

ABSTRACT

An Investigation of the Problems Primary Teachers Face in the Teaching of Mathematics in the County of Victoria.

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The intent of this study was to investigate the problems primary teachers face in the teaching of mathematics.

Teachers were grouped on the basis of school location (urban, semi-urban, rural) and years of experience as trained teachers. A sample of one hundred and five teachers from the County of Victoria was interviewed through a questionnaire. Responses were compared by the use of  $X^2$  and A N O V A tests of significance.

There was no significant difference in the frequency and intensity of problems teachers experienced across school location. The school system was generally perceived to be unsupportive of teachers' classroom efforts. Generally the mathematics syllabus did not present problems, though it was too wide to be completed in the given time. Some teachers reported having problems with certain topics and with teaching methods. Teachers' greatest problem seemed to be their students' lack of readiness to pursue upper school studies, this being compounded by their mixed ability. Generally teachers placed high importance on their

professional needs. The more experienced teachers faced problems significantly less frequently and less intensely than their less experienced counterparts.

The findings of this study were discussed and strategies to overcome some of the problems were suggested. The findings could form the basis for development of retraining programmes in mathematics for in-service primary teachers.