all but two of the eight schools failed to incorporate any forms of formal competency assessment techniques or programme evaluation measures into their induction practices.

Aidan (Principal) suggested that an informal induction policy was more useful than implementing a *'set'*, formal policy, as he felt it is necessary to vary what you do for NQTs in accordance with their strengths and weaknesses:

> *It totally varies from year to year, we've had different people with different strengths, different personalities, different abilities. Some who need guidance, some who possibly we would take guidance from almost. . . . You have to evaluate what you do on that basis in order to meet the requirements of being deemed satisfactory.*

Georgina, the NQT working under Aidan's management, explained her school's approach to induction as *'a hands-on experience involving a whole school approach'*. Georgina stated that the key components of her induction programme were *'probably the reflection logs, the assessment, the self-assessment and the visits to other schools'*. Two of the eight NQTs visited other schools as part of their induction, which incorporated a variety of opportunities for reflection. Research points to this characteristic of an induction programme as being considerably worthwhile, as reflection helps NQTs develop schemata for making sense of classroom practices (Conway et al., 2009; Bartell, 2005), and without it current practices tend to stagnate (O'Brien and Christie, 2005).

Induction provisions in Aidan's school were centred upon meeting certification requirements of the probationary period, working on objectives for improvement as recommended by inspectorate visits from the DES. Evaluative procedures underpinning this model were interrelated with the inspector's assessment of the NQT and focused upon passing the probationary process. Assessing positive teaching techniques to enhance pupil learning was not included:

> *What's essential about evaluation is feeding back to them the inspector's perspective, trying to give them as much information as possible so that they can channel that information into making progress in whatever way possible to achieve full probation status* (Aidan, Principal).

The main problem with evaluative procedures of NQTs' abilities during induction concerned the concept of evaluation itself because of possible threats to NQTs' sense of professional competence. 'Positive evaluations are fragile, can fluctuate

over time and have to be re-established time and time again' (Rots et al., 2012). Unfortunately, the two essential sources (efficacy and social recognition) of NQTs' self-affirmation as competent teachers were simultaneously the main potential threats to some NQTs' self-esteem in this study. Georgina (NQT) referred to how the experience of personal failure is a significant threat to NQTs' self-affirmation as competent teachers:

> *Your sense of self-esteem comes from the relationship you develop with your pupils. I have a great relationship with my pupils but one of the other lads (NQT) can't seem to engage his pupils in learning. His pupils have no respect for him at all. He can't keep control of his class. His self-esteem is so low as he is always worrying about what the rest of the staff are saying* (Georgina, NQT).

From her experience of evaluative practices, Georgina was aware that for some NQTs challenges will turn out to be useful learning experiences, but for others the sense of failure if one doesn't meet the self-imposed demands may cause serious doubt and a declining motivation for the teaching profession.

One of the eight principals (John) operated a staged induction programme named *The Best Beginning Teacher Induction for Professional Development*. He spoke about the programme with noteworthy praise: *'it's terrific . . . it gets the NQTs started and we find it keeps them on task with comprehensive and research-based practices.'* Conversely, the three principals operating sparse induction practices could not be associated with attributing time to research-based practices, their view of induction being that *'it's not a priority for us'* (Iris, Principal) and *'we have other things to plan for now'* (Sara, Principal).

Jessica (NQT), who participated in *The Best, Beginning Teacher Induction for Professional Development* explained that the core elements of the programme involved *'video seminars, one-to-one mentoring and regular self-evaluation and reflection for professional development'*. John, her principal, stated that in administering the characteristics of the programme:

> *The programme is shared. It establishes NQTs' professional practice . . . we recognise here that they begin with us in September but by Christmas they have changing needs during that year.*

John (Principal) and Jessica (NQT) agreed that NQTs' needs do not remain the same over the course of the induction year; new challenges approach at different stages throughout the year: *'report writing and testing were things I needed help with at the end of term three'* (Jessica, NQT). The approach to induction outlined in this one school's policy included the following: establishing professional practice, creating an engaging learning community, managing teacher performance, development management strategies, implementing effective instruction strategies, impacting student learning through quality teaching, celebrating best practices, and finally, applying professional development.

John (Principal) stressed the importance of a self-directing approach to induction, acknowledging that NQTs enter his school from a variety of different colleges with different teaching approaches, methodologies and interventions. He stated that his school *'welcomes the variety in practice and that's part of the very, very, important philosophy of welcoming to our school'*. When Jessica, the NQT in John's school, was asked her views on her induction programme, she was extremely positive. She

praised the school for its consistent approach throughout the entire induction year. At the beginning of the year, NQTs were informed of the teachers that were interested in being mentors, and after getting to know these teachers for a week, NQTs selected their own mentor to work with:

> *I loved the way that from the moment I began in the school, my views and choices mattered, I felt respected. I know from my other friends that are teaching working in other schools in different parts of the country that this is not the norm. I am much more fortunate* (Jessica, NQT).

This self-selection mentor process was certainly not the norm for any of the other four NQTs who had mentors. In fact, it was the opposite of Joanne's (NQT) experience, who felt that she and her mentor had nothing in common, were *'on completely different wavelengths'* and were teaching class levels at opposite ends of the school. Likewise, Pamela (NQT) relished the thought of having a mentor that she *'could actually gel with and get on with'*. It was noteworthy that under John's (Principal) management of induction, mentors did not always have experience in teaching the same class level as their NQT, although such alignment is highly recommended in the literature (Beijaard, et al., 2010; Moir, 2009). Pamela (NQT) interpreted that one of the downfalls of her mentor–NQT relationship was the lack of alignment in curriculum and pedagogy. In contrast, Jessica's (NQT) response to this was:

> *As teachers they have the ability to teach any class level; it was way more important to have someone I clicked with. We worked out the curriculum questions together; the mentor sought help about curricular stuff, from other teachers, if they needed to.*

Jessica (NQT) further explained that in comparison to some of her friends that have a mentor teaching the same class level as them, *'they're not as fortunate to have a mentor on the same footing; you cannot learn from one another then.'* This idea was supported by Joanne (NQT), who had reservations about the way in which her mentor gave her pedagogical advice: *'she made you feel inadequate for not knowing the curriculum inside-out the way she did.'* Of the five schools (out of eight) who allocated mentors, allocation was undertaken by the principal in four cases, in one school in accordance with criteria, but more often in accordance with seniority and hierarchical issues.

The school that addressed induction in various stages was the only school with a comprehensive induction policy. No other school had a written policy on induction, although two schools had welcome packs for NQTs mainly pertaining to organisational routines, curricular and administrative policies. Four school principals (Norman, Isla, Aidan and Carol) referred to the fact that although they had no formal written policy, they regarded themselves as undertaking informal practices. However, John, the sole principal with a written policy on induction, demonstrated quite a damning attitude towards schools without formal, written policies. He questioned if these schools were merely formulating policy ideas as they progress along with induction practice:

> *Are they simply making it up as they go along? It cannot be a whole school approach or even worthwhile unless it is properly, and yes, systematically planned. We wouldn't dream of that here. Yes, we reflect on what we do, yes, the NQTs reflect too. That's extremely valuable but you need to have clear targets and objectives. Yes, clear direction is the driving force* (John, Principal).

John (Principal) and Jessica (NQT in John's school) expressed different views in relation to their staged approach to induction being implemented in other schools. Jessica felt that the induction year would be *'hell'* without the constant support of this programme, and that from *'knowing that my friends in other schools really struggle, it should be rolled out in all schools'*. John (Principal) opposed the viability of Jessica's suggestion of implementing this programme across all schools:

> *Our induction programme could work in schools that are a similar size to this one and with similar challenges as ourselves, but one size does not fit all; it would be undoable in smaller schools and their challenges are different.*

Rationales for Irish NQT induction practices

As only one of the eight schools had a written policy on NQT induction, it was not straightforward to derive the rationale for induction practices in the remaining seven schools. Nonetheless, this remained an important issue. Rationales for induction practices were analysed from the perspective of principals, attempting to establish why principals provided certain components of induction while others did not. Connections, where relevant, were made with the perspectives of NQTs to interpret whether or not particular rationales for the adoption of practices were having the desired effect. The rationales of principals for NQT induction practices, coupled with concrete workplace examples, offer insights into how principals internalise the process of induction and subsequently adopt respective induction practices.

Aidan, Carol and John (Principals developing/operating formal induction programmes) said NQT reassurance was their ultimate rationale for induction, recommending that NQTs need to be made aware of the support available to them and to be encouraged to seek advice or assistance, even with small things which may appear as stupid questions. These views accord with those who found that personal stresses were associated with assuming the role of class teacher for the first time (Beijaard et al., 2010; Cherubini, 2007; Humphrey, 2000), and with those who described the transition from ITE to teaching as a sink-or-swim journey through the unknown (Moir, 2009). Pastoral support, evidenced in five schools, recognised these concerns and provided some reassurance for NQTs. It successfully alleviated feelings such as *'you're the only one who does not know something'* (Jane, NQT). The need to encourage and support NQTs as they attempt to reconcile their previous impressions of teaching with the present reality is clear in Pamela's account of her first days teaching in a disadvantaged school:

> *Nothing that you do in college can prepare you properly for the sorts of challenges that I had in my first year in this school. It was so different; when I told my parents about it, they often asked if it was a proper course of teaching training that I did. I mean nothing you do in college can prepare you for all the issues that you are just bombarded with – the work, the parents, the staff* (Pamela, NQT).

It was noteworthy that principals' rationale for induction made no reference to the fact that as new members of the school organisation, NQTs have to compete for a place amongst more experienced teachers. All eight NQTs made one reference or another to the difficulties in adjusting to school culture, with half of them specifying difficulties of earning appreciation from colleagues. Research conducted by

Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) and Feiman-Nemser (2001) strikes a chord in relation to this. They suggest that NQTs form their professional identity, construct a professional practice and often decide to stay in the profession or leave it depending on the relationships developed with colleagues. Unfortunately, although NQT reassurance was a high priority for three principals, their ignorance of NQTs competing for a place amongst more experienced teachers presents itself as a deficiency in achieving NQT reassurance as their ultimate rationale for induction.

In three schools where induction practices were largely serendipitous, disconnections appeared between principals and NQTs regarding the needs of NQTs during the induction year. Sara (Principal) stated that:

> *The hardest concept for NQTs is that they are newly qualified, they think they now know all they need to know and that their learning is done. They don't actually realise that their real learning is now only beginning. Keeping up curriculum implementation and circular implementation is no easy mission. I really think they need to start looking at the bigger picture.*

Connecting this principal's opinion with that of her NQT below, one of the most conflicting theories of principals and NQTs is that principals are asserting that NQTs feel they know it all, while NQTs are claiming that principals expect them to know it all, *'with no scope to make mistakes'* (Glenn, NQT).

> *It can be kind of intimidating going into a new school setting like that, and you're only just out of college, and you kind of wonder, well, what are these teachers thinking of me now, as you're walking in, especially when you start you have got lots of questions, an awful lot of questions, you've more questions than answers sometimes and you know, you feel you don't want to feel like a burden either as you are out of college and you're expected to show that you know what you are doing* (Shane, NQT).

Alternatively, it could be suggested that it is both principals' and NQTs' incorrect perceptions of each other that cloud their judgements and intensify the lines of communication between them, causing some principals to dismiss NQTs as having needs while somewhat explaining their rationale for the sparse induction provisions in three schools in this study.

Such disconnections of understanding between principals and NQTs highlighted that principals did not appear to have adequate knowledge of the problems that NQTs encounter during their first years of teaching. Literature reveals that principals need this sort of knowledge in order to make solid judgements regarding the design, implementation and evaluation of induction support (Schwille and Dembélé, 2007). In contrast, one principal operating comprehensive induction practices was adamant about his genuine commitment to NQT development in personalised contexts. This principal said principals should not forget that NQTs will face difficulties and problems which will change over time and from person to person. Two of the eight principals who knew this were the ones administering the two more comprehensive forms of induction.

Five of the principals rationalised their approach to induction as integrating NQTs to meet school self-evaluation and whole-school development planning needs, adopting a somewhat managerial and tick-the-box attitude towards induction. Principals tended to merge NQTs' strengths with school development or organisational needs, rather than evaluating NQTs' needs and specifically incorporating their needs at whole-school level:

> *What we try to do here is marry the skills and attributes of the NQT with the fabric of the community. That's in my opinion, anyway, what makes induction a success in a school and had worked very well in our school* (Aidan, Principal).

On one hand, five of the eight schools paid attention to integrating school-based induction into the professional learning component of the school plan. Nevertheless, maintaining a clear focus of NQTs' needs was ignored during planning in these cases. Literature recognises that an induction programme should harmonise individuals' needs with the needs of the school where they work (Strong, 2006; Bartell, 2005). For these five schools, NQTs in addition to their principals internalised induction as being driven by the most recent circular or new legislative measure:

> *We're busy with all the elements of the new Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and the Child Protection one. We spend a lot of our meetings working on them at the moment* (Jane, NQT).

Such actions reflect the theories of Strong (2006) and Bartell (2005), who attest that problems arise when the individual's needs are absorbed by the more pressing needs of the school.

Principals made reference to health and safety, child welfare and child protection being substantial responsibilities for NQTs in schools today. Five principals confirmed utilising induction as a means to address NQTs' responsibility with regard to school policy and insurance liability. Whilst the remaining three principals considered that NQTs needed to be carefully advised as to their duty of care, and to be fully proficient with new legislation, their rationales for induction were not

specifically to address these issues. However, no NQTs commented that legislative developments needed attention during induction. This may be attributed to the fact that schools were either covering these areas adequately, or that principals were underestimating work covered in ITE, to instil NQTs' self-development to keep in touch with current educational developments.

Acculturation was another predominant rationale for induction practices. School protocol featured highly on this agenda. One school provided NQTs with a welcome pack containing such information. Six principals felt strongly that it was essential for such information to be communicated to NQTs, as every school will have its own particular issues which NQTs may not have encountered previously. Similarly, NQTs felt that the transfer of this information was important to them, as *'parents and pupils alike automatically expect NQTs to be knowledgeable of the conventions of the school'* (Glenn, NQT). Although NQTs referred to this background information as *'the basics'* (Glenn, NQT) or *'the way of doing things'* (Shane, NQT), they simultaneously provided examples which clarified the immediate need for school-specific information. Theorists posit that this dissemination of information reflects the organisation's way of partly ensuring that new employees meet the requirements of the post (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009).

In spite of this, NQTs conveyed some doubt regarding the comprehensiveness of the information conveyed. Lorraine, Shane and Joanne (NQTs) admitted that principals too often presume that NQTs are aware of the conventions of the school, written or unwritten. John (Principal), who had completed numerous reviews of his

school's induction programme, supported this, expressing dissatisfaction at the lack of formal information that schools provide to NQTs prior to them taking up their teaching post. Induction, he argued, should provide universal access to basic information on the school in order to avoid debilitating situations for NQTs:

> *I mean you find these young teachers wandering around the school corridors looking for a laptop trolley; now if their class knows more about it than they do, they lose credibility and it's difficult for them, it increases management issues and so forth. It's a vicious cycle.*

Norman (Principal) stated that it was vital for induction to make NQTs aware of prevailing staffroom issues or undercurrents within a school, which would not be apparent to NQTs until offence has been inadvertently caused or NQTs' lack of knowledge on the current situation has been taken advantage of. These perceptions clearly show how the rationale of acculturation has shaped the induction practices of schools in this sample.

Two of the eight principals considered building positive relationships with parents as being paramount to their rationale for implementing induction practices aimed at equipping NQTs to deal with parents. Although Killeavy (2006) and Morgan and Burke (in Picard and Ria, 2011) attest the challenge posed for NQTs in building positive relations with parents, this challenge was grossly underestimated by six of the eight principals, who gave no credence to induction practices surrounding parental relations development. Opposing views emerged when principals' perspectives and NQTs' perspectives were connected on this matter. The rationale for addressing parental relations during induction was raised by seven of the eight

NQTs, who considered this to be *'probably by far the most stressful part of teaching'* (Jane, NQT). Jessica, the only NQT who received induction workshops on dealing with parents, deemed them as:

> *Vital . . . in aiding NQTs to establish positive relations with other adults in the school community and to set necessary and appropriate boundaries for their involvement in the class.*

In contrast to NQTs' beliefs, six principals expressed no concern that NQTs felt challenged or intimidated by parents. This difference of opinion explains the overall lack of rationale for focusing on establishing and maintaining positive parental relationships during induction. Notably, relationship building with parents encapsulates what seven of the eight NQTs believed should be a high-priority rationale for any induction programme. This variance in rationales is notable, as the two principals who undertook the inclusion of parental relationship building during induction were quite adamant about its worth:

> *During induction, they [NQTs] need to learn how to deal with parents properly. This puts them on the right road and saves a lot of conflict and misunderstandings with parents in the long term* (Norman, Principal).

> *Relationship building with parents is one of the single most important features of inducting NQTs into our school. It would not work without it* (John, Principal).

At the core of rationales for induction was a general perception that induction practices had the potential to benefit NQTs on one hand, and staff members, schools and the community as a whole on the other. This theory is widely supported in research (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Moir, 2009). As NQTs have immediate responsibilities and are expected to be conversant with the procedures

of the school, their induction was perceived by principals as essential to achieve

continuity and quality within their schools. Isla (Principal) uses an analogy she read

about to emphasise the challenges and risks presented to schools by the arrival of

several NQTs at the beginning of the academic year:

> *If you were in a hospital situation and you had twenty doctors, and seven of them were brand new coming in on day one, somebody would be worried. Life and death may not be at stake in the classroom but something equally important but not as visible is.*

Six principals widely appreciated that if a school is to operate effectively, the need

for NQTs to be fully integrated members of the school community is an integral

rationale for induction. Encouraging autonomy among NQTs also featured as a

rationale for induction, though to a lesser degree as it was only evident in two

schools. Keay (2007) reveals the pitfalls of lack of awareness adopting autonomy

during induction, as she warns that if a lesser version of professionalism is adopted

by principals, it will invariably lead to a generation of professional development

based on reflection, which will in turn lead to continuous identification of

professional development needs and not merely the search for ways to deal with

newly acquired autonomy. Interestingly, principals in this study had given no

consideration to this theory in their rationale for inducting NQTs to be autonomous

members of an integrated school community.

Four Principals (John, Norman, Aidan and Carol) viewed enhanced professionalism

of staff as a rationale for induction practices due to the frequent communication

and exchange of ideas between all stakeholders involved. Aidan (Principal) asserted

that encouraging high-performing members of his in-school management team to

be involved in the induction of NQTs was seen as *'the greatest affirmation you can give a competent, experienced and highly skilled teacher'*. Rationales for induction were viewed as an expression of interest and commitment on the part of the teaching profession towards its newest members, sparing them from what Isla (Principal) described as *'all the pitfalls that people might have had to go through in the past'*. The rationales for induction were described as promoting high morale and unity among present professionals and those of the future:

> *Induction does tremendous things for the collegiality and cohesion within the school community. Young teachers, especially, need to be seen to the fore in the profession. They will make the future of the teaching profession; they need to be encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities. They need the support of fellow staff at this critical juncture in their own careers* (John, Principal).

Conclusion

Highly informal, ad hoc induction practices arose in three of the eight schools. Another three schools operated collegial based practices which encouraged ongoing interaction between NQTs and experienced teachers, whilst more formal induction practices were in operation in the remaining two schools. The three schools that offered highly informal induction practices did not have a high turnover of NQTs. Overall, NQT induction practices varied considerably across the eight schools with the operation of induction practices ranging from being entirely sporadic in nature to being completely formalised at whole-school level. As regards principals' rationales for NQT induction, the most prevalent rationales included the smooth and effective running of the school, maintaining a positive relationship with

stakeholders and the potential to enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning in the organisation. Rationales were largely underdeveloped in the six schools operating non-formal induction practices and would require considerable rectification to result in practices that would render personalised professional growth for NQTs.

Chapter 5 Ireland's NQT induction: professional development

Introduction

The preceding chapter presented research data in relation to the first two of this study's four research questions. This chapter explores the findings in relation to the final two research questions. Thus, NQTs' perceptions of their induction practices and the extent to which induction practices supported NQTs' professional development is addressed. Then the research evidence is further examined, to identify in what ways and to what extent induction practices reflect Main's (2008a) conceptual framework of the components of effective induction, as a means of providing NQTs in this study with an effective induction experience. It is important to explore what NQTs identify as being effective or ineffective in their induction, as effective induction practices are deemed highly significant for NQTs' professional development (Bezzina, 2006; Breaux and Wong, 2002). This is undertaken in this chapter by presenting a comparative analysis of the data across the eight case study schools.

Relationship of Irish NQT induction practices to professional development

An awareness of our rapidly changing educational sphere and professional development needs was apparent in principals' responses, but interestingly to a much lesser extent in NQTs' responses. Sara (Principal) felt that induction should combat a tendency among some NQTs to consider their development as teachers

complete after graduation. Norman (Principal) similarly felt that this was *'the saddest thing about the teaching profession'*, as teachers should be engaged in continuous self-evaluation of their practice, methodologies and relations with pupils. Unfortunately, this opinion was by no means unanimous. Iris's (Principal) views on induction arguably encapsulate the worst of what was expected based on the research. She passionately stated that:

> *Too much is being made about induction, we all did it, they are no different today. There are more pressing issues for principals to deal with* (Iris, Principal).

Iris portrays that teacher induction to enhance professional development is the absolute least of her worries, and if she progressed through her first years of teaching without an induction programme, others will too. Iris's views do not correspond with those who view induction as essential to the creation of a continuum of professional development wherein teachers continually self-evaluate and self-develop by revising and updating their skills (TCI, 2012; Conway et al., 2009).

Only one school in this study prided itself on providing an induction programme inclusive of professional development. In explaining what his school did to induct NQTs, the principal explained that:

> *We have a philosophy of a whole school approach. We like to bring everyone on board when it's to do with the life and work of the school. All members of the school community, and by that I mean teachers, ancillary staff, SNAs, children, parents, we're all valued and respected as individuals and as members of the whole school team. Our induction programme is supported by the whole school community* (John, Principal).

This principal stressed the importance of welcoming NQTs into the whole-school team so that they feel *'part of the school family'* and that they are helped to establish their own particular role and position within that team from the outset: *'We try and enable them to grow professionally and to develop as professional individual teachers as well as team members.'* John (Principal) possessed an awareness of the literature attesting that satisfaction with one's teaching accomplishments implies more than effectively applying curriculum knowledge, pedagogical skills, or interventions for classroom management (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). John (Principal) engaged his NQTs in the process of working towards self-affirmation as competent teachers, brought about by team-building experiences and recognition of development by significant others within the school team. Rots et al. (2012, 4) recognise the value of John's practice for professional development, affirming that 'the most influential teaching successes have to do with the experience of efficacy'.

When Jessica (NQT) was asked what stages of the above induction programme were most effective for her professional development, she stated, *'on visits to other schools we got to see first-hand models of good classroom practice'.* The value of this experience was also supported by Georgina (NQT), who was similarly provided with access to visit other classrooms for the purpose of self-evaluation and reflection. Both NQTs who had access to school visits advocated the worth of seeing best practice in operation in contributing towards their own professional development:

It was so much clearer, and interesting, than just reading it from a book, or being told about it (Georgina, NQT).

A fantastic opportunity (Jessica, NQT).

Sara (Principal) referred to the *'extreme confidence'* that current NQTs possess, stating that NQTs' abundance of confidence is the main reason why reflective professional development practices are often overlooked during induction:

Principals are reluctant to embark upon reflective practices with some of their NQTs, as they [NQTs] feel they know it all and aren't afraid to challenge and often not that willing to listen to experience (Sara, Principal).

Discrepancies in principals' and NQTs' perceptions of NQTs' needs during induction may inhibit the professional development of NQTs, as many NQTs expressed feeling far from competent and were similarly not confident enough to seek advice and support:

There are lots of little things and bigger things too, that you just need clarity about, but you want to come across like you know what you are doing and that you're able and capable (Glenn, NQT).

The absence of self-evaluative practices in most schools in this study can only be attributed to principals' lack of realisation that some NQTs are hiding their inhibitions and anxieties. Therefore, working towards convergence of opinion on the real professional needs of NQTs, as perceived by principals and NQTs, will be of paramount importance if induction practices are ever to further NQTs' professional development in Irish primary schools.

Research documents that NQTs are not passive receptors of socialisation processes, but rather are active agents who interpret their experiences, make sense of them and learn from them professionally (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002). NQTs in this study who experienced passive induction practices were grossly unaware of their schools' expectations of them. This was the predominant precursor of worryingly low or stagnant levels of self-esteem, as experienced by participants:

> *Generally been left to my own devices I reckon . . . struggling away and feeling low. Feeling like I must get everything right, and I should know it all straight away* (Shane, NQT).

In direct contrast to Shane's (NQT) feelings of low self-esteem, Sara, his principal, did not express any hint of concern about the NQT in her school feeling low. Surprisingly, she spoke of the complete opposite, stating that she is so often overwhelmed by the extreme confidence that NQTs have in themselves, and that she believes that it is their supreme confidence that holds them back in their professional development:

> *Well their strengths seem to be, one thing I notice about them and I've noted it over and over again, they're supremely confident, they're coming out, they're very confident in their own abilities, this is their biggest problem, they are so confident in their own abilities that they cannot see the bigger picture. They need to start looking at the bigger picture, there's more to life than this huge confidence they have* (Sara, Principal).

The perspectives of the above NQT and principal appear highly disconnected, the principal stating that NQTs have too much confidence in their capabilities and the NQT feeling he has almost none. No common ground was shared between this particular NQT and his principal in relation to NQTs' self-beliefs and confidence.

Such extreme divergence of opinion on the issue of NQT confidence did not emerge in any of the other seven schools, although discrepancies surrounding NQTs' needs somewhat accounted for the general lack of induction practices to enhance professional development in six of the eight schools.

Lack of personnel to act as mentors in smaller schools arose as a major obstructer to NQTs' professional development. Schools with administrative principals, resourced with larger staff units, had access to a few members of staff that were willing to mentor NQTs. In this study, all such mentors were members of the in-school management team. Three of the smaller schools, managed by teaching principals rather than administrative principals, did not allocate a mentor to NQTs. They either checked in on the NQT themselves from time to time, or the onus was on the NQT to collaborate with the small staff unit, if they required guidance. Irish research reveals the need for a specific induction programme to be created for NQTs in smaller schools because their problems are believed to be completely different to NQTs in larger schools (Fogarty, 2004). Interestingly, this study does not confirm this finding. Differentiation, dealing with parents, SEN (Special Educational Needs) and EAL (English as an Additional Language) featured as substantial challenges for NQTs' development in smaller schools as well as in larger schools. NQTs with a teaching principal referred to principals' heavy workload and were all conscious of not adding to that workload, even if it meant leaving questions they had unanswered, attributing little towards NQTs' personal development:

My principal's hands are full with everything. She would give me advice after school when she does all the administrative work. Sometimes there's more I would like to ask her about different strategies for differentiation, but it's not fair on her. She would be at the school all night. No NQT wants to be a constant burden on their principal either (Jane, NQT).

Two of the three teaching principals expressed that inducting NQTs into small schools was an opportunity to nurture a fresh approach within the organisation:

They come fresh from college fully equipped with new teaching methodologies and ideas for the new curriculum. We all get stale, and learning a fresh approach is good. It's great for a school to get new blood; it's like a breath of fresh air around the place (Sara, Principal).

Conversely, greatest emphasis among teaching principals was placed on supporting NQTs to become members of the school community, understanding and accepting the qualities, norms, manners and organisational structures that existed within the school:

The induction vision is to get them used to the school. We've all done our probation. Today's NQTs are no different. I've done it, you've done it, we've all done it. They're just going to get used to it, get on with it and get through it. . . . Inducting them into the school itself and the running of the school. That's surely the priority (Iris, Principal).

Literature refers to this situation as 'an introduction to the micro politics of the school', understanding who the informal leaders are, and how one can influence decisions (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002). The micro-politics of the school emerged as an area of concern for two of the eight NQTs, describing their colleagues and principals as not being supportive towards their development or even friendly on occasion, resulting in the NQTs often avoiding collaboration:

You could go and ask her if you really needed [to] all right. I could but I just wouldn't go there. You might not get a very warm reception. It would just put you off and you wouldn't bother (Joanne, NQT).

One of the eight NQTs described her principal as borderline disrespectful and somewhat hostile and unsympathetic. The following example of micro-politics in action was a definite source of anxiety and stress for the NQT, destroying the value of any mechanisms that were in place to enhance professional capacity:

She would make you feel like you haven't got a clue sometimes. She's not exactly respectful towards me in comparison to older staff. I can see it in the way she walks by me (Lorraine, NQT).

NQTs in this study did not appear to be given the most difficult classes, as past research conducted by Weiss and Weiss (1999) show is often the case. This finding may be attributed to the fact that difficult classes are generally more associated with post-primary education. More significantly, it demonstrates that principals are not off-loading additional burdens on NQTs to purposely lay obstacles in their path towards professional development. Instead, the general consensus was that principals wanted to protect NQTs from downfall during induction, being acutely aware of the adverse affects this would have on all partners in education:

It's very important that the other staff show that the NQT has much to offer them as well as the other way around. They can learn from each other. It's so important to develop a culture and perception that they are in fact an equally valued member of staff and the school community and not just some 'newbie' that nobody values (Carol, Principal).

The research evidence of this study suggests that the impact of external factors upon professional development during induction can be underestimated. They

included being consumed with a lack of awareness of how to approach paperwork required by the Inspectorate; time consumed with NQTs trying to find information themselves with no support structure; and finally, negative feelings towards colleagues, the DES, and TCI. Interestingly, though, five of the six NQTs who cited these areas of difficulty were of the opinion that if they had participated in a wider-ranging induction experience, these issues would not have existed. Unfortunately, this theory does not seem to be the case, as some of the same issues, namely those of paperwork and negativity towards the DES, also existed for the two NQTs who participated in considerably more structured induction programmes which were amenable to professional development:

> *I think it would be good to hear from your inspector at the beginning of the year; there were parts of the school's template for notes in the school's induction pack that the inspector didn't like and we ended up having to change it then in all of our notes, and it was just a lot of work, backtracking and everything like that, you know* (Jessica, NQT).

> *The level of preparation and planning is horrendous. Teachers in the post-primary sector have absolutely no idea of the volume of notes that we have to do. My mentor knew herself that she could only help me so much because every inspector seems to be different and they want different types of planning. You don't know what they want until they visit* (Georgina, NQT).

Therefore, clarification from higher authority regarding more regulated, systematic requirements in relation to planning would ease this particular developmental burden for all NQTs.

Frustrations existed with the manner in which *'some schools make you work hard for your probation during induction and some don't at all'* (Georgina, NQT).

Georgina stated that NQTs in other schools were deemed satisfactory at the end of the probationary period, without dedicating the same time to planning and paperwork that was required of her. When Georgina was asked to suggest an alternative approach to the volume of paperwork, she confessed, *'My personal objectives are always changing. It kept me on the right track. I knew what I was doing and what I needed to do to up my game.'* However, Georgina, who underwent a fairly comprehensive induction, had little sympathy with NQTs who received few professional development experiences during induction, appearing almost envious of their lack of time-consuming paperwork. Bearing in mind Georgina's (NQT) internalisation of the individualistic and changing needs of NQTs, it appears that planning tools need to incorporate scope for personalised reflection to further NQTs' professional capacity.

While it was apparent that Georgina (NQT) respected the manner in which her principal approached her induction, she also had reservations about some of the professional development practices she underwent: *'he's quite honest, he'll come in and tell you what you need to cut back on and what you need to step up on. There's a good rapport between us but I don't know if he always knows what we need. I don't see the value of the NIPT workshops.'* Aidan (Principal) stated that he insists that NQTs in his school attend the NIPT workshops outside of school hours: *'I'm aware of the certification process that's in the pipeline for NQTs so you have no choice but to conform.'* Conversely, it was evident that Aidan somewhat doubted the value to be had from these workshops, as he felt they contained an over-emphasis of irrelevant material:

> *There's a huge amount of materials, the dilution of their school life. . . . I would question whether all of what they're doing is immensely relevant to the here and the now and the what's to come, because they're covering material that I would feel could have been addressed at the teacher training level.*

Six principals had reservations regarding various elements of the content and facilitation of NIPT workshops. Seven of the eight NQTs supported Aidan's point that many of the NIPT workshops were repetitive of the work already covered in ITE and consequently not particularly conducive to professional development.

The desire for professional development manifested itself more strongly for NQTs working in geographically isolated, remote or rural communities. The need for effective induction practices in these circumstances is reflected in the literature (Morgan and Burke, in Picard and Ria, 2011; Killeavy and Murphy, 2006). Lorraine (NQT), originally from an urban area, who began her career in a small country village, felt that her induction did not prepare her for the cultural change she faced. Upon reflection, she felt let down by the school as she felt it could have aided her better in her development as a new professional during her first year teaching. On the other hand, she interpreted the positive side of her free time, paying tribute to the relaxed manner in which her induction took place, her free time after school facilitating the settling in she had to do, in a new local community:

> *I was in an isolated area and was having a difficult time as it was. I really wanted to pass my probation year and felt I had fulfilled all my obligations and that, even though the principal and deputy had not fulfilled theirs in doing nothing much to help me in my induction. All that was good was my induction was a very relaxed affair. That was good because I was all confused at the very beginning, out of my natural surroundings* (Lorraine, NQT).

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Although Lorraine's (NQT) induction did not have a clear vision, perhaps her perceived suitability of her free time highlights the benefit to be had in providing a reduced workload for NQTs, taking into account their personal life and well-being as part of their professional development. Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija (2009) and Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2005) confirm the importance of a healthy work–life balance for NQTs' professional development. When considering the relationship of Irish NQT induction practices towards professional development, Lorraine's (NQT) experience is most interesting when compared to the following experience of Georgina's:

> *No one could argue that the school that I'm in does so much for its NQTs, but I mean you would get worn out with it. It's much more here for overloading NQTs with a dose of meeting and mountains and mountains of paperwork* (Georgina, NQT).

Comparing NQTs' experiences across the eight schools reveals widely contrasting ends of the professional development operational spectrum that Irish NQTs are faced with during induction.

Irish NQT induction practices in consideration of Main's conceptual framework

Analysis of the four components of the conceptual framework of effective induction advocated by induction theorist Andrea Squirrel Main (2008a), provides organisational structure to this section of the chapter. The components of Main's framework, namely *pedagogical development*, *professional agency*, *socio-emotional support* and *structured balance*, were developed further in additional sub-components reflective of the review of literature discussed in Chapter 2. The

framework was then used as a conceptual lens to investigate and evaluate the applicability of its components to Irish NQT induction practices in this study. All four components are presented from the research evidence and discussed in terms of how they are utilised and perceived as effective Irish NQT induction practices.

Pedagogical Development

Pedagogical development was viewed both by principals and NQTs as important in achieving a successful induction experience. NQTs attributed this to the fact that if they were well equipped in the area of pedagogy, they were able to manage their classrooms and survive the challenges of the teaching day:

> *It makes it so much easier when you know the curriculum content inside-out for your class. Then, at least, you can get on with it as you know what you are doing and you are not wasting time checking objectives in your folders at the top of the room while the kids down the back are messing about and taking advantage of the situation because you don't exactly know what it is that you are supposed to be doing. You are way more confident teaching the class when you know what you are at* (Pamela, NQT).

Principals related success in pedagogical development as being vital in maintaining positive working relationships with pupils and parents. Research suggests that pedagogical development during induction should be organised around a clear vision of teaching (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009; Villani, 2002; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Echoing the literature, pedagogical discussions reviewing teaching methodologies pertinent to curricular development were to the fore. However, in six of the eight schools, this took place solely in relation to pedagogical development at a whole-school level in relation to school development planning,

rather than honing in on the particular requirements of NQTs. Off-site pedagogical development was considerably more predominant. Workshops facilitated by the NIPT were attended by seven of the eight NQTs. Theorists consistently refer to the idea that well-designed, off-site professional development courses can help cultivate NQTs' thinking strategies (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006; Wood, 2005; Earley and Bubb, 2004). Unfortunately, at least two thirds of NQTs and principals were firmly of the opinion that the off-site professional development workshops were ill-designed. This arguably encapsulates one of the worst outcomes expected from this research, as NIPT workshops, which were highly criticised as being ill-designed in this study, are the only element of induction to have been made mandatory in the ROI from September 2012. The order in which NIPT workshop modules were addressed received much criticism:

> *Class organisation, it's the first module, whereas the NQTs at that stage are screaming out to do their planning, preparation and their classroom management and organisation. So I do consider that module one is a total waste of time. Waste of two hours – it could be far better served* (Sara, Principal).

Areas identified for workshop re-design and improvement were: tired facilitators, facilitators without expertise in their subject area of delivery, content repetition of work already covered in ITE, the combination of NQTs at primary and post-primary level, geographical locations beyond an hour's travel and facilitation of the workshops entirely outside school hours.

The other thing I'd say is I questioned where the preparation of some of the people who are delivering the courses in terms of teacher induction is. Are they just good facilitators who can take notes and present them? That's the feedback I'm getting from the NQTs is that the terminology couldn't be explained because the person delivering the workshop wasn't overly familiar and did say, oh yeah, well I intend to visit that environment myself to see what that is and what everything is. But that's not sufficient (Aidan, Principal).

Nevertheless, there were elements of workshop design that NQTs valued. Value was attributed to networking with fellow NQTs and opportunities to ask for clarification regarding issues NQTs felt they were unable to address in school due to sensitivity, or there simply being no obvious person to approach. None of the NQTs had a link with a university during induction. Theorists confirm the benefit to be had via participation in off-site learning circles (Beijaard et al., 2010; Moir, 2009; Harris, 2004). In contrast, half of the NQTs argued that attending courses or workshops in their own school setting had the potential to better address their learning needs, as such courses could be tailored to the challenges of their individual schools. Five NQTs cited modules on assessment as being worthwhile. Notably, five principals and six NQTs condemned the fact that the NIPT was failing to address Special Educational Needs (SEN). SEN was considered to be of paramount importance to the here-and-now meta-cognitive needs of NQTs:

There is no module on special needs under any shape or form, and that's a crime because no matter where you're teaching or who you're teaching or what size a school, you're going to come across a child with special needs. A lot of NQTs are in resource posts, in learning support posts, in English Language posts, and we haven't the faintest idea of where to start with pupils with special educational needs (Jane, NQT).

NIPT workshop attendance was recommended by all principals, bar one. This explains the high uptake of the workshops, coupled with NQTs' desire to successfully complete their induction year. Principals who recommended the workshops largely felt compelled to ensure that their NQTs were first and foremost involved in some sort of induction. Two principals attributed it to the fact that it was recommended by their school inspector. The principal who did not recommend workshop attendance explained why:

> *We wouldn't be happy with it; we find that it's a very generic course that's given and it doesn't really address the particular needs our NQTs have. We would find our own induction programme to be much better. It really is just a matter of ticking the boxes and that they attend this course and get a stamp to show they've been there but it's not something we would ever look for personally here in the school. We wouldn't hold much weight with the national induction programme (John, Principal).*

Overall, John (Principal) expressed his belief that his staged approach to induction in his own school was considerably more beneficial than NIPT workshops. This was also the consensus of the NQT respondent in John's school, although she had not personally attended NIPT workshops. Although John (Principal) must be praised for the comprehensiveness of his school-based induction, which was predominantly absent in the sample of schools in this study, he portrays himself as having a closed mind to outside support. John (Principal) almost internalises his school as being exclusive whereas networking with others teachers outside the school (Fletcher, Strong, and Villar, 2005; Britton et al., 2003) best addresses diversity in learning and culture, while lending collaborative support (Whisnant et al., 2005; Villani, 2002).

Therefore, no school should stand alone as an island; as schools, their principals and entire staffs are all very porous to the impacts of societal change.

Peer coaching was highly utilised by NQTs who did not have mentor access. Those who engaged in peer coaching did so with peers working in other schools, in addition to those undertaking induction or who had recently completed the induction year. In seven of the eight schools, professional development was largely undertaken in education centres, external to the school as a learning organisation. Conversely, theorists argue the value of this work being undertaken in schools, as it is an important role that can be played by school leaders in developing the school into a learning organisation (Eisenschmidt, 2006; Fullan, 2006). Four of the NQTs in the study affirmed the principal's developmental role in induction, deeming principals to have more influence over NQTs' pedagogical development than the mentor, the mentor being internalised by NQTs as more a supporter of induction, rather than a leader:

> *The mentor is good with us. She carries out all the initiatives that Aidan, our principal, has planned for us. Yeah, she's good but she only does whatever it is that he tells her to do with us. She takes her lead from him* (Georgina, NQT).

Professional Agency

Attitudes within schools that are less than conducive to supporting NQTs is cited in literature as an obvious impediment to NQTs' professional agency (Trenta et al., 2002; Achinstein, 2001). On the contrary, five NQTs in this study described their

school as having a positive and appropriate disposition to NQTs. Norman (Principal) suggested that a reluctance to offer NQTs support may stem from a lack of confidence amongst experienced staff, who fail to sufficiently acknowledge or value their own professional expertise. Such self-dispositions would cause difficulties for mentors or facilitators implementing any form of induction programme. Lorraine (NQT) explained the need to convince principals and senior staff of the importance of cultivating a whole school commitment to the process:

> *We need to get the school principals, the deputy principals and the post holders to buy into induction as something that is pretty crucial and worthwhile, without which their school is probably not going to progress in the way that it should* (Lorraine, NQT).

All NQTs favoured a planned and co-ordinated approach to induction in order to enhance their feelings of value and self-worth in schools. Notably, the three NQTs who experienced little or no induction provisions expressed feeling under-valued in their schools and consequently unwilling to take on leaderships roles. Considering that theorists say teachers' sense of efficacy has been shown to be positively related to their goals for students, the effort they invest in teaching, their behaviour in the classroom and student achievement (Mulford, 2003; Rust, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000), it is a characteristic of professional agency identified for immediate address.

Four of the five NQTs who engaged in collegial aspects of induction had the opportunity to engage in team-teaching, but only two of the five stated that they actively engaged in passing on skills to colleagues. Conversely, six of the eight NQTs

said they would relish to opportunity to pass on skills to fellow colleagues, enabling

them to further their sense of professional agency. Interactive teaching, formative

assessment techniques and group work arose as perceived strengths of NQTs, while

six NQTs felt competent and keen to pass on these skills:

> *We know way more than older teachers do about assessment of learning and traffic lighting and using rubrics for assessment. I have an interest in interactive teaching, I have done a few courses in the area and I feel it's a shame not to be able to pass on what you know. The children I know would love it, and I'm sure the staff would find it beneficial even if they didn't like having to hear it from a way younger teacher. We're more up to date with that sort of thing* (Georgina, NQT).

Georgina's sentiments above are re-iterated in literature, as researchers report that

NQTs' fresh approach to teaching is often treated as deficient by principals and

experienced colleagues (Murphy, 2006; Martinez, 2004). Nevertheless, although

principals referred to NQTs as *'confident'* (Carol, Principal), *'energised'* (Isla,

Principal) and *'a breath of fresh air'* (Sara, Principal), these same principals emerged

as underestimating and underutilising NQTs' abilities to infect the whole school

community with replenished energy, impinging at large upon professional agency.

Reciprocal status within an integrated culture emerged as the most controversial

element of professional agency. Six of the eight NQTs viewed themselves as being

in a separate camp to more experienced teachers in their schools. These six NQTs

did not agree that working in a school with reciprocal status was strongly related to

NQT job satisfaction. Their reasoning was that receiving reciprocal status

immediately would be too overwhelming to deal with, and not something that they

felt comfortable with cognitively at the beginning of their first year teaching.

Another NQT suggested that a staged approach to reciprocal status within an integrated culture would be more manageable:

> *It would be a bit too full-on in the initial stages of the beginning year, I think. I suppose I felt a bit more sheltered in the school by being the new teacher and I would prefer to get the feel of the place and the staff properly rather than being immersed in it all and people coming to me looking for answers. It could be too much, too soon. Take it in steps, I suppose* (Shane, NQT).

Research does not fully support Shane's (NQT) opinion, as Johnson et al. (2004) confirm that mentoring in a reciprocal culture benefits the novice and the experienced teacher: the novice being held in high regard, and the novice and the experienced teacher sharing responsibility for growth. Five principals were of the opinion that NQTs' professional agency is dependent on school culture and related to school development. However, literature demonstrates that professional development in terms of agency is multidimensional and personal in addition to being dependent on context (Eisenschmidt, 2006).

Socio-emotional Support

Research evidence demonstrated wide variance in the range of socio-emotional supports available to NQTs. Seven of the eight NQTs mixed with fellow teachers, management, and staff, but the level of interaction differed greatly among schools. Significantly, strong management support was entirely absent for NQTs working in schools with teaching principals. Notably, the three NQTs who received strong management support spoke highly of it, but this support pertained exclusively to schools with administrative principals:

There was enthusiasm and commitment from the principal, like the principal needs to be enthusiastic. The principal makes sure that everybody here would try their best for NQTs and they want the best for the children in their school and they work together for NQTs and they're organised as well. Like there's always communication from the principal to the staff, where you get letters and that with different points and what's coming up and what needs to be done and very good staff meetings that inform the NQTs and are useful for NQTs. Just positive management really (Joanne, NQT).

Varying degrees of supportive social environments were evident in five of the eight schools, where NQTs received elements of mentoring, observation, teaching feedback, lesson modelling, collaborative planning and support from mentors or principals. However, only two NQTs could attest to experiencing a combination of the majority of these attributes of socio-emotional support. NQT networks, including those facilitated by the INTO, were uncommon and were attended infrequently by two of the eight NQTs. None of the other six NQTs attended these networks. Research indicates this lack of off-site networking as a missed opportunity (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006; Earley and Bubb, 2004). Consequently, sparse engagements with off-site support networks mean that NQTs have nowhere to turn for assistance, when problems or conflicts arise that are uncomfortable to discuss with colleagues.

NQTs receiving mentoring support reported that mentors mainly aided them with the translation of curriculum knowledge to classroom practice. This corresponds to research carried out by Wang et al. (2008). Mentoring which incorporated assessment featured in one school, while mentoring that incorporated critical self-reflection featured in one other school. None of the other six schools engaged in

forms of assessment or self-reflection. The school that undertook practices of assessment during mentoring directed the assessment focus towards meeting the requirements of the probationary process, concentrating on the development of the NQT in terms of teaching delivery, classroom management and organisation. Research affirms that mentors actually need to focus NQTs' attention on children's thinking (Athanases and Achinstein, 2003). If this gap in assessment were addressed, NQTs' beliefs about children's thinking could potentially enhance the development of more effective teaching strategies utilised by NQTs.

According to Bubb (2002), lesson observation is one of the most cost-effective practices of evaluation in effective induction. Interestingly, in this study, observing others was reported to occur with greater frequency according to principals than according to NQTs. Most importantly, NQTs reported this practice as being considerably less frequent than they would have liked:

> *I'd love to see much more of teachers in action rather than sitting listening to people telling you; you need to see it in action and the bits I have seen have made such a difference to me now. But that's what we need way more of instead of the NIPT programme* (Georgina, NQT).

However, Georgina's perspective is perhaps a false alternative to the NIPT programme, when in fact a combination of both could be very useful. After all, research demonstrates that we need to know the theory well before we can root it and make sense of it in a classroom context (Beijaard et al., 2010; Bezzina, 2006).

NQTs in the two schools operating more developed induction provisions were afforded the opportunity to visit other schools and view teaching in action, particularly in relation to SEN, assessment of teaching and learning, and self-assessment. Off-site networks with other schools were cited by the two principals who provided this facility as critical to induction success:

> *Teachers learn far better by seeing others in action. They honestly pick up so much from observing another teacher. Some of those aspects may relate to them or things that they needed assurance and clarity and they can pick that up and apply it to their own classrooms. The senior teachers and myself are firm believers of giving plenty of those opportunities* (John, Principal).

Remarkably, John (Principal) fails to acknowledge that NQTs simultaneously need the necessary skills and theory to make sense of what they see. Rots et al. (2012, 2) stress that 'understanding refers to both the understanding one has of oneself at a certain moment in time, as well as the ongoing process of making sense of one's experiences and their impact upon the self'. Ultimately, observation can never realise its potential unless NQTs are fully competent to interpret and make sense of what they see.

Significantly, NQTs indicated that they needed more encouragement before engaging in self-assessment in comparison to higher-utility socio-emotional practices. The component of self-assessment was initially met with conflicting ideas by the two participating NQTs in terms of their comfort levels with the concept:

Self-evaluation . . . which we're all quite nervous about. When we started team teaching, that was a shock for us; that these experienced teachers were going to be coming in, but it's not that bad when you get used to it. Self-evaluation is harder and you need more encouragement, but a bit of encouragement goes a long way. You learn from it all right but it takes a good bit of getting used to (Georgina, NQT).

Self-assessment. It's brilliant, they come in, he might lead a lesson and give suggestions on different things, he has his strengths and I have my strengths so we work off that. That helps you to kind of up your game and kind of identify ways in which you can improve yourself (Jessica, NQT).

One school engaged its NQTs in professional learning communities when NQTs and other teacher colleagues would reflect on their own teaching, and that of others, identifying possible areas for future development and improvement. The ability to self-reflect is one of the important bases for professional growth (Harrison et al., 2005). International research shows that the NQTs' eagerness to self-reflect is insufficient and mentors are more oriented towards supporting adjustment to school culture (Eisenschmidt, 2006). Unfortunately, narrow-focused reflection, evidenced in this study as meeting the targets of the probationary period during induction, may impinge upon the greater establishment of lifelong professional growth. Research regards this limitation in reflective practice to hinder socio-emotional development, the readiness of teachers to develop themselves and analyse their work (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Structured Balance

Reduced teaching workload was the most prominently cited example among respondents to structuring the balance of an induction programme. Literature

supports the view that additional release time has been highly endorsed for this purpose (Timperley and Wiseman, 2003; Villani, 2002). Every single NQT, at some point during their interview, referred to the stresses and pressures of the induction year, often feeling exhausted and overwhelmed by the entire process:

> *Well, like, it's a tough year, your first year out is a long and tiring year and you've an awful lot of work to do and it's your kind of first time doing it so it'll take you a bit longer than maybe when you get used to it, you know, especially with all the plans and that, there's a huge workload there, and I mean even something like if you had a substitute to cover you once a month so you might have a day for planning, it would be a huge help if you just had one day* (Shane, NQT).

Although six principals demonstrated awareness of the high workload demands placed on NQTs, they did not activate any mechanisms to help alleviate this workload. This could be attributed to two factors, the obvious one being the lack of funding for this purpose, but interestingly one principal spoke about the importance of NQTs facing up to the realities of embarking upon a teaching career that does not get easier:

> *There's no point in making the workload way easier for NQTs as that would only be immersing them in a sheltered bubble, which is not reality. Let's face it, the last five years or so have brought about considerable changes for Irish teachers and I have no doubt that the workload and the stress is going to increase in years to come. Current proposals all indicate that* (Iris, Principal).

This tough stance is a dangerous and worrying scenario for any NQT to be confronted with. Research attests that high work demands coupled with low time allocation leads to programme failure (Peeler and Jane, 2003).

The challenge of achieving a healthy life-work balance was highlighted by principals and NQTs, and was portrayed as being particularly difficult at times when NQTs experienced stress, sickness and issues in relation to voice care:

> *Their immune systems need to adjust to the bugs and viruses of the classroom setting; they suffer from sore throats and laryngitis from not looking after their voices. You can see the tiredness in their physical appearance and the stress in their faces as they try to juggle all their new full-time responsibilities* (Carol, Principal).

No principals underestimated the importance of encouraging NQTs to look after their physical and mental health. *Employee Assistance Service for Teacher*s is provided by the DES, offering confidential assistance from skilled counsellors in relation to work and personal issues. Work/Life Balance is one of their areas of specialism, yet the existence of this service was unknown to fourteen of the sixteen respondents in this study. The two respondents who had heard of the service were principals, but they had never availed of it themselves or recommended it to others. This finding indicated a lack of assistance being attributed to achieving life balance.

Research indicates that it is not only NQTs that need a clear sense of purpose, but induction programmes as well (Moir, 2009; Bartell, 2005; Wong et al., 2005). Only one of the eight schools could be categorised as having a clear programme vision, with one other school having unwritten, informal aims. Although NQTs in these two schools were fully engaged in formal evaluation in collaboration with staff, no formal evaluation was presented to the Board of Management. This does not reflect the work of theorists who believe that programme vision and evaluation

must follow a coherent, planned structure (Main, 2008a; Portner, 2005) that is piloted and redefined by all stakeholders (Totterdell et al., 2004).

Conclusion

It is evident from these findings that although widely varying induction practices exist among schools, the professional development of NQTs is not being prioritised. This chapter has demonstrated how the exclusion of professional development opportunities has resulted in a spectrum of ineffective outcomes. Significantly, in the minority of schools where professional development is addressed, it remains exceptionally difficult to strike an appropriately balanced provision as desired by NQTs. Thus, the next chapter looks at synthesising the information from these findings to provide a logical and coherent overview of the nature of induction practices in schools in this study, in light of the evidence from principals and NQTs. It also explores Main's (2008a) framework used for evaluating the components of effective induction, and discusses its suitability or otherwise as a representation of the components of effective induction in the ROI.

Chapter 6   Towards a new typology for Ireland's NQT induction practice and an adaptation of the Main model

Introduction

The data was collected and initially collated to answer the research questions. Further analysis of the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 developed three themes for discussion in this chapter. Theme one arises from the significant gap that has emerged between the rhetoric of proposed induction policy and the realities of practice, coupled with the disparity between principals' and NQTs' perceptions of appropriate school-based induction. Theme two introduces a typology of Ireland's NQT induction practice – an original development from the research data that is not per se in the literature. Theme three aims to critique Main's (2008a) framework of the components of effective induction evolving in a reconstructed framework specific to effective induction in the ROI. It is hoped that the reconstructed framework will aid Irish policymakers and stakeholders to compare current and future plans for induction, in alignment with perceived needs, in the midst of current induction proposals and developments in Ireland.

The Rhetoric–Reality Gap between policy and practice and between principals' and NQTs' perceptions of appropriate school-based induction

Considering that full implementation of *CEPP* by 2016 has been proposed, the research findings of this study provide timely discussion of the rhetoric of induction initiatives and their contextual reality of a conflict of interest for principals. Analysis

of the research evidence also illuminated barriers which NQTs met in attempting to negotiate beyond the status quo of induction provided by principals in their schools. Thus, this section of the chapter provides a platform for discussing and examining the realities behind the rhetoric, highlighting not only a gap between proposed policy and practice but also disparity between principals' and NQTs' perceptions of appropriate school-based induction.

Regarding the role of the school principal in induction, findings reveal a fundamental disconnect between the perspectives of respondents in this case study and the core concepts in the *CEPP Consultation Document*, published by *The Teaching Council of Ireland*, 2012. The *CEPP Consultation Document* positions principals in an evaluative capacity during NQT induction, saying they will 'observe and evaluate the NQT's practice' (2012, 22) and that 'they will be in a position to make an informed recommendation to the TCI in relation to the NQT's suitability for entry to the profession' (2012, 7). Such appraisal is necessary if NQTs are to be recognised as fully probated teachers at the end of their induction period. Although literature asserts that undertaking evaluative practices has been commonplace for principals in many other countries for years now, with noteworthy results (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009), this rhetoric was strongly opposed by most NQTs and principals in this study. Respondents' firm opposition to evaluation was shown by its absence in six of the eight case study schools.

Principals considered the prospect of this rhetoric of evaluation as *'unmanageable and complicated'*, defined by one principal as *'a high-stakes evaluation process'* (Áine, Principal). The majority of principals felt uneasy at the prospect of utilising their authority to deem NQTs unfit to meet probationary requirements. A common thread to NQTs' responses was that it seemed contradictory that while principals were responsible for establishing supportive, trustworthy, collegial relationships with NQTs, they would simultaneously be commissioned to the demands of measuring outcomes where NQTs' recognition as fully probated teachers would be in the balance. As outlined in the quotations below, both NQTs and principals had acute reservations about the feasibility of these two roles harmoniously co-existing so as not to adversely impact upon relationship development and professional growth.

An inspector coming in doesn't know you; he's judging you purely on your teaching. Whereas, if you had a disagreement with your principal, you might feel the consequences if they were inspecting you too. It wouldn't work then. (Glenn, NQT)	*A lot of principals have a personal relationship; they mightn't be that comfortable coming to NQTs and telling them that they're not doing that well. It's hard to know, you'd have to be very trusting of your principal. I think in that way it would be quite complicated.* (Georgina, NQT)
I don't really see it as an ideal situation. I do think it would blur roles slightly and I wouldn't be a huge advocate, say, or a huge fan. I do think a principal has a role to play, but I think in terms of judging someone's capabilities or competence, I wouldn't be happy to be in that situation and making judgement calls on other people. I think you'd want to be very sure of teaching practices, very, very sure of your facts before you'd be in a position where you could go in and judge somebody else. (Carol, Principal)	*I don't think the principal in the school should be asked to evaluate somebody that's working there. It may change the environment of the principal into a recruitment process and that certainly wouldn't make sense either.* (Norman, Principal)

Thus, findings from this study appear to assert that notions of relationship and evaluation, albeit necessary considerations in induction (Craig, 2013; Day and Lee, 2011), should be directed in separate avenues and interpreted from different perspectives. Although concepts of mutual respect, collaboration, and trust associated with the principal's role, which resonated in the literature review (Menon, 2012; McGraner, 2008), also surfaced in the *CEPP Consultation Document* in terms of 'communication and relationship-building' (2012, 12) for the NQT, perspectives from the research evidence suggest that such concepts would be significantly undermined by situating the principal in a position where their boundaries extend to assuming the role of evaluator. Principals felt that this rhetoric would force them to orchestrate the potentially delicate terrain of meshing social and cultural values that inevitably intersect with notions of ultimate accountability in respect of undertaking teacher evaluation responsibilities.

By recommending the rhetoric of principals' evaluative capacity in probation, the *CEPP Consultation Document* may be overlooking research on the emergence of conflicts and residual consequences when collaboration and authority clash with hierarchical and bureaucratic realities (Wood, 2007). Given the fact that the principal would be responsible for evaluating the NQT and subsequently determining their future employment capacity, this may manifest towards NQT agendas of willingness and tolerance to achieve a means. It could also result in principals being concerned with 'consistency and order' (Kotter, in Fidler and Atton, 2004, 30) in relation to induction, instead of focusing on 'constructive or adaptive change' for induction (ibid.). There is similarly a fear that principals may become

overly concerned with technical issues and implementation of proposed policy instead of focusing on specific purposes and values in relation to induction. NQTs and principals unanimously agreed that *CEPP* proposals would compromise elements of support and trust in their relationships due to proposals' underlying features of managerialism and performativity. Thus, one is compelled to ponder whether the proposals in the *CEPP Consultation Document* create appropriate conditions for NQTs to flourish or for principals to develop constructive, worthwhile changes for induction.

Acknowledging that remarkable things happened in many of the schools within this study, this theme also focuses on the dilemmas faced by NQTs who worked to negotiate beyond the status quo operationalised by school principals. Discussion of this finding addresses the importance of separating rhetoric from reality in induction if we are to support NQTs' efforts to redefine the norm. Literature attests that too often, dynamic educators disappear within systems that are antithetical to what NQTs envisioned when they entered the profession (Cherubini, 2007; Long, 2004). Six of the eight NQTs in this study appeared to enter school systems which to varying degrees disdained change and thwarted innovation.

New ideas were not embraced, they have no interest in new methodologies we learned in college, they frown on them because they feel they have seen it all before as most of them are teaching a lifetime.	*My views were not valued on most things. It just knocks your confidence to try and put your ideas forward*.
(Shane, NQT)	(Jane, NQT)

NQTs immersed in such systems emerged as being robbed of their vigour, their thirst for growth as professionals and their personal drive to make a difference. They portrayed themselves as weary individuals due to their constant battle to grow and learn. One NQT described herself as *'confident to change the world'* after her initial teacher education, but expressed frustration, disengagement and a loss of self-confidence as she internalised herself as settling for the status quo. Although a minority of NQTs in this study articulated stories of success, tales of self-doubt and discontentment dominated the data:

My principal never compliments me on the positive things I do, but the moment I make the smallest mistake, it will be promptly pointed out to me often in front of the staff or the pupils.	*When I hear negative comments, it puts me off implementing new techniques. There isn't a buzz of excitement for new ideas and strategies or anything.*
(Lorraine, NQT)	(Joanne, NQT)

In order to break down barriers between veterans and novices, an understanding is required as to why veterans, many of whom are probably highly effective teachers, adopt the attitudes they do. Many veterans or principals said their time was highly preoccupied with school management issues, which may somewhat explain principals' behaviours towards NQTs. Principals' misjudgement of NQTs' needs, in addition to attending to demanding, predetermined work schedules, continually arose as noteworthy issues.

In terms of collegial support, a shortage of evidence emerged in the findings to demonstrate encouragement from principals for NQTs to explore and experiment as learners. NQTs largely envisioned an ideal induction where professionals would

work together in a community driven by interest and excitement for new ideas and growth. Conversely to their initial vision, half of the NQTs experienced alienation at some point during their induction because of their excitement for implementing new practices. Whilst a feeling of powerlessness arose for these NQTs, they were sometimes demoralised by what I would term 'collegial frustration'. This is a concept that I have developed from the findings, which I have categorised as the lack of like-minded colleagues to embrace professional growth and change. Joanne (NQT) faced collegial frustration when the mentor she was assigned demonstrated little interest in the job of mentoring and appeared to have minimum passion for professional learning: *'She had no idea of the practices I learned, her own practices were completely different to mine. She didn't really know or care what I had learned at all.'* To soften the blow of collegial frustration, NQTs turned to fellow NQTs for support: *'Thank goodness for my college friends in other schools and the NQTs at the workshops; I couldn't have imagined it without having one another to lean on'* (Jane, NQT). The challenge to maintain convictions and continue to grow in the face of systems that did not embrace change was overwhelming, ultimately resulting in some NQTs changing themselves in ways they had not envisaged: *'You don't feel you really have a choice. I guess you lose yourself and your ways a little, you persevere with it and change your ways and you learn not to rock the boat, I guess'* (Shane, NQT).

Remarkably, one principal acknowledged the reality of such dilemmas for NQTs. This principal said that *'all stakeholders must value ongoing learning'* if barriers are to be broken down:

Until we as stakeholders look at our profession as one that requires ongoing learning, how can we be expected to be viewed by NQTs as professionals (John, Principal).

This principal believed that, to challenge the status quo, the whole school community must adopt the attitude that being a professional educator means that you never stop learning. Correspondingly, Jessica, the NQT under this principal's leadership, credited her development to regular conversations with colleagues, and opportunities to experiment with new ideas. Jessica highly valued the opportunity to question and re-think the appropriateness of her induction practices over time, the benefits of which, although widely acknowledged in literature (Crosswell et al., 2011; Howe, 2006), were unfortunately largely deficit in the findings of this research.

On the whole, we have known for years now that such barriers existed for NQTs (McCann and Johannessen, 2004; DEST, 2002; Turnbull, 2002), but what is alarming is that they continue to exist today. Inevitably, if they are still in existence, then it stands to reason that a proficient job is not being done to address dilemmas facing NQTs in schools. For NQTs to negotiate beyond the status quo and to redefine the norm, it appears that principals will need to interrogate their school status quo, to separate the rhetoric that has too commonly defined their work from the realities faced by NQTs. It is clear from these findings that there are still too many school environments where NQTs feel isolated and professionally compromised in their passion for knowledge and quest for professional development.

Typologies of NQT induction operationalised in schools

When I examined the data, it was possible to identify various conditions and practices which represented the overall sample of induction provisions in this research. The conditions and practices that emerged are presented in the following table as the defining features of induction provision which were operationalised across the eight schools in this case study. Then, using these defining features as an analysis tool aiding categorisation, I identified four typologies of induction provision that subsequently emerged. These typologies, namely 'Laissez Faire', 'Collegial', 'Competency Based' and 'Self-Directing Professional', will be explained and explored in light of their contribution to NQT induction.

Literature asserts that many of the defining features of the typologies arising from this research play a key role in influencing NQT learning and development in schools (Flores, in Wang et al., 2010, 45). However, the typologies themselves shape the ways in which professional identity is (re)constructed as NQTs' personal beliefs, values and perceptions are challenged against school-based influences. Day encapsulates this as 'a two-way struggle in which teachers try to create their own social reality by attempting to make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socialising forces of the school culture' (1999, 59).

Table 6.1: Typologies of NQT induction across eight primary schools in Ireland, 2011

Defining Features	*Laissez Faire* (3 schools)	*Collegial* (3 schools)	*Competency Based* (1 school)	*Self-Directing Professional* (1 school)
Induction vision	Nothing identifiable	Informal	Content monitored and evaluated to meet probationary requirement	Formal, written policy. Vision evaluated and assessed
Programme design	Absent	Collegial	Meet external requirements	Multifaceted, inclusive of CPD
Management support	Minimal	Low input	Support informed by inspectorate	Funded, exemplary support
Mentor support	Minimal	Ongoing interaction	Observation and judgement by all stakeholders	Social, ethical, personal and professional support
Professional relationships	Sporadic, but desired	Knowledge sharing process	Professional critics subject to workplace absorption	Within and outside the workplace environment
Staff development	Not a priority	In-service for mentor and NQT	In line with DES requirements/ current policy initiatives	Lifelong learning
NQT's disposition	Vulnerability, solo practitioner	Motivated	Committed, with visibility	Change agents
Social recognition	Isolated	Sense of belonging	Probation at stake for full recognition	Recognised as part of an inquiry community
Acculturation	Compliance	Workplace absorption	Management skills and authority developed	Personalised educational visions
Orientation	Individualistic	Institutional	Workplace competency	Two-way interaction: NQT and others
NQT's contributions	Not valued	Somewhat valued	Directed tenet of probation	Onus on the NQT to contribute

Laissez Faire

This typology of induction emerged in three schools as being highly informal, ad hoc

and sporadic in nature. Although this typology instantly equipped NQTs with

individualism, NQTs unanimously experienced vulnerability and feelings of

uncertainty that resulted in social recognition being threatened. NQTs felt

vulnerable in the experience of their own limits in competence:

> *Sometimes, like, you couldn't help but feel disillusioned, the reality of teaching is just so different from what you experienced on TP in college. It was hard to go on with your work every day; I even resented the kids when I was under pressure, I was short with them* (Lorraine, NQT).

However, theorists posit professional relationships as 'a potential threat to self-esteem', as external criticism can increase feelings of vulnerability beyond the scope of experiencing personal shortcomings (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002, 111). The desire for professional relationships within the laissez faire typology was compelling, being envisioned by NQTs as an essential source of recognition. Kelchtermans and Ballet write that NQTs pursuing this agenda find themselves 'torn between experiences of success and the threat of vulnerability' (2002, 111). NQTs in the laissez faire typology, practising as solo practitioners in veteran-oriented schools, felt aggrieved by being treated as a separate entity from more experienced colleagues, affirming the output of 'hierarchical, formal relations' (De Lima, 2003). Overall, the laissez faire typology presented itself as a paradox to the literature that advocated a multifaceted approach to induction. NQTs in this typology were cognisant that they had lost their idealism and increased their compliance under the lack of clear expectations:

> *There is no other option, I guess. You just have to get on with it and get through it. You never know what the next day will bring* (Glenn, NQT).

Collegial

The collegial typology, evidenced in three schools, encouraged ongoing interaction between NQTs and experienced teachers. Researchers show that NQTs are challenged to maintain their initial beliefs and positive image as they become socialised into the ethos of the school (Anthony et al., 2011; Moir, 2009). However, NQTs within this typology largely emerged as motivated and committed to teaching and learning because of the supportive atmosphere and informative, collaborative culture of their workplace. Despite formal arrangements and workplace discourse on the virtues of collaboration, traditional norms and practices tended to be reinforced, instead of joint work that could also have facilitated transfer of NQTs' knowledge and skills to others. This finding is reiterated in the work of Jones (2005) and Wang et al. (2008). NQTs' induction was facilitated by a sense of belonging, security, support and learning of school norms from colleagues.

By using their mentors and colleagues as sounding boards, NQTs appeared to examine their school workplace as an organisation, in the course of this knowledge sharing process:

> *Collaborating with others meant that you soon found out the opinions and thoughts of the other staff. You got to know the ideas of the different groups and it gave you a chance to find out where best you fit in among the staff* (Pamela, NQT).

Cognisant of their co-constructed knowledge of the workplace, as highlighted in the above quotation, NQTs understood and largely adapted to school norms and traditions, internalising power relationships and alliances. Arising from this

typology's trait of workplace socialisation, NQTs shifted from individualistic towards institutional orientation. Thus, the greatest downfall of participation in the collegial typology for NQTs was ultimately the way in which they adapted so readily to the culture of their schools. What is interesting is the distinction between how NQTs were supported and why they were supported in this way. As evidenced in the findings, NQTs had a supportive environment, but unfortunately, one which perhaps supported NQTs to do things in the ways in which stakeholders in this environment liked things to be done.

In keeping with practices of collegiality, NQTs avoided the instigation of micro-political change, as strong group identities had already been forged in workplaces. NQTs similarly received no direction towards reconciling their idealistic expectations within the reality of their school workplace. Hargreaves and Fullan encapsulate this experience for NQTs as 'an issue of who you value and how well you value them' (1992, 226). As NQTs were generally socially content within this typology, they did not pursue personalised educational visions. In workplaces where the fit was comfortable, there were frequent accounts of collaborative relationships and valuing of the NQT's contribution:

> *The skills of the NQT and the vision of the NQT has married very well with the fabric of the school community and it works very well for the development of the school as well as the NQT* (Áine, Principal).

However, if the fit presented itself as being uncomfortable, one wonders if adaptation to institutional norms would still prevail to the extent of workplace absorption as evidenced in this particular scenario.

Competency Based

This typology of induction addressed the objective of fulfilling probationary requirements and emerged in one of the eight schools. Although attendance at NIPT workshops was a required activity within this typology, it was regarded as failing to achieve its intended professional learning outcomes. The high level of assessment and evaluation integral to this typology considerably increased the level of visibility surrounding the NQT's professional practice. In spite of the relative isolation of the classrooms, this model subjected the NQT to observations by colleagues, the principal, inspectors, parents and others, this high degree of visibility comparative to 'working in a fishbowl' (Blase, in Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002, 111). Coping with visibility was a significant outcome of this typology. This led to the NQT's awareness that her actions were perceived, interpreted and judged by others, and that these perceptions and judgements determined the images that other stakeholders in the workplace formed.

Research posits that authority is one of the greatest preoccupations for NQTs in terms of coping with visibility (Veenman, 1984). Self-interests being at stake was integral to this competency based typology, as the NQT was highly aware that publicly manifesting her authority and management skills contributed to positive evaluations as a successful teacher. One noteworthy consequence of the apprenticeship of evaluation is that stakeholders feel they know how to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Bullock, 2011). Unfortunately, experienced teachers acting as critics within this typology appeared unaware that their

apprenticeship as evaluators has made them insiders and subsequently elements of the system they critique. Thus, what emerged as a fundamental outcome of this typology was another diagnosis of workplace absorption, as it remains extremely difficult to conduct an objective, critical analysis of an induction programme once you have become an element of that programme.

Self-Directing Professional

In this typology, which emerged in one school, the NQT was engaged in a practice with their inquiry communities that apprenticed her into becoming a professional, while growing as a change agent. Within this small sample, high levels of inquiry-based practices were a rarity, which makes this typology particularly interesting to explore from a management point of view. In contrast to the previous typology, which focused on probation as an end-point, this typology sought to assist the NQT to enact and broaden her personal repertoire of educational skills both within and outside the workplace environment. A focus on professional inquiry featured as a goal and outcome of this typology, shared unanimously by the whole school community. The finding of this outcome affirms other international studies in suggesting that in order to achieve the shared object of long-term professional learning, rather than short-term survival and fit, alignment of the purposes and processes of the induction programme is vital (Anthony et al., 2011; Flores and Day, 2006). The NQT's account of her experience readily acknowledged the value of support addressing social, ethical, personal and professional domains. Support provided by senior management was particularly affirming.

It must be acknowledged that to take full advantage of this self-directing typology of professionalism, the NQT needed to have a shared understanding of the goals of induction and to exhibit considerable agency in order to maximise opportunities for professional learning. Whilst this typology embraced a two-way interaction about teaching and learning between the NQT and experienced teachers, the onus was on the NQT to contribute to the induction process in an active and purposeful manner in order to entirely fulfil the induction outcomes.

Within this study, NQTs' and principals' constructions of the defining features of induction resulted in the four typologies of induction provision that emerged from the research evidence. Overall, induction outcomes arising from the typologies provided evidence that induction can be both beneficial and productive, particularly when the defining features of the experience are directed towards supporting the NQT to become a professional inquirer.

Reconstructed Framework of the Component of Effective Induction with Specificity to Effective Induction in the ROI

In a systematic review of induction frameworks and integrated professional development, Main (2008a) categorised 'pedagogical development, socio-emotional support, professional agency and structured balance' as underpinning effective induction (2008a, 8). Sub-components of these categories were further developed in accordance with the literature review undertaken for this research (Figure 2.2). Although Main's framework is very valuable, it is somewhat a generic

framework of the components of effective induction, and there remains a need for a framework to reflect the specific context of the ROI in this case.

In light of the research findings of this study, this section of the chapter will critique Main's framework of effective induction, and will discuss its development and reconstruction in order to address specific gaps that emerged in providing Irish NQTs in this study with an effective induction experience. Utilising Main's framework throughout analysis was very appropriate for establishing the presence or absence of each structural component and more significantly NQTs' perceptions of their worth. Therefore, Main's framework was used as a starting point; it was developed and contextualised in light of the specific context findings of this research and was accordingly reconstructed to reflect effective induction of localised circumstance in the ROI.

Departures from Main's framework emerged in relation to the component of 'structured balance'. 'Structured balance' arose as a cornerstone for immediate address in the ROI. Further departure from Main's framework arose in light of participation in NIPT induction (out-of-school strand) being made mandatory for Irish NQTs from September 2012. Main's framework failed to address inclusive provision of mandatory elements of NQT induction beyond the context of the school environment. Therefore, NIPT induction was included in the reconstructed framework as a feature of induction but with sub-component features suggesting improvements regarding more effective administration and integration. Three of the other four structural components of Main's framework were present to varying

degrees in this research, namely 'socio-emotional support', 'professional agency' and 'pedagogical development'. In accordance with NQTs' perceptions and desires for effective provisions, attention was attributed to sub-components within each structural component, which were accordingly merged, renamed or deleted. Thus, in terms of these three categories of provision, the reconstructed framework builds on Main's work, highlighting attributes for effectiveness particular to NQT induction in Ireland. The critiquing process, integral to the development of the new framework (Figure 6.1) will now be explained in detail.

Figure 6.1

Reconstructed Framework of the Components of Effective Induction
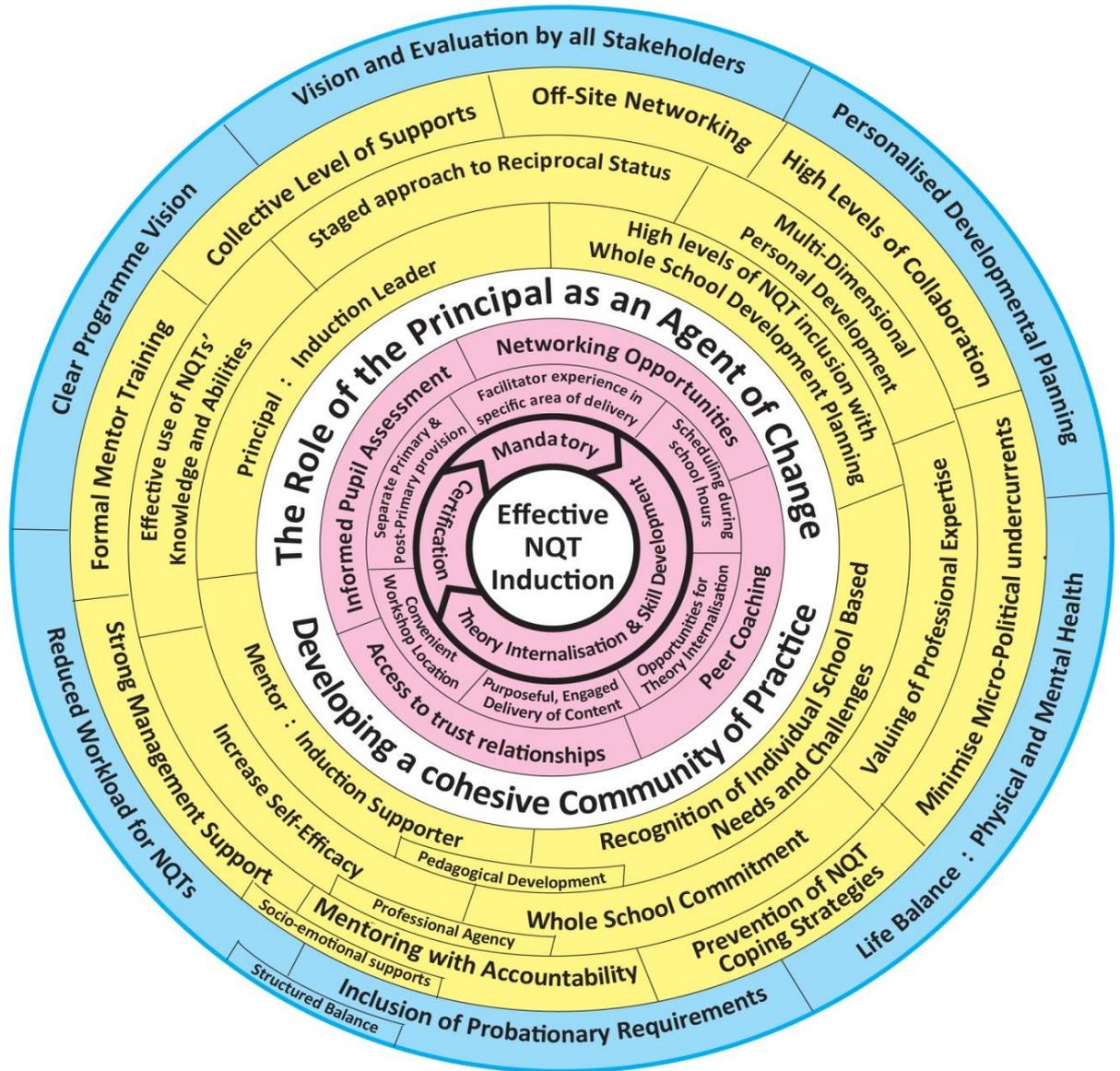
LEGEND

Framing Arena of Structured Balance

School Based Induction (In-School Strand)

NIPT Induction (Out-of-School Strand)

Analysis of induction provisions revealed gaps, especially surrounding practices of 'structured balance', which were almost exclusively omitted in research findings, despite theorists advocating the importance of 'structured balance' in the well-being and personal life of the NQT (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009). The absence of structured balance arose as being centrally disadvantageous for NQTs. Many NQTs reported high stress levels as a direct consequence of the lack of 'structured balance' in their induction, which they in turn internalised as impeding their personal and professional development. Consequently, to address effective provision, the component of 'structured balance' was reconstructed in the new framework as the outline arena framing effective provision of all other components and sub-components.

In addition to impeding life balance, heavy workloads had resulted in a notable acquisition of coping strategies for NQTs. Such strategies featured as being entirely detached from the practices of vision and evaluation that NQTs deemed essential for all stakeholders in the induction process. Therefore, vision and evaluation by all stakeholders and prevention of coping strategies were added to the reconstructed arenas of 'structured balance' and 'socio-emotional support', respectively. Informed recognition of the emergence of coping strategies was perceived as being very useful for induction providers, signifying warnings of deficits in 'structured balance' with preventatives being easier to administer than cures.

Data analysis revealed that the educational objectives of probation were being somewhat stunted by the intense focus that NQTs placed on curricular planning in

relation to fulfilling probationary requirements. Previous research conducted in Ireland by Killeavy and Murphy (2006) similarly cited planning workload in relation to probation as a key factor limiting reflective practice. NQTs' narrow focus on meeting the specifications of the probationary period appeared as ultimately preventing them from concentrating on the overall aim of induction: to become competent practitioners who can utilise knowledge gleaned from induction to enhance and develop future teaching and learning. In order to enable reflective theorisation processes, NQTs felt that an amendment of personalisation in structure would create a more holistic basis for planning development. While this research highlights the importance of a personalised developmental process for NQTs, the initiative itself is well documented in literature, which shows that development will occur at different rates for different NQTs in the process of professional learning (Hammerness, 2006). These findings contributed to the reconstructed framework under the headings 'clear programme vision', 'inclusion of probationary requirements' and 'personalised, developmental planning' in the framing arena of 'structured balance'.

A new core for the reconstructed framework emerged as a result of the critique. This was deemed appropriate given that out-of-school workshops facilitated by the NIPT were central to the induction provisions in seven of the eight schools in this study. Although both principals and NQTs were disappointed with the generic content of the NIPT workshops, the stipulation of this out-of-school strand as a mandatory initiative leading to certification nevertheless succeeded in bringing about high levels of attendance. As a result, it must be acknowledged for its

capacity to internalise theory and generate skill development for NQTs. This finding was illustrated in a cyclical manner in the centre of the reconstructed framework.

Ill-designed workshops in terms of organisation and content, tired facilitators, lack of expertise in areas of delivery, the combination of primary and post-primary NQTs, the inconvenient geographical spread of education centres and provision outside of school hours, had all emerged as severe organisational and administrational malfunctions of the mandatory NIPT experience. Whilst these malfunctions were noted, they were turned around in the new framework as operational functions of NIPT paramount to realising more effective provision, namely 'purposeful, engaged delivery of content', 'facilitator experience in specific area of delivery', 'separate primary and post-primary provision: sector specific', 'convenient workshop location' and 'scheduling during school hours'. Next, the new NIPT core was further developed to highlight perceived merits of its current provision. As a result, informed pupil assessment, access to trust relationships and networking opportunities were all framed. On second round coding, peer coaching was added as another attribute of NIPT induction, highly utilised by NQTs who lacked mentor access in their schools.

Data analysis suggested that many of the sub-components of the initial framework, developed in accordance with Main's (2008a) category of pedagogical development, were absorbed into the NIPT sphere of the reconstructed framework. For example, under 'professional development of thinking strategies', there were initially four sub-headings: education centres, workshops, university relationship

and school-wide curricular focus. However, with data reduction, education centres and workshops were merged into one, forming the 'mandatory' category of NIPT provision whilst being absorbed into the new NIPT sphere. University links were not desired by NQTs, leading to subsequent deletion. From second round coding, it emerged that the heading of 'school-wide curricular focus' was currently related to school development planning, featuring minimal levels of NQT engagement. This was considered by NQTs as a missed opportunity. Hence, this was remedied in the new pedagogical arena, advocating 'high levels of NQT inclusion with Whole School Development Planning'. Emerging strongly from data analysis of pedagogical evidence was the importance of recognising individual school-based needs and challenges in induction, with the principal as leader and the mentor as supporter in this field. Hence, all such perspectives to improve effectiveness were appropriately assigned to the new pedagogical development arena.

An insert of 'the role of the principal as an agent of change' was fused between the in-school and out-of-school induction strands in the reconstructed framework. This insert has the greatest capacity to reform current practices and enhance effectiveness by initiating engagement between the NIPT and schools as cohesive communities of practice. The principal needs to take on board the provisions of the NIPT and then align school induction practices with the skills and theory disseminated by the NIPT, adapting generic content for induction to the specific needs of a school's climate. Given that from 2012 NIPT participation is now mandatory, the central role of mediator of change ultimately rests with principals. Principals predominantly emerged in the findings as being cognisant of induction

complexities and the lack of interconnectivity between in-school and out-of-school strands. NQTs in this study concurred that if principals are serious about supporting NQTs, they must consider the larger contexts in which induction takes place: NIPT provision in this case, to ensure a sustainable induction process within their workplace (Wood, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The fundamental role that principals can play as agents of change is further underscored by literature attesting that NQTs are more influenced by the context and support of their initial school setting than by any teacher preparation programmes (Cherian and Daniel, 2008).

Professional Agency emerged as a contentious category of support for NQTs. Despite NQTs' up-to-date pedagogical knowledge from their initial teacher education, the few NQTs who held leadership responsibilities tended to hold these roles in areas such as after-school sporting activities rather than in areas of the curriculum targeted by the DES for strategic improvement, such as specific objectives targeted in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020*. Furthermore, literature shows that NQTs who hold multiple roles believe that their skills are varied and well utilised, and register significantly higher organisational commitment than those who do not hold multiple roles (Johnson et al., 2005). Given the stark contrast between this theory and the findings of this research, this thesis challenges principals and mentors to consider why they are not tapping into the pedagogical knowledge of NQTs, and presents this in the reconstructed framework as 'increase self-efficacy' with more 'effective use of NQTs' knowledge and abilities'.

As regards 'Reciprocal Status within an Integrated Culture', in the original framework area of professional agency, the two NQTs identified as engaging in varying levels of reciprocally interactive behaviour did not respond comfortably with their experiences. They stated that at times this was overwhelming to deal with as a result of other members of staff coming to them looking for answers. Hence, this heading was redefined as 'Staged Approach to Reciprocal Status', connected directly to NQTs' preferences to earn the trust and respect of stakeholders over time, while allowing them to acquire competence in their newfound knowledge. 'Whole School Commitment' and 'Valuing of Professional Expertise' were added as sub-components of the reconstructed arena of professional agency, representing principals' perspectives that senior staff and post-holders required greater self-confidence to commit to induction responsibilities at a whole-school level. Second round coding also contributed a new sub-component to professional agency, namely 'multidimensional, personal development for NQTs'. Eisenschmidt (2006) posits that agency is multidimensional and personal, in addition to being dependent on context. Principals' perspectives in this study concur that the personal capacities of NQTs must be fulfilled before matters of agency can be realised.

Though multiple manifestations of supportive induction practices arose in this study, divergence of opinion emerged between the responses of NQTs and principals in relation to the level of socio-emotional provision. Unlike principals, NQTs found the majority of supports to be predominantly pedagogical in nature and somewhat lacking in socio-emotional support. Notably, though, mentors who

received formal training were perceived by NQTs as more effective providers of socio-emotional support than mentors who did not receive training. Therefore, mentor training in awareness of its benefits was directly incorporated in reshaping socio-emotional support. While elements of Main's (2008a) component of socio-emotional support were evidenced in the data, supports were grossly lacking at a collective level. While the few NQTs who received strong management support spoke highly of it, this support pertained exclusively to schools with administrative principals. Thus, the need for strong management support in all schools and at a collective level was made explicit in the new framework. Negativities emerged from respondents in relation to mentor support operating largely at an instructional level, focusing on classroom practice and curriculum knowledge, hence mentoring was changed to 'mentoring with accountability', now encompassing assessment and self-reflection.

Off-site networking was noted as a rarity in this research, implicating sparse engagements with the benefits of off-site networking as a missed opportunity (Killeavy and Murphy, 2006; Earley and Bubb, 2004), and thus highlighting the need for its inclusion in the reconstructed framework. Socio-emotional support tended to stem from schools with a culturally based ethos of care, with collaboration being one of its critical elements. However, Jane's (NQT) perception of the *'cliques that formed with their own agendas'* develops our awareness of the danger of supportive school environments evolving in line with the micro-political undercurrents of school culture (Pillay, 2004), something to be avoided in future provisions of socio-emotional support.

Finally, one of the purposes of the reconstructed framework is to aid Irish policymakers and stakeholders to compare current and future plans for induction in alignment with perceived needs particular to the ROI. Although the presentation of the reconstructed framework is timely because of current induction proposals and policy developments in the ROI, I am, however, not making a claim regarding obvious generalisability outside the ROI. The reconstructed framework appears as the first of its kind in the ROI, specifically incorporating mandatory NIPT provision (out-of-school strand) in addition to school-based induction (in-school strand). It is the contextual specificity of the new framework that makes the presentation of its features of effective induction most interesting. It is a complex framework that raises many questions for NQT induction providers and facilitators who wish to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of their provisions.

Moving Forward: The two main elements of the Reconstructed Framework

The two main elements of the reconstructed framework are in-school and out-of-school induction. Proposals for future induction in Ireland have vastly changed the context of induction from ITE upwards (TCI, 2012). These two framework elements provide concrete realisation of students' needs at the conclusion of ITE. By outlining in real terms the next stage in NQTs' educational provision, the framework provides a bridge between ITE and Induction, paving the way for a more coherent process towards professional development. It is hoped that this knowledge of NQTs' specific needs will prevent induction stakeholders working in a vacuum and thus result in

the emergence of practices that include vision and evaluation from all induction stakeholders.

The framework can be used by stakeholders as a lens to evaluate provisions, reflective of the need to enhance NQTs' ownership of personalised professional growth, which is integral to the reconstructed framework. The framework also considers the interplay of school principals between in-school and out-of-school induction, noting their potential to develop a more cohesive community of practice. Principals have the greatest capacity to improve in-school induction by evaluating mandatory out-of-school provisions, and subsequently adapting generic content to align with specific school based needs. The out-of-school induction element clearly outlines particular aspects of NIPT provision for future improvement. Overall, the framework provides an immediate focus for open and meaningful professional dialogue centred upon analysing, improving and strengthening the place of induction on the continuum of life-long learning.

Chapter 7   A future for Ireland's NQT induction: adopting the reconstructed Main model

Introduction

Voices of Irish principals and Irish NQTs were predominantly absent from the dominant discourses about NQT induction in the analysis of literature. However, this inclusive, participative research succeeds in allowing the previously absent Irish perspective to now enter the debate. Exploring forms of NQT induction practices in eight primary schools in a border county in the ROI, which has no statutory provision for induction, revealed rhetoric not matching reality resulting in unforeseen consequences for principals and NQTs. A new typology of Ireland's NQT induction practices and a reconstructed framework of the components of effective induction have therefore been produced from this research to add to Ireland's scant literature on the practices of induction. The findings also contribute to conceptualisation of induction, having critiqued and reconstructed Main's (2008) framework. Reflections on contributions to literature, implications for practice and the reconstruction of Main's framework of the components of effective induction form the three sections of this chapter.

Relationships to teacher induction literature

Ireland's NQTs often experienced practices which ran counter to previous research attesting new professionals' needs in meeting current expectations in a knowledge-based society (Conway et al., 2009). Examples included failure to include NQTs in

whole school planning and policy developments which emerged as a central contradiction to the concept that NQTs have a key role to play in providing quality education (DES, 2011). School micro-politics emerged as an area of strong concern for two NQTs, who described their colleagues and principals as being anything but supportive, resulting in these NQTs actively avoiding collaboration, thus diminishing benefits to be had by experts and neophytes reflecting on their practice and learning together in a supportive environment (Howe, 2006).

Significantly, in the two schools where professional development was addressed, it remained exceptionally difficult to strike an appropriately balanced provision (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009). Discrepancies arose regarding principals' and NQTs' perceptions of NQTs' professional development needs during induction, though both perspectives deserve credence. NQTs desired short-term assistance to alleviate current problems they were personally experiencing while principals felt NQTs would benefit from longer term assistance more tailored towards school development needs. Lack of personnel to act as mentors in smaller schools also contributed to inhibiting NQTs' professional development. Characteristics of induction contributing to new professionalism were given little consideration by six of the eight schools, providing minimal scope to enhance teachers' attitudes to personalised professional development (TCI, 2012; Beijaard et al., 2010). One single school adopted a school-based approach to induction that placed the NQT on a continuum of professional development. It was surprising that only one school did this given that the literature is replete with calls for NQTs to be placed on a

continuum, affirming that induction is a stage in a continuum that must extend into lifelong learning (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Conway et al., 2009; Keay, 2007).

Adverse effects of failing to align mentors and NQTs were evident in elements of professional growth, as well as social development. Contrary to guidance criteria for mentor selection incorporating qualities such as interpersonal skills, communication and knowledge about the learning of NQTs (Bickmore and Bickmore, 2010), seniority and hierarchical criteria came into play in seven of the eight schools, although it was almost unavoidable in smaller schools. Similarly, little attention was attributed to the importance of matching the class level mentors and mentees were teaching to legitimately address NQTs' pedagogical needs (Conway et al, 2009; Killeavy, 2006). Though an introduction to school routine formed the basis of mentors' support, NQTs only valued this support when they developed a positive relationship with their mentor. In schools where good relations failed to develop between NQTs and mentors, NQTs to varying degrees, regarded this provision as a negative interference.

The attitudes of principals operating sporadic practices towards induction could arguably be summed up as induction having the potential to be fulfilled outside the school environment, perceiving attendance at NIPT workshops or INTO meetings to be a satisfactory induction for NQTs. Such principals specifically recommended that NQTs participate in out-of-school support, counter to the merits of providing school based help and understanding (Bartell, 2005). While seven of the eight NQTs

participated to varying degrees in many of the NIPT out-of-school induction workshops; all seven felt that many of the workshops were repetitive of the work covered in ITE and consequently not particularly conducive to professional development. This emerged as a considerable downfall of NIPT workshop attendance, as oversights in organisation and administration were failing to build NQTs' professional capacity as expected from engaging in off-site support (Earley and Bubb, 2004).

Rationales for induction were largely underdeveloped due to principals' inadequate knowledge of the problems facing NQTs, and would require considerable rectification to result in practices that would render personalised professional growth for NQTs. While parental relations were raised by almost all NQTs, considering this to be by far the most stressful part of teaching and thus a vital rationale for undertaking induction, only two principals gave credence to the challenges involved in building positive relationships with parents (Morgan and Burke in Picard and Ria, 2011). At the core of rationales for induction was a general perception that induction practices had the potential to benefit NQTs on one hand, and staff members, schools and the community as a whole on the other (Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010; Moir, 2009). Half of the principals viewed enhanced professionalism of staff as a rationale for induction practices due to the frequent communication and exchange of ideas between all stakeholders involved.

NQTs and principals were reluctant to use evaluative and assessment practices in order to further professional development during induction (Conway et al., 2009;

Scott, 2001). The potential value of these practices for NQTs as well as mentors was largely unrecognised. Bearing in mind stipulations outlined in the *CEPP Consultation Document* (2012) proposed for full implementation by 2015/2016, the absence of practices of evaluation and self-reflection in six of the eight schools does not align with the TCI's views on quality assurance processes that NQTs will be required to fulfil for full registration as recognised teachers.

Overall, this study revealed stark deficiencies in the range of effective practices for NQTs in comparison to the wide array advocated in literature. High levels of disagreement between principals and NQTs also featured in relation to NQTs' needs. Many counter-productive practices emerged, including; excluding NQTs in whole school planning and policy development, school micro-politics, non-alignment of mentors and NQTs, inadequate knowledge of problems facing NQTs, and assumptions that induction could be fulfilled in out-of-school meetings and workshops. Significantly, though, principals and NQTs did not present any disagreement in relation to evaluation. Both principals and NQTs had acute reservations regarding principals, NQTs' colleagues in essence, undertaking evaluative practices in NQT induction.

Implications for Practice

This research clearly ruled out the suggestion of placing principals as evaluators of teachers undergoing induction, thus highly contradicting *CEPP* proposals (TCI, 2012). NQTs and principals who strongly opposed this rhetoric, considered the

proposal as being *'unmanageable and complicated'* and *'a high-stakes evaluation process'* (Áine, Principal). NQTs' responses highlighted difficulties regarding this proposal's implementation revealing that it seemed contradictory that while principals were responsible for establishing supportive, trustworthy, collegial relationships, they would simultaneously be commissioned to measuring outcomes of NQT probation. It is vital to acknowledge that both NQTs and principals had acute reservations about orchestrating this potentially delicate terrain, particularly in relation to the feasibility of these two roles harmoniously co-existing so as not to adversely impact upon relationship development and professional growth. NQTs and principals agreed that the role of evaluation in induction should remain to be undertaken by the Inspectorate of the DES.

Inductees' needs for relationship development and professional growth were also noted in 'collegial frustration'. This is a concept I have developed to reflect new teachers' upset at the lack of like-minded colleagues to embrace professional growth and change, particularly within the context of collaborative relationships with colleagues. To varying degrees, according to the views of six of the eight NQTs in this study, NQTs felt that they entered school systems which disdained change and thwarted innovation, with tales of NQTs' self-doubt and discontentment dominating the data. Conversely to their initial vision, half of the NQTs experienced alienation at some point during their induction because of their excitement for implementing new practices. These NQTs were demoralised by what I call 'collegial frustration'. This finding presents a challenge for NQTs to maintain convictions and continue to grow in the face of systems that do not embrace change as this

research evidenced NQTs changing themselves in ways they had not envisaged, simply to fit in with the status quo. What is significant here is that only one principal acknowledged the existence of these dilemmas for NQTs in attempting to negotiate beyond the school status quo, attesting that all stakeholders must value ongoing learning if barriers are to be broken down in future induction provisions. Intrinsic to this research is awareness that a participant's opinion, such as this, may only reflect one side of the story as opinions are socially constructed experiences involving highly personalised internalisations and are therefore partial.

Induction provisions in the eight schools in this study occurred as follows: Laissez Faire existed in three schools, Collegial in three schools, Competency Based in one school and Self-Directing Professional in one other school. While NQTs in the Laissez Faire typology were inarguably encouraged to be individualistic, they unanimously experienced vulnerability and feelings of uncertainty, resulting in social recognition being threatened. The power of workplace absorption permeated to the core of the Collegial typology. Although this typology encouraged ongoing interaction between NQTs and experienced teachers, the transfer of NQTs' knowledge and skills to others was inhibited by traditional norms and practices that tended to be reinforced in favour of joint work. In spite of NQTs emerging as motivated and committed to teaching and learning due their supportive workplace cultures, NQTs intrinsically shifted from individualistic orientation towards the apprenticeship of institutional orientation, unknowingly adapting readily to their school cultures. One of the consequences of this apprenticeship is that NQTs learn

the behavioural norms of colleagues, without understanding or questioning these norms (Bullock, 2011). As this study's NQTs were generally socially content and fitted comfortably within this typology, they did not pursue personalised educational visions. However, this raises the question of whether or not workplace norms would still prevail to the extent of workplace absorption if the fit were uncomfortable for NQTs in the implementation of the collegial typology.

Concerns surrounding NQT visibility emerged as a direct consequence of participation in the Competency Based typology, the outcome of visibility arising from this typology's high levels of evaluation. The NQT was acutely aware that their actions were perceived, interpreted and judged by others, determining the impressions that workplace stakeholders formed. Unproductive outcomes of this typology were also presented in the form of a 'tick the box' attitude by induction stakeholders due to immersion in constant evaluation. Unfortunately, many of the experienced teachers acting as critics within this typology were unaware that they themselves are an element of the system they critique. Induction policymakers and the inductees themselves therefore need to realise the importance of acknowledging the effects that their own stakeholder experiences may have upon forming perceptions and evaluations.

Fundamental to effective implementation of the Self-Directing Professional typology, this research attests that NQTs need to engage in an active and purposeful manner with this typology in order to gain maximum productive

capacity. While the NQT in this research was engaged in a practice where goals were shared and supported within the inquiry community, the onus was simultaneously on the NQT to contribute in order to fully apprentice the NQT into becoming a professional while growing as a change agent. Counter to the previous typology, which focused on probation as an end-point, this typology sought to assist NQTs to enact and broaden their personal repertoire of educational skills both within and outside the workplace environment, the benefits of which are prevalent in literature (Fletcher et al., 2005; Britton et al., 2003). What is significant here is that despite its high potential merits, this high level of inquiry-based practice occurred as an isolated rarity in this sample, thus, presenting itself as a missed opportunity for Irish NQTs.

Reconstructed Framework of the Components of Effective Induction

In the absence of Ireland's statutory school-based induction, although coupled with the introduction of mandatory NIPT workshop participation (TCI, 2012, *online*), this research introduced (Chapter 6) a reconstructed framework. While this arises from Main's (2008) structural components of effective induction, it usefully incorporates new elements, the cohesion of in-school and out-of-school induction strands and others discussed below. This new framework and Main's original are each related to different country contexts (Ireland and New Zealand) but they are also intended to be considered for international validity.

Numerous departures arose in relation to initial framework components proposed by Main (2008a). Structured balance developed as a cornerstone for immediate address, as its absence in the data emerged as being centrally disadvantageous for NQTs. Contentions arose around professional agency; hence, the reconstructed framework challenges stakeholders to make more effective use of NQTs' knowledge and abilities, whilst incorporating NQTs' preferences to engage in a staged approach to reciprocal status. Striking a more appropriate balance of socio-emotional support was addressed due to supports being grossly lacking at a collective level, while rectification of the socio-emotional category included the minimisation of cultural micro-politics within school-based induction.

NIPT was included as a new central core, given that from 2012, participation in NIPT workshops is now mandatory for registration with the TCI. However, many changes to the operational function of NIPT workshops were included as a direct consequence of malfunctions noted in the findings. Pedagogical development was also reshaped to account for the absorption of some of its sub-components into the NIPT sphere, while including individual school-based needs and challenges arising from the data. The educational objectives of probation emerged as being somewhat stunted by the intense focus that NQTs placed on planning documentation in relation to probationary requirements. Thus, in order to enable more reflective theorisation processes for NQTs, greater personalisation as regards planning was incumbent in the reconstructed framework.

A new insert into the Main model from this research was the role of principal as an agent of change, fused between the in-school and out-of-school induction strands. Bearing in mind that current recessionary times are likely to impact negatively on the provision of additional funding for induction in the near future, this insert is perceived as having the greatest potential to reform current practice. It involves initiating engagement between schools and the NIPT to realise a more cohesive community of practice. Ultimately, principals will have to evaluate the now mandatory NIPT provisions, aligning school-based induction provisions with the skills and theory disseminated by the NIPT, in order to adapt generic content to specific school needs. In this way, NIPT workshop participation will be of greater merit to NQTs in meeting personalised school needs while also contributing to whole school development.

The reconstructed framework (Figure 6.1, page 179) speaks for itself in advocating the components and sub-components of effective induction. It is the first of its kind to be undertaken to this categorical extent regarding NQT induction provision at primary level in Ireland. Intrinsic to its significance is its inclusion of *CEPP* proposals which say school-based induction should be implemented for all NQTs at primary level by 2015–16. This allows the framework to be a central starting point for future evaluation and conceptual development, while offering schools and the NIPT a conceptual lens to lessen the rhetoric–reality gap in induction provisions. It acknowledges the importance of incorporating NIPT out-of-school induction in order to enhance cohesion between in-school and out-of-school mandatory

induction – raising the potential to develop better connections between mandatory workshops and school-based induction currently free from statutory provision.

Conclusion

> *Not knowing how to do so many things was wrong. My principal didn't understand and thought I was making a big deal of my induction as she didn't understand what I was going through* (Lorraine, NQT).

Lorraine's sentiments demonstrate that working towards convergence of opinion on NQTs' professional needs, as perceived by both principals and NQTs, will be of paramount importance if induction practices are to further NQTs' professional development in primary schools in the ROI. The reconstructed framework of the components of effective induction represents this study's theoretical contribution to scant Irish literature in this area, thus offering comprehensive conceptualisation towards the improvement of NQT induction practices. The contribution to knowledge outlined in this chapter lays the groundwork for the improvement of NQT induction practices in light of the wider understanding it sheds on the operation of NQT induction practices in the ROI and their perceived effectiveness.

In order to best assist in implementing the practicalities of the reconstructed framework at primary level in the ROI, the Irish government's educational policy-makers will need to commit to providing teaching principals and mentors with release time for induction activities while also reducing NQTs' teaching workload. This would alleviate the burden on induction stakeholders by providing the

necessary time to dedicate to the development of more effective practices, as desired by respondents in this study.

Critical reflective dialogue within a community of practice should be a cornerstone feature of NQT induction in schools so that NQTs and principals can build upon the skills, knowledge and dispositions associated with reflective practice. An inquiry-oriented stance needs to be initiated in ITE in order that reflective practices fulfil their maximum potential during NQT induction. While this research identified that principals have a key role to play in developing and sustaining effective induction practices, it also showed that their practices varied considerably. This suggests a need to identify the induction and professional development requirements of principals more effectively so that they can be supported in their role as an agent of change in NQT induction. Thus, it is important to create conditions in which principals can collaborate, reflect and learn about NQT induction from those who are operating more comprehensive forms of induction, directed towards supporting NQTs to become professional inquirers.

Irish *CEPP* proposals (2012) from the TCI need to reflect on findings from this study that assert strong opposition from both principals and NQTs to principals taking over the evaluative capacity of the DES Inspectorate during probation. Findings suggest that notions of relationship and evaluation, albeit necessary considerations in induction, should be directed in separate avenues and interpreted from different perspectives. This demonstrates that *CEPP* proposals may be overlooking research

that posits the emergence of conflicts and residual consequences when collaboration and authority clash with hierarchical and bureaucratic realities. Consequently, it is hoped that these findings may enrich dialogue among stakeholders, and therefore in some small way help to lessen the rhetoric–reality gap in induction, thus supporting improvements to induction in the ROI, in alignment with perceived needs as evidenced in this study.

Future research could explore the impact on NQTs of the reconstructed framework of effective induction, while establishing what typologies of induction practice emerge as a result of framework implementation. In this way, the components of the reconstructed framework could be further developed and refined not only to further NQTs' professional development, but also to take account of the needs of other key stakeholders in the induction process. It is vital to encompass the needs of facilitating stakeholders so that effectiveness of provisions becomes an evolving priority for NQT induction in the ROI as it is clear that it is currently being grossly overlooked.

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval Form

EA2

Ethical Approval Form:

Human Research Projects

Please word-process this form, handwritten applications will not be accepted

This form must be completed for each piece of research activity whether conducted by academic staff, research staff, graduate students or undergraduates. The completed form must be approved by the designated authority within the Faculty.

Please complete all sections. If a section is not applicable, write N/A.

1 Name of Applicant	Amanda Grant
	Department: Faculty: CERD
2 Position in the University	EdD Student
3 Role in relation to this research	Principal Investigator – EdD Student
4 Brief statement of main Research Question	The main aims of this research are: • To identify the range of induction practices for NQTs that are operationalised across a sample of Irish primary schools. • To explore the rationale and justification for adopting particular induction practices within the schools in the sample. • To ascertain NQTs' perceptions of these induction practices and the extent to which they deem them to be supportive of their professional development. • To evaluate the efficacy of Main's framework of components of successful induction. In order to achieve this, I will utilise a framework for successful induction developed by Andrea Squirrel Main in 2008 and subsequently evaluate its suitability in light of the research. The intention is to both address the substantive issues addressed in the research aims, and to be able to evaluate the usefulness of Main's framework as a means of identifying effective practices in providing induction for NQTs.

	The research proposes to explore the following research questions:
	
	1. How are induction practices being operationalised in Irish primary schools?
	
	2. Why are induction practices in the sample of Irish primary schools being undertaken in such a way?
	
	3. In what ways and to what extent do these induction practices reflect the key components of Main's framework of successful induction, namely:
	    pedagogical development,
	    socio-emotional support,
	    professional agency,
	    and structured balance.
	
	4. What do NQTs identify as being effective and ineffective in their induction?
	
	The rationale underpinning this research is based on the assertion that some form of structured induction into any new role is generally accepted as good practice and productive (Fresko and Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2009). Watkins (2005, 83) states that the average yearly turnover rate in education is thirteen percent compared to eleven percent in other professions. According to Howe (2006, 289), the *'sink or swim'* metaphor is so ingrained in the teaching profession, that it would be difficult to find a teacher unfamiliar with this cliché. There is a concern that poor induction experiences may contribute to high levels of teacher turnover, representing a cost in both personal and organisational terms (Freiberg, in Bezzina, 2006, 415).

5 Brief Description of Project	This research has not been commissioned. The approach to this research will be an interpretative, qualitative, case study approach. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with principals in schools and with teachers who have completed their induction year and are simultaneously within two years of doing so. These teacher graduates are better placed to answer the research questions than NQTs currently in their induction year, as they have very recently completed the induction year in full. If I am offered documents such as policies on induction or welcome packs for NQTs by the schools, they will be accepted and included for the purpose of data analysis. All interviewees will be adults.
	Approximate Start Date: Approximate End Date: September 2011 December 2011
6 Name of Principal Investigator or Supervisor	Supervisor: Howard Stevenson
	Email address: Telephone: hstevenson@lincoln.ac.uk 01522 837333

7 Names of other researchers or student investigators involved	None
8 Location(s) at which project is to be carried out	I am planning to work with seven or eight primary schools in a border county, in the northern midlands of Ireland. I am aware of the need to be flexible in case the data suggests that more information is needed, in which case I would need to work with a slightly greater number of schools. The schools in which NQTs and principals work will feature a distribution of urban and rural settings, single mainstream classes and multi-grade situations. A non-probability sampling procedure will be employed for this research. This type of research allows the research 'to target a particular group, in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population' (Cohen et al., 2007, 113). It is obviously important to have participants that fit the specific criteria of the research; therefore NQTs who have received recognition from the Irish Teaching Council in respect of their qualifications, have completed their induction year and are in the second year of full-time teaching are deemed the most suitable respondents. Purposive sampling will allow the respondents to be systematically chosen so that the sample is satisfactory to the needs of the research (Cohen et al., 2000, 103). The Cavan and Monaghan district branch of the INTO (Irish National Teachers' Organisation) maintains an up-to-date register of teachers, which will allow respondents that fit the criteria to be systematically chosen. It is anticipated that about fifteen/sixteen interviews will be conducted as both principals of the schools and teachers who have just completed their induction year in full will be interviewed.

9 Statement of the ethical issues involved and how they are to be addressed – including a risk assessment of the project based on the vulnerability of participants, the extent to which it is likely to be harmful and whether there will be significant discomfort. **(This will normally cover such issues as whether the risks/adverse effects associated with the project have been dealt with and whether the benefits of research outweigh the risks)**	The project will be conducted according to UL guidelines for conducting research with humans, and also according to the Revised Ethical Guidelines published by the British Educational Research Association (2004). Within these guidelines a number of areas are identified and are pertinent to this project: *Informed consent* – all participants will be provided with a written project summary prior to their interview. This will also make clear that participation is voluntary. The summary will set out a number of consents relating to the taping of interviewees (the default, unless consent is not provided), the use of data and the right to anonymity and confidentiality. It will also make clear that participants are free to withdraw at any point in the process. *Privacy* – all participants and schools will be anonymous. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout.

	Security – all data will be stored securely on password-protected computers, and recordings of interviews will be stored securely.
	Risk assessment – working within the above guidelines it is not considered that there are any risks that may be considered exceptional. All interviewees are adults, and the focus of the research is not a sensitive issue. Due regard will be given to the possibility of sensitive disclosures and any such instances will be managed in a way that prevents harm or damage to others.

Ethical Approval From Other Bodies

10 Does this research require the approval of an external body?	Yes ☐ No ☐ **If "Yes", please state which body:**
11 Has ethical approval already been obtained from that body?	**Yes ☐ Please append documentary evidence to this form.** **No ☐** **If "No", please state why not:** **Please note that any such approvals must be obtained and documented before the project begins.**

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule – NQTs

(Introduce self, explain research, interview format, information sheet, sign consent)

1. Before you tell me about your induction experience, I'd like to gain an overall sense of your role in the school. Could you please briefly describe your role and responsibilities for me?

2. Tell me about what your school does to induct NQTs. What do you think of this?

3. Tell me about your strengths and weakness as an NQT.

4. Tell me about the core components of your school's induction programme. Tell me if it caters for your strengths and weaknesses.

5. (Pedagogical Development) – Have you become a better teacher as a result of your induction? Tell me how your induction has improved your teaching? Has your induction impacted negatively on your teaching. Give me some examples.

(prompts for each section, in bullet points, if necessary)

    a) Professional development of thinking strategies
- education centres
- workshops
- university relationship
- school-wide curricular focus

    b) Inquiry using student data
- peer coaching

    c) Professional portfolios
- systematic review

6. (Professional Development) – Has your professional development been enhanced during induction? Did you feel you were encouraged to become more responsible for your own professional development? What were the best aspects of your professional development? What were the worst aspects of your professional development.

    a) Teacher efficacy
- feelings of value and self-worth

    b) Leadership roles
- NQTs lead
- post of responsibility

- technology fields
- passing on new skills to colleagues
- team teaching

c) Reciprocal status within an integrated culture
- NQTs voice opinions in staff meetings

7. (Socio-emotional Support) Were you afforded opportunities to work with other teachers in your school? Did you ever work with other teachers apart from those in your own school? Was this work formal or informal? Explain to me about the work with them. Were school staff and management supportive of this process?

a. Collaboration
- frequent observation
- systematic, collaborative planning
- teaching feedback

b. Mentoring
- liaise with management
- lesson modelling

c. Orientation
- pre-meetings
- handbook
- induction policy

d. Management support
- monitor mentor
- mentor accountable

e. NQT networks
- on-site and off-site networks
- management co-ordinates areas for development
- meetings have clear purpose

8. (Structured Balance) Structuring the balance of an induction programme is important. Did you feel the correct balance was structured in the induction programme in your school? Is there anything you would alter to improve the balance of the induction programme?

a) Reduced workload
- additional funding
- substitute cover
- release time used for induction-related activities

b) Life balance

- emphasis on physical health
- employee assistance service for teachers

c) Programme vision and evaluation
- clear programme vision
- formal, written evaluation presented to the board of management
- plan for updating induction programme

9. As an NQT, were you afforded the opportunity to voice your opinion of the school's induction practices? Did the school evaluate or amend induction practices in light of this? If so, how was this process conducted.

10. In what ways, if any, would you alter the school's induction practices or the school's vision for NQT induction? Have you any ideas to make induction more beneficial for future NQTs in your school?

11. What do you think of the plans to make induction programme participation mandatory by 2012? If you were designing this mandatory programme, what sort of practices would you include? Tell me more about what way you would like this programme to operate for NQTs and schools.

12. Tell me your thoughts on principals taking over the role of the inspectorate regarding the probation of NQTs.

13. Are there any current induction practices that need to be reviewed or amended?
    a. Induction practices at whole-school level in general
    b. Induction practices at national level

14. Is there anything else that you believe is particularly helpful or supportive about your school's induction programme? If so, what? Why is it so helpful/supportive?

15. Have you received any documentation (paper and/or electronic) of your induction programme? Would it be possible for me to have a copy? Are you required or encouraged to maintain any records during induction? Tell me more about the paperwork – do you find it to be helpful or a nuisance?

16. Anything else you would like to add?

Finally, thank you for your help and time.
If you think of anything else or have any queries, please contact me – details on information sheet.

Appendix 3: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule – Principals

(Introduce self, explain research, interview format, information and consent form)

1. Before you tell me about your school's induction programme, I'd like to gain an overall sense of your school. Could you please briefly describe your school's context/mission for me?

2. Tell me about the rationale for induction provision in your school. Tell me about the school's vision for inducting NQTs. Tell me if the school culture impacts on induction.

3. Tell me about your induction programme for NQTs:

a. What do you consider to be the strengths and weakness of NQTs? Tell me if their strengths and weaknesses are incorporated in their induction programme.

b. Personnel – Who is involved in the induction programme? How many NQTs have you had in recent years? How do you choose the personnel involved?

c. Financial – How do you fund your school's induction programme (NIPT, additional monies)?

d. Pastoral – What is your method for ensuring NQTs are 'doing OK'?

4. Tell me about the core components of your school's induction programme. Explain to me how your induction programme is designed to cater for the needs of NQTs.

5. (Pedagogical Development) – What sort of things do you do to encourage NQTs to improve their teaching? Do you encourage NQTs to participate in activities outside school to improve their teaching? Tell me how you feel schools could best enhance the pedagogical development of NQTs.

(prompts for each section, in bullet points, if necessary)

   a) **Professional development of thinking strategies**
   - education centres
   - workshops
   - university relationship
   - school-wide curricular focus

   b) **Inquiry using student data**
   - peer coaching

   c) **Professional portfolios**
   - systematic review

6. <u>Professional Development</u> – How you do advocate professional development for NQTs? How do you encourage NQTs to become more responsible for their professional development? Are there any aspects of professional development which are vital for NQT? Or are there aspects of professional development for NQTs that are useless or counter-productive?

a) **Teacher efficacy**
- feelings of value and self-worth

b) **Leadership roles**
- NQTs lead
- Post of responsibility
- technology fields
- passing on new skills to colleagues
- team teaching

c) **Reciprocal status within an integrated culture**
- NQTs voice opinions in staff meetings

7. <u>(Socio-emotional Support)</u> How do you encourage teachers and NQTs in your school to act as a community? Give me some examples of how this happens.

a. **Collaboration**
- frequent observation
- systematic, collaborative planning
- teaching feedback

b. **Mentoring**
- liaise with management
- lesson modelling

c. **Orientation**
- pre-meetings
- handbook
- induction policy

d. **Management support**
- monitor mentor
- mentor accountable

e. **NQT networks**
- on-site and off-site networks
- management co-ordinates areas for development
- meetings have clear purpose

8. <u>(Structured Balance)</u> Structuring the balance of an induction programme is important. How do you structure the balance of the induction programme in your school? What is the ideal scenario?

a) Reduced workload
- additional funding
- substitute cover
- release time used for induction-related activities

b) Life balance
- emphasis on physical health
- employee assistance service for teachers

c) Programme vision and evaluation
- clear programme vision
- formal, written evaluation presented to the board of management
- plan for updating induction programme

9. How well has the school's vision for NQT induction justified the adoption of particular induction practices? In what ways, if any, are the voices of NQTs reflected in this vision?

10. What happens when things go wrong for NQTs? What do you do then? Tell me some examples of how you have managed such situations.

11. Are there any current induction practices that need to be reviewed or amended?
    a. Induction practices at whole-school level in general
    b. Induction practices at national level

12. What do you think of the plans to make induction programme participation mandatory by 2012? If you were designing this mandatory programme, what sort of practices would you include? Tell me more about what way you would like this programme to operate for NQTs and schools.

13. Tell me your thoughts on principals taking over the role of the inspectorate regarding the probation of NQTs. What effect will this have on schools? In what ways do you think these changes will alter what you do for NQTs? What will remain largely the same?

14. Anything else you would like to add?

15. Documentation – Do you have any documentation (paper and/or electronic) of your induction programme? Would it be possible for me to have a copy? What paperwork, if any, do you require/encourage NQTs to do?

Finally, thank you for your help and time. If you think of anything else or have any queries, please contact me – details on information sheet.

Appendix 4: Information Sheet

Amanda Grant,

Drung Central National School,

Drung P.O.,

Co. Cavan.

Telephone / Fax: (049) 4338317

Information Sheet for Study

I am currently studying for a Doctorate in Educational Research and Development at the University of Lincoln, United Kingdom.

As part of this course of study, I am undertaking a research study entitled: Investigating Perceptions of the Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers in Primary Schools in Ireland.

The research aims to identify the range of induction practices for NQTs that are being operationalised across a sample of Irish primary schools, while exploring the rationale and justification for the adoption of particular induction practices. The study aims to ascertain NQTs' perceptions of these induction practices and the extent to which they deem them to be supportive of their professional development. This research aims to develop more awareness of what sort of induction provision is needed to provide NQTs with an effective, successful induction experience – an induction experience that NQTs believe 'works for them'.

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You will be given this information sheet to keep. If you choose to take part, you can change your mind and withdraw from the study without giving a reason.

I intend to work with seven or eight primary schools in the midland counties. I will be interviewing the principal and a teacher who has completed their induction year in the previous academic year. Each interview will take approximately sixty minutes to complete. The interview will take place in an educational setting at a convenient time. With your consent, interviews will be audio recorded so that the information given can be transcribed afterwards. A copy of the transcript will be forwarded to you for your approval prior to beginning data analysis. This will afford you an opportunity to amend, add or delete something that you may have said. I would like to assure you of complete confidentiality regarding any of the information given in the course of the interview. Your own anonymity, and that of your school, will be maintained at all times. Any data gathered will be held securely and in confidence.

Your participation in this study should lead to a deeper understanding of the induction of newly qualified teachers in Irish primary schools. This study may be published upon completion in an educational journal or some other educational document and the results and findings may be shared with individuals and organisations that have an interest in the area of teacher induction. However, please note participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be assured throughout all stages of the research.

Appendix 5: Consent Form

Amanda Grant,

Drung Central National School,

Drung P.O.,

Co. Cavan.

Telephone / Fax: (049) 4338317

Consent Form

I am currently studying for a Doctorate in Educational Research and Development at the University of Lincoln, United Kingdom.

As part of this course of study, I am undertaking a research study entitled: <u>Investigating Perceptions of the Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers in Primary Schools in Ireland</u>.

<u>Name of Principal Supervisor</u>: Dr. Howard Stevenson, Centre for Educational Research and Development, University of Lincoln, United Kingdom.

- I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have asked and received answers to any questions asked.

Please initial [   ]

- My participation in the interview is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way.

Please initial [   ]

- I am free to refuse to answer any questions at any time.

Please initial [   ]

- I am free to refuse to have my voice audio-recorded during the interview.

Please initial [   ]

- I understand that the researchers will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all material will be anonymised.

Please initial [   ]

- I understand that the researchers may publish this research and its findings upon completion, and that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained in any publications.

Please initial [   ]

Having read the above, being satisfied to proceed with being interviewed, please sign this consent form.

Name of respondent	Signature	Date

Name of researcher	Signature	Date

Appendix 6: The Nature of Patronage of Irish Primary Schools

The fact that 96% of Ireland's 3,169 primary schools are under denominational patronage is unique among developed countries (Coolahan, Hussey and Kilfeather 2012). The reasons for this are deeply rooted in the history and belief system of the Irish population. With the establishment of the National (Primary) School system in 1831 the State provided financial support to local patrons for primary school provision, provided that patrons observed the regulations of the newly established Commissioners of National Education. While the State favoured applications from patrons of mixed denominations, what evolved, in practice, was that the great majority of schools came under the patronage of individual clergymen of different denominations. Then, and for generations afterwards, the vast majority of Irish people were affiliated to denominational churches, mainly to the Catholic Church.

Over recent decades, Irish society has been undergoing major political, social, economic, cultural and demographic change resulting in a greater diversity of religious belief systems and the more multi-cultural composition of the population. This has led to Ireland being criticised by a range of international agencies for the lack of balance in the character of its current primary school system, which is so heavily dominated by denominational school (United Nations, 2011). Placing this research in context, all eight schools featuring in this multi-case study were denominational schools under Roman Catholic patronage, which are the majority school type in Ireland amounting to 89.65% in the overall demographic profile of primary schools (Coolahan et al., 2012).

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