Values Education: Teacher Attitudes and Awareness in Australian Public Schools

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Abstract

The society we are living in today is very different from that of 50 years ago. It is changing rapidly in every area you can think of from medicine, science, history, aviation, education, globalization, engineering, finance and politics. On the one hand, we are advancing in leaps and bounds technologically with the state of art discoveries in computer technology, telecommunications, medical break through etc. This is all fine and good in the name of advancement. However, at the same time, all aspects of morality in our society is also diminishing rapidly. Respect for others, for others property, and for oneself is uncommon in today's world. Children and young people are heavily influenced by the media which, apart from providing knowledge about the world is also promoting negative traits such as eating habits, fashion, music, and language. In a majority of families both parents work and spend less time with their children. They are in a dilemma as to raise good children. All parties are now turning to schools to assist in raising morally good citizens for the future.

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PART ONE

The Current Values Void

The direction of Education is determined by the prevailing needs of the society. From the late twentieth century i.e. from 1980 onwards there have been tremendous changes in the economic, social, political and cultural climate of our society. These changes are characterized by differentiation and fragmentation rather than homogeneity and standardization. (Hall quoted in Welch 1996) There is a surge of movement towards an advanced technological community. The changing nature of the job market and all other areas of community including family life and social life are influenced by advanced technology. The pace of life has accelerated rapidly. Information is readily available and accessible through advanced technological tools. The younger generation is bombarded by information overload. The unpredictability of the job market and the changing nature of the jobs have had a direct impact on education. The challenge for educators is to understand these remarkable changes and respond strategically and effectively. In schools, universities and TAFE colleges' students are being trained for the jobs they may take up in their career paths such as computer engineers, advanced mobile communication technologists, research analysts, financial consultants, banking systems managers etc. Globalisation has resulted in an international job market through the establishment of multinational businesses and population migration. The world is at the fingertips. The economy is now global and borderless, particularly in financial markets. For example, Australia is increasingly forming business links with South-East Asia. Noticing the trends, the students are choosing to learn to speak and write Asian languages as they feel that these would be useful in their future. In spite of being aware of these changes and trying to be prepared it is estimated that an average student will change at least 5 to 6 jobs in their career due to the changing nature of jobs. In 1996 Middleton and Hill claimed that 50% of jobs available in 2010 had not been created yet. Therefore half the students do not have any idea of the kinds of jobs they will end up with.
These rapid changes are continually impacting upon all facets of education including students, schools, parents, teachers' work and the curriculum.

Changing social and family dynamics and childhood

Families are changing. Most families have been touched, in some way, by the heartache of divorce. In the United States one of two marriages ends in divorce. (Lickona 1991) Australia has one in four marriages ending in divorce or separation. The high rate of divorce means children are increasingly spending their childhood in single-parent homes. Mothers are generally the ones responsible for raising their children often without any outside assistance or support. According to research, the turmoil and distress caused by divorce lingers for long periods of time especially for the children. Academically high achieving children start to have problems and well behaved children soon turn out to be bullies. Older children end up suffering from drug or alcohol addiction, depression and the like. All this also results from unmarried single mother families, de-facto relationships and families where parents are drug users. The implications of these dysfunctional families are disastrous. Some parents, despite such adverse circumstances, place a high priority on raising their children who manage to thrive. However, too often, these kinds of stress affect children drastically.

Many better off families, on the other hand, are spending enormous amounts of time and money in providing extra tutoring for their children to cope with the competition for places in the better high schools or universities. The present generation of children is generally more demanding. They want to relate to their peers and the popular culture, follow fads, entertainment and other interests. Their life seems to be in the fast lane. Many parents over schedule themselves and their children resulting in the disappearance of parent-child face to face communication. Meaningful, quality time with children has been reduced to a mere five minutes a day in majority of families. There is an oversupply of consumer products which families find it hard to keep pace with. The majority of parents have a mortgage or rent to pay. These cause financial pressure on parents which force both of them to work outside the house. This results in even lesser time being spent at home with children. A lot of children are cared for in the child care centre, at the babysitter or child minders houses. The older children come from school to an empty home and stay alone for long periods of times. Their parents spend longer hours at work in order to meet with their financial commitments. The few hours left to spend with the children have shrunk due to the television, telephone, internet and computer games (Dhall and Dhall 1999). More recently children are spending hours chatting on the internet, text messaging on the mobile phones and playing the violent x-box or play-station.

The younger generation is driven by the popular culture portrayed by mass media which occupies a prominent place in their lives. Apart from getting useful information they witness uncountable number of acts of violence and sexual scenes. Young people growing up in this kind of media culture are robbed of their moral judgment. Many of them don't even realize that rape is wrong. It is evident that young people, mostly schools students, are increasingly involved in some combination of smoking, drinking, drug use and sex. They are more vulnerable to peer pressure because they don't have a close relationship with their parents or family members. They don't have a strong foundation at home that would enable them to resist these pressures.

The home is the place where the initial foundations of character are laid and the child's self concept and value system are formed. The family is the primary moral educator of the child and the parents are the first moral teachers. There is nothing more effective than a stable home that gives children confidence to learn as well as handle value conflicts encountered in the school, peer group and in the wider community. The children lack these skills also because the role of religion and spirituality has diminished from children's lives as a result of the changes in traditional culture and family dynamics. The home has always been a place of informal learning through religious practices, rituals, customs and traditions. In traditional cultures many decisions were already made for individuals. But recently religious and cultural practices in many homes have declined due to the shift to individualistic culture where individuals make their own choices. Students need to make informed and reasoned decisions and choices about life and living. It should be noted that the parental values may not be so much taught as experienced because children learn from how they live. Many parents themselves are far from ideal role models for their children. They are looking for help in raising good children.
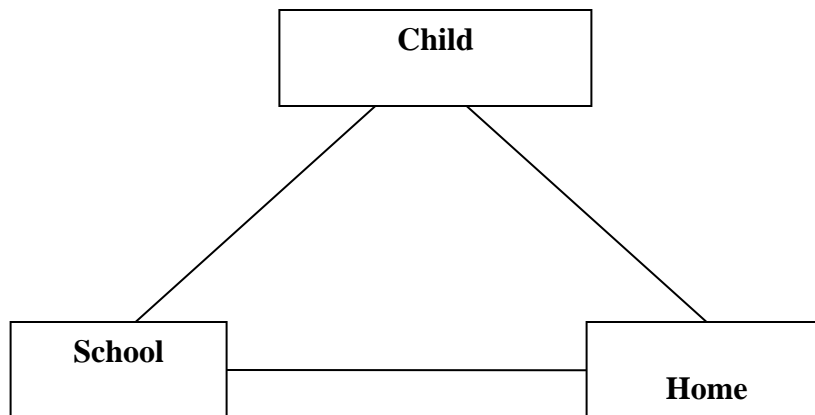
Preparation of children for life rather than living

Children need to be prepared for life. For children to achieve this, a lot of thought and planning is required by the parents, teachers and the government. At a tender age children are open minded and acceptable and they can be molded into ideal citizens if their environment and role models are exemplary. Schools play a major role and children need a lot from education. Some of the following thoughts highlight how education plays a vital role.

1   Children spend most of their time outside home at school with teachers and classmates. Schools can and does play a major role to help children develop a sense of social and community responsibility.(Lickona 1991)

2   The education has to equip the children to face the changing future world. In our rapidly advancing world, young people need to make decisions regarding matters of ethics, morality and social justice and accept responsibility for their actions. (Hill 1991)

3   Education also has to pass knowledge and wisdom to be carried through generations. (Lickona 1991)

4   There is no shortage of information but students need to be taught the skills of making sense of the enormous amount of information and to discriminate between what is relevant and necessary and what is irrelevant and unnecessary.

5   Homes and schools, the two formative social structures have real power to raise moral human beings. They can work together to provide children with an environment to enhance their understanding and practice of values which are principles such as honesty and compassion which are consistent, universal,

transcultural and objective.(Hill 1991)

6   The school is the bridge between the home and the pluralistic society. This bridge should be kept open all the time for traffic (discussions) from both sides. The schools must accept the home backgrounds of the students as at least having some positive value and giving starting points from which to extend the child's awareness of the larger societal or community environment.(Hill 1991)

7   Homes and schools have to work together if students are going to learn the skills required to live in the ever advancing world. "Parents recognize that the best education is likely to be provided where the home and the school are compatible in values and discipline. It is about working in partnership." (Alan Reid, quoted in Burke 2004)

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Changing Nature of Jobs and qualities required for the 21st Century

During the industrial years in history our workforce required people who were prepared to work at unskilled jobs as well as in the skilled trades and professions. The technological revolution from the 1980s onwards has brought about changes. According to Middleton and Hill, full-time permanent unskilled work has disappeared. (Middleton & Hill 1996) Instead highly skilled workers are required for full-time jobs. This means that school leavers who previously had a secure place in the unskilled, semi-skilled or manually skilled workforce no longer have that. Most Australians used to attend school full-time, have a break and then either take up full-time employment or full-time further study at a university or college. Today, most students work on a part-time basis while they are still in school. The trend now is that between the age of fourteen and twenty four students are engaged in both, schooling or tertiary education and part-time work. This provides for their new found identity associated with music, clothes, make up and the most updated mobile phones. This is a significant change in the social life cycle of young

people compared to their parents. It also has an impact on the education system. Schools recognize the need for students to work in part-time employment and are therefore providing this greater flexibility.

Furthermore, the way information is sought, stored and retrieved has changed dramatically with the technological advancement characterized by the development of computers, the internet, mobile phones, digital cameras and so on. This has influenced the way we communicate, the way we structure work and the way we enjoy our leisure.

These social and technological changes can result in an increasingly marginalized society especially for the non-achievers if education is going to be based on the industrial model. However, Jones quoted in Middleton & Hill suggests that if education reform takes place then there will be place for all in future. This education has to give people opportunities to achieve knowledge and skills necessary to participate fully and positively in future developments of Australian society. Learning in this generation has to make people "socially critical, capable of shaping their world, including the world of business and work, of the arts and cultures, and of sharing work and income across the whole range of people." (Middleton & Hill 1991)

Schools are now engaging in outcomes based learning. The intention is to cater for the differing learning styles of students. Whereas in the past a fixed standardized process in terms of time, and learning programs was adopted producing differential outcomes (as discussed above; skilled, unskilled and semi skilled people), now differential processes in relation to time frame and learning activities are adopted to reach the same clear goals. Curriculum outcomes are the main ones which schools concentrate on. What are urgently required are outcomes for the students; leading to thoughts about how people live their lives, and social outcomes; how a good society can be achieved.

From the above points it can be seen that the importance placed on education is immense. Even though the schools are ultimately given the responsibility of providing students with an education that will help them cope with life they are a few questions which remain.

1   Are the schools meeting the complex needs of modern life?
2   Is today's education preparing the young for life?
3   Are technical and academic knowledge the most important knowledge or do we need to help students develop morality?
4   What are the community expectations?

Literature Review on Values Education in Schools

As stated earlier, historically, the school, the home and the church have shared the work of moral education. However, in the middle part of the 20th century, schools abandoned this role as teachers and the state education took a values neutral stand. It was felt that in order to be fair to all students and to avoid identification with one view of reality, state schools must strive to be value neutral. Educators came to the agreement that each individual should have the right to determine his or her own values. People worried that teaching morality within public schools would be the same as teaching religion and they were not sure whose values should be taught. (History of Character Education) The policy, therefore was "to teach the facts and leave opinions out of it". The 1960's saw the rise of what Thomas Lickona termed as "Personalism''. (Lickona 1991) Personalism emphasized the worth and autonomy of the individual person. People believed in their rights rather than responsibility and freedom rather than commitment. People were led to focus on expressing and fulfilling themselves as free individuals rather than their

obligations as members of groups such as family, church, community or country. Good things such as civil rights movement and rights of women came as a result of this new focus but it brought along problems as well. Individuals rebelled against authority and authority figures including parents and teachers who were reluctant to exercise their genuine authority. People generally became more selfish and slogans like "get all you can" and "you can have it all" guided popular thinking about happiness. Many parents considered self-fulfillment more important than self-denial and sacrifice for one's children like parents of the olden days. All this affected the schools in that it led to "Values Clarification". This led teachers to believe that teaching values was not their job; instead they had to help students learn about how to "clarify" their own values. This seemed easy for the teachers but it raised several issues, for example, what were the teachers supposed to do when the students had clarified their values. One major concern was that values clarification discussions made no distinction between what you might want to do and what you ought to do. There was no standard to evaluate one's values against or even any suggestions that some values may be better or worse than others. With values clarification the mistake was treating kids like grown-ups who only needed to clarify values that were already established and sound. It forgot that children need a lot of help in developing sound values first. In the 1970's Lawrence Kohlberg's "moral dilemma discussions" gained popularity and schools and educators placed emphasis on "process" or "thinking skills" rather than moral content.

However, as society celebrated individualism and schools stayed neutral on values morality within society and later among the youth began to decline. Violence and vandalism, stealing and cheating, peer cruelty and bad language were soon increasingly evident. Self-centeredness and selfishness was on the rise. Smoking, alcohol, drug and sexual abuse made troubling news.

The trend all over the world was similar – breakdown of the family, negative impact of television on the children, growing self-centeredness, materialism, and delinquency among the young. Countries all over the world, seeing this trend are turning to schools for help. They are now returning to character/values education and no doubt this will play a vital role at a time when millions of children get little moral teaching from their parents or the social institutions such as the church or temple which have become less important in their lives. The growing interest in values based education has been evident from the 1990's. Values education has always been linked to moral education. Moral education is not a new idea. It is as old as education itself.

Some facts showing why values education is needed?

1 The increasing concern over the morals of youths today has led to the much needed focus on values education. (Bohlin & Ryan 1999)

2 Young people are increasingly hurting themselves and are less concerned about the welfare of others around them and their environment. (Healy 2001) In Australia, 2213 people between the age of 15 and 19; 187 between 20 and 24 years and 518 between 25 and 34 years committed suicide in 2003. This accounted for 33%, 37% and 44% respectively of the total deaths for 2003. Suicide is the second largest cause of death, largest being motor accidents.

(Australian Bureau of Statistics)

3   Sexual morality issues raise an alarm to all. One in three Australian girls will abort during their life; one in ten of them has chlamydia by the time they are 17. (Doherty 2005) In America, each year, 14000 girls under the age of 14 have babies. The average age of sexually abused victims is now 8. (Lickona 1991)

4   Values education is essential to fight against the ever increasing drugs and crime. In 2004 there were 789 homicide and related offences, 768 kidnappings or abductions, 16,490 robberies, 308,368 unlawful entries with intent, 87,916 motor vehicle theft and 547,800 other thefts. The social cohesion of our society including individual and community health and function is affected by illicit drug use, crime and violence. In 1992 government spent nearly $7 million to address crimes associated with drugs which means that these funds are unavailable to be used elsewhere. (Australian Bureau of Statistics)

5   Businesses are recognizing that a responsible labour force requires workers who have character traits of honesty, dependability, pride in work and the capacity to work cooperatively with others. (Godden & Kehoe 1997)

6   According to a range of surveys and conclusions of the Civic Expert Group, Australian students as well the community do not have much understanding of civics and government. (Gore 1998)

7   Parents are asking schools to provide instruction that would deal with moral and moral behaviour and help raise good children.(Lickona1991)

8   Violence and bullying in schools have increased dramatically. (Healey 2001) In New South Wales alone a total of 4672 long suspensions of up to 20 days have been handed out to students by principals for a range of reasons including physical violence, drugs and weapons brought into schools, persistent bad behaviour and failure to attend schools i.e truancy. A 'violence audit' conducted by the Teachers Federation listed 2766 instances of verbal abuse, malicious damage(613), verbal threats(853), and continued harassment(547). The audit also revealed more than 3047 physical attacks in schools on both students and teachers. This is all in the first six months of this year. (Daily Telegraph, 26th October 2005). There are 2230 state schools, primary and high and although these statistics represent all schools one can say that the seeds of violence and bad behaviour are sowed when children are young.

All these underline a clear and urgent need for formal values education to be introduced in schools. With the disturbing statistics stated above, public schools in Australia are

experiencing a mounting pressure to **do** something about moral education.

The international trend in the last couple of decades has also been to return to behaviour focused philosophies of character education(USA), citizenship(UK), and social capital(Italy) because there is evidence that societies all over the world are facing character deficit as a major problem. This again reflects the urgent need for moral and spiritual renewal. (Lickona 1991)

What is moral education?

Moral or objective core values work in three parts; moral knowing, moral feeling and moral behaviour. For example, to be compassionate one must have the moral knowledge, but that does not make one compassionate. What is required as well is moral feeling about compassion, being emotionally committed to it and feeling uncomfortable when compassion is not practised. Again, moral knowledge and moral feeling is not enough. One must behave with compassion and act compassionately towards others to build a caring society. So compassion, like other values involves the head, the heart and the hand. It can be said that moral knowledge, moral feeling and moral behaviour are directly linked to good character. Therefore, good character is the habit of knowing the good, the habit of desiring the good and the habit of doing the good. As Brian Hill has said, "we are still grappling with the problem of moving the student from 'knowing the good to be desirable' to 'desiring to do the good'". (Hill 2000)

Moral education deals with common ideas about what is right and wrong. Children need to be able to make considered decisions about this for their own emotional, social and spiritual health as well that of their community.

Moral education is closely related to character education. Character development remained a primary goal of schools until the middle decades of last century. This was because throughout history, in countries all over the world, education has had two great goals:- The first was to help young people become smart in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, and the second was to make them good. (Lickona, 1991) That is the development of character. The following quotes from great citizens all over the world highlight the importance of character as part of education.

150 years ago, Ralph Waldo Emerson said that "character is higher than intellect". Research also claims that IQ contributes only about 20% to the success of a person's life. (Lynch 2003)

Aristotle saw character as an amalgamation of virtues; Benjamin Franklin described that character was a prerequisite for the enjoyment of freedom and George Elliot said "character is destiny". (From Brendon Nelson's opening address at the National Values Education Forum, Canberra 2005)

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has said that "the end of education is character". (Sanatha Sarathi December 1994)

"To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." (Roosevelt as cited in Lickona 1991)

A popular affirmation, "wealth lost, nothing lost; health lost, something lost; character lost, everything lost" fits in here as well.

International Interest in Character/Values Education

1. The educators in America believed character education should be an important part of the school curriculum. Even though in the mid sixties the emphasis had shifted from this there has been a timely return recently. The government and all parties including the states, schools and parents obtained an agreement on the values that describe people at their best. They developed what is known as the "Six Pillars". These are brief but complete and it is assumed that they can be easily integrated within the curriculum of young children. The pillars are *Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.*

   Together with this, there have been numerous articles and papers published and studies and research completed on values education in the United States. Schools are being encouraged to delve into these and develop programs from some of the suggestions given. Many schools have endeavoured to implement already available programs on values such "Living Values" or "Values for Life" and are attempting to teach these. (Living Values)

   One of the other programs used in America and in some schools in Australia is the "Virtues Project". This project has looked into all world religions and drawn out a set of virtues (values) that form a reference point for all discussions in classrooms and become the object of teaching and learning. According to John Gore, the Chief Education Officer, HSIE, New South Wales, a program of this nature is likely to be promoted by people in our community who are looking for simple solutions to complex educational and community problems. (Gore 1998) He warns departments and systems about having appropriate policy construction to safeguard schools, students and communities from such approaches to teaching values. (Gore, 1998)

   Despite these attempts by state governments and the community expectation there are many other schools that are unaware of or have not given much thought about teaching values as there are still many unclear and questionable areas which will be briefly discussed in this paper.

2. In some Asian countries moral education is compulsory. There are special university trained teachers in moral education who go out to schools to give explicit lessons on moral education. In schools where specialist teachers are not available, classroom teachers are required to teach morals explicitly. This is a compulsory course completed by teachers in their training at universities.(Prof. Lee Wing On-Values Forum, Canberra 2005)

3. In Scotland, the Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1991) acknowledges that:
   - Values are linked to fundamental beliefs
   - When we teach we communicate values
   - Values permeate educational activity
   - Values are not always held consciously
   - A consensus on values is unlikely

   The document provides a set of values (more like principles) to be promoted within the Scottish system:

   - An appreciation of learning
   - Respect and caring for self and respect and caring for others
   - A sense of belonging
   - Social responsibility

   All partners are required to make these values explicit in the policies and practices of schools in Scotland.

   These statements are equally relevant to any discussion on values and values education in any part of the world.

4. In the United Kingdom values education is no longer optional, it is now a legislative requirement that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students be the subject of inspection by the 'Office for Standards of Education in Schools'. Like in the United States schools are developing and implementing their own programs or are adopting what is available. (internet site)

5. In New Zealand, a number of studies have been carried out as a result of evidence suggesting society facing character deficit. Many schools have embraced the more proactive, identifiable approach to teaching character. In the pilot study schools, the development and provision of resource folders for each value equipped teachers with ways to infuse character education in their programs. Part of the first staff meeting each term is devoted to training for the values of the term. Many schools in New Zealand are choosing lessons from variety of programs such as "Living Values", "Virtues Program", "Human Values Program".

Challenges For Public Schools In Australia

Values education has always been linked to moral education. The expectation is always about making society better for all. However, governments, parents, educators and community groups are all trying to impose their own values on the education of children so that schools end up reinforcing these values. These may be well and good, but teachers in the classrooms have the ultimate role of implementing policy decisions in education. They need to be clear on how they will achieve the goals of education.

Dr Brendon Nelson, our Federal Education Minister, has pointed out that the challenge of education and the parents' expectation is not only to teach children how to learn and acquire skills but also assist them in building of their character. This can be supported by the statistical analysis of research conducted by the Australian Council of Educational Research, which found that strict discipline; a non-negotiable school uniform code, proud school traditions and a firm adherence to religious or moral values are regarded by parents as so important that they outweigh a non-government schools academic record by three to one. (Burke 2004).

 The implication of this is that public schools generally do not have strict discipline compared to the discipline codes followed in independent schools. The nature of public education is such that it demands understanding from schools where disciplinary action is required. The duty of care for teaching staff and policies regarding discipline in the public system is restrictive.

Private schools, particularly church schools with a strong religious emphasis, offer direct moral education. They enjoy the support of staff, students and parents who have selected private schools generally for the principles of behaviour, as found by Burke's research.

Problems arise in public schools in terms of offering moral education. Public schools refrain from explicitly emphasizing religious or moral values within the curriculum due to the policy of free education for all schools aged children from various religious and cultural backgrounds. Many teachers in public schools react with alarm when it is suggested that one of their function is moral education. They think they have to be models of moral virtue. Yet, directly or indirectly, they are all involved in it in teaching general standards of behaviour. No matter what stand the teachers take, it does not guarantee immunity to the objections of parents and politicians. If teachers present a definite moral viewpoint they are criticized by the permissive as too traditional, or by the traditional as too permissive, or both. If they take a neutral stand and point out a variety of views on the subject, they are criticized for giving the impression that one moral opinion is as good as another. And if they opt out of moral discussion altogether, they are criticized for ignoring the subject. Therefore, a nervous avoidance of all sensitive issues occurs, which Watt says is the worst way out of the problem. (Watt, 1976)

School uniform in public schools is not compulsory even though it is encouraged. This is so considering the lower socio-economic backgrounds of many children attending state schools compared to the elite group attending private schools.

The research implies that parents regard the above issues as much more important than academic achievements and that they are prepared to move their children into Catholic and private schools because of these reasons. They do not want their children's study interrupted by disruptive students.

This research clearly shows that a third of public school parents surveyed would switch their children to private schools if they could afford the fees due to concern about discipline. In the 10 years to 2003, public school enrolments increased nationally by 1.2 per cent compared to 22.3 per cent in private schools. Each year NSW public education system loses about 5000 existing or prospective students to private schools. (Doherty 2004) It is mainly because parents are looking for traditional values many of which are there in government schools but not apparent. According to Professor Geoff Masters, chief executive of the Australian Council of Educational Research, "the lesson for public schools is they should better market themselves about how they are addressing values, discipline and the quality of education." (sited in Doherty 2004) This is the challenge for public schools.

Truancy and failure to attend schools is a major problem, at least in NSW. A number of distressed parents are withdrawing their children from schools and are home-schooling as a result of serious bullying and physical violence. The government has to address these issues about public schools.

Dr Nelson has said that what needs encouragement and formalization in our schools is the teaching of values and the building of character. He does not agree with teachers who argue that their role is to be neutral and to provide students with information they need in order to make their own choices. He emphasizes that there is great risk in taking a position of moral neutrality with young people because they may think that 'anything goes' when adults deliberately do not take a stand on life choices such as drug use, exploitation of others, relationships with authority, or sexual activity. (Nelson 2004) As quoted above Watt also does not agree with the neutral stance of teachers. Maybe this attitude of teachers has contributed to the problems young people are now having.

Dr Nelson is a strong advocate of Values Education. There is desperate need for it in our schools. It is not something that will come and go but is here to stay. Educators and schools leaders coming to grips with it is fundamental to having successful schools which would fulfill the aims to education and properly train young people for life.

Values Education Study

In Australia as a result of:

> # Parents and community expectation
> # A decline in the character traits in children
> # Diminishing morals in youths of today
> # Violence and bullying in schools
> # Lack of respect for teachers and elders and
> # Rising crime and drug problems

There has been an attempt to return to providing values education in primary and secondary schools.

Aim of Study

A Values Education Study was commissioned by Dr Nelson as a Federal Government funded initiative to be conducted by the Curriculum Corporation in 2002. The study was designed to:

- enable schools to develop and demonstrate current practice in values education;
- provide an informed basis for promoting improved values education in Australian schools; and
- make recommendations on a set of Principles and a Framework for improved values education in Australian schools.

The Study

The study had the following three components:

- a literature study;
- research to determine parent, teacher and student views on values;
- action research with schools across Australia to develop and demonstrate good practice in values education.

Sixty nine schools from all States and Territories, primary and secondary, government and non-government, urban, rural and remote were selected to receive grants. The case study schools used one or a combination of the following three approaches as the basis for their value education projects:

1. review of values education process- auditing, articulation, congruence and or evaluation;
2. building student resilience- sometimes with a service dimension as well;
3. a specific values teaching and learning focus-at times using defined values education programs of some sort.

In Australia the vision is that, ultimately, every school would address values education in an ongoing, planned and systematic basis by:

- examining the schools mission/ethos in consultation with their community;
- developing student civic and social skills and building resilience and
- ensuring values are incorporated into teaching programs across the key learning areas.

Values and values education is a complex and controversial topic. Talking about values education can be problematic because it suggests that it is separate from education. We know that all education is value laden. Values education is not only taught when it is stated as such. The values in education such as aesthetic, intellectual, social and others are varied and isolated and they run in a complicated way. In schools all pursuits work simultaneously, teaching cannot be categorized e.g. teaching compassion on Monday, respect on Tuesday and so on. Choices have to be made and it is difficult to bring a coherent, conceptualized and concise method of teaching values. Values education is so broad that when values are discussed one questions whose values are being referred to; the teachers, the parents, the community's, the children's or patriotic values. How are values different from virtues or beliefs or principles?

The Final Report

The final report of the Values Education Study included a draft framework for values education in schools and was released in November 2003. There are a number of observations that can be made:

The Education Study report defined values as "the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable" (Halstead and Taylor 2000). This definition in itself can be debated. Professor Brian Hill (from Murdoch University, WA) argues this definition carries a cognitive weighting which obscures the motivational aspects. His preferred definition is that values are "the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure." This, he says, shifts the focus from the cognitive state to a whole-person decision or readiness to act in a certain way.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba describes values as follows. "Just as the rays of the sun absorb water vapour from the sea, gather them into clouds, and drop them as rain on earth so that they may flow as rivers back into the sea, likewise, the senses of man contact the world and collect experiences out of which the sacred and sustaining ones are selected, stored and utilized by the mind as values, as instruments for uplifting the individual and society. Those values are Truth, Right Action, Peace, Non Violence and Love. Taken together these values encompass a full range of human potential." (from R and S Farmer, 1998)

Apart from defining values the concept of Values Education also needs to be defined as the case study schools differed markedly in their understanding of what is meant by 'values education'. There is need to establish a common language with which to undertake the values education conversation to schools.

The initial experiences of the case study schools highlighted the following:

- there was a limited time frame in which the schools were expected to achieve a lot.
- the project focus overlapped and not all schools fit neatly into a single category.
- there was difficulty in working on an agreed set of values at a local level because there was discussion on whose values and which values were more important.
- even though schools were willing to address values and values education in an explicit way there was not much understanding among all staff. However, there was at least a higher awareness among all.
- there was a lack of resources on values education which schools could access – there were no lessons, no set activities related to the values that were expected to be taught, there was not any plan or structure given to be followed, there was no teacher orientation or handbooks with guidelines. Schools basically adopted whatever they could lay their hands on and modified them according to their needs.

Outcomes of the twelve Case Study Schools

Many schools based their projects on collection of qualities, attributes and behaviours which was classified as 'resilience'. They concentrated on student welfare and discipline to achieve a firm moral base or a value based approach. Responsibility and self discipline as well as mutual understanding and respect were the key aspects and in some projects this extended to community service programs.
A number of schools and clusters also endeavored to develop some values in the curriculum and the behaviours of students as well as the community. Many of these reflected the religious focus of the schools and were values such as honesty, fairness, caring, peace, empathy, love, tolerance and non-violence.

<u>Issues</u>

The key issue of this study is that the findings are being captured and awareness has increased mainly in the project schools and it is being used to guide the work of schools across the nation in taking values education forward.

Other issues include:

*values as a separate subject of study- some schools felt that values education can only be addressed implicitly through modeling, policies, processes and practices in the classrooms. Others felt that the values clarification process and the cognitive development methods where students learn to critically assess and evaluate value positions and then come to their own value positions was better. Yet others thought that explicit teaching and learning of specific, prescribed values in the curriculum was needed.

*direct impact on students- all schools show that some positive outcomes both qualitative and quantitative were achieved although it is hard to assess them.

* identifying key values- all schools brought up a diversity of values. At the same time there is a commonality as well about the 10 core values proposed in the draft framework as discussion starters at schools.

* local school community forums- most schools found it hard to attract parents but wherever it was possible, these forums were useful. The importance of engaging the whole school community- teachers, management, other staff, students and parents in order to develop real ownership and total school integration of values education was realized.

* resources- there is an absence of resources (ranging from teaching resources, professional development, evaluation materials to teacher time) needed for values education.

Since then many initiatives are in place as it has been accepted that the responsibility of teaching morals is mainly upon the parents but it should be a joint effort between school administrators, teachers and parents each having their own role.

<u>Lessons learnt from this study</u>

1. There were many interpretations of values and values education among all parties involved. There needs to be clarity in the understandings of these.

2. Not 100% of the staff from all the project schools were aware of the initiatives taken by their schools. In some cases only small committees of members have worked on the project.

3. There were no processes or methods provided to the project schools to implement.

4. Two approaches to values education were evident: **implicit** – across the curriculum infusing the teaching of every subject and **explicit** – providing a place in the curriculum for specifically studying values as such.

5. A lot more professional development for teachers is required for better understanding of the whole concept of values and values education.

6. A whole school approach is necessary for it to make an impact.

7. Partnership with parents and the local community is also a must.

8. Ongoing support for students and teachers need to be provided.

9. Teaching resources need to be made readily available for schools.

10. Despite the fact that funding was available, many schools which had not applied were not interested due to the amount to work required to qualify for the funding.

Government Documents and Framework

There have been a number of documents published by the state and national government regarding values education in schools. Some of them are in response to public concern about children's values today while others came about as a result of rectifying political mistakes in statements which said that schools are values neutral. Government does play a role in setting values for education and for teaching them through the curriculum. Hence, the following documents were released:

1.   The Values We Teach (1991)

2.   Working in NSW Public Schools – A statement of values, skills and understandings   (1998)

3.   Civics and Citizenship Education Program (1994)

4.   The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century (1999)

5.   Values in NSW Public Schools (2004)

6.   National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005)

1. The Values We Teach

"The Values We Teach" is a long established document from the New South Wales Department of Education published in 1991. It grew from community concern in the 1980's that public education was values-free or worse valueless. It states that:

"Public schools are not value free. They aim to inculcate and develop in students entrusted in their care those educational, personal, social, moral and spiritual values which are shared by the great majority." It lists a set of core personal and societal values for the practical attention of schools and their teachers and states that "all public schools are expected to promote the following attitudes and behaviours". The sections are:

1 Values relating to education - this refers to *personal commitment to education* (focusing on the inherent value of learning, knowledge, curiosity, logical and critical thinking, truth and life-long learning)

2 Values relating to self and others – this refers to p*ersonal integrity* (focusing on values such as self acceptance, responsibility, co-operation, honesty, respect for others, health and fitness)

3 Values relating to civic responsibilities – this refers to *civic consciousness* (concerned with values such as respect for the rights and property of others, as well as to social justice and the elimination of discrimination).

2. Working in NSW Public Schools – A statement of values, skills and understandings.

This further document on values has been drafted in 1998. It lists a number of values and principles derived from the previous document "The Values We Teach". These should guide the work of all Departmental staff. Its purpose is to form a framework for the development of staff that has a clear values base.

It refers to values, skills and understandings which teachers in public schools should hold and the principles that should underpin their work and relationships. Teachers' roles as modelers of values are clearly articulated.

The above two documents provide teachers with a positive framework to work in and reflect the values and principles that are common to a society and which that society expects schools to teach. Such documents attempt to be multi-racial, multicultural and multi-faith.

Although these frameworks are helpful, teachers still have to deal with the everyday events of teaching controversial issues in a community with particular values and attitudes. These documents provide some pedagogical direction but if not implemented from the systems level then individual teachers and schools can find themselves under pressure from the views of minority groups in the community who wish to impose their own views.

3. Civics and Citizenship Education Program

In 1994 this $25m program was launched as a national government response to rectify the problems found by the Civics Expert Group who surveyed Australian students and found them to have little knowledge about civics and citizenship. Within one year it was reviewed and with the change in government this program got relaunched as Discovering Democracy (1997). There were 18 units of teaching materials issued to all Australian schools for use with students from Years 4 – 10. There was plan to provide professional development funds for use with the materials. There are five principles that express the values on which the materials are based. Even though these were broad and inclusive, it raised concern for some in the general public and a national survey of 600 parents was carried out. This survey revealed that parents were concerned that teachers lacked the training and were not professional enough to teach the course without any bias. Civics and citizenship education through the history of Australian democracy is more values laden than any other curriculum areas. It is more explicit about its value component, about which values to teach and how to teach them. Even though this was a good classroom-focused initiative, it must be remembered that each Australian State and Territory is independently responsible for education. Therefore, adopting a national government initiative is never a simple task.

4. The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty- First Century

"The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty- First Century" is a statement of national goals for schooling in the twenty-first century. It is a result of the 10th meeting of the Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) held in April, 1999 in Adelaide and attended by all state, territory and Australian ministers of Education. Being aware of the fact that schooling of our children is what the future of our country depends on, the council agreed to assist schools in meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. The preamble of this statement states that "Australia's future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision."(The Adelaide Declaration)

The statement also states that *"schooling provides a foundation for young Australians intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development".*

Intellectual development refers of that which is related to the intellect or involves intelligence rather than emotions or instinct. An intellectual person is one who utilizes their mind creatively.

The physical aspect is characterized by energetic, bodily activities as far as schooling is concerned and sports and fitness take up a major bulk of time.

The social aspect in schools is marked by friendly companionship with class and school mates as well as human society and its members.

The above three aspects are generally what schools feel they should develop in students. It is often taken for granted by all stakes that schools will cater for these.

The next three areas are ones that are not common to educators and even parents.

Moral development is concerned with the principles of right and wrong or performing to standards of behaviour and character based on these principles.

Spiritual development is concerned with sacred matters like religion or church and those affecting the spirit or soul.

Aesthetic development is characterized by an appreciation of beauty or pure sensation.

These are profound areas which the Adelaide declaration states that schools should consider as their aim and endeavor to develop in students. However, many people will agree with teachers that these matters should be left to the parents and the home front. Teachers particularly feel that it is not their role to delve too deep into these areas. This is very likely so because they are not aware that this is stated in the declaration and that they are free to interpret it in any way they like. Since it is stated that schooling provides a foundation for the development of these aspects it should be analyzed and teachers should be made aware of the content of this document. This will also complement the discussions presently taking place about values education and related issues.

This statement has immense interpretation as to what can be taught in schools – it covers a whole range of areas left only to the teachers' imagination.

The common and agreed national goals provide a basis for schools to help young people to become engaged effectively and be able to relate to an increasingly complex world. The declaration notes that the future world will see advances in information and communication technologies, population diversity due to migration and movement, and challenging environmental and social changes.

There is a common thread running through these goals and the whole notion of values education. If we are to prepare our children for the increasingly complex future world than values education is a must. It is only through learning about values and the practice of them that students are going to realize the understandings and adjustments required to cope with the information and technological overload and the multicultural make up of the societies.

The declaration further states 18 major goals divided in three sections;

1   Enhancing students' talents and capabilities,

2   curriculum goals,

3   social goals.

These again are exquisitely related to the first three aspects stated and discussed above i.e the intellectual, physical and social development but the moral, spiritual and aesthetic areas are not elaborated to a great extent. However, under the first section it is stated that students should:
"*have qualities of self confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members.*" (Goal 1.2) *and*

"*have the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their own lives…*" (Goal 1.3)

These can be interpreted as addressing the aspects of moral and aesthetic development. In a study in Hong Kong when parents were asked to rank values, the highest was spiritual development as they thought if your inner self is clear than everything else falls in place. In this document even though reference is made to morality it must also be noted that no processes are given or suggested and that the only way to achieve these goals is by teaching about values and values itself.

5. Values in NSW Public Schools

"Values in New South Wales Public Schools" is a document which was released in March 2004 by the then Minister of Education Hon Andrew Refshauge. It outlines the NSW approach to values and values education in public schools. It states that values have always been taught in NSW public schools and that values underpin learning.

The document also states that:
1) Values are taught explicitly in classrooms and through the activities and relationships of the school and its community and
2) Values guide student welfare and discipline, how the school communicates with parents and how the staff, students and parents participate in the decision making process.

This statement also lists the nine core values that it says the government recognizes. These values are from the draft framework developed after the values education study of 2003.
There is a section on values education *in classrooms* and *in school communities.*

In the last section of the document, values education outcomes are listed under:

Student Learning Outcomes- mainly deals with student academic and social skills

Outcomes of Schooling- rewords the list of values previously stated as outcomes.

Social Outcomes- relates to the appreciation of history and multiculturalism.

This document was sent to schools in mid 2004 and every teacher was supposed to receive a copy and familiarize themselves with it.

1 Yet again, this is another document that sets out a whole range of goals and outcomes for students to achieve without explicitly giving any processes for teachers to follow.
2 The day to day routines of schools are exemplified as teaching values.
3 The mention of "core values" repeatedly makes it sound important but it only highlights the activities surrounding the running of schools as values education. This is definitely not so even though educators may like to think so.
4 There is mention that teachers explain the meaning of core values but how can the teachers do this without fully understanding the values themselves?
5 Without providing guidance for schools and teachers to follow releasing such documents becomes a futile exercise and do not serve any purpose.

6. National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools

"National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools" is an eight page document developed after the Values Education Study was completed in 2003 and the Draft Framework that resulted from the study. The framework was published in March 2005 and consists of six sections:

1. An introduction

2. A context

3. A vision for improved values education in Australian schools

4. A set of values for schools, based on the Adelaide Declaration

5. Guiding principles for schools to help implement values education

6. Key elements and approaches to provide guidance to schools in implementing values education.

The framework expands and explains these in detail. The context and vision describe how the framework came into being and the documents it already acknowledges.

Section 3 lists nine values but some have two values in each, for example 'Care and Compassion' 'Honesty and Trustworthiness' and 'Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion'. So there are actually 13 values.
There are 8 guiding principles followed by key elements and suggested approaches which schools can take.

Even though these guiding principles are given they can not be acted upon easily. There still needs to be detailed practical approaches before schools can seriously think about implementing some of the ideas.
The Education Study Report states that this framework is just a discussion starter and is there to increase awareness across the board, starting with teachers. It seems a lot still needs to be done before there is any chance of schools taking any major steps to introduce values in their classrooms.
There are no guidelines as to how to cater for the needs of kindergarten children, primary aged children and high schools students as far as values are concerned. There is a need for age appropriate resources including suitable activities for these age groups. Teachers are most likely not to spend their own time preparing or modifying ideas into lessons for their classes. They have to be given a broad spectrum and overview and then they may be able to work from there.
This framework, like the others in the past is not likely to make a major impact on schools unless it is accompanied by supporting documents and resources. It needs to provide teachers with an understanding of the importance of values and the teachers' significant role in developing these in the children in their care.

Listed Values to be taught

"Values in NSW Public Schools" lists: "National Framework for Values Ed." lists:

1. Integrity   1. Care and Compassion

2. Excellence   2. Doing Your Best

3. Respect   3. Fair Go

4. Responsibility   4. Freedom

5. Cooperation   5. Honesty and Trustworthiness

6. Participation   6. Integrity

7. Care   7. Respect

8. Fairness   8. Responsibility

9. Democracy   9. Understanding, Tolerance and

                                                Inclusion

Many of the values in each set are interrelated. However, they do have a purpose. These values to be taught in schools seem to be chosen for three reasons:

1. Excellence at school

2. Democracy

3. Multiculturalism

Each of these reasons has its own place and are outcomes of previous discussions and outcry from the general public about schools addressing these areas. For example, claims such as:

*our younger people are poor readers and poor spellers,

*teachers are not well qualified,

*teachers do not know their grammar,

*Australians in general have little knowledge about democracy and citizenship,

*absence of racial and religious tolerance in our society,

*schools should help build character of children.

According to Terence Lovot, Dean of Education at Newcastle University, this list is meaningless and incomplete. He says some of these are not values but virtues and some are ethical principles as such. (Lovot 2005) These values do not fit in any sort of framework. They seem to be selected randomly only because it came up frequently when the sample schools did their discussions and developed plans to introduce values to their students. The values chosen need to fit into some kind of framework which would make the whole program integrated and flowing. If they are chosen randomly and no reasoning is given as to how and where they fit in the overview then it seems like a set of disjointed lessons on certain values/virtues/beliefs/principles.

Peter Vardy from the University of London, has referred to these nine values as "apple pie" words that would not help students analyse current and emerging complex issues such as the war in Iraq, refugees, sexual morality and genetic engineering. (Vardy quoted in Doherty 2005) Vardy suggests that the Government's proposals for values education lack rigour in that the content is remarkably empty. (Doherty 2005)

The discussion and debate from schools is always going to be that they already teach values. Therefore, rather than a prescriptive document, this framework can be used as a platform for discussion, dialogue, awareness and to create interest.

Have these documents achieved their goals?

1. The above documents were established mainly to combat the problem of community concerns about values education. However, in the process of releasing the documents, providing schools with additional resources and trying to implement it from a national level the momentum is lost and these documents have not achieved their goals.

2. There always seems to be a lobby group who oppose any initiatives taken.

3. Other issues come into existence and the enthusiasm for testing out the new approach using new materials is lost.

4. Since these programs are not mandatory many of the States and Territories do not choose to implement them seriously enough.

5. Some schools have a communication problem where these documents get received but are not acted upon.

Even though the general understanding and expectation is that schools are the most suited to help children in this time of dire need, little attention has been given to teachers, who are the most important as they are in direct contact with the children.

Questions which arise are
1. How do the teachers feel about the introduction of formal values education in schools? Do they feel it is their role to impart values to children?
2. What training and preparation do the teachers need?
3. What can the government do to support teachers so they feel adequately equipped to carry out their new challenging role to help these children?
4. Do primary schools and secondary schools have the same role? Is it enough to teach values in primary schools only?

Furthermore, schools know that they have to do something but they are not told how to do it. What can they do without knowing how to do it? There have not been any processes or pedagogy given to them.
My survey questions for teachers aim to address some of these issues.

PART TWO

Research Methodology

Survey Purpose

For the purpose of this study a survey questionnaire was designed for teachers currently teaching in public schools. The objective of the survey was to gather information concerning the following aspects of values education and teacher professionalism:

1. The awareness of teachers about values education

2. The manner in which the teachers become aware of values education

3. Teachers' attitudes towards values education

4. Teachers' perception of the values that guide the life of the current generation of children.

5. Teachers' willingness to teach values

6. Teachers' perception of the kind of support they would need in order to teach values effectively.

In addition, the following areas were also explored:

7. What the teachers like best about teaching

8. What their perceptions are of their roles and priorities

9. What they think makes a successful lesson

10. What techniques they use in their classrooms for general teaching.

Sampling Method

A sample of schools from South West Sydney was selected for this survey. Each school was given 15-20 questionnaires for the teachers selected at random by the contact teacher at each school. A note explaining the reason for the survey was attached to each questionnaire. A time frame of four weeks was allocated for the distribution, completion and collection of the survey questionnaires. Some schools required a written letter addressed to the principal explaining the reason for the survey and the intended use of the results before staff from those schools could be asked to complete the questionnaire. A letter of explanation from the Institute of Sathya Sai Education was given to these schools. One school approached for the survey refused to allow the teachers to complete the survey. The principal believed it was against department policy for teachers to take part in any surveys.

A total of one hundred primary school teachers completed the survey.

Response Rate

The response rate was 70%. Verbal reminders about the collection date were given to schools at the end of three weeks. At the end of four weeks completed questionnaires were collected. Some teachers claimed they could not complete the questionnaire because they were busy with the half yearly reports which were to be completed in May/June in the schools in the area surveyed.

The Survey

There were 30 questions for teachers. The questions were designed to investigate a number of areas and were focused on issues which became evident from the critical literature review given in Part One and the Values Education Study (2002). All questions except one had a yes/no format or multiple choice selections. These formats made it quick and easy for teachers to respond. The questions were specially designed to take into account the limited amount of time teachers are prepared to spare in their busy daily routines to complete surveys. Hence, 70%, the response rate was considered acceptable. Four of the multiple choice questions asked for level of agreement or disagreement on particular issues related to values education. (These were based on a modified lickert scale) The choices ranged from strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree to strongly agree. This format was also chosen for quick and easy responses as well as finding out about teachers' opinions on these issues. If they were asked to give a written response they may not have responded at all.
One question asked teachers to list their priorities as a teacher for the group of children they taught each year. They had to order their priorities from 1 being the most important to 10 being the least important. A number of teachers commented they found it difficult to prioritize their duties from most important to least important because they thought each was the choices was just as important as others.

The first six questions were designed to find out whether the teachers are fulltime, part time or casual and their experience in number of years.

1. Are you a full time teacher at the moment?   Yes   No

2. If yes how long have you being teaching full time?

   (a) 0-2 years   (b) 2-5 years   (c) 5-10 years
   (d) 10 – 20 years   (e) over 20 years

3. If not, are you a part time teacher ☐ or a casual teacher? ☐

4. How long have you being teaching on a part time or casual basis?

   (a) 0 - 2 years   (b) 2 - 5 years   (c) 5 - 7 years
   (d) 7 – 10 years   (e) over 10 years

5. If you are a part time or casual teacher now, have you taught as a full time teacher before?   Yes   No

6. If yes, how long have you taught as a full time teacher?

   (a) 0 - 2 years   (b) 2 – 5 years   (c) 5 – 7 years
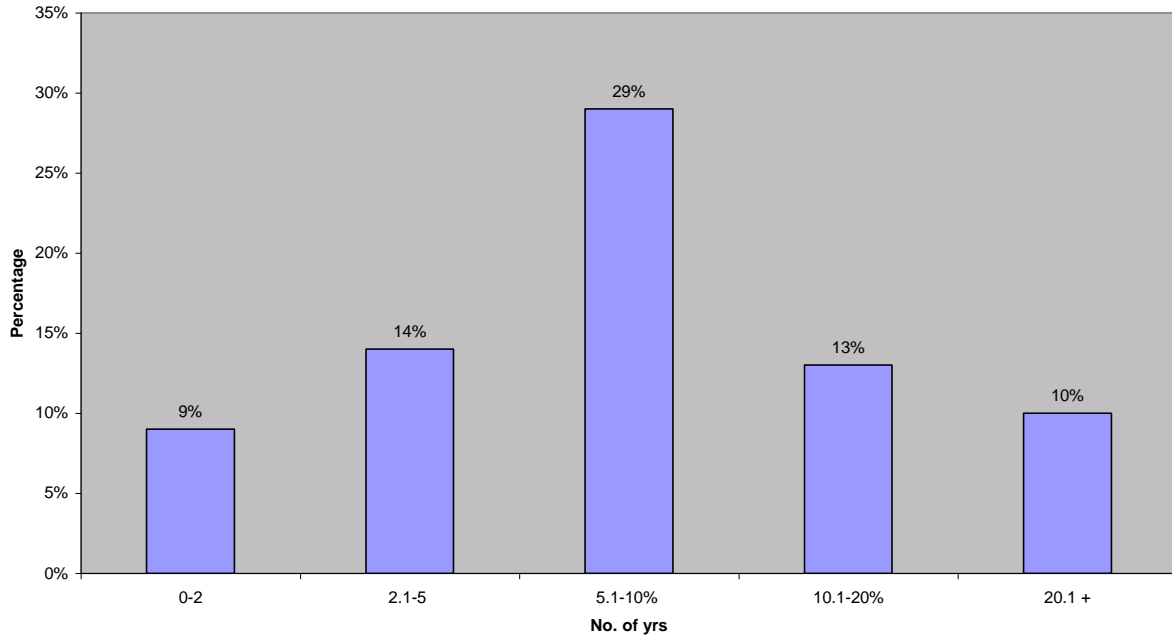   (d) 7 – 10 years   (e) over 10 years

The results showed that 75% were full time teachers and 25% either part-time or casual teachers.

Composition of Teachers
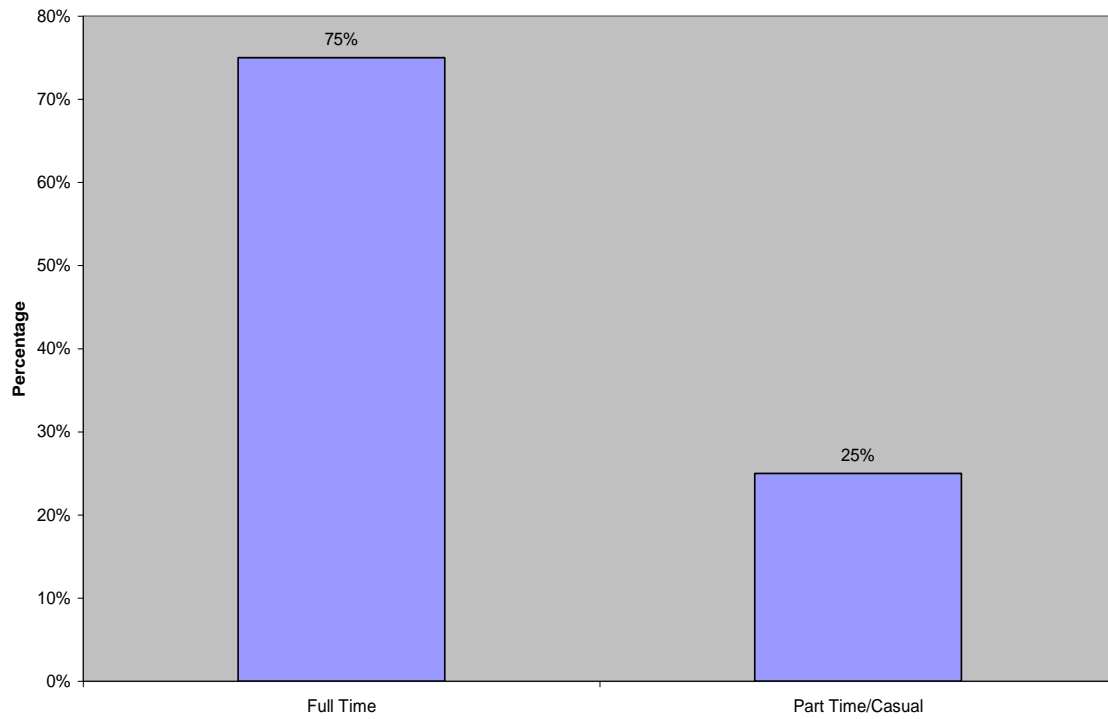
Of the 75% who were full time teachers 9% had had 0-2 years of experience, 14% 2-5 years, 29% 5-10 years, 13% 10-20 years and 10% over 20 years experience.

Experience of full time Teachers

Discussion of Results

There was a similar distribution of teachers in terms of experience. Majority of the teachers surveyed had between 5 – 10 years experience. There were similar numbers of teachers with either very less experience, 0 – 2 years or extensive experience of over 20 years.   Similar numbers also had either 2 – 5 years experience or 10-20 years of experience.

The 25% of casual or part-time teachers had had various numbers of years of experience. Some of them were permanent part-timers working from one to four days a week while others were long term casuals who were working five days a week for many years. This information was gathered when I spoke to the teachers who completed the survey.

Question seven was intended to find what teachers liked best about teaching. They were given five choices and were allowed to choose more than one reason if they wished to.

7. What do you like best about teaching? You may choose more than one response by circling them.
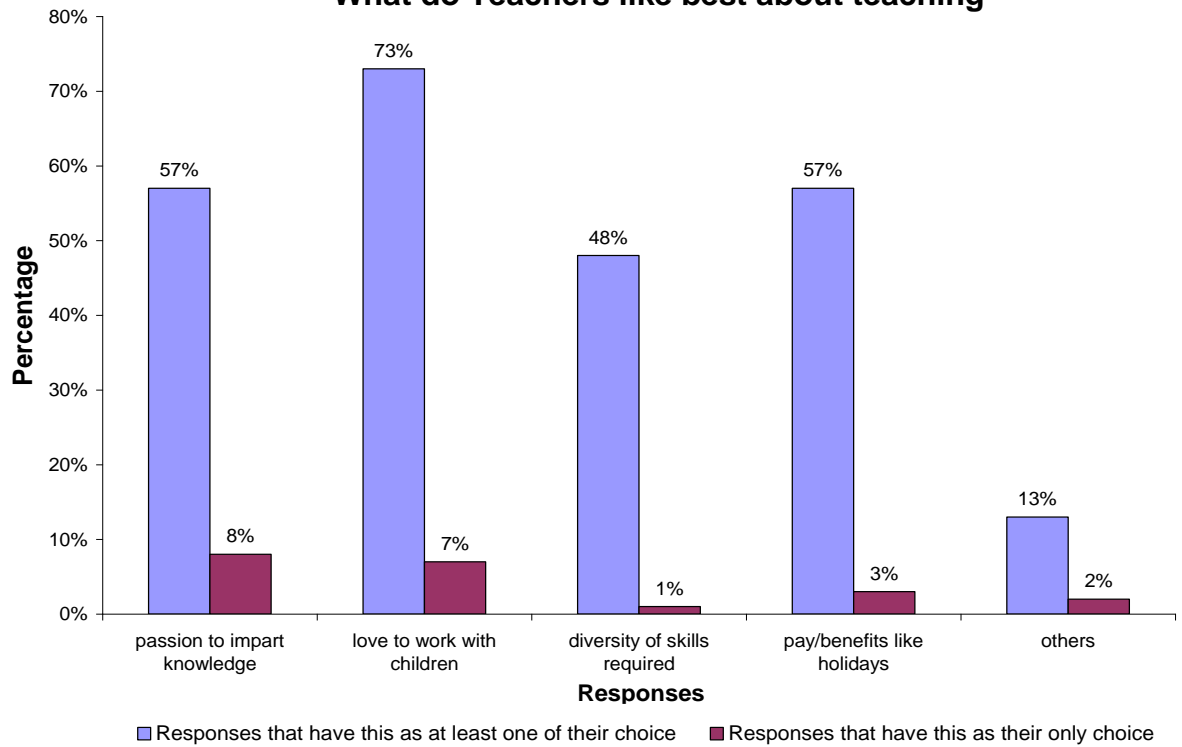
(a)   You have a passion to impart knowledge
(b)   You love to work with children
(c)   The diversity of skills you need for your job
(d)   The pay/benefits like holidays
(e)   Other: Please specify_____

Most teachers liked more than one aspect of teaching. 73% of the teachers said they loved to work with children as what they liked best about teaching as at least one of their reasons. 57% had a passion to impart knowledge and 57% also considered benefits like pay and/or holidays as what they liked about teaching. A further 48% chose the diversity of skills they require for teaching as at least one of their reasons. Finally 13% liked other aspects that they liked best about teaching, for example developing relationships with students, serving their community , watching students gain skills and helping students in need.

The following were the percentage of teachers who chose a single response for what they liked best about teaching.

*Passion to impart knowledge   8%   *Love to work with children 7%
*Diversity of skills needed for the job   1%   *Pay or benefits like holidays 3%
*Other reasons   2%

What do Teachers like best about teaching

Percentage

- passion to impart knowledge: 57%, 8%
- love to work with children: 73%, 7%
- diversity of skills required: 48%, 1%
- pay/benefits like holidays: 57%, 3%
- others: 13%, 2%

Responses

☐ Responses that have this as at least one of their choice   ■ Responses that have this as their only choice

Discussion of Results

It is surprising to note that 27% of teachers did not include in their response that they love to work with children and yet they spend 5 days with the children. One implication here is that a number of teachers are in a profession they may not be best suited for. There could be network support program provided for such teachers by either the school they are in or the local district of the department of education. This is one area that cannot be neglected as it has immense reciprocation.

Questions 8, 9 and 10 were to find out if teachers had heard about, seen or read the document "The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century".

8. Are you aware of the document, "The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century"?   Yes   No

9. Have you seen the document?   Yes   No

10. Have you read the document?   Yes   No

The results showed 22% had heard about it, 15% had seen it and 9% had actually read it.

Awareness of the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the 21st century
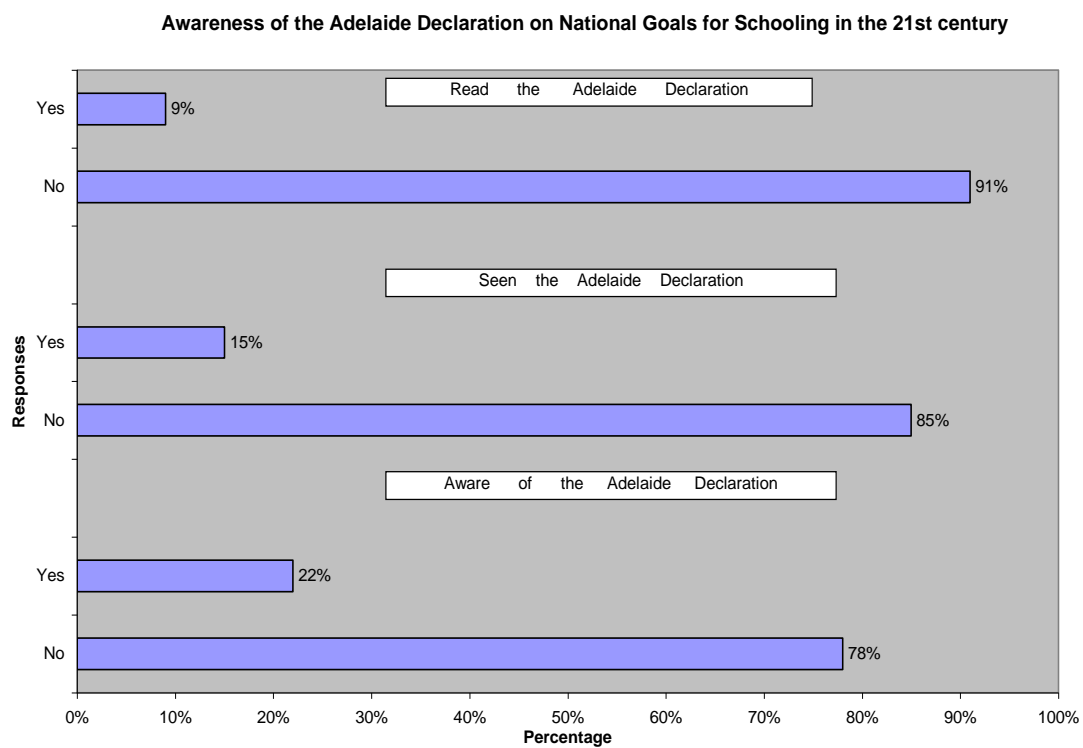
Discussion of Results

This result shows that even though the Adelaide declaration concerns education, and as reviewed sets the actual goals for schooling in the twenty first century, only 9% of teachers had actually read it! A majority of teachers (85%) hadn't even seen the document and about one in four had heard about it. Many of these teachers had heard about this document from a talk presented by myself on values education at one of professional development sessions after attending the Values Forum in Canberra in May 2005. From a discussion after the survey two of the newer teachers said they were shown the document at their university during their teacher training course. Three teachers surveyed have completed the Diploma In Education in Human Values offered by the Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Australia.

This unawareness of teachers shows that because a document is published doesn't necessarily mean that it will be read by all concerned. In education, information is disseminated via policy documents sent to schools or standard letters from the office of the Ministry of Education, to the state department offices which then gets sent to individual schools. There is a lack of communication between these offices as well as between the principal, executive staff and general teachers in schools. The poor communication between policy and practice, between the Ministry of Education and Education Departments and the schools is evident. The Minister had the Adelaide Declaration posted on the official education website and sent letters to principals asking them to make their respective teachers aware of it. However, the responsibility of ensuring that it reached the teachers was not taken by any party. It is the teachers who need to be aware of it most because they are the ones who can act on it or begin to think of the issues raised and suggestions given. The fact that a majority of teachers were unaware shows that teachers are not regarded as highly professional individuals deserving of the information in such documents. The view that teachers' place is in the classroom and that they are the deliverers of content is still prevalent. "…curricular and pedagogical planning and decision-making take place at higher levels of authority." (Watts and Castle quoted in Middleton and Hill 1996) As stated by Watts and Castle, the teacher should be included as a professional decision-maker who is knowledgeable and reflective.(Middleton and Hill 1996) Considering these views a better system of communication has to be sought for informing teachers rather that publishing documents and sending them to schools. Even when they are available on the internet and advertised in the media some teachers are still unaware.

Question 11 asked teachers how they felt about the underlined aspects in this statement from the Adelaide Declaration – "Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, <u>moral, spiritual and aesthetic</u> development." The purpose of this question was to establish if teachers felt that they were responsible for moral, spiritual and aesthetic development.

11. This statement is from the above document.

"Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, **moral, spiritual and aesthetic** development?"

How do you feel about the underlined aspects?

(a)Strongly agree   (b) Somewhat Agree   (c) Neutral
(d) Disagree   (e) Strongly Disagree

24% said they strongly agreed, 55% said they somewhat agreed 11% were neutral, 9% said they somewhat disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

Does schooling provide "moral, spiritual and aesthetic" development for young Australians?

Strongly Agree	24%
Somewhat Agree	55%
Neutral	11%
Somewhat Disagree	9%
Strongly Disagree	1%

79% agreed that schooling does provide moral, spiritual and aesthetic development whereas 19% disagreed with the statement.

Discussion of results

Some of the one in four teachers who strongly agreed and nearly one in two teachers who somewhat agreed to this statement probably read it as "schools should provide" rather than "schooling provides". From the 79% who agreed that schooling provides for these 69 teachers also believe that values are either not apparent or missing in today's children (Question 19). This suggests that these teachers may have misread the question because if they believed that schooling provides for moral, spiritual and aesthetic development then children would have some apparent values.

This was also evident when I had subsequent discussions with teachers after they had completed the questionnaire. If looked at carefully, schooling at present does not provide moral, spiritual and aesthetic development of children to any great extent. Teachers, until the recent past, generally didn't and many still don't feel it is their responsibility to cater for moral, spiritual and aesthetic development in children. In the actual classrooms, there may be some incidents and activities which may cover some related areas but not as extensive as it could or should be.

In addition, there seems to be a flaw in this question in that some of the teachers may have overlooked the fact that they were asked for their feelings about only the underlined aspects and not the intellectual, physical and social development which were not underlined. This was also a comment made to me by some teachers when asked verbally about their responses. The intellectual, physical and social development is definitely covered in schools and some teachers may have agreed to these when answering the question.

8% of those who were neutral and almost all of those who disagreed that schooling provides moral, spiritual and aesthetic development felt that values are completely missing in today's children or that negative values are apparent. These teachers see that schooling does not provide with these types of development explicitly enough to transfer the resulting characteristics to the children and therefore, is missing in the children.

Questions 12 and 13 asked if teachers had seen or read the document, "National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools."

12. Have you seen the document, "National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools"?   Yes   No

13. Have you read the above document?   Yes   No

41% said they had seen it and 19% said they had read it.

"National Framework of Values Education in Australia Schools"
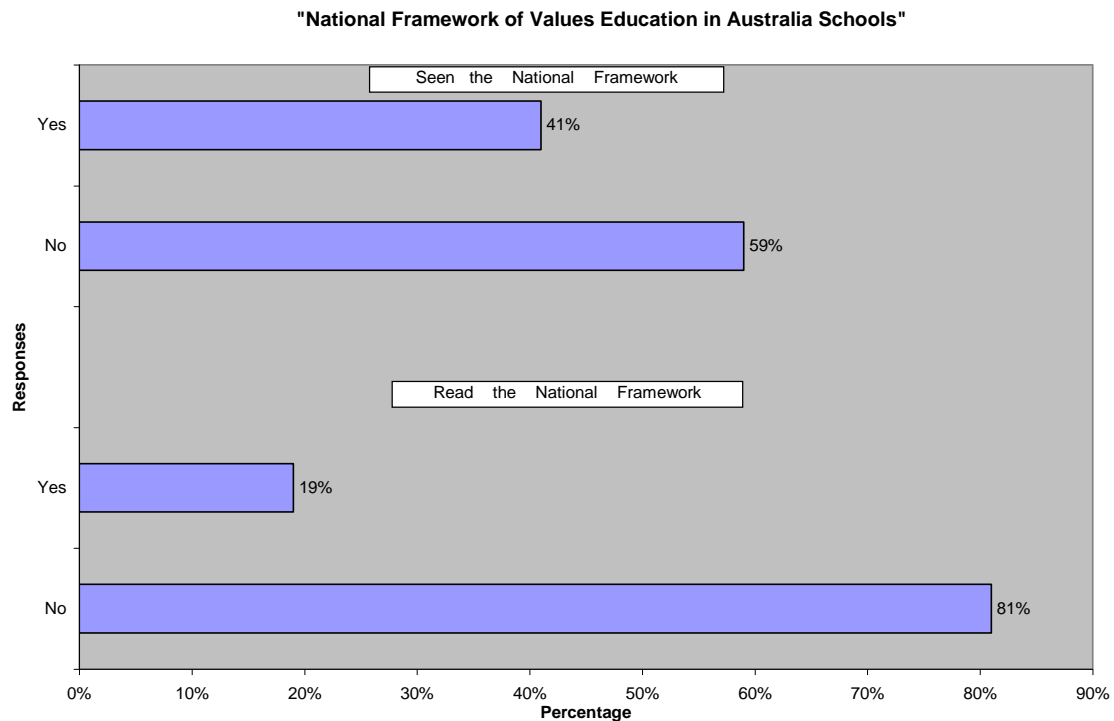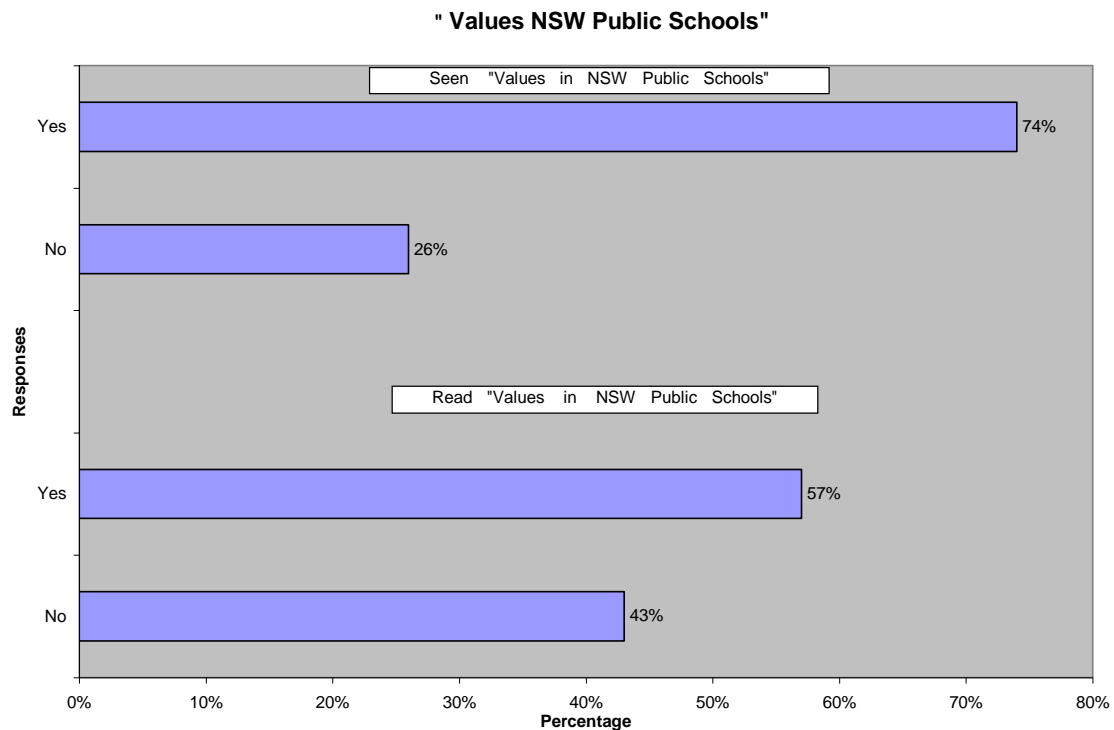

Discussion of results

This framework was only released in March, 2005 and is still in the process of being sent to schools. This survey was completed in May 2005. It seems that some of schools from which the teachers answered the questionnaire must have received it. Some of the teachers would have seen it on the official government website as well. It is interesting to note that more teachers were not only aware but had seen and read this document than the Adelaide Declaration. The Adelaide Declaration was released in 2000 when values education was not a major agenda in the education or the government arena. It is now a government subsidized initiative and is likely to have more impact. As more and more schools receive the package, the awareness among teachers is likely to steadily increase.

Questions 14 and 15 asked if teachers had seen or read the document, "Values Education in NSW Public Schools."

14. Have you seen the document, "Values in NSW Public Schools"?   Yes   No

15. Have you read the above document?   Yes   No

74% said they have seen it and 57% said they have read it.

" Values NSW Public Schools"

Discussion of Results

A more significant number of teachers had seen and read this document. Perhaps this is because every teacher received a personal copy of this document and it was the intention of the government that teachers would be aware of the substance in the document. However, despite this, more than one in three teachers had not seen it and almost one in two had not read it. This shows that ensuring every teacher receives a copy of any document does not necessarily mean that they would read it. Therefore, this is not an effective method of values education of teachers.   As discussed previously the content of this document was not detailed enough to make any real impact on schools or teachers. It sets out a whole range of goals and outcomes for students to achieve without outlining the processes to be followed to achieve these. It exemplifies the day to day routines of schools as teaching values. There is mention that teachers explain the meaning of core values but this cannot be so because teachers have to have a good understanding of the values themselves first. Therefore, this document has not served the purpose of guiding teachers and providing them with pedagogy for values education.

Question 16 asked for the teachers' view on Dr Brendan Nelson's comment that schools should assist children to build character in addition to teaching reading, writing, counting and communicating.

16. Dr Brendan Nelson (Federal Minister for Education) recently said that apart from teaching reading, writing, counting and communicating schools should also assist children to build character".

What is your view about this?

(a)Strongly agree   (b) Somewhat Agree   (c) Neutral
(d) Disagree   (e) Strongly disagree

44% strongly agreed, 38% somewhat agreed, 15% were neutral, 2% somewhat disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

Schools should assist children to build character

|	
Somewhat disagreee 2%	Strongly disagree 1%
Neutral 15%	Strongly agree 44%
Somewhat agree 38%	
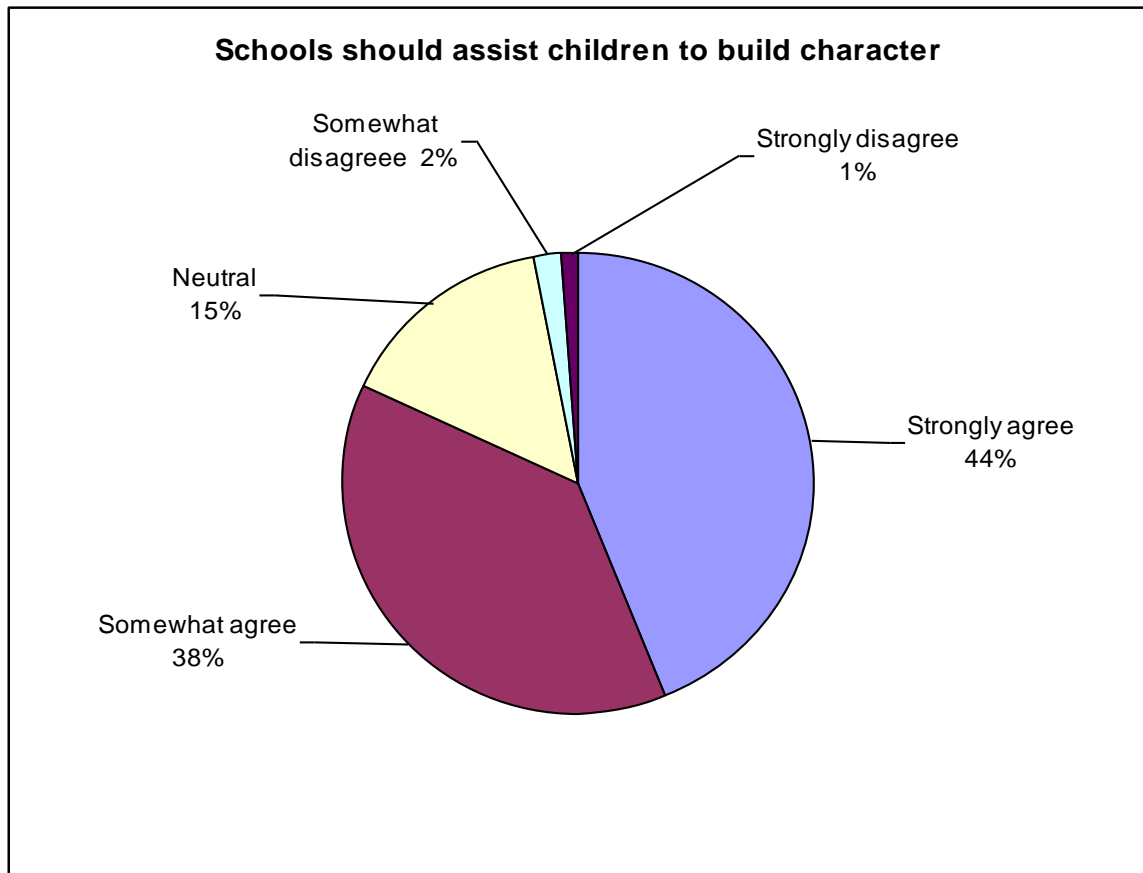
Discussion of Results

A majority of teachers believed that schools should assist in building the children's character. They agreed that schools build character not just by "teaching." School culture, the procedures, discipline, demonstration, visual focus on values etc all play a part. The teachers have a control role in this.

About one in six teachers were neutral about this statement. This indicated that they are challenged by this concept. The reasons for this were not explored in the questionnaire but during discussions teachers brought out a number of concerns. The first was that they considered values as private rather than a public domain and as such should be formed and developed at home in the family environment rather than in a public place like the school. Teachers feared that the question of religion and values and whose values; the teachers, the children's, the parents, the community or patriotic values would arise. Then the question of indoctrination, the when and how to implement the teachings would come up as well. Teachers' felt that their role did not include teaching values or character traits and preferred taking a values neutral stance similar to that taken by the education system. 82% of teachers who agreed that schools should assist in character building of children probably did so thinking the school is somehow responsible. Even though the role and responsibility of the teachers in this regard was not explored "school" to them may not necessarily mean that they have to do something about it.

Question 17 was to find out if teachers were aware that there is discussion at national and state level about formal introduction of values in schools.

17. Are you aware that there is discussion at the state and government level about the introduction of values education in schools? Yes   No

78% said they were aware. 22% were not aware.

Awareness about introduction of values in schools

Teachers not aware
22%
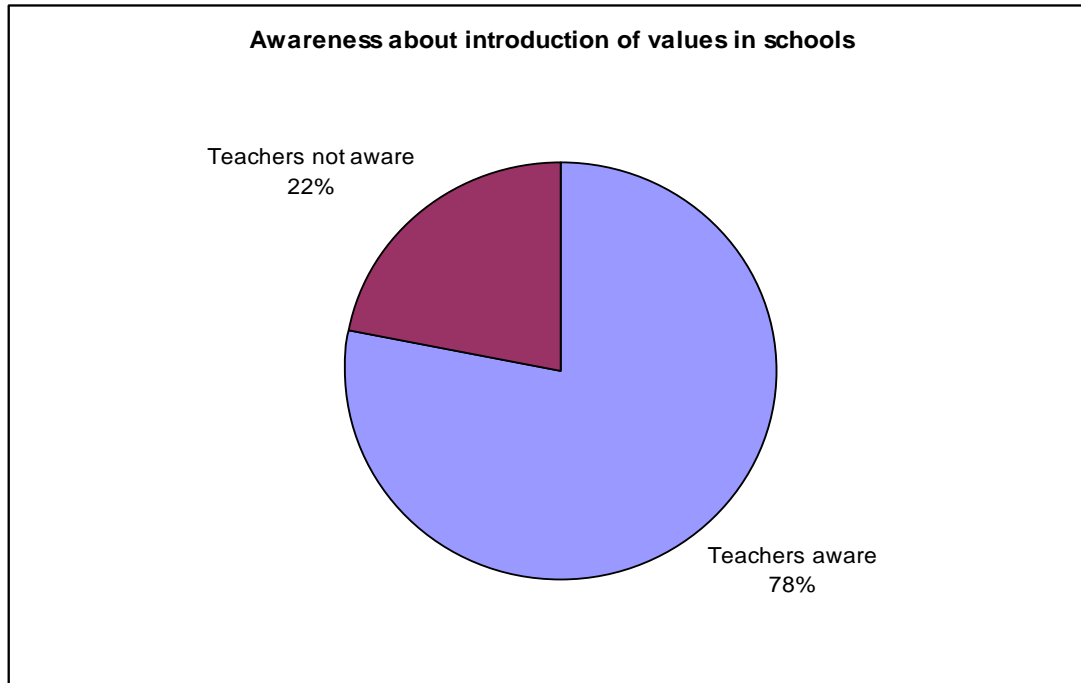
Teachers aware
78%

Discussion of Results

It is significant that many teachers are aware that there is active discussion at the state and government level about introduction of values in schools.75% of the teachers who were aware of government initiatives were those who stated they loved to work with children and felt it was their role to impart values to children in schools. From this 60% stated that values were not apparent in children today and felt that they should help with the character building of children.
80% of teachers who had not seen or heard of the government documents were unaware of the current dialogue on values education.20% of teachers who had not heard of, seen or read any of the documents were still aware of the values education dialogue. They had come to know of this mainly through the media or other teachers.
On the other hand 10% of teachers who had seen and read some of the documents said they were unaware of the values education dialogue. This is surprising and self-contradicting because the documents are about values and suggest means and ways of implementing them in classrooms. If a teacher had read them, they would have become aware that the whole current dialogue is on introducing values into education.

20% of the teachers who were not aware of the discussion on values education said they had not seen or read any of the government documents. This makes sense.

Question 18 asked teachers how they became aware about values education. They could choose more than one option.

18. If yes, how have you become aware? You may choose more than one response.

(a) From the media: newspaper   television   radio   internet
(b) From other teachers
(c) From family and friends
(d) From government documents
(e) Any other, please specify _____

56% of the teachers had become aware of the government and state initiatives from the media either newspaper, radio, television or internet as at least one of the options, 40% had learnt about this from other teachers as at least one of the ways. 31% chose government documents as at least one of the options. Family and friends were the only source of information for 5% of the teachers. 6% of teachers chose others as an option and this included newer teachers who had obtained their information from their universities.

How did you become Aware?
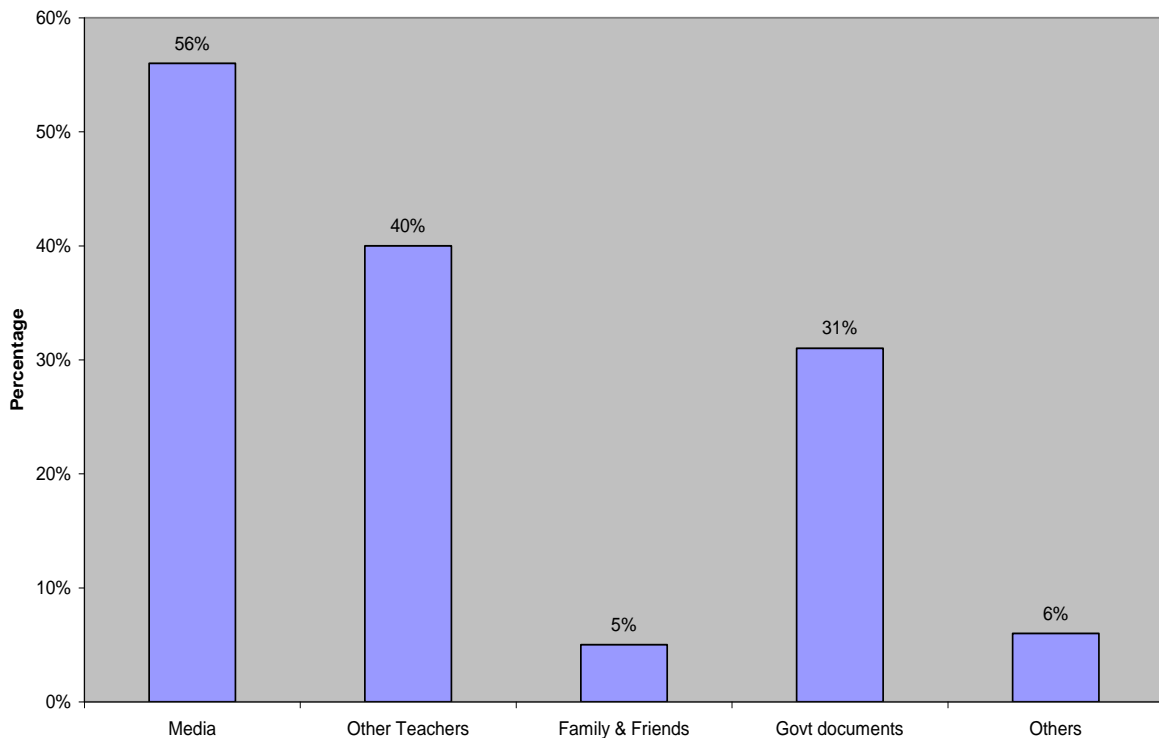
89% of teachers selected multiple modes of information for their awareness. This suggests that there are no set criteria for dissemination of information for teachers by the government. Teachers should be able to learn about major developments in their professional lives from school administration rather than family, friends, media and other teachers. This indicates the lack of teacher professionalism in Australia.

Discussion of Results

This result indicates the impact of media releases on teachers compared to that of government documents. 25% more teachers became aware as a result of media than from all the government documents discussed in part two of this paper.

As stated above, 20% of teachers who had not seen the documents were still aware of the dialogue on values education at state and national level because of the media releases.
This indicates that releasing documents and sending them to schools for teachers to read and act upon is not an effective method of communication. The problem could be at any level ranging from schools not receiving them; the principals hanging onto them; the document getting accessioned and shelved in the teacher resource room; the teachers receiving it but not having the time to read it; to teachers reading it and not remembering it.

Putting communiqué in the media seems to be a better option for governments to choose.

Question 19 required teachers to give their perception of values in the current generation of children.

19. What is your opinion of the values apparent in most children in today's society?   (You may also consider the children you teach.)

(a) They have strong family values
(b) Most of their values are apparent
(c) Values seem to be there but not apparent
(d) Values seem to be completely missing
(e) Negative values are apparent

 2% of teachers said that children have strong family values. These teachers commented on their questionnaire that their school had predominantly Asian children. 15% said most of the children's values are apparent, 43% said that values seem to be there but not apparent, 30% said that values seem to be completely missing while 10% said negative values are apparent.

Teachers' opinion of children's values

Negative Values, 10%   Strong Family Values, 2%   Values- Apparent, 15%
Values-Missing, 30%   Values-not Apparent, 43%
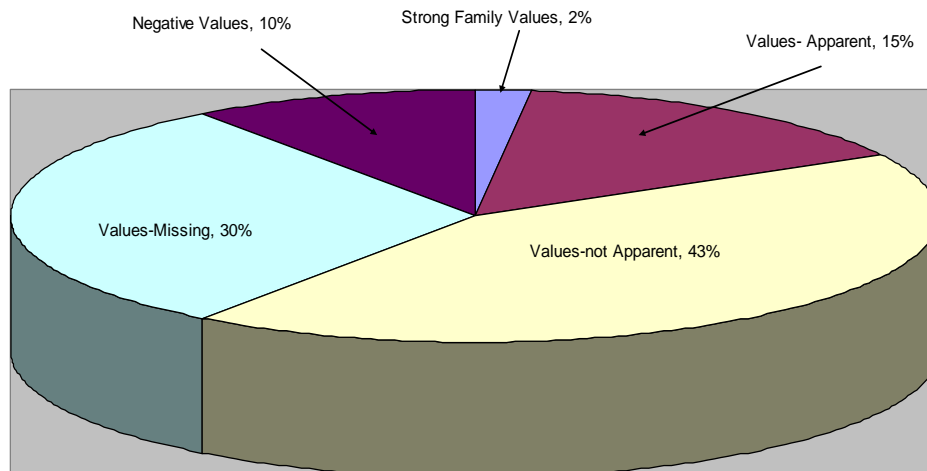
Discussion of Results

A majority of teachers (73%) felt that values in children were either not apparent or completely missing. This is a conclusion they have reached as professionals from their own observations on children's behaviour in class, in the playground and in their social relationships with other children.

In addition to this, 10% of teachers felt children had negative values. This is most likely from teachers, who have to deal with children involved with different forms of bullying, having disrespect for parents and teachers, back chatting, pushing and punching, swearing and kicking, being rough, lying, stealing and so on. In high schools it is a different range of problems such as drug abuse, verbal and physical violence towards students as well as teachers, possession of weapons, threats and harassment.

Those teachers who said values in children are apparent may or may not have necessarily referred to positive values since values was not identified by the questionnaire.. They could have thought of values such as competition, winning, exercising your rights, demanding cultural understanding and so on. In saying this, it should not be overlooked that many children do have positive values which come from goodness of their nature or from their family traditions and practices.

Question 20 required teachers to comment on their perceptions of the values of the present generation of children vis-a-vis their own values when they were children.

20. Most of the children today have the same values as you used to have when you were their age. How do you feel about this?

(a) Strongly agree   (b) Somewhat agree   (c) Neutral
(d) Somewhat disagree   (e) Strongly Disagree

1% strongly agreed that children of today have the same values as they had when they were children. 15% somewhat agreed, 7% were neutral, 33% somewhat disagreed and 44% strongly disagreed.

Do children now have the same values as the teachers did when they were primary school children?
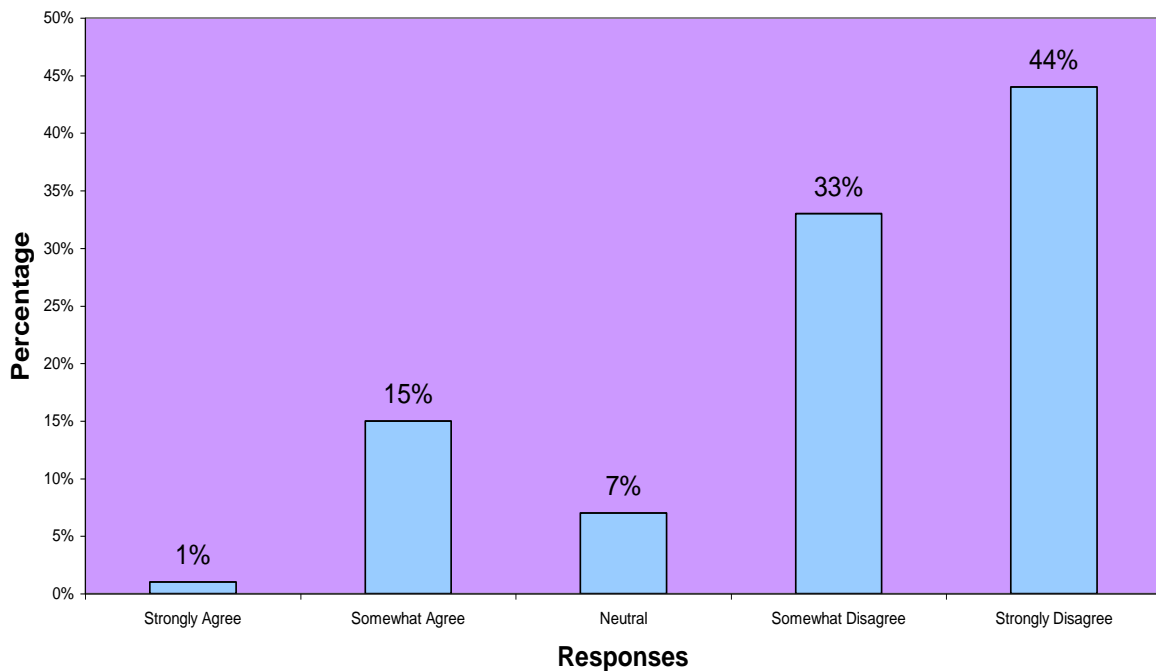
Discussion of Results

8 out of 10 teachers felt that their values when they were young were different from values of today's children. These teachers are aware of the difference in the way children are brought up in now compared to when they were young. The environment in which today's children live is very different from the environment in which the teachers lived when they were young i.e around the seventies. Many aspects of life have changed and these influence the modern childhood experiences. This has an impact on the teaching profession. Many families today do not have the support from extended families which means that children do not have trusting adults in whom they can confide. Teachers may be the only adults some children can trust.

Teachers have a far greater challenge today than in the past to provide for the vast and differing nature of needs of children. These ranges from manners, eating habits, healthy lifestyle choices including diet and junk food, fitness and exercise, drug education, sex education, personal health, relationships and the list goes on.

The 16% of teachers had agreed that values of children today are the same as their values when they were young. From subsequent discussions with these teachers it was discovered that they were thinking of mainly family values when responding to this question. Things that they considered as values were importance of relatives and friends, family gathering and outings, grandparents' role and influence, taking part in celebrations and so on. The teachers also claimed that even though these activities have been reduced they are still there and some children value these.

After the analysis of the responses to this question and the subsequent discussions with the teachers it can be concluded that teachers' perception of values are different. While many confuse values with lifestyle choices others feel strongly about children having a set of values when they are born and as they grow in the environment they live in. A range of factors influence the way teachers consider about values today. These include the media and the way it influences it audiences; mobility of families resulting in different ethnic and religious groups living together; the internet and its positive as well as negative impact; more liberal society where a number of things not acceptable before are now accepted by the community, for example family breakdown; changing family dynamics where most women are working; greater awareness of human rights and emphasis on individualistic culture; terrorism and wars; modern youth culture including drugs. These are social changes but impact on values that the children grow up with.

The 7% of teachers who were neutral may have been confused about what is being asked. They were possibly wondering that intrinsically children are good even if they have made bad choices because of the social changes in their lives.

This question has probably made some teachers think deeply about children today and their values stance.

Question 21 was asked to explore how teachers felt about formal introduction of values in primary schools.

21. What is your opinion about the introduction of values in school?

(a) Strongly Agree   (b) Somewhat Agree   (c) Neutral
(d) Somewhat Disagree   (e) Strongly Disagree

When asked about their view on the formal introduction of values into schools 45% strongly agreed, 30% somewhat agreed, 20% were neutral, 2% somewhat disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.

Do the teachers think that values should be introduced in Government Primary schools?
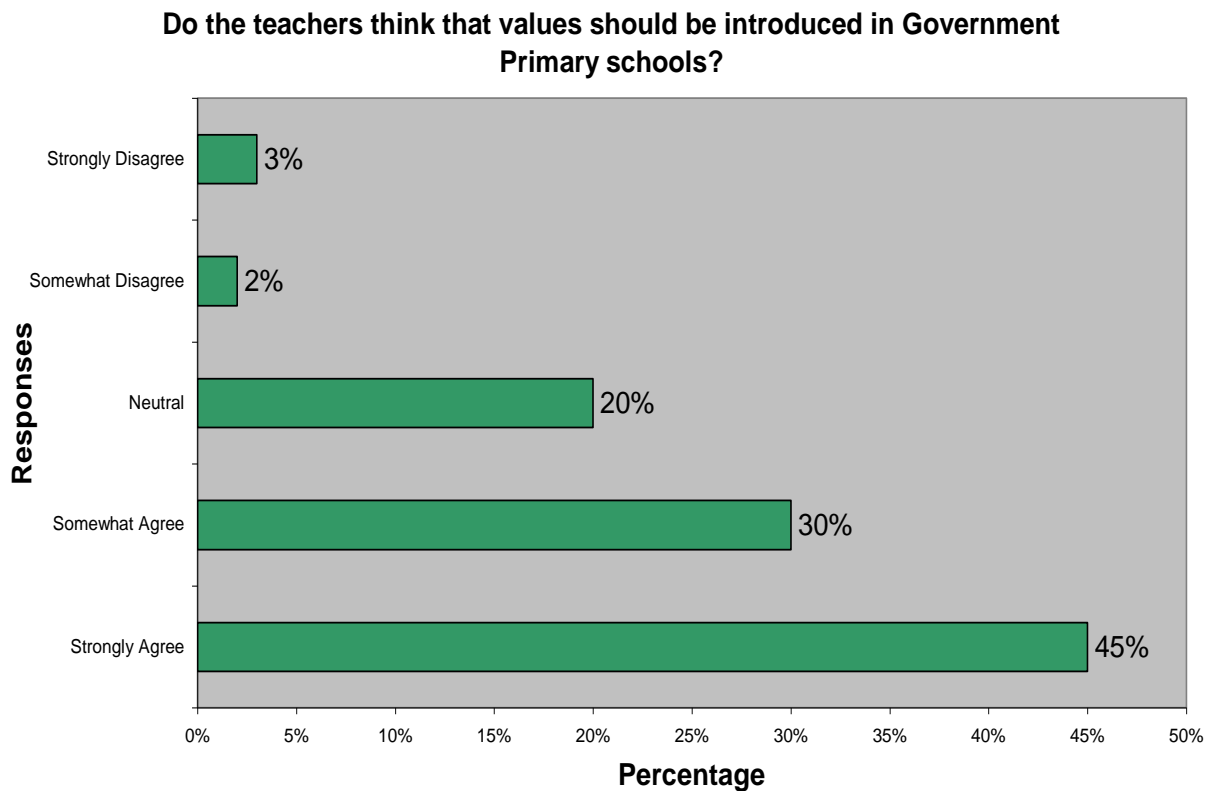
Discussion of Results

As is evident 75% of teachers agree with the introduction of values in schools. Comparing these results with results from questions 22, 23 and 24 it is found that 65 % of these teachers were willing to teach values but only half of them felt they had the knowledge and skills to teach values and 72% needed more than one kind of support.

14% of the 20 who were neutral about this feel that it is their role to impart values but only half of them felt they had the skills and knowledge to do it.

The 5% who disagreed with the introduction of values also thought it was not their role and they did not feel confident to teach them. All the five teachers had 2 – 5 years experience. It is known that in the initial years of teaching some teachers feel overwhelmed. From discussions with these teachers it was evident that they felt lost and they commented that actual teaching was not like when they did practical teaching during teacher training in university. They were overwhelmed with the variety of roles they had to play and the expectations from all parties including other staff, supervisors, principals and parents.

In Question 22 teachers were asked if they felt it was their role to impart values to children.

22. Do you feel it is your role to impart values to children?   Yes   No

Is it the teachers role to impart values to children?

Yes	78%
No	19%

78% of the teachers said yes and 19% said no.

Discussion of Results

Majority of teachers acknowledged that it was their role to impart values to children. Teachers are basically aware of the pressing need for children to be taught values and assistance is needed in the development of character.

Three teachers who felt it was not their role had written comments to say that it was the parents' role to teach values. Two teachers wrote the comment "whose values do we want to teach children?" Five teachers wrote that it was their role together with parents and community.

75% of teachers who agreed that schools should assist in building character of children so felt that values are not apparent in children today and that it is their role to impart values in schools.(Results from questions 16, 19 and 22) However, five teachers who agreed that schools should help with character development claimed it is not their role to impart values and disagreed that values should be introduced in schools (Questions 21 and 22) Many teachers do not feel prepared as seen from question 23 where nearly one in two teachers claimed they did not have the knowledge and skills to teach values effectively. This has a strong message about what the government needs to do and the area it needs to concentrate.

Some teachers who were neutral about schools assisting character development have said they would be prepared to teach values given the training and support.

The 3% of teachers who disagree that schools should be involved in building children's character are experienced full time teachers who stated that they do not love to work with children. They like the pay and benefits of teaching as a profession like shorter hours and holidays they are entitled to. These teachers need extra support in raising their morale and encouraging them to like their profession. Perhaps it would also help to make them understand how vital their role as a teacher is in the life of the children that teach.

Question 23 asked if teachers felt they had the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver lessons on values.

23. Do you feel you have the knowledge and skills to deliver lessons on values?   Yes   No

57% said yes they feel equipped to teach and 41% said no, while 2% said yes and no.

Do teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach lessons on values

Yes and No, 2%

No, 41%

Yes, 57%
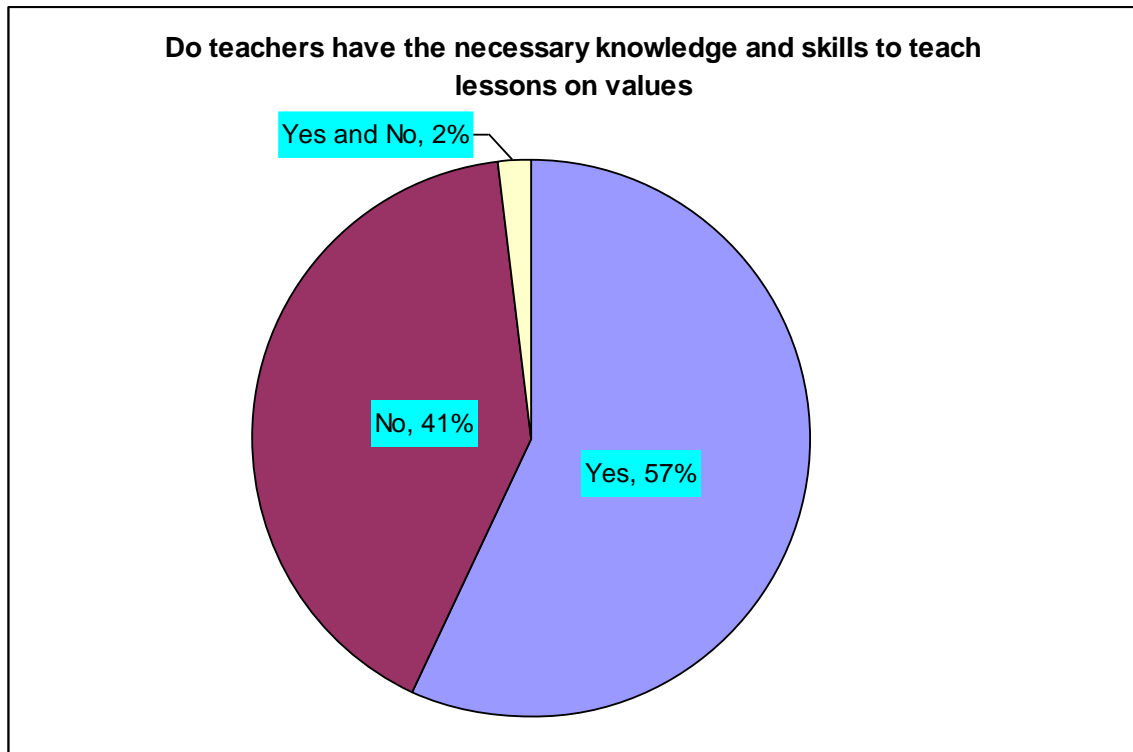
Discussion of Results

 Most experienced teachers feel that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach values as they have seen the trend and changes in the students they taught a long time ago and the students they are teaching now. They may be thinking that they can see the missing link. However, it must be noted that even though it may seem easy a lot of thought and planning has to go on before an effective program of values can be implemented. Some of the younger teachers may also be thinking it is easy to teach values but without understanding them and the related issues it can become an unproductive exercise.

Question 24 asked for the kind of support teachers need to resource them to teach values effectively. They were allowed to choose more than one response.

24. What would prepare you to be able to teach values effectively to your class? You may choose more one response.
(a) Teacher in-services with practical ideas
(b) Outline of what values to teach and how they were chosen
(c) Lesson plans with aims and objectives and resources to go with them
(d) Rationale as to why we are teaching values
(e) Any others. Please specify._____
_____

78% said they needed teacher in- services with practical ideas, 50% said they needed an outline of what values to teach and why they were chosen, 74% said they needed lesson plans with aims and objectives and resources to go with them and 34% said they needed a rationale as to why we need to teach values. 11% thought they needed other things such as commercially available books, parent support and so on.

Teacher Opinion: What do they need?

(Some Teachers gave more than one response)
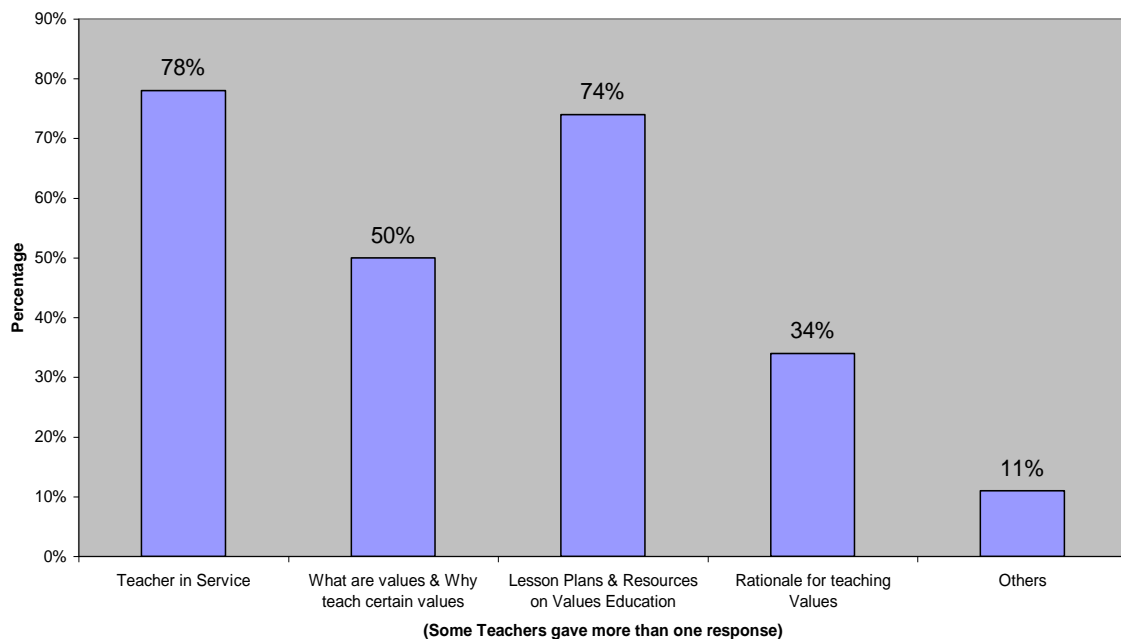
Discussion of Results

This clearly shows how much support teachers would need if they are to become equipped for teaching values.

The most common type of support needed by teachers is an in service followed closely by lesson plans with aims and objectives and resources to go with them. Teacher training, in-service or professional development, it does not matter what it is called, but what teachers need is a better grasp of the whole notion of values education. It can be concluded that teachers need a better understanding of what values are and how they work in everyday living, how teachers and parents are vital role models for children and how what they learn when they young impact what they do as they grow older and are faced with new, complicated challenges. In general, teachers need to be better informed about all aspects of values education.

From the 57% of teachers who claimed they had the knowledge and skills to give lessons on values 50% also said they needed teacher in services with practical ideas and lesson plans with aims and objectives and resources. The other 50% said they needed an outline of values to be taught and the rationale for teaching values.
 All of the 41% of teachers who thought they did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach lessons on values chose at least two kinds of support, the most common one being teacher in service followed closely be lesson plans.
From this analysis it can be concluded that teachers who felt they had the knowledge and skills to teach values still need support in different areas. None of these teachers said they were fully equipped or that they did not need any support.
On the other hand, all the teachers who said they did not think they had the knowledge and skills to teach values thought they would need all the support available.

In relation to the teachers feeling whether it was their role to impart values or not, it did not matter how they felt. All teachers admitted they needed more than more type of support.
These findings warrant the urgent need for authorities to get together a whole set of support system including the ones given in the question 24 as well as others for teachers use if they are expected to take values lessons seriously enough to teach them. Here the teachers are explicitly admitting what would prepare them best to be able to teach value lessons.

Question 25 required teachers to comment on what they thought was a successful lesson.

25. What do you consider to be a successful lesson?

(a) One that you think has achieved the objectives of the lesson
(b) One that you found most children enjoyed
(c) One where a variety of activities were planned and completed
(d) One where all children were genuinely engaged and focused
(e) One that you enjoyed teaching

80% of teachers considered a successful lesson was one where children were engaged and focused. 64% thought it was one that achieved the aims and objectives. 63% thought it was one that most children enjoyed. 41% said a successful lesson was where a variety of activities were planned and completed and 50% of teachers believed that if they enjoyed teaching a lesson it was successful.

What do teachers consider to be a successful lesson
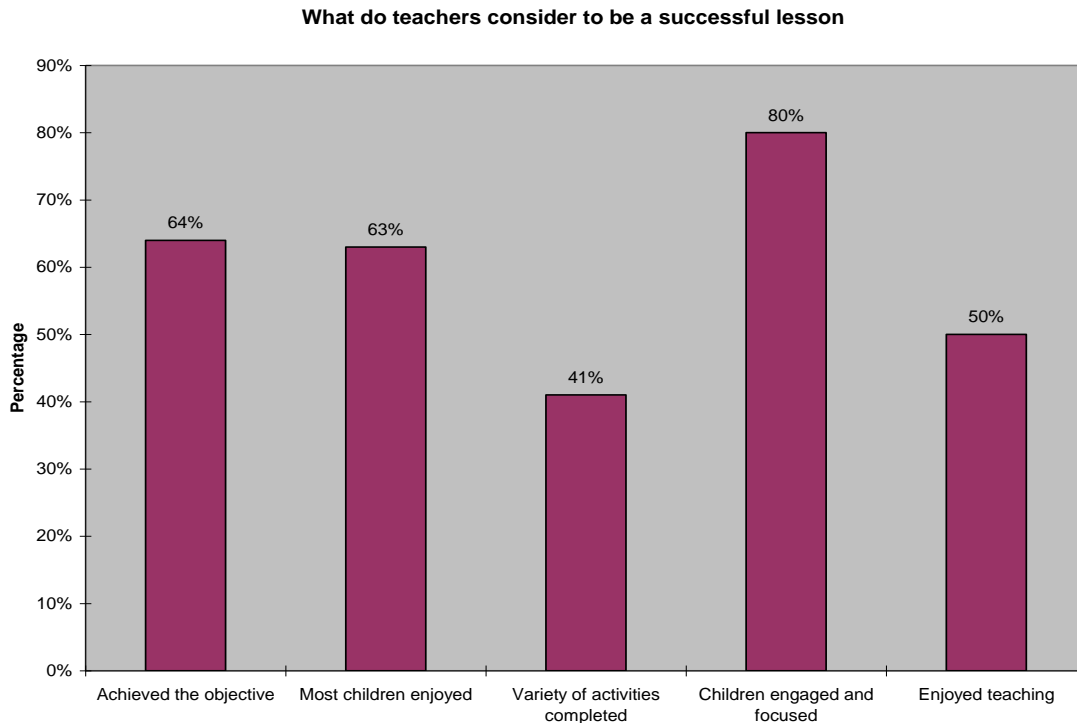
Discussion of Results

This was a question to get the feeling of what teachers thought a successful lesson was. As expected of a good lesson the teachers also found it is one where children are engaged and focused and if this is so then obviously the children will be enjoying it probably because the variety of activities planned would be catering for individual needs and styles of learning. However, it is not essential to complete every activity planned as lessons can sometimes take different turns. Hence, the teachers' responses correlate to these.

Nearly the same number of teachers said a successful lesson was one that achieved the objective and one that children found enjoyable. These are just as important as children being focused. It is important to achieve the objective but sometimes the enjoyment of lesson overrides it but the lesson is still successful.

One in two teachers believed they must also enjoy teaching the lesson which is a fair judgment because if teachers did things they don't enjoy then they cannot be very effective. It is empowering when children can see the teacher's involvement and enthusiasm in a lesson.

The implication of this is when planning lessons on values all these features would have to be incorporated into the material.

Question 26 asked for teachers' priorities in order of importance for the children they are teaching. The following choices were given and teachers had to place numbers 1-10 next to each.

> 26. What are your priorities as a teacher of the children whom you teach for the one year period? Please order numerically from 1 – 10   (1 being most important and 10 being least important)
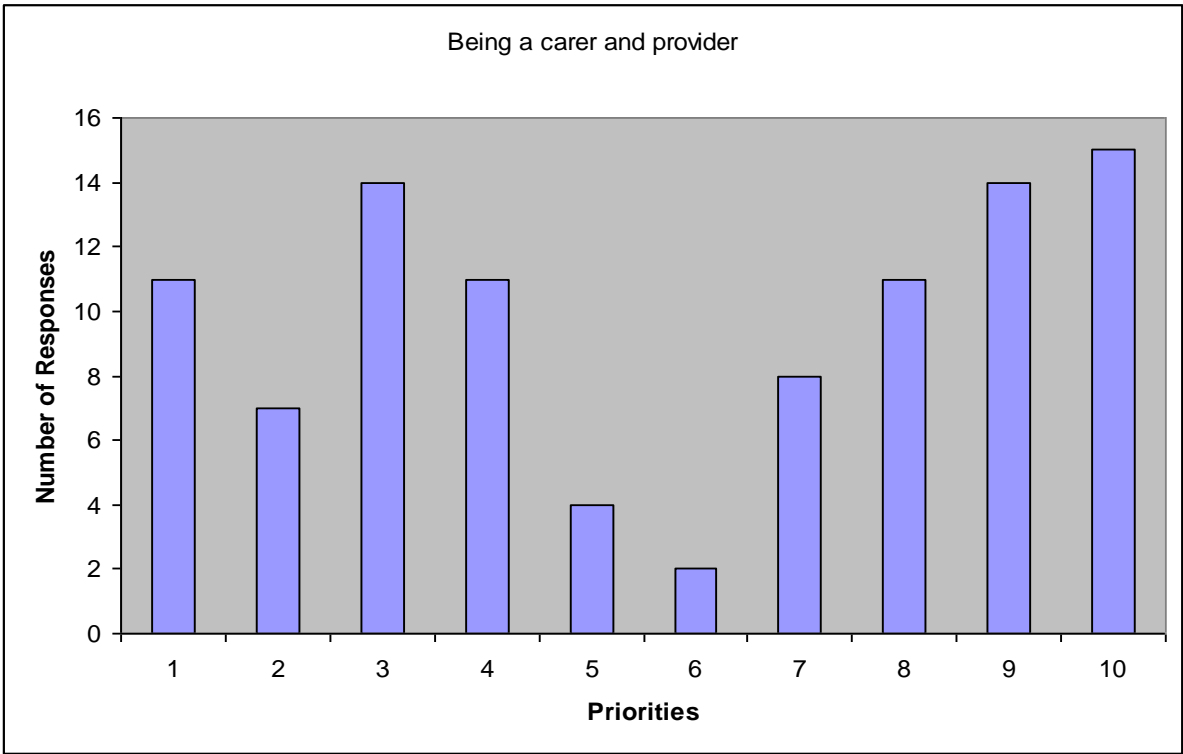>
> * Being a carer and provider __
> * Being a listener to the child's problems __
> * Teaching the child the prescribed syllabus of literacy and numeracy__
> * Imparting some basic values which the child may hold on to for life eg. Respect, responsibility honesty, manners, kindness __
> * Teaching the extra-curricular subjects eg. performing arts __
> * Adopting styles of teaching to cater for individual needs eg. using DeBono's thinking hats and Gardener's multiple intelligences __
> * Educating the child about the importance of healthy lifestyle and fitness and incorporating them in the daily routine __
> * Catering for individuals with special needs eg. learning difficulty/ disability __
> * Having special consideration for children coming from dysfunctional family backgrounds eg. single parent, abusive parents etc. __
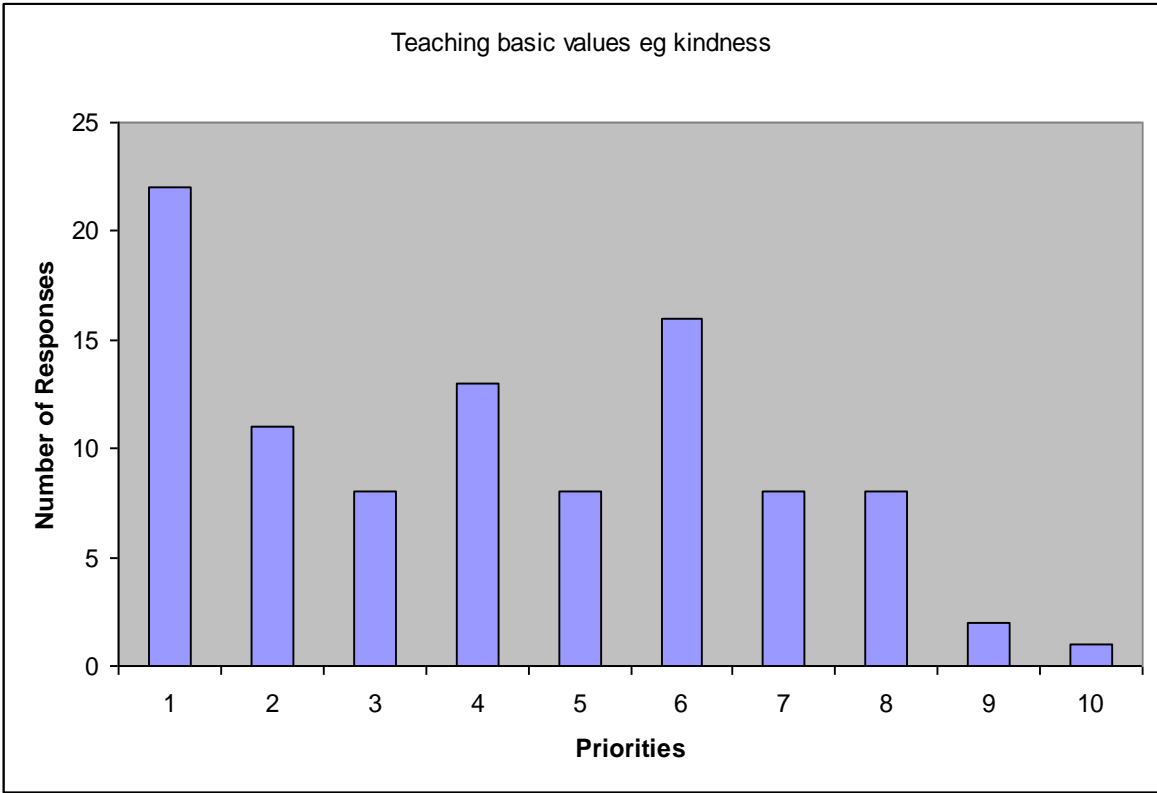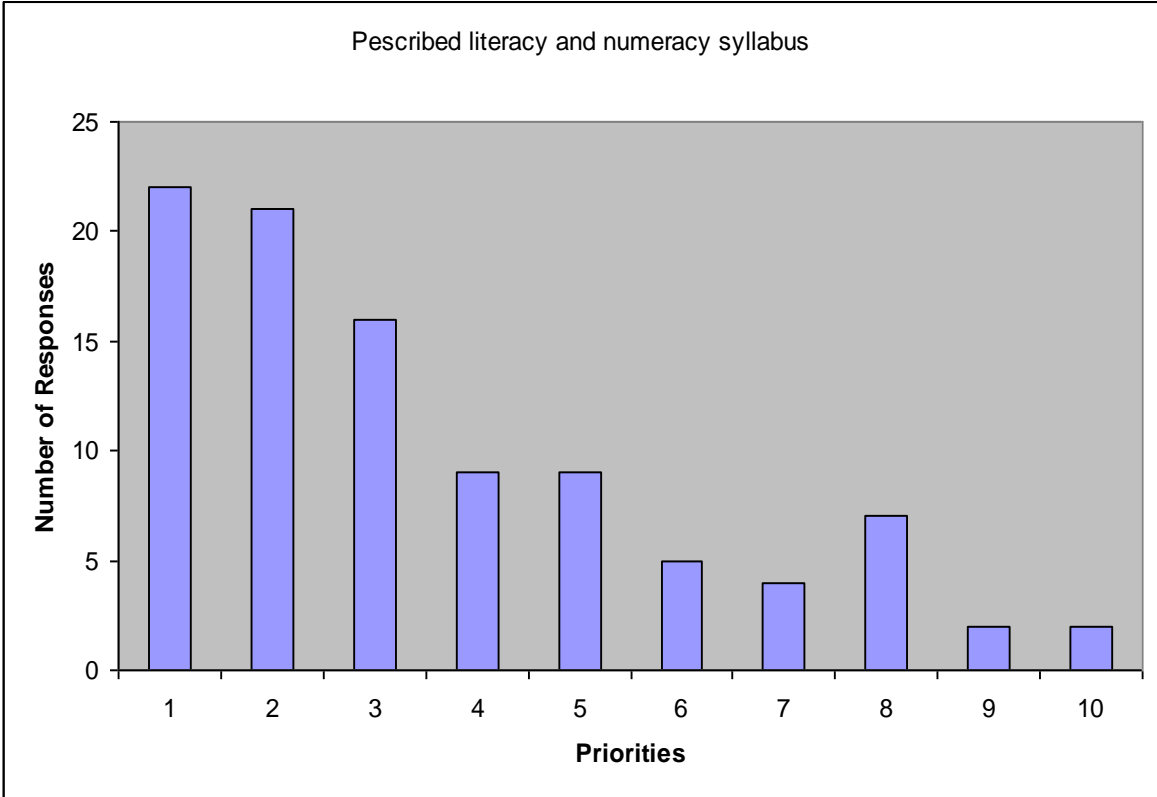> * Covering all activities suggested in the syllabus of all Key Learning Areas __

Twenty teachers commented that it was hard to prioritise their duties since all the choices given seemed to be equally important. However, their attempts to prioritize their duties showed that teachers varied a lot on what they considered as the most important to them. Their choices differ for a number of reasons namely:
* their personal interests
* what they think would make school fun for the children
* what they enjoy doing themselves
* what is best for the children
* the schools they teach in and its expectations from teachers
* the make up of the children and the backgrounds they come from
* the training that the teachers have received (what was emphasized in their universities)
* what their philosophy of teaching is

There could be others reasons for their choices.

The following ten graphs show each of the choices that were given as the title of the graph and then the number of teachers that prioritized them in the order shown.

Being a carer and provider

Being a listener to their problems

Pescribed literacy and numeracy syllabus

Teaching basic values eg kindness

Teaching extra-curricular subjects

Adopting different styles of Teaching

Teaching about health and fitness

Catering for individual learning needs

Children from special backgrounds

Covering all activities from all KLAs
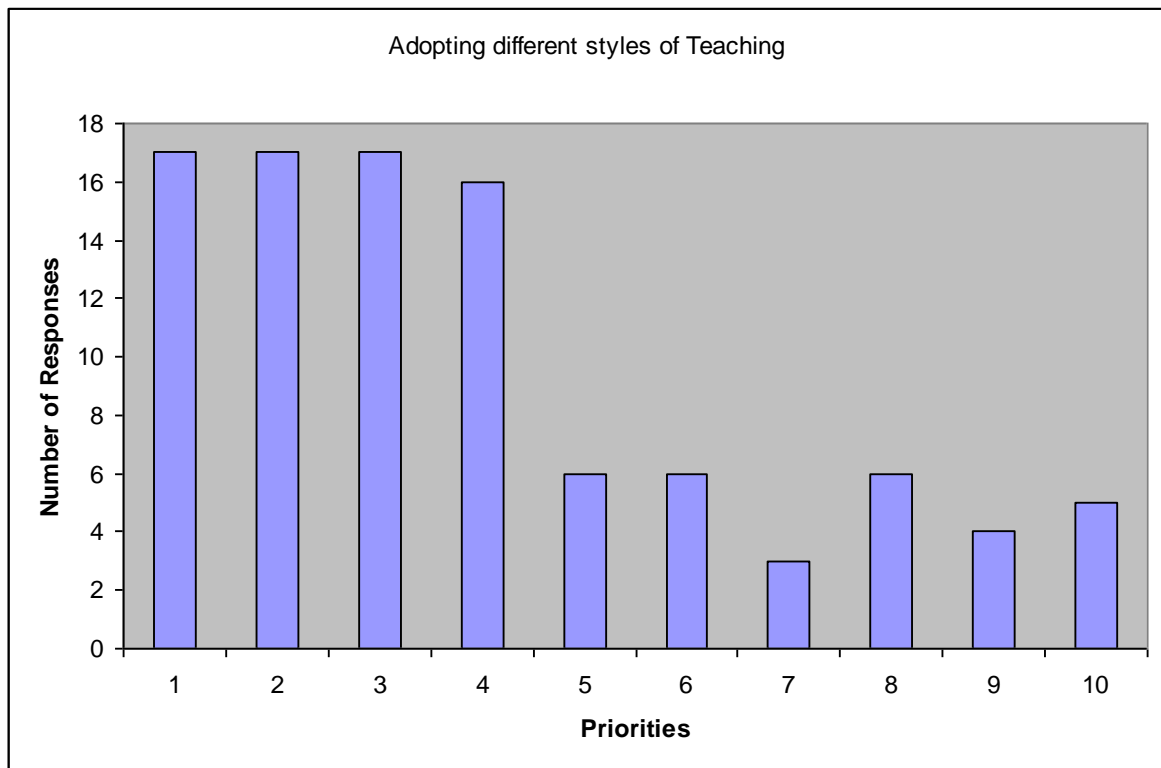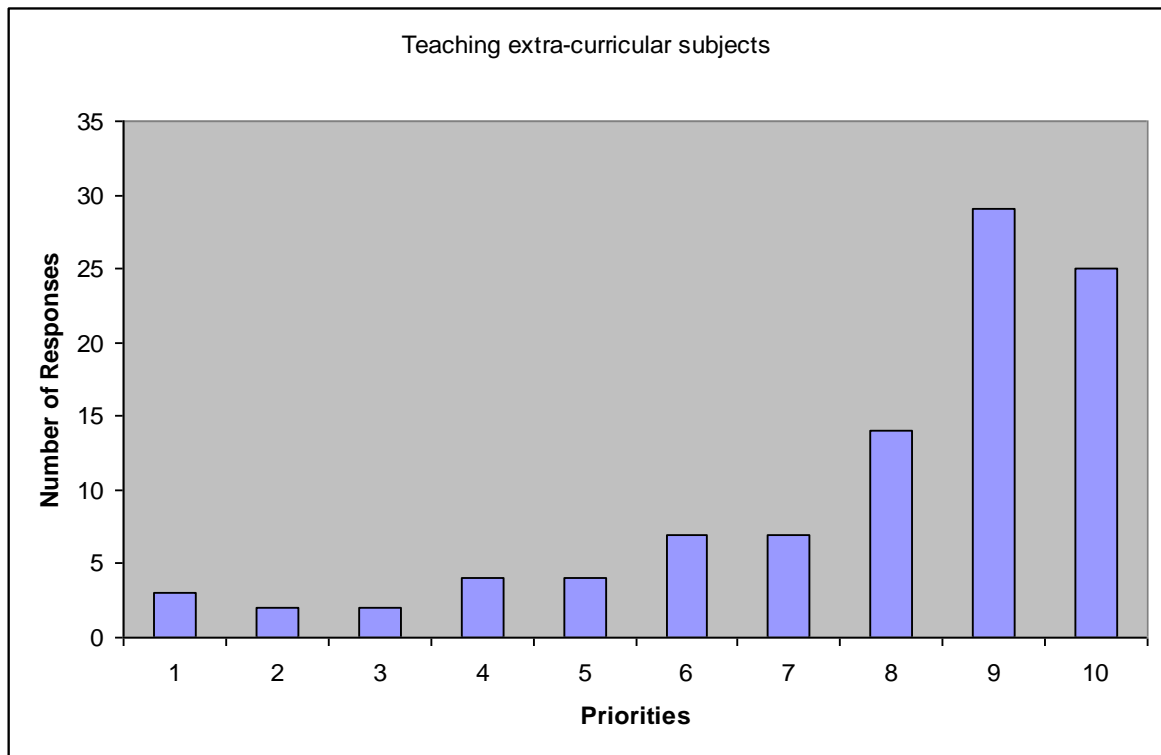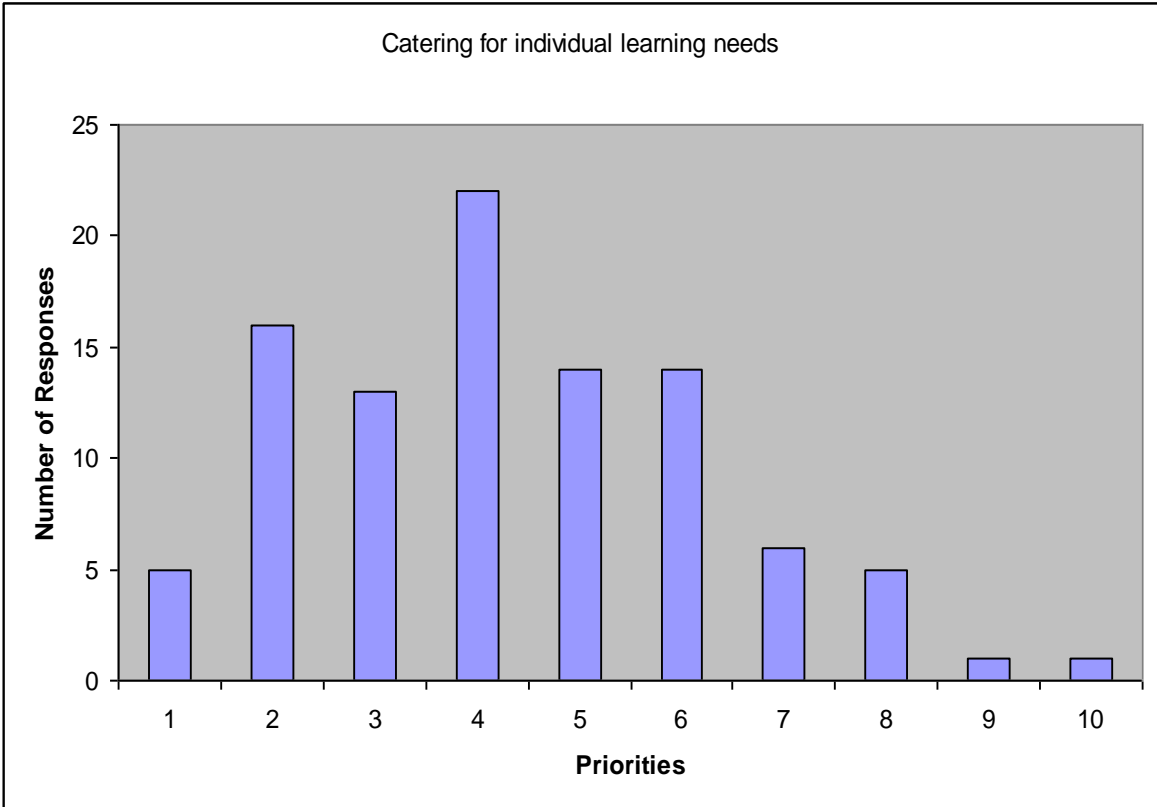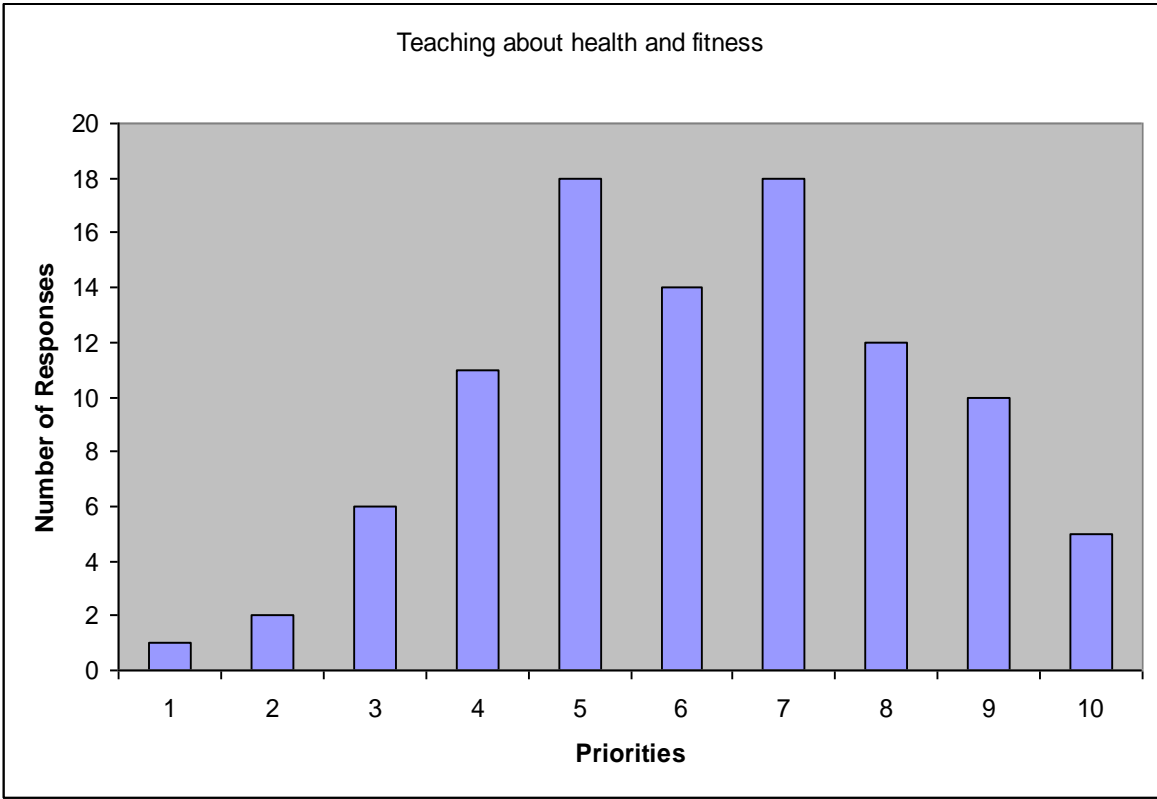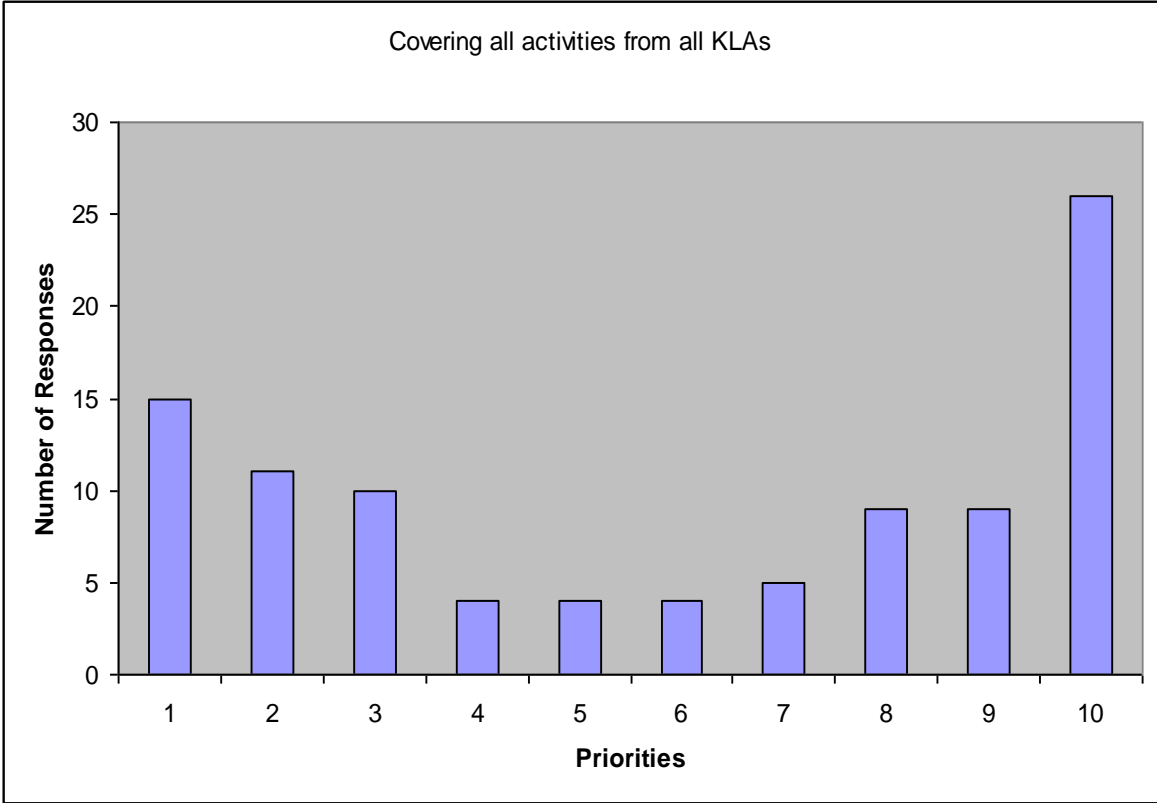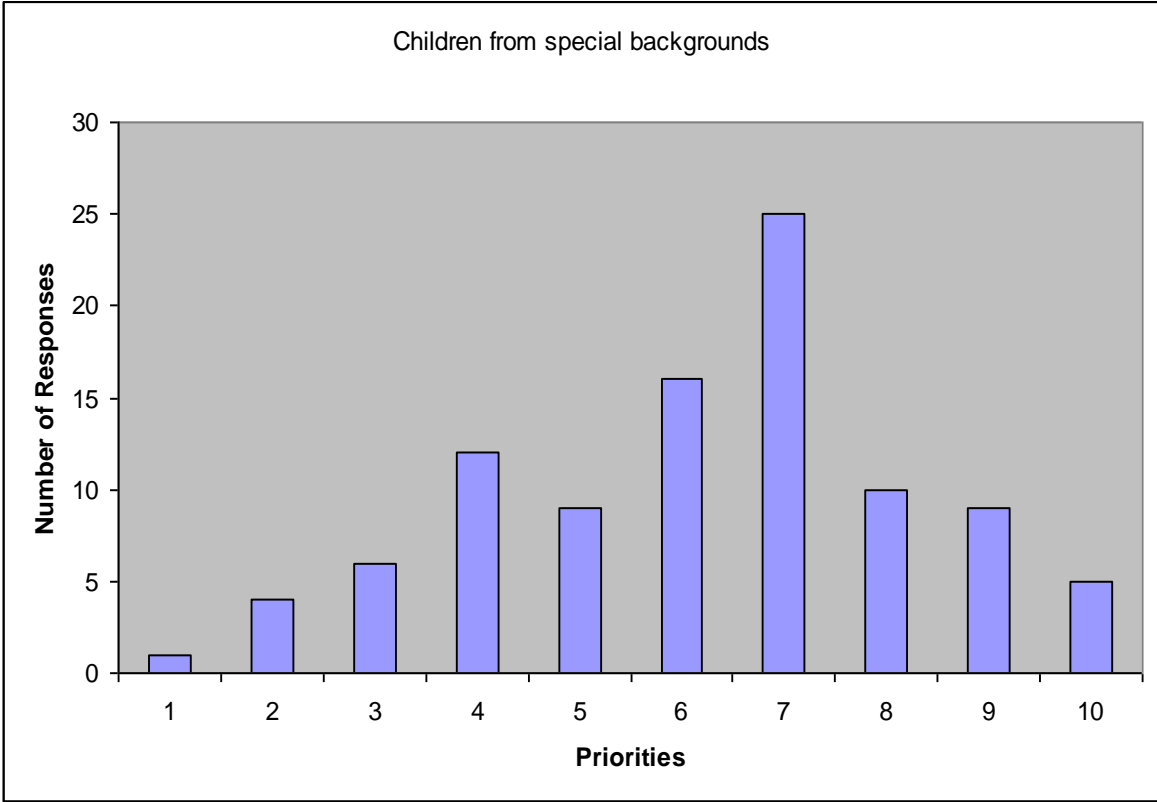
Discussion of Results

Teachers have numerous roles to play in the schools they work and for the children they teach. The above results show that teachers prioritize a varying range of duties as most important or least important. Recent research shows that students also look for a number of things in their teachers. When asked what factors helped create an effective teaching and learning environment they stated "the importance of providing motivating learning experiences, how important it was for the teachers to be caring, to have a sense of humour and be able to maintain a safe learning environment. It is interesting to note that students understand that teachers need to balance the purposes of care with those of group management and instructional effectiveness: care is construed in social and moral terms as well as interpersonal" (Hargreaves & Tucker, 1991 cited in Groundwater-Smith 2003)

Other research exploring management issues from the perspective of students who are disruptive identified the following reasons for behaviour problems in the order of priority:
1.   Peer pressure to become involved in undesirable behaviour or to gain attention.
2.   Difficult relationships with teachers
3.   Irrelevance of the curriculum- uninteresting or boring lessons
4.   Family and community problems
5.   Failure of teachers to meet individual student needs or control the class
6.   Bullying
7.   Individual learning problems or disabilities
(Kinder and Wakefield, 1996 quoted in Groundwater- Smith, 2003)

This result shows that teachers have demanding roles to play and must be able to prioritize their time effectively. Apart from being efficient they need to be organized, prepared and authoritative and establish a caring classroom community where relevant learning can go on. Many of these expectations from students are listed in this question and it is interesting to note the varying choices of different teachers. For example, 22% of teachers listed teaching of the prescribed literacy and numeracy syllables as their first priority and a further 22% listed teaching of basic values as their first priority. 17% of teachers listed adopting different teaching styles which would cater for different learning styles as their first, second and third priority.

Many teachers chose catering for individual needs of students as their second to sixth priority.

Covering all activities from all Key Learning Areas is virtually an impossible task and more than one in four teachers have put this as their last priority. It is pleasing to note that these teachers have thought about their priorities seriously. In contrast more than one in three teachers listed this as their first, second or third priority. From discussions with some of the teachers after they completed the questionnaire it was found that completing activities was seen as a form of assessment of children's understanding and fulfillment of achieving outcomes. However, they did agree that **all** activities from **all** KLAs could never be completed as the suggestions in the syllabus documents are extensive.

Question 27 and 28 asked if the teachers considered stories to be an important teaching tool and if so how often they used them in their classrooms.

27. Do you consider stories to be an important tool leading to discussions and other learning?   Yes   No

95% of the teachers felt that stories were an important tool to use.

Do teachers consider stories as an important teaching tool

No
5%

Yes
95%
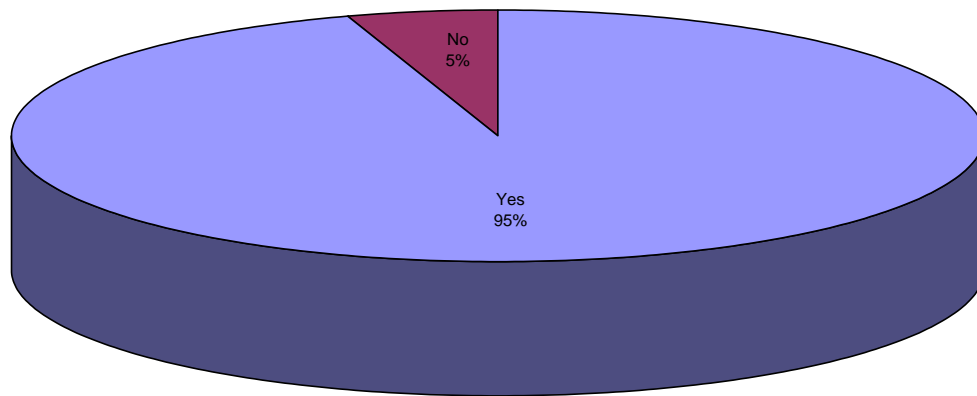
Discussion of Results

Stories are very popular among children and numerous activities can be based on them. They are meaningful to children as they capture the imagination and touch the heart. Stories have always been one of the favourite teaching instruments among the world's greatest moral educators. Stories teach by attraction rather than compulsion, they invite rather than impose. The results show that almost all teachers seem to be aware of the importance of stories and are already using them regularly in their classrooms.

28. How often do you use stories in your class? (This may include personal experiences, both yours and the children's or stories from books).

a) Everyday   b) Once or Twice a week
c) Once or Twice a fortnight   d) Hardly ever   e) Never

Of the 95% who believed stories are important, 38% use them everyday, 41% used them once or twice a week, 10% used them once or twice a fortnight, 7% said they hardly ever use stories and 2% said they never used stories. 5% of the teachers commented that stories are important teaching tools but are not relevant for their subject areas such as music or physical education.

Use of stories in a Classrom
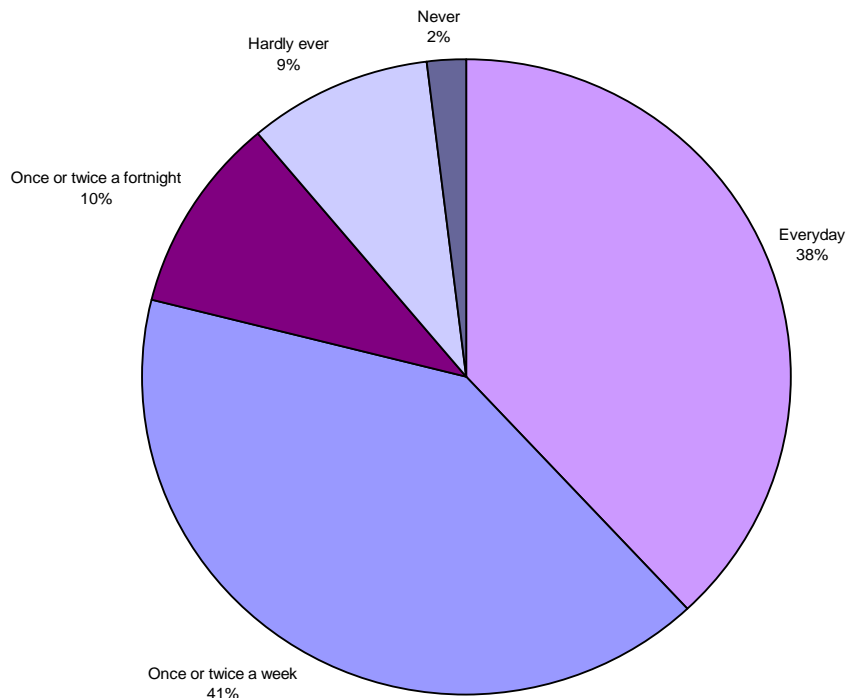
Discussion of Results

It is evident from this that stories are part and parcel of teaching. Value stories are a common tool that can be used to teach values. If teachers are already using stories in their classroom regularly they can easily adapt this technique to using them for teaching values. They are most likely aware of the art of story telling and the activities related to them. Story telling is a powerful tool and is a natural way to engage and develop the emotional side of a child's character. Many teachers tell a story to their class on the first day of the school year and find that it captivates the children and 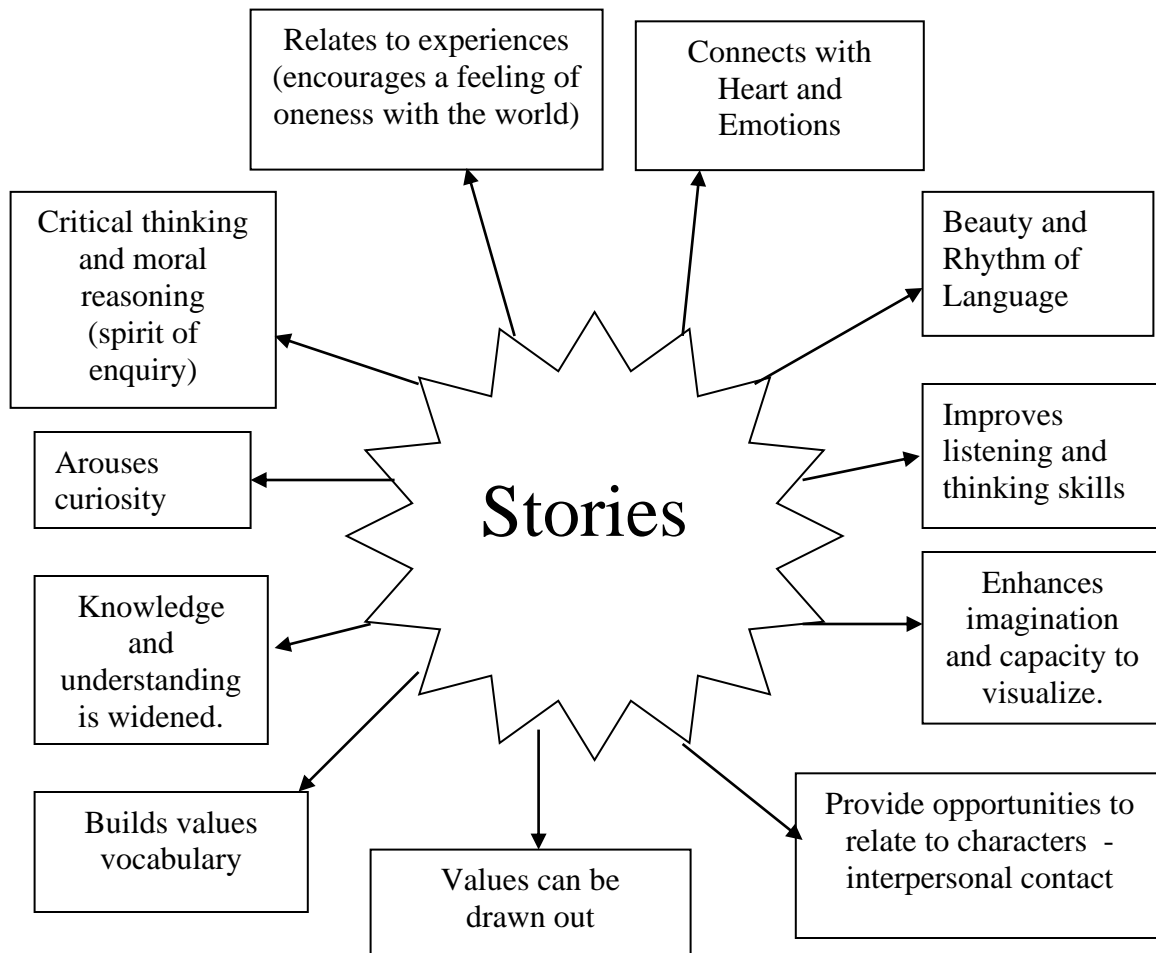creates an immediate rapport. The following is a simple mind map of the benefits of stories and how it caters for multiple intelligences as well. Using stories also covers many of the outcomes of the English key learning area.

```
        Relates to experiences              Connects with
        (encourages a feeling of            Heart and
        oneness with the world)             Emotions

Critical thinking                                                Beauty and
and moral                                                        Rhythm of
reasoning                                                        Language
(spirit of
enquiry)
                                                                 Improves
Arouses                        Stories                           listening and
curiosity                                                        thinking skills

                                                                 Enhances
Knowledge                                                        imagination
and                                                              and capacity to
understanding                                                    visualize.
is widened.

Builds values                                          Provide opportunities to
vocabulary                                             relate to characters  -
                          Values can be                interpersonal contact
                          drawn out
```

73

Questions 29 and 30 were to find out if teachers used creative visualization or silent sitting in their classrooms and if they did what effect, if any, had they found on the children.

29. Do you use creative visualization or silent sitting in your classroom?
Yes   No

63% said they use these techniques. A small percentage of teachers commented that they did not know what creative visualization is and some commented that they would love to use it but they could not fit it into their timetables.

Do teachers use creative visualization or silent sitting in their classrooms

No
37%

Yes
63%
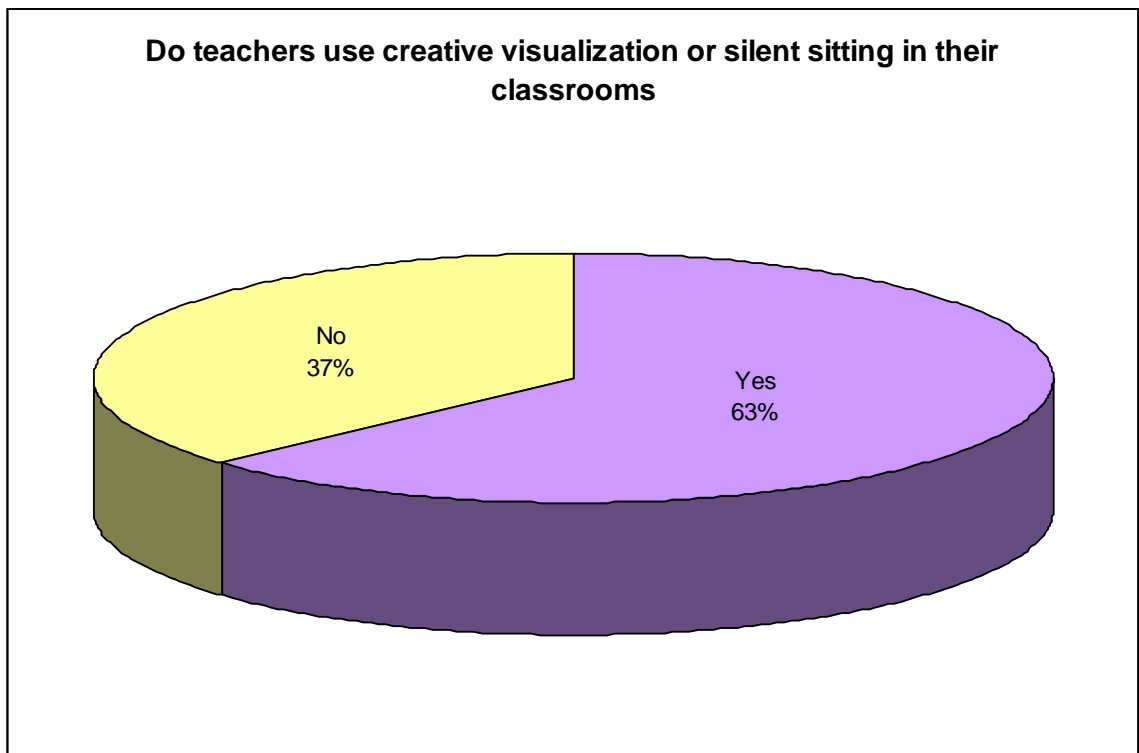
Discussion of Results

Silent Sitting and creative visualization are simpler versions of meditation. Teachers are increasingly becoming aware of the benefits of these to the children they teach. After discussions with teachers it was clear that many teachers can actually see positive effects of just silently sitting for a short while straight after recess and lunch breaks when children are hot and extra active. Some teachers commented that a mathematics lesson after silent sitting is always successful. Many said that they used creative visualization before writing lessons to set the scene for their stories.

30. If yes, what effect do you think it has on the children? Please order
    your response from most important (1) to least important (4)

(a) It calms them down ___   (b) It helps them to concentrate better__
(c) It makes them drowsy__ (d) Makes them noisier__

All 63% who used the techniques thought they calm children down and help them concentrate better.

Effect of Creative Visualization and Silent Sitting on Children

calms them down
44%

helps them
concentrate better
56%
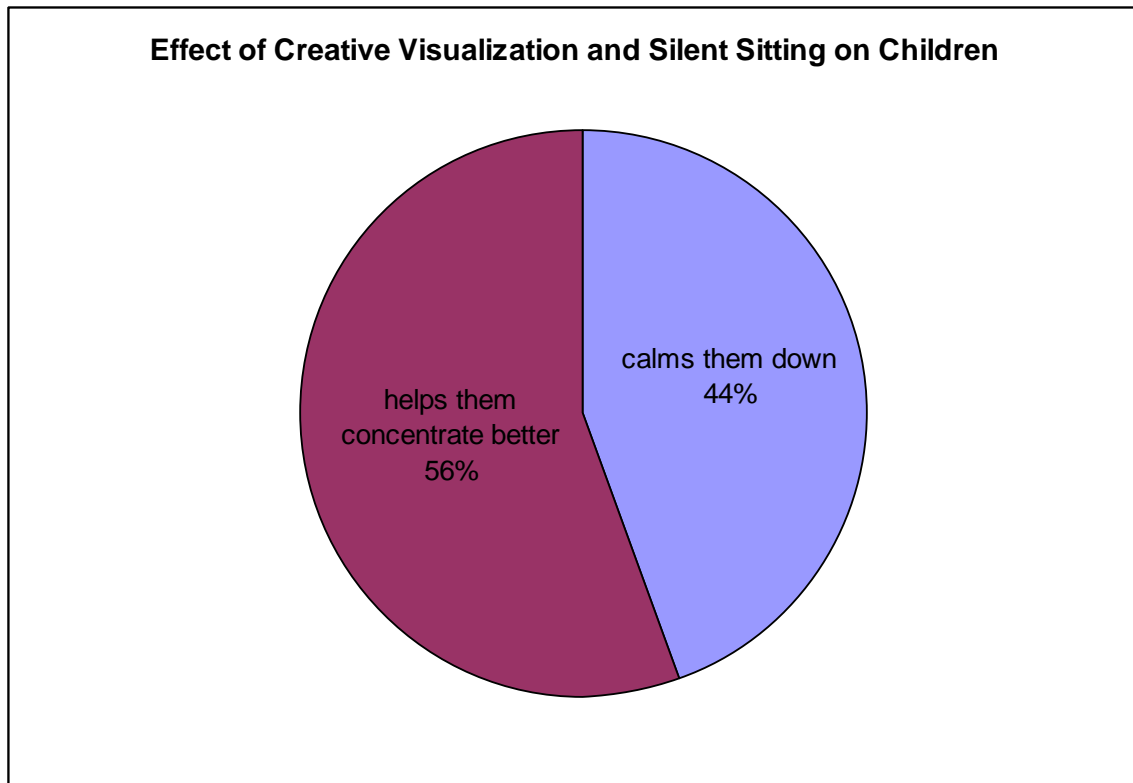
Discussion of Results

It is interesting to note that many teachers are using this technique with the children they teach. This shows that they are already familiar with using this technique in their classrooms and are aware of the benefits. Creative visualization is an important teaching technique for values as children can be given an experience of the values through the visualization process. It is pleasing to foresee that these teachers would be able to confidently use this technique when teaching values.

PART THREE

Analysis of Results

The intention of this research was to explore a number of issues related to the teaching of values. Some areas explored were: teachers' awareness about values education; their attitudes towards values education in schools; their perceptions about values in children of the present generation; whether they felt it was their role to teach values; how capable and equipped they felt about teaching values and the kind of support they would need in order to teach values effectively.

The results of the survey show clear trends in a number of areas. The four main areas are:

1   The extent of teachers' awareness about values education and how they have become aware of it

2   Teachers attitudes towards the profession of teaching

3   Teachers' perception of children's values and their willingness to teach values to children

4   Teachers own assessment of their knowledge and skills and additional support they require in order to equip them to teach values.

1. Teacher Awareness about Values Education

Teachers were asked if they were aware of or had seen or read three major documents on the government initiatives in values education over the last 5-6 years. These documents are:

1 The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century,

2 The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools and

3 Values in New South Wales Public Schools.

The background and the contents of these documents have been reviewed in Part One of this thesis.

Regarding "The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century", even though it is a national document about schooling which all Department of Education staff should be aware of and should especially be read by teachers only 22% of the teachers surveyed had heard of it, only 15% had seen it and a meager 9% had actually read the document. Of the 22 who had heard about it 15 were teachers who had had less than five years of experience. Although the survey did not attempt to determine the manner of their becoming aware of this document it is likely that they had exposure through their university courses as two of the teachers actually stated this. It is also likely that many of these teachers were computer literate and had been keen to find out about their own professional responsibilities. The other 6 had varying years of experience but they became aware of the document after they had attended a presentation on values education given by myself at a staff professional development session in May 2005. This was after I had approached my school and was permitted to attend the National Values Education Forum in Canberra on 1st and 2nd May 2005, as my own initiative and professional development. One response was from a full time teacher with more than 20 years experience.
From the 78% of teachers who were not aware of this document 22 were either casual or part time teachers with varying number of years of experience. The other 56 teachers were full time employees ranging from 1 to over 20 years of experience. This indicates that no matter how experienced or less experienced the teachers are or whether they are full time, part time, or casually employed the majority of teachers are unaware of this essential document.

In question 11 teachers were required to comment on how they felt about schools providing the foundation for young Australians moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. This was part of a statement from the 'Adelaide Declaration' which also states that schooling provides for intellectual, physical and social development. One of the major roles of school is to provide for intellectual and physical development and it goes unsaid that schools fulfill this role. Moreover, schools provide an optimum environment for peer socializing which is an inevitable part of school experience. Developing social skills is a basic outcome all primary school teachers like to see in the children they teach. The survey, however, asked for teachers' opinion on the underlined aspects namely moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. 79% of teachers agreed that schools do provide these and 10% disagreed. Perhaps some teachers were commenting on the first three aspects of intellectual, physical and social development. From subsequent discussions with these teachers, it can be concluded that many teachers also seem to have misread the question to read 'schooling should provide' rather than 'schooling provides'. This may also be so as 69 of these teachers said that values are not apparent in children of today's generation in question 19. They also agreed that values should be introduced and that it is their role to impart values (questions 21 and 22). If they previously agreed that schooling already provides for moral, spiritual and aesthetic development then they would think there was no need of introduction of values or that it is their role to teach values. They would also witness the presence of values while interacting with children. On the contrary, even if the teachers thought schooling provides for moral and spiritual development they may think it doesn't necessarily have to involve teachers. They may think that somehow schooling provides for these.

Two teachers agreed that schooling provides moral development but not aesthetic or spiritual development. They also commented that spiritual generally refers to religion and religious education is not the emphasis in public schools.

For the document "National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools" referred to in the survey, 41% of the teachers said they had seen this document and 19% said they had read it. There may have been confusion among the teachers here. This is because some teachers seem to have read or thought of the document "Values in NSW Public Schools" when answering this question. The National Framework was only released in March 2005 and the teachers completed the surveys in May 2005. The document was only accessible on the Values Education official government website and was currently in the process of being sent to schools. At the time of the questionnaire it is highly likely that fewer than the number of teachers who responded in the affirmative in the survey would have actually seen or read the National document. As for the "Adelaide Declaration" some of these teachers were the younger computer literate teachers or those who attended my presentation where these documents were shown and passed around.

In the questionnaire teachers were asked to answer if they had seen and read the document 'Values in NSW Public Schools'. 74% said they had seen it and only 57 % had actually read it. This is probably a correct picture because when schools received this document each teacher was given a copy and was asked to read it. Despite this effort by the state government 43% of teachers surveyed had not actually read it and 26% had not even seen it. This indicates that documents sometimes do not reach teachers and if they do, teachers don't always read them or remember doing so. This suggests that the teachers don't seem to get extremely concerned when government circulars are published and circulated. Teachers may not be considering it as their role to get involved. Hence, it can be deduced that there is resistance among teachers when the 'top down' approach is used for any changes. For documents to have any effect on teachers the executive staff of schools have to know them well and then in a systematic, planned way go through the important sections with the teachers. Many teachers feel isolated in the sense that they are not consulted when changes are planned, whether it be school based or from the department. Wanting all teachers to read, familiarize and implement the many suggestions in numerous circulars is an unwarranted expectation.

Concerning awareness of teachers about the current values education dialogue, 78% said yes, they were aware and 22% said they were not aware. When asked how they became aware, 40% of these teachers said they had become aware from the media including newspaper, radio, television and the internet. In 2002, Dr Brendon Nelson made a public statement that values free education will result in values free adults. This was widely publicized in the media and led to a lot of controversy. This is most likely the avenue for teachers' awareness when they chose media as their source. The other 38% became aware as a result of my presentation to the staff, as stated above.

From this survey it is clear that the government spending thousands of dollars publishing documents and placing advertisements in the media had not been as effective in creating awareness of values education initiatives. From a small sample of teachers surveyed an average of 53% had not seen the above three documents and an average of 71% had not read them. Nearly one in four teachers surveyed were completely unaware of the discussions about values education taking place at state and government level.

If the government is serious about values education a lot more has to be done. It is surprising that publishing and circularizing documents, holding National Forums and placing material on the official websites had not really had much impact apart from raising some awareness of some teachers. Many teachers became aware of the values education dialogue from colleagues or fellow teachers. While this underscores the importance of collegial relationships which should be encouraged, more and more teachers are remaining isolated in their own classrooms trying to complete paperwork

instead of mixing, socializing and discussing professional matters with other staff members. This should be promoted by schools so that teachers can learn from each other and share success stories about the children and other professional matters. Research shows that professional development requires teachers to work together. Structures which support collegiality are necessary. Observation of peers, feedback from peers, consultation and reflection with peers, planning and evaluation together are required. (Lieberman and Miller, 1984; little, 1984; Anastos and Arcowitz, 1987; Johnson and Johnson, 1987; Eisner, 1988 quoted in Hughes 1991) Yet schools are designed where teachers are split and kept isolated.

Most teachers who were aware of the discussions about values education said they needed the knowledge and skills before they would be confident to teach values. This clearly shows that teachers need to be in-serviced thoroughly. More professional development courses on values need to be conducted and all teachers should be asked to attend them. As more teachers become aware further interest in this area will be generated but if teachers are not given the knowledge and skills they need to be able to impart values to children they will soon lose the momentum which took some time to gain. This will be discussed further in the next section of this thesis.

Despite all these documents and discussions there are no real processes in place which the teachers can rely on. Even after the Values Education Study of 2003 there has not been much input from other schools apart from the sample schools. There is no mandatory requirement but just guidelines so schools are at the liberty to take what they like and discard what they don't. As mentioned in the introduction because education is dealt with by the individual states, it is very hard to implement something from the national government. Therefore that extra effort is required by the government if values education is to be taken into schools. Since the survey shows that teachers require knowledge and skills on values education, there should be mandatory courses on values offered at universities within the teacher training courses for students to complete as they are going to be future teachers. This will ensure that teachers are well equipped and capable of handling the controversial area of values education.

2. Teacher Attitudes

Teachers were asked to select what they liked best about teaching out of a range of options. This was to find out what teachers find attractive about teaching. This in turn would show whether they are doing it for love of the job or for other reasons.

73% of teachers claimed they love to work with children as at least one of their responses. This figure was expected to be higher because it means 27% of teachers presumably don't love to work with children as their priority. For these 27% of teachers the attraction of the teaching profession was the pay and benefits like holidays and shorter hours. 3 teachers said they were happy about their job security. One in three of these teachers also said they liked the diversity of skills required for the job. In terms of experience, 17% out of this 27% were younger teachers with 0-5 year's experience. 7% had 6-10 years experience and 3% had over 20 years experience. Even though the majority of teachers are younger, older teachers also chose attractions other than loving to work with children as their priority. One in five of these 27% of teachers also feel it is not their role to impart values to children. 57% of teachers have actually stated that they were either attracted to benefits like pay and holidays or they have a passion to impart knowledge as at least one of their reasons. A further 48% stated that the diversity of skills needed for teaching was one of the things they liked best about teaching. These teachers are most likely those who are talented in certain areas such as music (playing of instruments), sports, technology, visual arts and performing arts including dance and drama. Primary schools teachers are expected to teach all key learning areas including the above and if teachers have a talent in these areas, they would love to be involved with it and teach them to children.

The results of the survey for this question can be summarized to show that around 50% of the teachers have reasons other than the desire to work with children as their main reason for teaching.

It may be worthwhile to consider that until recently (2003 onwards) candidates accepted in the teaching course in most universities in NSW only had to have an average TER (Tertiary Entry Rank) or UAI (University Admission Intake) of between 55 and 70 in their Higher School Certificate course. This leads to the thought that while many candidates were genuinely eager to take up the teaching course, there were many others who chose the teaching course by default as they were not accepted by universities to complete courses in their field of interest. The long term result of this is the caliber of teachers in the system today. There are teachers who are complaining: about the school, parents, colleagues, students, the system, the resources, and the lot; there are teachers who are explaining: the lack of or abundance of everything and anything; and there are teachers who are inspiring: despite the difficulties these are teachers who love their job and see opportunities and optimism at every step and are able to inspire all parties including the students, colleagues and parents with their enthusiasm.

It is only in the last couple of years that the UAI for the teaching course has gone up to the 80's and 89 for some universities. This is a timely realization considering the idealism of the teaching profession and the multi facetted role of teachers in the future of the nation.

Only 50% of the teachers surveyed had a desire to work with children can also be effected to the fact that many teachers may feel they are burnt out or they may have lost the motivation to be enthusiastic about the new challenges. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, Australia and many parts of the world are undergoing significant economic and social change. An Australian government report (SEETRC, 1998 quoted in Groundwater-Smith,2003) noted that the overall pace of living has increased dramatically with the result that 'people generally' including teachers, students and their parents, are living much more harried and stressful lives. (Groundwater-Smith 2003) Teachers' work has become more complex and more difficult. Some of the changes include integrated curriculum, varied and flexible instruction, multiple forms of assessment, new use of technology and so on. Some teachers find new learning and new ways of working as very threatening. Teachers and schools are constantly under scrutiny and criticism. As a result they have low morale and high stress. If the morale and commitment level of teachers is low then the government has to take appropriate measures in order initiate the interest back.

According to Kevin Donnelly our education system is in crisis, whether measured by staff morale, student absenteeism and lack of interest, the exodus of parents out of the government system, falling standard or the politically correct nature of the curriculum. (Donnelly 2004) However, he does agree that there are many excellent schools with hardworking, dedicated and successful teachers.

The above discussion and the related parts of this research show the following:

1. Teachers lack professionalism and opportunities for sharing.

2. Government is inadequate in disseminating knowledge about the changing roles of teachers.

3. In the 21ˢᵗ Century information age the tasks of schools are changing rapidly. Consequently the teachers have to cope constructively with these changes, in relation to themselves, their pupils, the school community and the wider society. The advancement in technology, the economic relations with the rest of the world and the social change all have an impact on schooling. The hi-tech revolution is requiring school leavers to enter a different workforce and so teachers are asked to emphasize different skills such as the ability to work in groups; organize work experience and to teach initiative and adaptability rather than traditional conformity and contentment.

   Social change brought about by immigration has led to schools having to connect with an increasing range of cultural, religious backgrounds of children. Today many families with children operate differently from the traditional male bread-winner family and schools have are expected to offer extra support. The pace at which schools are presented with fresh demands from this new structural mix is quite overwhelming. (Hughes 1991)

   In addition, the advances in psychological, linguistic and sociological research have given new schools of thought and understanding in the ways in which schools can help all children.

   All these places more demands on teachers and principals as the organization of schooling changes. Schools are left to make many decisions on their own and more expertise in curricula areas is required by the teachers. The schools community is more involved, parents are helpers in the classrooms and parents, as well as students help in the decision making process.

   While schools have to deal with these changes, they have to be tactful about embracing every suggestion from outsiders including state and federal governments. (Rhoades, 1987 quoted in Hughes 1991) Schools have to develop professional views on what they are for and what they can realistically do.

   Finally, as has been said earlier in this thesis, it is essential to support teachers. There needs to be large-scale, in-school staff development where there are systematic opportunities for teachers to think, grow, update and refresh. Many teachers in the education system, especially those in leadership positions, have gone through training in an entirely different era. They were trained for a narrower range of tasks than is now demanded of them. Teaching is a classically stressful occupation. (Rosenholtz, 1987 Mcpherson, 1987 quoted in Hughes 1991) Some teachers learn positive ways of coping while some others have exceptional energy. However, many must develop defense strategies, which means they give less and less, or simply burn out. (Hughes 1991) Therefore, professional development for teachers must be based on the fact that they are competent. There should be acknowledgement of the enormous demands on teachers from society and government. The traditional attitude towards professional development – all that is required is an occasional after school speaker plus voluntary individual effort- is no longer enough. The older thought was that new teachers posted to schools would top the schools sufficiently for new ideas and skills. Even though professional development sponsored by other agencies is important, the most crucial is the one that is in-built into the school itself and is part of the normal cycle of a school's renewal. (Joyce, 1986 quoted in

Hughes, 1991) Professional development is no longer a luxury or an 'add-on if time and resources permit'. It has to be planned and developed effectively (Lacey, 1998 quoted in Beale, 1998). The staff profile itself can provide the human resources needed to plan and work towards a goal. Age, experience, mobility, backgrounds and morale are important factors. Many schools have teachers working for fifteen to twenty years without gaining further qualifications while some have a range of staff ages and experiences. New staffs have provided a needed challenge to experienced staffs who are pleased to act as valued mentors and coaches. (Lacey, 1998 quoted in Beale, 1998) Peer mentoring can be an effective part of the on going professional development of individuals. As stated earlier teachers are required to function in a variety of ways during their teaching career: 'act, entertain, motivate, facilitate, organize, counsel, arbitrate, inspire, control and teach in the human context of the classroom where a range of agendas is operating at any one time' (McCann & Redford, 1995 quoted by Beedles, 1997 cited Beale, 1998).This shows the possibility for mutual support and joint ventures where both parties can grow and develop. McCann and Redford define peer mentoring in terms of teacher collaboration where 'two or more people, committed to individual reflection (thinking carefully and systematically about what they are doing and why), getting together in some way to develop conversations about teaching'. This is well and good but given that teachers find very few opportunities to work together they have to be encouraged to develop confidence to discuss their professional practice. The reality is that the majority of teachers does not socialize but feel isolated.

Many professional development sessions are taken by outside so called experts on agendas that are 'provided' rather than those that are sought (Gorman, 1997 quoted in Beale, 1998). Des Gorman says that many teachers attend these programs without participating actively or improving competencies or knowledge. They are there because others are there. There are other teachers who have been attending everything and anything like conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings exchanges, launches and other initiatives. Teachers have to show a commitment to self improvement and the challenge of professional development is to 'engage the comfortable' and 'focus the frantic' (Gorman, 1997 quoted in Beale, 1998).

3. Teachers' Perception of children's values versus their willingness to teach values

Children of today's generation are growing up with a very different set of values compared to the children of the nineties. The changing nature of childhood as a result of the technological and social changes today has led children to value a different set of things compared to their parents. The family dynamics of today has a direct impact on how children behave and what they value. Parenting styles have changed to cope with the ever increasing demands of children. Research shows that children of today tend to be more self-centered as a result of lack of interaction due to spending longer periods of time being alone, having smaller family units, more commonly having only one other sibling, absence of extended families structures and having fewer reliable and trusting friends and neighbours. All these have an impact of what children value and also how adults view them.

In my survey teachers were asked about their opinion of values apparent in children of today.

Values apparent	-	17%
Values not apparent	-	43%
Values completely missing	-	30%
Negative values apparent	-	10%

Even though the question asked about values most teachers commented (during discussions) that they considered about behaviours in children which are influenced by the values they hold. 'Values apparent' here was intended to suggest that children have and show respect for teachers and adults, show concern for others and others property, care about the environment, show understanding of other peoples culture and religion, possess emotional skills to handle situations, have empathy for others and general manners.

Sometimes these would be hard to assess in children but because teachers know the children well they may also know that these behaviours are a result of having certain values.

Sometimes wanting to be popular among friends and peers and the fear of losing them prevent children from doing what they feel is the right thing to do. They think they would not look 'cool' if they practiced the values. This was when teachers would choose 'values not apparent'.

'Values completely missing' referred to cases where teachers could see, feel and know that values are not there at all. Teachers may notice that such children are indifferent about dilemmas or situations where other children may have strong views. It is possible to make these judgments because of the relationships teachers develop with children over time.

"Negative values' would have been seen by teachers as behaviour traits such as lack of self discipline, social skills, empathy for others, respect and manners. Teachers would be thinking of children who are disruptive in class, not focused, not paying attention, who get involved in arguments and fights, are bullies and don't have respect for authority.   These traits do show that values are missing but they also suggest the negative values are apparent.

Teachers were required to comment on whether children had the same values as the teachers had when they were the children's age.

Agree	-	16%
Disagree	-	77%
Undecided	-	7%

Many teachers would have considered behaviour patterns for this question as well. 70 of the 77 teachers who disagreed with this agreed to the introduction of values in schools which is shown next.

Teachers were then asked for their opinion on the introduction of values in schools.

Agree	-	75%
Disagree	-	5%
Undecided	-	20%

From the 25% who disagreed or were undecided 10% thought that values in children were not apparent, missing or were negative. These were all teachers with 0-5 years experience again indicating that they are probably already overwhelmed with the many demands of teaching than to think of new things to teach.

Then teachers were asked if they feel it is their role to impart values.

Yes	-	78%
No	-	19%
Undecided	-	3%

From the above results a few trends can be seen.

Looking at the 10% of teachers who believed that negative values were apparent in children today, 7% thought their values were different when they were young; they agreed with the introduction of values in schools and felt it is their role to impart values to children. There would be no problems for these teachers when values are introduced apart from the fact that training and support will have to be provided to make them competent to teach and model selected values.
The other 3% of the teachers who thought negative values were apparent thought that values should be introduced but seemed uncertain if it was their role. One of them commented that it should be mainly the role of parents with teachers supporting them. Considering that teachers already have so much to do and prepare for it is likely that teachers who are uncertain about whether it is their role to impart values may be thinking it would be an additional responsibility for them. What they really need is personal training and development and lots of support as mentioned above.

Of the 30% of teachers who observed that values seem to be missing in children, 23% thought their values were different when they were young: they agreed with the introduction of values in schools and were willing to impart values to children. 4% were neutral about the introduction of values in schools but were willing to teach them whereas the other 3% (whether they agreed with the introduction of values in schools or not) were not willing to teach values as they felt it was not their role.

Of the 43% who observed that children have values but are not apparent 30% felt their values were different from values of current generation of children; they agreed with the introduction of values in schools and were willing to teach them. Another 2% had the same beliefs but did not think it was their role to impart values. 8% of the teachers were neutral about the introduction of values in schools but of these 5% were willing to teach them and 3% thought it was not their role to do so. 3% disagreed with the introduction of values in schools and were not willing to teach them. The majority of teachers were willing to teach values to children if asked to.

The 17% of teachers who thought that values are apparent in children today could have interpreted the question to mean beliefs and cultural values. Half of these teachers agreed that they had different values when they were young;

One in three agrees with the introduction of values in schools and one in two is neutral about it but they all are willing to impart values to children. This indicates that teachers are aware of the need for values education and the call from the general public that schools can help. From discussions with teachers it was found that many of them thought one of their key roles was to help in character development in children as they realized that both parents in the present generation and economic climate have to work and don't have much time to spend with the children. We must realize that quality time with children only comes from spending quantity time. The teachers also realized that with the large immigrant population in the area they were working, the teachers have this important role as many of these parents are probably not aware of Australian values and way of living. It is worthy to note this view of teachers.

Five of these teachers commented that they taught in a school with predominantly Asian children who came from families that have very strong values such as respect for their culture and traditions as well as valuing education and these were apparent in most of the children they taught.

A trend can also be seen in relation to how teachers feel about the statement that "schooling provides a foundation for the moral, spiritual and aesthetic development of young Australians" and their perception of values in children and their willingness to teach them values. 10% of the teachers disagreed with this statement suggesting that they feel schools are not meeting with this need. Except for one they all thought values in children are missing today; they agree with the introduction of values in schools and are willing to teach them. This is indicative of many teachers out there who feel the same. They have a good idea that schools are not meeting the vital need of providing moral development of children and are willing to do something about it if they are asked and support is provided.

A comparison can also be made in regards to the teachers who disagreed with the statement that schools should assist children to build character. One of three teachers who disagreed with this statement strongly agreed about the introduction of values in schools and was willing to teach them. This is contradiction of beliefs but it must be noted that these questions make teachers consider about values in children and about their roles in the big picture of things. The other two teachers who disagreed strongly believed that values should not be introduced in schools

and were not willing to teach them. From this we learn that even though some teachers realize the importance of values they are still unwilling to do anything about it. This could be representative of many teachers and one wonders who is going to do the job if teachers feel it is not their role and are not willing to help out. These teachers would fit in the category of complaining teachers. Incidentally these three teachers have reasons other than the love to work with children as their best part about teaching. The comment about the selection and suitability of candidates for the teaching job could be added here again.

A further observation can be made regarding the teachers feelings about the introduction of values in schools. Even though 75% of teachers surveyed agreed with the introduction of values in schools, nearly one in four felt it was not their role to impart values to children. The reasons for these, including lack of morale and increasing demands from teachers, have been stated in the discussions above. A few teachers commented that they feel it is the parents' role and rightly so without the parents supporting the teaching of values at home, it would be ineffective trying to teach them at school.

The teachers who disagreed with or are neutral about the introduction of values in schools and are not willing to teach them, had varying number of years of teaching experience from one to twenty years. Some were also full time, some part time and some casual teachers. It seems some teachers feel they already have enough to do in their tight school timetable where their time with the children is robbed off with all sorts of interruptions and variations to their academic teaching programs.

The most obvious observation is that teachers require a fresh orientation to values education. The teachers' role is vital. According to the above results it can be seen that most teachers are already positive about values education. All they need is plenty of in service and continued support.

4. Knowledge and skills of teachers and the support they require.

When asked if teachers thought they had the knowledge and skills to deliver lessons on values 57% said yes and 41% said no while 2% circled the yes and no options!

This shows that teachers feel they will be able to teach values if they are required to. Many teachers have attended professional development courses on resilience, character building, and aspects of behaviour which children with positive values show such as listening, cooperation, taking turns, self confidence and so on. Some teachers have had exposure to religious teachings which contains a lot of values and as such they feel they are equipped. Teachers are aware of some tools and techniques. Some teachers also commented that they are already teaching values implicitly everyday.

The 41% of teachers who said they did not have the skills and knowledge to teach values are probably feeling that values education is something completely new and that they have to get trained for teaching them. This raises other concerns for teachers, for example, getting out of their schools to training venues, traveling issues, working on assignments or assessments or just plain change of routines. Many experienced teachers may also have uncertainties about their own capabilities and self confidence when the question of training in new areas arises.

It is a noteworthy observation that more than one in two teachers feels they have the knowledge and skills to teach values. If these teachers can be provided with further training they will feel more confident and competent in dealing with values issues.

In the following question teachers were allowed to choose more than one response.

When asked about the kind of support teachers will require to prepare them to teach values effectively, the most common response (78%) was teacher in-services with practical ideas. Lesson plans with aims and objectives and appropriate resources to go with the lessons was the next common response (74%). This shows that if values education is made practical and everything teachers require are given to them, teachers will feel confident and equipped to teach values effectively. 45% of the 57% of teachers who felt they already had the skills and knowledge also said they required additional support.

It is worthwhile to note here that most teachers have a teaching career of over 40 years. During this period there are developments in education and educational psychology, sociology of youth, moral development and so on. Teachers are usually given professional development to bring them up to date with these developments and changes. This is the reason why many of these teachers have expressed these needs. They need to be shown what the essential building blocks and techniques are. This is why they need lesson plans. But once given a few teachers will bring in their own creativity. This has also been the experience of the ISSE Australia.

50% of teachers also said they needed a list of values to teach and the reason for choosing those values. 34% wanted to know the rationale behind teaching values.

Teachers are uncertain because there is confusion between brain washing and values education. There is vast literature on values education, virtues, values clarification, moral development and social emotional learning. They are confused as to which process or program to follow if they are to start. I will examine each of these in some detail here.

Virtues

Virtues can be explained to children as values related to truth and goodness:
Honesty is the best policy; possessing good character is an advantage in life; being good is the surest way to be happy. These virtues are predetermined by adults and so they may vary. There is no element of choice; the more one has the better. The "Virtues Project" is being used in some New Zealand and Australian schools to base their values education program on. It uses five strategies to build foundations for safe and caring communities. They are: Speak the language of the Virtues, Recognise Teachable Moments, Set Clear Boundaries, Honour the spirit and Offer Spiritual Companioning. The program also uses 52 virtues as a way of creating a culture of character. However, virtues programs do not rely on improved reasoning.

Values Clarification

As discussed in the introduction, in the 1960's personal freedom was the ideal societal value. Values clarification came about where teachers could talk about values yet keep their neutrality. Teachers were expected to focus on processes like "choosing freely" which would help students clarify their own values.
It was accepted that whether one wants to be an engineer or a farmer is a 'free' personal decision but whether or not to cheat is quite different. Some basic values clarification methodology is still around and being used as there are many great classroom activities but is not called by that name. Values clarification activities had their downside of undermining traditional morality. It would have been better if it emphasized helping students to clarify their own values as well as to adopt society's moral values. The point missed was also that students were too young and had not developed their own values yet. It failed to address the crucial question of whether the values espoused by the student were worthwhile. Students needed help in deciding what is good and right for themselves and others. Values clarification lacked a framework which could help students evaluate values by critically examining them. So in the 1970's educators started using Lawrence Kohlberg's moral development psychology.

Moral Development

This assumed the child to be a moral thinker. Kohlberg argues that all children go through the same stages of development in their moral reasoning but at different rates.

The six stages fall into three categories:

Pre-conventional	(1) Obedience and Punishment Orientation
	(2) Individualism, Instrumentalism & Exchange
Conventional	(3) Good Interpersonal Relationships
	(4) Maintaining Social Law and Order
Post-conventional	(5) Social Contract and Individual Rights
	(6) Universal Principles

At each higher stage, a person is better able to stand in the shoes of others, integrate conflicting perspectives on a moral problem, appreciate the consequences of any course of action and make a decision that respects the rights of all parties. (Lickona 1991

Social Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning refers to the process through which one develops the skills and attitudes to acquire social and emotional competencies.(Cohen 1999) Children's social and emotional experiences affect their ability to learn and develop. The notion of "knowing the whole child" includes the child's social and emotional functioning. Social and emotional aspects of learning have always been there but the competencies now allow us to:
- solve social and emotional problems
- modulate emotions
- solve them creatively
- be effective leaders or collaborators
- be assertive and responsible
- be able to ask questions that lead to new learning

The social and emotional learning programs are for all children. They have perspectives for special needs children as well. They promote social and emotional awareness and skills of all parties in the education system.

Now when the values dialogue is on it is important to know how to transmit values without the confusions and debate over which values, whose values and fear of indoctrination.

It is interesting to note that 18% of the teachers who previously felt that values are missing in today's children or that negative values are apparent in children said they need a rationale as to why they should be teaching values. This shows that they still need clarification and understandings for themselves before they would feel comfortable with teaching values. They need to see the correlation between values missing in children and how schools can help them attain these missing values. There could be a variety of reasons why some teachers feel they need a rationale for teaching values in schools. As stated earlier, some teachers feel it is the parents' role, not the schools. Others feel teaching values in schools will not be effective if they are not supported by the child's environment. Confusions also arise due to vast literature on values education and the whole variety of values including democratic values, religious values, citizenship values and values for resilience. Some of these have been discussed in Part One of this thesis.
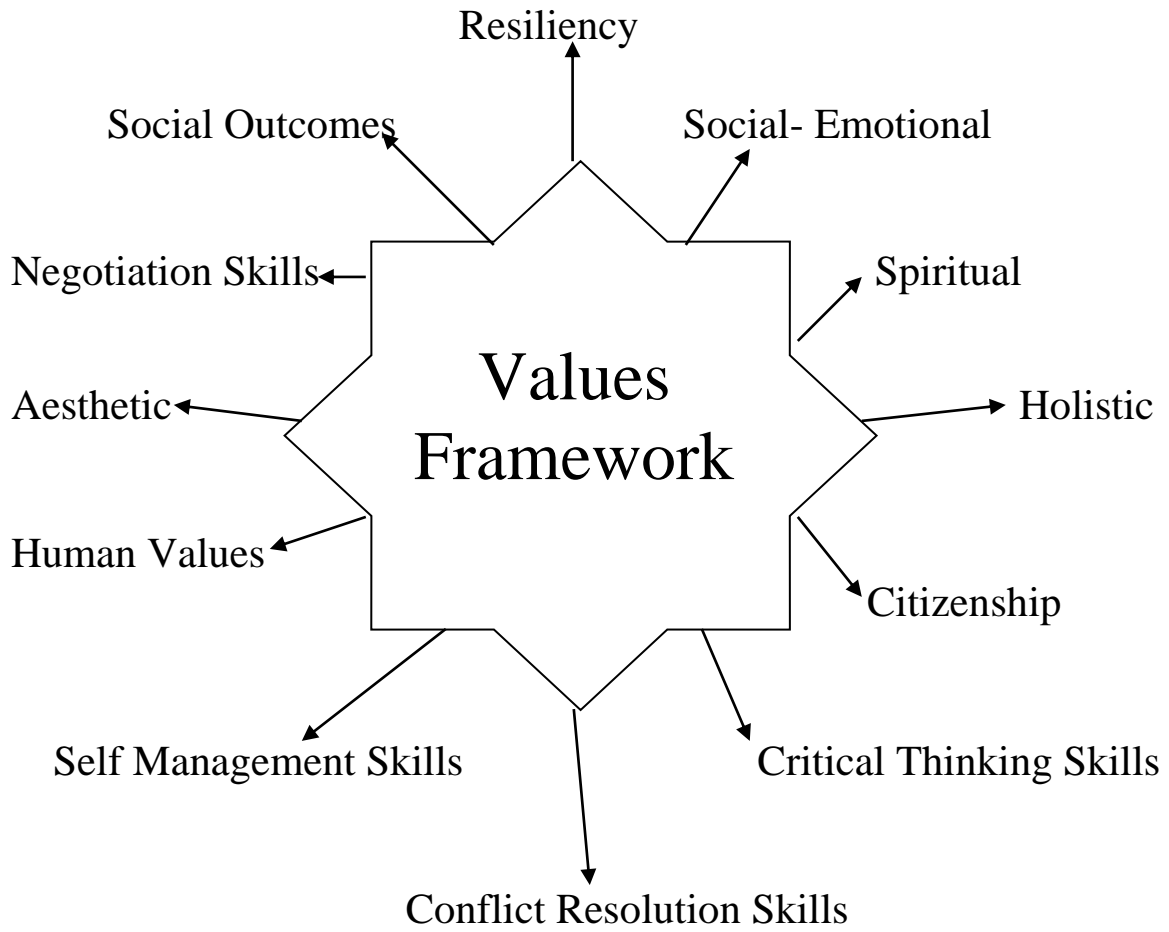
Nearly 80% of the teachers chose more than one response for this question suggesting they need as much help and support as they can get.

General Discussion

After the literature study and reviewing the Values Education Study of 2002, it can be concluded that for a values framework to be complete a number of aspects have to be considered. Apart from the classroom setup and activities that take place on a daily basis much more has to be in place. The instrumental or learning values are what are already taught when educators say that schools teach values implicitly. The classroom design, routines, procedures and activities, teacher expectations, discipline and learning and achievements are all related to such values. What has now become essential is the explicit teaching of terminal, life long values such as truthfulness, peace, love, gratitude, empathy, compassion, non-violence and so on.
For such values to be taught a more holistic values framework is needed. The following mind map shows some of the desirable aspects of a values framework. A framework covering all such aspects and providing detailed guidelines would be a more workable document which schools could use to develop value programs.

Schools and teachers are expected to fill up the gaps in the childhood experiences of children today.

Resiliency

Social Outcomes

Social- Emotional

Negotiation Skills

Spiritual

Values
Framework

Aesthetic

Holistic

Human Values

Citizenship

Self Management Skills

Critical Thinking Skills

Conflict Resolution Skills

PART FOUR

Conclusions

After analyzing and studying the results of this survey a number of conclusions can be made. Some of them are:

1. Even though the government has spent thousands of dollars for publicity and extensive research on values education in government schools many teachers remain unaware of these government initiatives.

2. Many teachers have become aware of the values dialogue at government level through the media.

3. Majority of teachers consider values in children of today to be negative, missing or not apparent.

4. Elliot Ginsberg quoted in Lickona's book "Educating for Character" says "rapid changes in the world of children and parents have threatened the ability of families to raise happy, healthy and successful children." Majority of teachers in this survey also believe that because of the change in the nature of childhood today, the challenges which the children face and the choices they have to make today, education requires to be reformed with a new emphasis on values which should give children the skills to lead a balanced life of inner peace, well being and fulfillment.

5. Most teachers acknowledge that one of their roles is to impart values to children even though they believe parents are critically important in inculcating values in children.

6. Many teachers are passionate about their job and love to work with children. As a result they are genuinely interested in the well being of the children in their care. These teachers would like to impart values to children provided they get given training and necessary support.

7. Schools at present are left to develop their own values programs. Almost all teachers feel they need teacher in-service and professional development to gain the knowledge and skills required to develop a better understanding of values.

8. Moral/values/character education in schools is inevitable and all parties involved are in agreement. A simplistic approach to values education should be taken at Kindergarten level aiming at instilling goodness and developing understanding of virtues such as truthfulness in children. As children progress through the primary years values have to be modeled and taught in detail. This is the crucial age when most of the concepts are built and consolidated. Children should be taught to have the desire to be good and understand the qualities of a good character. A deeper level of understanding has to be gained as children move to high school. It would not be enough just to introduce values education in primary schools and think that the mission of character education is completed.

9. There is a lack of teacher and student resources on values education.

10. Schools need to decide what approach would be the best to adopt, the implicit teaching or the explicit teaching or both. Evidence shows that values must be taught with an explicit focus and cater to cognitive, emotional and behavioural domains. Since the general feeling is that values are already taught implicitly in most schools, an explicit whole school approach should be adopted in order to make any positive impact.

Recommendations

1. Teachers are the vital agents in the whole area of values education in schools.

2. Consultations with parents and community are essential if values education programs are to succeed in schools. This can be done using the aspects of values framework suggested above.

3. Government has to provide funding for professional development and teacher in services.

4. Values education should be introduced as a compulsory unit in the teacher training courses in the universities that train teachers.

5. Prospective teachers after graduating and before starting to actually teach on their own should have an interview whereby they can be advised about the vital role they play in society.

6. A collection of resources should be available for schools to complement their activities in class.

7. A whole school explicit approach where a set time is allocated to teach values using the direct method should be adopted. In addition the value being taught for the week or month should be integrated into other curricular areas, therefore using the indirect and co-curricular method as well.

8. Teacher in-service to explain the school policy on values education should be held at the beginning of every year at every school to inform the new staff as well as provide new and innovative ideas for existing teachers.

SOME THOUGHTS AND QUOTES ON THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

"You may have taken up the teaching profession for various reasons, but they are not relevant now. Once you have joined this grand association of teachers, you must endeavour to justify the trust placed on you, and serve the best interests of the children given into your care. Your learning is of course, valuable, but your character is your best tool in this profession. Speak the truth and tread the path of righteousness." – (Sathya Sai Baba 1968)

Some people have said that a person turns to the teaching profession when nothing better seems to present itself, but this should not be the attitude. Sathya Sai Baba says that "off all professions, that of a teacher is the noblest, the most difficult and the most important." (Divine Discourse 17-5-1981) A teacher can help mould the character of the children, and it is the children of today who will make or mar the world of tomorrow. So it can be truly said that the future of the country - any country - is in the hands of its teachers.

"Education is a slow process, like the unfolding of a flower. This unfolding will be helped if the teacher is a fine example of wisdom, discipline, with a keen intellect and justness of decision. Mere repetitive teaching and coaching for examinations is not enough. Example, not precept, is the best teaching aid." – (Sathya Sai Baba 1958)

Teaching is really whatever you do in front of the class. If you want to teach punctuality, you must be on time. "The tender minds in the classroom are moulded by example. If you speak against smoking you should not smoke. You are rigorous scrutiny at all times. Any misdemeanour of yours, will be discussed in a hundred homes the same day. Patient effort and steady persistence are indispensable for a teacher." –(Sathya Sai Baba 1970)
By nature children imitate. That is how they learn. It has been truly said that "values are not taught, they are caught".

Whenever a teacher thinks something, a transfer of energy occurs that children detect though they may not even be aware of it. If you have a lot of love for them, children know it. If the teacher is angry or anxious, children stay at a distance. If a teacher is caring, he/she attracts the children. Sathya Sai Baba tells us that "it is not by fear that children should respect the teacher, but out of love. The teacher should avoid all methods that frighten and terrorise." –(Sathya Sai Baba 19958)

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Even though more than one in two teachers felt they would not be overlooked because

character education is an enormous responsibility and if accomplished with the correct attitude and motive using their heads, heart and hands teachers can create a vast difference in the future society.