

Teacher Learning Matters: The interrelationship between the personal and
professional lives of rural teachers.

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Statement of Sources

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in this thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees.

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Signature

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to highlight the growing understanding that schools and all its members are continually learning. This has provided a new lens for educationists to view the professional and personal needs of teachers. Goodson (1996) refers to the fact that researchers have often omitted the 'lived voice' of the teacher in educational research. By this he means that the life stories and experiences of teachers, told by themselves, are ruled out as irrelevant data by many researchers. The early work of Hall and Morgan (as cited in Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education (1996)., and later Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1996) who based their work on the stages of nurse development, but adapted to assist with understanding the professional and personal lives of teachers, formed the initial interest in exploring the under researched area of teachers' lives.

This qualitative research study explores the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of teachers especially those in mid to late careers in rural areas. Participants in this study completed a written survey and then oral contributions through focus groups or interviews.

A model which illustrated the critical influences on teachers' professional learning in their school was developed as a result of the analyses of the teacher data. This model highlighted the need for the provision of professional learning opportunities that incorporate the four major themes which emerged from this study. It also showed the need to maintain a learning culture in a school that is inclusive of all teachers regardless of their life or career stage. Reactions to this model were then obtained

from the school principals, and from professionals working in the education system office. These reactions showed distinct variations to those of teachers.

The teachers clearly had the view that teacher learning does matter to the life of a learning community. The challenge for rural schools is to provide teachers with professional learning opportunities that incorporate adult learning principles and empower teachers to take control of their own professional and personal learning.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

In recognising that teachers are integral to the success of effective schools, professional learning has become a growth industry with an ever increasing range of professional learning opportunities now becoming available. Few of these opportunities however are set wholly within a particular school. For rural teachers in particular this can be an impediment unless their school organises for various professional learning opportunities to occur in the work place. Whilst most teachers are faced with having to access externally provided opportunities which take them away from their schools, but for rural teachers, this often means their town as well.

As a teacher who has spent my entire teaching career in rural locations, I have accessed the majority of my professional learning away from the school setting. This has involved travelling up to 900 kilometres on a round trip with the added concerns of overnight accommodation, and as time moved on also having to organise childcare for my own children. At various times in my teaching career I have had to make choices that have included consideration of my personal concerns, my family concerns and my professional growth: at times it was impossible to balance all these effectively.

My interest in associating professional learning with personal growth was enhanced after engaging with the work of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) who have demonstrated a strong link between the professional growth of nurses and their personal life stages.

Whilst examining this work, I could identify from my own experience parallels with the teaching profession and its struggle to meet the learning needs of its members. This then became the starting point for this thesis.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are (i) to determine whether the claimed inter-relationship exists; (ii) To ascertain what kinds of PD opportunities exist, and opinions of their effectiveness; (iii) to document what the barrier to PD are in the minds of the participants. The interrelationship between the professional and personal lives of teaching professionals cannot be ignored when planning professional development opportunities for teaching professionals. At varying points in a teachers' career, teachers have differing professional and personal needs. We tend to talk in generalities about 'teachers' but they are as diverse as students in their ways of learning and their needs. At this point it is apt to offer definitions of 'professional lives' and 'personal lives' these two terms will be used throughout the thesis and underpin it. 'Personal lives of teachers' includes the understanding teachers have experiences and obligations away from their professional duties and the term 'professional lives of teachers' includes the actual experiences of teachers as they fulfil their professional duties.

It is also a crucial premise of this thesis that professional learning activities or professional development (PD) should not be a series of separate episodes, but a sequence of opportunities for self and or professional learning for teachers taking into account their varying professional and personal needs, of teachers as they journey through their teaching careers. A survey commissioned in 2000 by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, suggests that there is some

significant difficulty in distinguishing and circumscribing professional development activity. (McRae, Ainsworth, Groves, Rowland & Zbar, 2001, p.1). For the purposes of this thesis, the term 'professional learning' refers to all learning activities, both those officially recognised and more general purpose activities undertaken by teachers.

1.3 Methodological approach

This study investigated the relationship between the life stages of a teaching professional and their professional growth. The three research questions addressed in this thesis are those I identified in the literature review and as a result of my experiences as a teacher in a rural area. They were;

- How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?
- How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?
- How do teaching professionals inform the governments, bureaucrats and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

A grounded theory approach was used for analysing the data. Grounded theory has been used in major research work in both psychology and anthropology and more recently in the fields of education, social work and nursing, all of which are concerned with the human condition. Glaser and Strauss (1967) offered this theory as a contribution towards closing the embarrassing gap between theoretical and empirical research, and in particular to legitimise qualitative research. However, rather than using grounded theory in a definite way, this thesis utilised grounded theory as a set of principles. In particular grounded theory encouraged me as the researcher to constantly revisit my data that I

collected using a survey instrument, focus groups and individual interviews and to be cognisant of emerging patterns and ideas that contributed to the emerging theory.

The participants in the research included a number of staff from each of three Catholic schools. Because I was a member of staff in one of the schools that participated in the study and my husband was a staff member of another school in the study, due consideration to ethical considerations was established prior to the commencement of the study. This is more fully discussed in Chapter Three.

Once the data had been collected and ‘checked’ for its authenticity, in Chapter Four.

The major themes embedded in the data were organized into a diagrammatic model that best represented the ‘lived’ experience of rural teachers as they journeyed through their career. The reactions to the analysis of teacher data by the schools’ principals and experienced Catholic Education Office staff were then obtained and are analysed in Chapter Five. In Chapter Six conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the data that were collected and the resulting major themes which emerged are presented. The three research questions are also considered in light of the analysis.

However, having only collected data from three schools, I cannot claim that the results will be generalisable beyond these schools. It will be for the audiences of this research, understanding the context of this study, to judge whether these results are pertinent to their own situation.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This study could be useful for school leadership teams and administrators who seek an improved understanding of the need to establish a shared vision which enhances the

opportunities of all people involved in their community to continue learning, especially teachers because “Colleagueship and the development of shared practice are essential to the profession”(Darling-Hammond, 1994, p.8). It also invites teachers to take up the challenge of a shared vision by continuing to be part of the decision making in their school to ensure that their professional and personal learning needs are considered in planning professional learning for teachers.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers an insight into the provision of professional learning and the small but growing awareness in the research literature that there is a confluence between the professional and personal lives of teachers.

The view of the teacher as a person has crucial implications for our understandings of change, professional development, and working relationships between teachers and their colleagues. (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p.25)

However, as will be shown in this review of the literature, limited research has been reported on this crucial relationship and especially for rural teachers. Goodson & Hargreaves (1996) refer to the fact that researchers have often omitted to include the actual lived experiences of teachers in educational research. They find it surprising that the life story of teachers is ruled out as irrelevant data by researchers when “Life experiences and background are obviously key ingredients of the people we are, of our sense of self” (p.146). They point out that a focus on the life cycle of teachers (referred to as Life Stages in this chapter) would generate insights into the distinctive elements of teaching but at the same time lamenting the fact that there has been so little work in this area. Goodson published these thoughts in 1996. This chapter will show that although many aspects of education have changed in the intervening years,

this association between the personal and professional lives of teachers is still under researched.

2.1.1 The structure of the chapter

I have structured this chapter to highlight the important issues that emerged from an appropriate review of the literature. Importantly the following three research questions that arose from my own thinking in this area, and from an initial review of the literature, were used as important ideas to structure my reading. They were:

- How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?
- How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?
- How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

I will open this chapter with an explanation of the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of teachers and present the literature that assisted me with defining the research topic that I had wanted to explore as a result of my experiences as a teacher who has spent her teaching career to date in rural areas. I will then present models of professional learning drawn upon from other professions, which have been adapted for teacher learning, as well as reviewing literature on the development of teaching professionals. Following this, I will present a brief historical perspective on the views of professional learning for teachers, the changing nature of teachers' work and the need for learning that can occur in the workplace. The chapter

will conclude with a summary of the literature focussed on each of the research questions, as well as noting the gaps in the literature reviewed.

2.2 The Interrelationship between the Personal and Professional Lives of Teachers

In this section I turn explicitly to the under-researched area which focuses on the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of rural secondary teachers to set the scene for the study. A specific search of literature produced very little information about on the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of rural secondary teachers. In particular there was virtually nothing on rural schools. The one exception was a study by Scribner (2003) of small isolated rural schools in the United States of America entitled: *Teacher learning in context: The special case for rural high school teachers*. It highlighted the fact that “rural schools have been historically understudied” (Scribner, 2003, p.2).

As noted in chapter one, the term ‘personal lives of teachers’ includes the understanding that teachers have experiences and their obligations away from their professional duties. On the other hand the term ‘professional lives of teachers’ includes the actual experiences of teachers as they fulfil their professional duties. These experiences and obligations are important in understanding the professional dimension of a teacher’s life. Thus the findings of this thesis will contribute to the emerging acknowledgement that there is an important link between the professional

and personal growth of teaching professionals and that this relationship should not be ignored when planning for change and growth in a school environment.

2.2.1 Personal dimensions of teacher learning

Until recently, planned teacher development by leadership teams has been the dominant mode of provision of professional learning in schools. ‘Hard’ research data generated from a quantitative paradigm, has underpinned the decisions made in offering professional learning rather than recognising the particular needs of individual teachers. This has been referred to as an over confidence in research (Fullan, 1991). If teachers are, as Clarke (1995) believes, to be active, knowledgeable and ready to learn, rather than passive, deficient and resistant, it logically follows that teachers can and should be responsible at least in part for their own learning. The review of research in this chapter suggests Clarke’s assertion is not misplaced. If we believe that teachers are learners and autonomous professionals then it is desirable that any professional learning offered would need to be multi-faceted to take into account a myriad of factors that may influence professional development programs. This will include the stage that teachers are at in their career, their qualifications, and the existing knowledge and skills that the participant may have (O’Brien, 2003, p.8).

The concept of a professional’s ability to be available for professional learning is one of the underpinning principles that guided this thesis and is related to O’Brien’s (and others) ideas of stages in a teacher’s career. It is a concept that acknowledges the importance of a holistic approach to teacher learning and the need to consider the uniqueness of individual teachers within their potential, as described by McGilp

(2003). She states that teachers need to be futuristic in their plans for professional learning, but at the same time giving consideration to personal commitment and personal fulfilment. It is the position of this thesis that personal commitment and personal fulfilment result from learning opportunities that are highly inclusive of a teacher professional's availability to be actively involved in their learning. However that availability is in part dependent on the personal stages of life that a teacher has reached. The review of the literature on teacher professional learning undertaken in this chapter clearly shows the abundance of material that has been generated to inform educationists in their planning for teacher learning. However a closer review reveals that the research material often fails to take into account the personal domain of a teaching professional's life.

2.2.2 Life stages and professional learning

There is a need to consider more deeply the life stages of teaching professionals and recognise that within a school there are differing needs, both professional and personal, as teachers move through their teaching careers. In the literature reviewed later in this chapter, Cross (1981), Butt and Retallick (2002) and Rogers (2002) hint at the need to consider the impact on the private lives of teachers on their professional learning. They acknowledged the relationship that exists between their *availability* to pursue professional learning and their personal needs by identifying the tensions that exist as teachers juggle the demands of their profession and personal lives. However they failed to explore this notion in greater depth. The need to explore this relationship more deeply was emphasised by a recent study completed by the Victoria

University for the Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT) (Cacciattolo, Cherednichenko, Eckersley, Jones, Kruger, Moore, Mulraney & Watt, 2005) that found “there was a lack of focus on professional development which supports teachers at particular career stages” (p.6). Ignoring such vital information can be perilous and has the potential to impede innovation and change. The challenge therefore exists for schools to be innovative but at the same time inclusive of teacher needs as well as teacher ‘availability’ for learning.

The professional life of a teacher is very much influenced by their personal life. Cumming (1997) alerts us to the dimension of teachers’ availability in teacher learning. Senge (cited in Hargreaves & Evans, 1997) supports this notion when he states “There is a natural connection between a person’s work life and all other aspect of life” (p.55). This is supported by Fullan (1994, cited in Hargreaves & Evans, 1997) who maintain that “The personal mastery in all aspects of life must be supported; recognising that teachers are not technicians, but that teaching is bound up with their lives, their biographies, the kind of people they have become” (p.55). Nias & Leithwood (1994) acknowledge in their work that there is a process of personal development that underpins teacher development. They also assert that teachers at different points in the life cycle have characteristically different orientations to change and improve as well as different needs in terms of professional learning. One’s development as a person progresses through different stages and hence “teacher readiness” is different for different teachers. Jasmin (2001) asserts that the more that this is understood about teacher development, the more likely it is that appropriate and effective strategies will be developed to cater for teachers at different stages of their career. Nias (1986, pp.14-22) proposed that over time the whole person changes

through learning, and hence you become a teacher with new skills and priorities. She names four phases through which teachers move over their career;

- Survival – in the early years
- Identification – with teaching as a career
- Consolidation and extension in teaching – strong sense of competency in the classroom and beyond; and
- Increased influence – looking for wider responsibility within the education system

Hidden behind some of these categories one can detect the impact of the teacher maturing as a person. As the beginning teacher becomes experienced and confident with the multi faceted role of a classroom teacher and colleague, they increasingly begin to move away from being bound by rules. The initial rules provided a framework from which to operate until the teacher felt that they could be more experimental with their modus operandi. Their role as a teacher and a colleague becomes clearer as they feel more confident in the classroom and in the staffroom and able to contribute professionally in meetings and professional learning opportunities. Increasingly, confident teachers with experience and with affirmation from their colleagues will seek responsibilities beyond the classroom. This supports the suggestion that professional learning and personal learning are interdependent.

Although the authors noted in this section stake out the importance of life stages on professional learning, none do so in a definitive manner. There are two studies from the 1980's that help to do so, the first singling out the impact of deepening experience of individuals, and the second explicitly linking the stages of personal life to that of one's professional life.

The Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) model provides a valuable framework for understanding the ongoing learning of professional nurses (see Table 2.1). The Dreyfus and Deyfus model postulates a series of metaphorical stages in growth from novice to expert performance. This model does not tie the professional life stages to personal life stages but recognises the growth that professionals experience as they become more adept at their job. It does not presume that the 'novice' is a young person and describes the last two stages as 'proficient' and 'expert' in preference to 'experienced' which has been generally used to infer that a professional who has been working in the field for an extended period of time and has therefore become an 'expert'. Hence it seems this model can be applied easily to teachers. Darling-Hammond (2004, p.32) also acknowledges that teachers progress from 'novice to more 'expert' thinking about teaching. She emphasises the need to understand how teacher practice develops before teacher professional learning programs are planned and developed. Hence she too acknowledges that at different stages in their careers, teachers have differing professional needs.

The Dreyfus and Dreyfus model (1986) also discusses the ability for a professional to be an expert in one area and a novice in another. This distinction supports the belief that learning is life long and does not progress at the same pace in all areas of professional life. The most instructive example I have seen for this is the introduction of increasingly demanding technology skills for teachers. Many classroom teachers who could be best described as 'expert' in terms of their pedagogy, would own up to being novices or advanced beginners in describing their ability to incorporate technology in their teaching. Acknowledging this distinction, this can help to remove unrealistic expectations of people and provide a basis from which to develop professional learning opportunities that are inclusive of a person's professional and

life stage needs. It acknowledges that there will be some things they do expertly, some they do competently, and some, where they are a novice.

Table 2.1: Dreyfus and Dreyfus's (1986) 'Professional Life Stages of Nurses model', adapted for teachers by Weadon (2002)

Novice Stage	The person has no practical experience, so they rely on rules to help them. This is where most of our students start. They need generalisable rules to help them get by.
Advanced Beginner Stage	At the advanced beginner stage they think that someone somewhere knows the answer. Here they typically ask for books with definitive answers or expect you to provide them. They are recognising patterns, but have limited experience and still rely on rules.
Competent Stage	At the competent stage, which commonly requires two to three years of relevant experience, the person is analytical and planful. They now take personal and emotional responsibility for the outcomes of their work.
Proficient Stage	The proficient person moves beyond analysis to synthesis, begins to trust their intuition, starts to see things as wholes, and develops maxims about their work.
Expert Stage	The expert is highly intuitive. They just do what needs to be done. They understand context, they read the context, and do the right thing at the right time. Their practice is not governed by rules. They know the rules well, but they know when to obey them, when to bend them, and when to ignore them. Their actions are contextual and so can be confusing to novices. Unless the expert can remember the generalised rules that help novices, they can make very poor teachers of novices. Often competent people, who are highly analytical, make good teachers of novices and beginners. Since expert knowledge is highly intuitive it is also difficult to adapt to common staff appraisal procedures, and to write into quality standards.

The Dreyfus and Dreyfus model may be helpful for understanding the stage of development of a teacher and also for identifying their learning needs. It also highlights the need for professional learning that acknowledges that;

Being a professional involves not simply knowing the answers but also having the skills and will to evaluate one's own practice and search for new answers when needed. (Darling-Hammond, 2004, p.32)

Curiously, the model fails to take into account the fact that once the 'expert' stage is reached that 'expertise' may be seen as a potentially limiting state especially in the context of lifelong learning (Day, p.59; cited in Hargreaves & Evans, 1997).

Although the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model is useful in clearly suggesting a pathway from novice to expert, it fails to answer the question: What impact does the professionals' private life have on learning? It is this issue to which I now turn. The second useful model from the 1980s to consider is by (as cited in Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education (1996).

In their work cited in the Queensland Consortium for PD Education (1996), Hall and Morgan claimed that a coordinated approach must be taken to meet the professional and personal needs of classroom practitioners. Table 2.2 was developed in response to the questions about the provision of professional learning that the various education sectors were grappling with. It is a model that attempts to explain the coordinated approaches that could be undertaken to meet the professional and personal needs of classroom practitioners. Even though Table 2.2 was developed in 1983, it is still relevant and can be viewed as insightful as it recognizes the tension that can exist for the adult learner between his or her personal life.

Table 2.2: Training Needs with Career Stages (Queensland, Consortium for PD Education 1983, p.109)

Stage	Task Needs	Personal Needs
Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied job activities • Self exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make preliminary job choices and settling down
Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job challenging • Developing competence in a specialty area • Develop creativity in a Specialty area • Rotate into new areas after 3-5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with rivalry and competition/face failures • Deal with work family conflicts • Support • Autonomy
Mid Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical professional development • Develop skills in training and coaching others • Rotation into new job requiring new skills • Develop broader view of work and role in organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express feelings about mid life • Reorganise thinking about self in relation to work, family, community • Reduce self indulgence and competitiveness
Late career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for retirement • Shift from power role to one of consultation and guidance/Identify and develop successes • Begin activities outside organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and counselling to see one's work as a platform for others • Develop a sense of identity in extra organizational activities

The key strength of the model developed by (as cited in Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education (1996). is that they do consider in the one

framework the interrelationship between the working and personal lives of teachers. Their model implies that there are direct linkages between the stages of both our professional and private lives that cannot be ignored. For example if a teacher is relatively young and still maturing as an adult and is also pursuing a new career in teaching they are still exploring their new found life. They are likely to want to experience life but at the same time work through the initial challenges of deciding on how to manage the demands of their job. They are likely to move to different schools after two to three years and may even change careers. They typify the 'portfolio society' referred to by Handy (1994).

Examples for this model can be taken from my own career. As a 'mid career' teacher, having established myself as a teacher whilst moving in and out of the workforce as I parented two children, I have now chosen to be in a leadership position. During the 'establishment phase' of my career when I was only available to work in a minimal capacity, I rotated through a variety of roles as I filled in for teachers who were on leave. My skills were enhanced when I was placed in positions with whose responsibilities I was often not familiar with. In these positions I was challenged to grow as a professional. I did develop a broad view of the role of the teacher in the organisation of the school and as I was able to take on more responsibilities as my family grew up, I felt that I had appropriate skills to enable me to accept a leadership role in a secondary school. Thus Hall and Morgan's model can be seen to have applied to my situation as a teaching professional and prompted me to consider it important enough to explore in this thesis.

In contrast to the Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) model, the Hall & Morgan model (as cited in Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education (1996), deals exclusively with teachers as they move through their teaching career. However it makes some value judgments about the entry point of teachers as they correlate each stage with an assumed progression from school to University then to school as a teacher. This is now a limitation of the model, since entry points to teaching in latter years do not neatly tie in with chronological life stages of many people, given the increase in mature age entries into the profession. This gives rise to a second limitation. The model does not recognise the fact that there are now a significant number of teachers who have a variety of jobs prior to their entry to the teaching profession. Hence the 'Personal Needs' as identified by Hall & Morgan (as cited in Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education (1996)., may also need to be redefined to some degree for the teacher of the twenty first century so they more clearly link to the 'Task Needs' of the modern world.

Acknowledging that teachers have a personal life that parallels their professional life is pertinent, and as noted previously, under researched. By recognising and including the implications of the differing professional and personal needs of teachers at varying times during their career, providers of professional learning, and administrators at a systems level may be able to address issues such as teacher retention rates of younger teachers, and teacher burn out in more experienced teachers. Clearly the work undertaken by Hall and Morgan included listening to teachers. By listening carefully to teachers and acknowledging their role in the institution of the school, it may be possible to establish the ingredients for motivating teachers, engaging them as

professionals and ensuring the greater effectiveness of schools. This notion is seen as crucial by Goodson:

Studies of the teacher's life and work develop structural insights which locate the teacher's life within the deeply structured and embedded environments of schooling. (Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996, p.145)

There is an emerging understanding of the inter-relationship between the professional and personal lives of teachers, though this has not traditionally been a consideration for administrators and planners of professional learning.

2.3 The Changing Nature of Teaching and Schools

A brief journey through the literature on teacher learning reveals a history steeped in tinkering by governments and a struggle by educationists to assert their need to participate in decision making about how teaching and learning can take place in schools.

Table 2.3 is a useful guide to understanding the evolution of the changing nature of schools and teaching and indicates the evolving nature of the role of teacher in each era. It illustrates the shift in economic emphasis that has impacted on the cultural positions and societal values of each of the major educational eras as described by Edwards (1997).

Socio- economic changes have led to new and pressing demands on educational institutions and other organisations to become more efficient in promoting skill development. (Dall'Alba & Sandberg, 2006, p.383)

Economic factors are seen to continue to underpin much of what is initiated by governments and systems to ‘improve’ education. Yet as Darling-Hammond (1994, p.48) explains, school reform has rarely focussed on the support and improvement of teacher education programs or the development of teacher knowledge. Residual archaic views of structures in schools and systems continue to impact on reform.

Table 2.3: Perceived role of schools over the past 30 years (adapted from Edwards, 1997, p.167)

Eras	Focus	Social Context	Values	Relationship with learners	Teaching /learning metaphors
Industrialization Post Industrial	Discipline of the mind. Pass on worthwhile knowledge, skills and attitudes Dickens – Hard times	Individual Perpetuating the class system	Classics- Perennially valuable knowledge	Teacher superior to learner	Empty vessels, conduit Doctor/ Patient
Deschoolers Modern	Full personal happiness	Individual	Feelings personal experience	Teacher inferior to student	Social engineers Underdog
Post modern Digital age Economic rationalism	Creation of a new and better social order Global Village	Individual in a struggle to transform societal structures and priorities	Sources of oppression/ irrelevance of traditionally accepted norms and values	Teacher and learner equals	Leader Companion

This theme that archaic structures that continue to exist in schools is taken up by Hargreaves (1994). He argues that the basic structures used for schools were established for other purposes at other times. This is supported by Lee (1997) who believes that most educational organisations were designed not to change. In particular, he notes that the vast majority of Australian schools do have a shortage of

resources in order to change, at least to some degree, but the resources are locked in an archaic model that prevents change. During the 1960's and 1970's in Australia, Hoban (2002, p.13), claims that there were many examples of innovations being presented to teachers for implementation with very little infrastructure to sustain the change. Educational administrators often used top-down or workshop models to introduce the innovation to teachers as a one-step approach for teacher learning.

In summary, the archaic factory model, which has permeated the institutional school, has been exhausted. In the dawn of the twenty first century it is clear that there are movements to address these issues and to facilitate an environment which values both teacher and student growth. It is also clear that there is little choice but to embrace the fact that the world is changing rapidly and teacher learning is going to be integral to the success of schools in the twenty first century.

Teaching has journeyed from being a profession carried out by classroom bound employees where a top down structure saw the Head Teacher as being an authority on all aspects of the school and with the absence of any in-service learning. Teaching and learning were based on what Murphy (1999b, cited in Hill, 2001, p.3) as behavioural, psychology- based models of learning. There were very few opportunities for further learning for teachers that took into account their individual needs and any attempts at educational reform focussed on the needs of students rather than the teachers.

Cohen (2002, p.532) claims:

The whole failed history of modern education reform—from the prescriptive lesson-plan formats of the 1970s to the restructuring plans of the 1980s to the state testing of the 1990s – has addressed the ‘needs of the child’, (but) it has paid hardly any attention to the work of the teacher.

It is to the traditional experiences that teachers have had in their role in schools and then to the current understanding of teaching that I now turn.

2.3.1. Traditional experiences of schools and teaching

The Coleman Report (1966, p.325) from the 1960’s attempted to convince the academic world that teachers made very little difference to how well students achieved. This study was followed up by Jencks (1972, cited in Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989) who reaffirmed this result. Whilst Coleman’s theory was developed from studies focussing on children in the ghettos of North America, it did reflect the beliefs of the wider movement known as the De-Schoolers who believed that school did little for students (Rumble, 1999). This deficit view of teaching devalues the complex and demanding role that teachers play in the holistic development of the young person and a perception that is limited in its understanding of the interrelationship that exists in classrooms where teaching and learning intersect.

There is now a whole tradition of educators who argue that teachers do make an enormous difference in the lives of students including the work of Darling- Hammond

who is committed to ensuring that schools are better places for teachers to work and learn through the development of Professional Development Schools. Her work emphasises the important role that teachers play in school reform and improvement and stresses the “growing importance of learning in our society, and the growing complexity of teaching and schooling” (1994, p.ix).

Traditionally, secondary teachers have taught their allotted classes in separate classrooms with little interaction with colleagues. Hence as is common in many countries, for more than a century the design of schools and their organisation in Victoria has been based on a model of one teacher working with one class group at a time, almost always behind closed doors (Hartnell-Young, 2001). The concept of isolation permeates much of the literature about teacher growth. Rogers (2002) cynically describes the isolation of teaching as ‘cells and bells’ where teachers did their own work in their own classroom. He cites the work of Fullan and Hargreaves (1992), Ruddick (1991, p.31) and Leiberman and Millar (1990) as researchers who have written about the isolation teachers have experienced in the workplace.

Johnson (1990) in her work with teachers in the United States highlights the fact that just as teachers have worked privately in their classrooms, professional learning for teachers was also a private matter. Her work exposes the frustration of teachers as they grappled with the very private process of learning and growth when she quotes a veteran high school teacher as follows; “We have grown all by ourselves in management skills, in curriculum skills, by hit, miss, trial and error- hard work” (p.250). Similarly, Darling-Hammond (1994, p.8) conveys the belief that the reinforcement of teacher isolation greatly reduces teacher learning and opportunities

for sharing knowledge. Slowly the wheels of understanding are turning and the growing realisation that in order to have more quality teachers, 'quality' opportunities for teacher learning must be developed and resourced.

Before elaborating on the changing view of teaching, it will be useful to look at why attempts at reforming teaching and learning have failed.

2.3.2 *Why many changes have failed*

Teachers are the human face of the educational process. The tension that teachers feel in acknowledging the political initiatives and at the same time being true to the students needs is enormous, especially when the widely held social ideals of working peaceably and constructively with others in families, neighbourhoods and schools are valued as well as the development of social and interpersonal skills (Skilbek, 2002). Perhaps now is the time to question rationalist imperatives to focus on the needs of the people who learn and interact in the learning schools of the future.

It is widely acknowledged that most attempts at educational reform fail. Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) believe that there are many reasons for these failures including;

- The problems themselves are complex and not easily amenable to solutions given the resources at hand
- Time lines are unrealistic because policy makers want immediate results
- There are tendencies toward faddism and quick fix solutions
- Follow through support systems for implementing policy initiatives are not provided (p.13)

Similarly, Banathy (1991, cited in Hoban, 2002, p.3) suggested five reasons why most attempts at educational reforms have produced disappointing results:

- The piecemeal or bits and pieces approach to change.
- The failure to integrate new ideas from research.
- The fragmented discipline-by-discipline study of education.
- Reductionist approaches.
- Thinking within existing boundaries.

Banathy states that;

these reasons are symptomatic of a mechanistic paradigm for educational change – characterized by thinking about independent components of change in isolation to other influences. (cited in Hoban, 2002, p.3)

Hopkins (2000, p.3) believes that most government interventions fail to achieve reform because they are driven by policies in which accountability and managerial change is important, and not by working with the teachers. Cohen (2002) claims that over the last five decades of school reform it's been "all about the kids". She argues that attempts at modern educational reform have failed because they "paid hardly any attention to the work of the teacher, the one critical player in the school who makes the biggest difference" (p.352). Both of these writers seem to argue that despite the cogent points made by the writers such as Fullan and Hargreaves, if the teachers are not won over in the change process, nothing much will indeed change. Hence it is in re-examining what teachers do, and indeed how we conceptualise them, which is

important, especially for policy makers, administrators and the governments who set the educational agenda.

2.3.3 The change in language used by Government

Recent developments in education have included the notion of the important role that teachers play in school effectiveness. School effectiveness has been on the education agenda for the last thirty years for researchers and policy makers, but in recent times it has become a key political term.

Most research on school effectiveness has focussed on improving outcomes for students. However, Rowe (2003, cited in Meiers & Ingvarson, 2005) suggests that “The key message to be gained from educational effectiveness research is that quality teachers and their professional development do make a difference” (p.12). It is a theme that is perpetuated in the literature and is truly representative of the lived experiences of teachers.

Macbeath (1999, p.59) quotes Sir Percy Nunn who over eighty years ago, described the important role of teachers as “Ambassadors of society to the kingdom of the child”, a lofty and responsible position to which to aspire. Macbeath, claims that both learning and teaching improve when teachers have the tools and grasp the value of being learners in their own classrooms.

In contrast Levin (2001) believes that “The past twenty years has seen an enormous amount of change in education policy in the industrialized English speaking

countries” (p.1). There has been an emphasis on developing a productive culture in schools that is based on accountability. It is this that has driven educational policy about schools. Levin (2001) would argue that despite enormous efforts of governments to reform schooling, schools are not as effective as they could be.

Much more is expected of schools now, and schools and teachers are scrutinized as never before. In other words the goals to be met are always becoming more rigorous. One wonders whether schools and teachers will ever meet the governmental standards, as they are always changing. As this thesis is being written, Victorian teachers are working towards full implementation of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards coming within seven years of the full implementation of Curriculum Standards Framework II. Designed to improve learning outcomes for students, both curriculum initiatives have required vast amounts of energy and resources to be allocated to satisfying perceived deficiencies in the curriculum and school effectiveness. Just as teachers have mastered the standards of one mandated change another appears. Teachers can quite rightly ask then that if deficit arguments are evoked, where does the deficit lie if massive change is needed after only seven years?

Much of the literature about school effectiveness alludes to the atrophying of skills in American teachers as governments have gradually changed the language of curriculum. Governments have always felt that they should control curriculum. Education may be seen as the most extreme case of the trend to employ an auditing model of quality control. The same could be said of Australian schools and teachers. In Australia, like other western countries, the government has utilised the lexicon and practices of the business world in an attempt to exercise greater quality control over

schools. Increasingly schools have become subject to measures of student outcomes and comparative practices. “The common view of reform tends to assume that political or ideological analysis leads to a reform program that in turn leads to changes in practice leading to particular outcomes” (Levin, 2001, p.4). But Levin goes on to argue that regardless of the political situation advocated, there does not seem to be widespread concern that systems of mass schooling are not as effective as they should or could be. As long as policy makers continue to persuade Governments that educational reform is about efficiency rather than individuals, the ‘Factory Model’ will continue to be a reality for many schools and teachers. Kincheloe (2002) warns us of the effects of globalisation and the mediocrity that has crept into education as a result of the new economic order;

Education in this globalised age of mediocrity devolves into an effort to make students competitive in the cold new economic order that faces them. The call for high educational standards in a global economy is touted as new and innovative educational policy, but even a cursory survey of twentieth century educational history will reveal numerous times where ‘innovations’ were instituted by reformers only to watch them fail. When educational purpose is defined as the process of training, the types of individuals, business and industry say they need, educational quality declines. (p.3)

2.3.4 *Teacher training*

Historically, teaching has been a profession that governments and systems have attempted to reform with very little consultation with practising teachers. Initiatives were handed down to schools to ‘fix’ perceived problems, and teachers were the portals by which these initiatives were delivered. This mechanistic view of teaching, where fragmented initiatives are introduced and passed on, has been the ‘modus operandi’ for schools since the seventeenth century for teacher development and in-service training. Educational administrators often used a top-down or workshops model to introduce the innovations to teachers as a one-step approach for teacher learning.

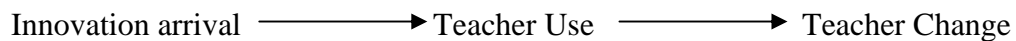


Figure 2.1: A one step linear approach for educational change (Hoban, 2002, p.13)

However with the more direct control now being exerted by governments as noted in the last sub- section, teacher training or education is also perceived differently and needs to be examined.

The time has rarely been more opportunistic or more pressing to think more deeply about what professional learning, professional knowledge and professional status should look like for the new generation of teachers. (Hoban, 2002, p.1)

Traditionally ‘training’ has been a term used to refer to the activities in which teachers participate to enable them to acquire skills which systems and school leadership teams have deemed necessary. The term training has connotations of deficiency and ‘top down’ driven agendas. It implies little or no choice and disregards the individual needs of teachers. Harrison (1995) refers to training as the process for transferring to the employee the knowledge and skills that the organisation has decided that the employee needs to know. He refers to the “training food chain” when he describes how teachers are subject to training initiatives as determined by the system or school administration then expected to ‘deliver’ the information to students. The final step in the chain is testing the students to evaluate the amount of knowledge they have absorbed.

Johnson (1990) suggests that in-service training is often haphazard and few sessions address teacher concerns about their teaching. This is based on the views of teachers that she worked with in the United States in the 1990s. She concludes that;

Teachers argued that in-service training failed to meet their needs not only because it was intermittent, poorly organised, and superficial or tangential, but also because it was organised by administrators and tolerated passively by teachers. (p.258)

Hence, Johnson suggests that generally teachers express frustration at attending in-service training that fails to meet their needs and would value time to work with colleagues or work on other relevant interests.

Training has also been the traditional term used to describe the activities that teachers have been involved in to enhance outcomes for students. Unfortunately this view continues to underpin some contemporary attempts at reform. Where teachers are to be trained and developed, they are not viewed as people who can and should develop themselves (Clarke, 1995). In summary, these authors suggest that imposed professional training has limited success in bringing about change in the individual and/ or the school.

In-service training continues to be a focus of attempts at reform in Australia. Fortunately, members of the profession who have been pro-active in claiming the right for teachers to be active participants in their own development have paved the way for a multitude of learning opportunities to occur. This has enabled teachers to embrace the challenge of being educators in an era that is growing and changing constantly. Hence for many the term training is being dropped and terms such as professional development and professional learning are now being used.

2.3.5 Professional learning vs. professional development

Professional development and more recently professional learning are the two terms that are most commonly used to describe the learning that is undertaken by teachers within the workplace and outside. This sub section defines each of these terms and presents the case for referring to teacher learning as professional learning rather than the traditional term of professional development or PD.

In 1996, a consultative paper from the Australian Curriculum Studies Association was launched by the then Federal Minister of Education, Dr David Kemp. In this paper it was recognised that professional development should be ‘reconceptualised’ and commended the work of Aspland, Elliott & Macpherson, (1995, p.9). Aspland’s model of professional development incorporated the notion of teachers being in the centre, and they were dynamic and interactive people. The model suggested professional development should be embedded in the professional practice of teachers and oriented to the active construction of professional knowledge. This was a refreshing but necessary view of teacher learning as schools reposition themselves as learning schools in a rapidly changing world. It is a conceptualization quite different to the term of teacher training.

However, throughout this thesis I have chosen to refer to all activities, both those officially recognised and more general purpose activities undertaken by teachers by another term, ‘professional learning’. I have chosen to use the term professional learning and not the more commonly (now used) professional development (or PD). There is a growing awareness that teachers cannot be treated as a homogenous mass. Professional learning provides a better starting point for discussions about ways to improve teacher effectiveness, as professional learning can occur in many ways that are often not thought of as professional development. In summarising the case for professional learning as opposed to professional development, Cole (2005, p.5) suggests, “As the concept of ‘professional learning’ carries little baggage, and helps to broaden thinking about teacher development, it should replace professional development as the descriptor of teacher learning opportunities.” Hence, this term

may not only indicate a paradigmatic shift from what is implied by teacher training, it goes beyond even what professional development implies.

Cole presents a table (see Table 2.4) that advocates the movement from professional development to professional learning. He believes that this approach will improve a school’s professional learning culture. It describes a movement towards more workplace centred learning and greater collegiality, two hallmarks of professional learning which Darling-Hammond (1994, p.8) supports with her statement about “colleagueship and the development of shared standards of practice as being essential to professions”. Cole does provide a rider for his model by stating that leadership teams will need to implement and sustain such an agenda.

Table 2.4: Shifting the balance from professional development towards professional learning (Cole, 2005, p.5)

Less of This	More of This
External workshops	Workplace-based professional learning
Reliance on Experts	Staff sharing experiences and expertise
Separation of training from work	Integration of teacher work and learning
Professional learning as an isolated event	Professional learning as routine practice
Individual pursuit of professional learning	Group pursuit of professional learning

Professional learning implies a broad, inclusive teacher centred approach to learning as opposed to professional development, which can still imply a deficit attitude to improving teachers as did teacher training. It also suggests that teachers have somehow failed to fulfil the externally required outcomes and that intervention is

required to ensure that they are ‘up to scratch’ (Hargreaves, 1994). Professional development approaches to teacher learning fail to recognize the personal aspect that overlaps the professional aspect. They also fail to acknowledge the research, such as that of Beare (2001) that informs us that compared to other professions, teachers are well credentialed and indeed are ‘up to scratch’. Beare’s defence of teacher learning refers to the fact that a large number of teachers are continually engaged in professional learning that earns them academic recognition, apart from the non-credentialed programs that most teachers engage in at least two or three times per year.

Professional development can be viewed as assuming that development can only take place in a setting and at a time contrived by the program developers. Hence educationists such as Cumming (1997) believe that determining the most appropriate professional development is problematic. He refers to the issues connected with professional development including the “disconnectedness” of teachers from professional development programs that are imposed on staff and that are overly concerned with process. In contrast professional learning allows for teachers to take control. It allows for learning to take place in a multitude of settings and in multimodal ways. It also acknowledges the increasing active involvement by teachers in determining the nature and timing of their own learning.

It will become a theme throughout this thesis that teacher professional learning is imperative if schools and systems are to be prepared to address the challenges of teaching in the twenty first century. The following observation is worth noting:

The desires of today's reformers for schools that educate all students to higher levels of performance, accommodate and celebrate student diversity, and ensure that all students learn to create, analyse, produce, adapt and invent their own ideas and products, require such "infinitely skilled" teachers: teachers who understand learning as well as teaching, who can address student needs as well as the demands of their disciplines, and who can create bridges between student's experiences and curriculum goals. (Darling-Hammond, 2004, p.5)

The shift from being conveyers of all knowledge to being facilitators or navigators for students as they develop deeper insights and understanding in their learning requires a new set of skills that are perhaps best acquired in the workplace, along side colleagues.

2.3.6 Reconceptualising the role of the teacher

The literature suggests that teaching now is a complex, difficult and time consuming occupation. It is therefore not surprising that a national survey of teachers conducted by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, revealed that:

- 72% of teachers have considered resigning due to work load pressures
- 91% of teachers claim not to have enough time or energy for Professional Development
- More than ¼ of all teachers work more than 50 hours a week

- Approximately ½ the teachers interviewed do not have enough time to spend with their own children
- 94% claim that they have too much administrative work, leaving not enough time directly related to teaching.
- 93% say that they are unable to give students enough individual attention

(The Practicing Administrator, 2001, p. 2)

In this context it is becoming apparent that the teaching profession has been thrown into turmoil as it attempts to reconceptualise its role in an age where change is rapid and unpredictable. Kiechel (1994) argues that the model of teaching as it exists now will disappear because it fails to meet the changing nature of learning. There has been a growing awareness amongst educationists that learning is a complex process. Taack Lanier in her foreword in 'Professional Development Schools, schools for developing a profession' (p. x, cited in Darling-Hammond, 1994) acknowledges that;

The growing importance of learning in our society, and the growing complexity of teaching and schooling call for greater attention to definitions of professional expertise. Further, interventions into the hands and hearts of young students needs better oversight.

There is a growing acceptance that knowledge is doubling every five years (Kinder & Wakefield, Wilkin, 1996). This is an issue that the ageing teaching workforce has to deal with. It is one of a number of issues that Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) use to show that the work of a teacher is far more complex than is normally thought. They believe that teaching requires a more sophisticated set of skills and understandings than ever before. A far more practical issue is that many of the staff who are currently in schools obtained their initial teaching qualifications over two decades ago;

It's clear that the 'bulge' of teachers who were recruited in the 1960's and 1970's are now close to retirement ... On average, twenty five percent of primary teachers and thirty percent of secondary teachers (in the twenty-five countries that took part in the OECD study) are over fifty years old. (OECD, 2005, pp. 20-21)

That was a time before computers were in schools, or even electronic photocopiers. Many teachers have become disenchanted with the predicament that they find themselves in on a daily basis, namely less and less time to get down to the actual job of teaching students and instead increasing amounts of bureaucracy. There exists for some a sense of loss and unease about being able to fulfil their primary role as teachers.

Hence there is a general feeling that the teaching profession is overwhelmed by the immensity of the task to reposition itself for the 21st Century. For example Hopkins (2000, p.3) argues that a system that is predisposed towards short term, quick fix remedies operates within a bleak context. However within this context there are opportunities.

As leadership teams and school systems accept that the role of the teacher is changing, then it is pertinent that changes in professional practice are advocated (Cole, 2005), and the importance of teacher collegiality is emphasised. Before examining the opportunities within schools that are available within the present context, it will be useful to briefly review three different organisations that operate at a systems level to show some of the specific influences that impact on schools.

2.4 Systems, Teachers and Learning

Having outlined briefly in earlier sections of this chapter the traditional and changing nature of schools, teaching and teacher learning and teaching, this section addresses three different types of bodies that operate at the systems level and the impact they have on teacher learning.

School systems are in many instances failing to recognise the dire consequences that could occur if they do not re-examine the role that they need to adopt if they are to meet the changing needs of teaching in the twentieth century. It is generally accepted that the evolving society is far more complicated than previously experienced by those who are the decision makers (Aasen, 1995, cited in Zjada, 1995). Fullan (2004, p.61) identifies a number of possibilities for the top education decision makers in governments:

In the absence of state-level policies and resources, it isn't possible to achieve large-scale, sustainable reform. On the other hand, imposing order and control from the centre does not work either. The state's role is to attempt to balance and integrate 'pressure and support', or if you like, 'accountability and capacity building'.

In doing this Fullan is again suggesting that change and identifying roles of the multiple players is crucial in today's society. But Beare (2001, p.30) notes often the ways in which systems operate with

Sweeping blanket reforms, running to tight timelines that are insensitive to the wider aspects of teacher's life and career and that does not address the teacher as a person, are unlikely to be successful.

In Victoria, the context of the study described later in this thesis, it is useful to note what three different system - level groups have commented on and how they contribute to teacher learning. This analysis will capture something of the way the education system impacts on teacher learning.

The Victorian Independent Education Union (VIEU) and The Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT) are two system- level organisations who are working towards addressing change for teachers in Victoria because they are a vital part in the attempt to balance and integrate, pressure and support , or if you like, accountability and capacity building.

The third organisation dealt with in this section is the Ballarat Catholic Education Office. The VIEU and VIT are state wide groups. The Ballarat Catholic Education Office is a regional organisation within which the schools in the later study are accountable to, to some degree.

2.4.1 Victorian Independent Education Union (VIEU)

The Victorian Independent Education Union was formed in 1994 as the result of an incorporation of union branches from Independent and Catholic schools ”but the

history of VIEU can be traced back over seventy five years prior to that” (VIEU 2003.pp.1-3).

The VIEU has developed guidelines for the professional development of teachers in schools. In particular the VIEU notes two needs of staff: firstly, the need for teachers to discuss their teaching and learning, and their intentions for teaching in the following year. Secondly, their professional development needs. This paper refers to “Five Dimensions” of teaching and professional development standards. The fifth dimension recognizes the value and importance of developing teachers in order to have a teaching profession that is up to date in all facets of education. It also acknowledges that teachers need to feel valued in this on-going process.

The VIEU Professional Development Checklist was developed to assist teachers when considering the different forms that professional learning can take. The checklist clustered ideas under the headings of improving personal and interpersonal skills, content knowledge, pedagogy, administration, leadership, and career planning. It suggested ways that teachers might access professional learning in these areas including: enrolling in post graduate courses, attendance at conferences/seminars, completing their own professional reading, developing collegial PD, participating in industry placement / volunteering / other work, and teacher exchange.

Whilst these ideas for professional learning were designed to assist teachers prepare for their Annual Review Meeting within their own school, it is affirming to read that VIEU in conjunction with teacher groups such as the Victorian Catholic Schools Association (VCSA) value the need for professional learning. However the issues

canvassed in this documentation will only be of relevance where teachers are free to explore the professional learning options that best meet their needs at their stage of development as people who have both professional and personal lives. There is little in this and other documentation from VIEU that overtly suggests support for these twin issues.

2.4.2 The Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT)

In 2001 the Victorian Government explored the notion of a professional body of teachers through the establishment of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). An Act of Parliament established the VIT in the same year. It was through the establishment of this organization that teachers hoped they would be given the recognition that they deserve.

In 2003, the VIT published its 'Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration' in which the characteristics of effective teaching were described and the essential components for teacher's knowledge and practice were established by teachers (VIT, 2003). The domain of Professional Engagement is of interest and in particular the following;

- Teachers work collaboratively with other members of the profession and engage in discussion of contemporary issues and research to improve professional practice.
- Teachers identify their own professional learning needs and plan for and engage in professional development activities.

It would appear that the VIT, like the VIEU, has a view of professional learning that is very different from the traditional teacher training model. These standards echo many of the principles in the literature. However, although noting the need for individual teachers to identify their professional learning needs, the VIT document fails to acknowledge the importance of the differential impact that experience and teachers' life stages have on what is appropriate professional learning and the form this could take. There is little acknowledgement that teachers have differing professional needs as they move through their career and a 'one size fits all' approach has been implemented. There are also a great number of teachers who are very critical of the VIT and its perceived lack of understanding of the complex work of the teacher in the twenty first century. Teachers are feeling as though they are 'conduits for policies' (Darling-Hammond, 1994, p.4). Teachers do not believe that they need more procedures to follow but more support to meet the demands of ever increasing change.

2.4.3 Ballarat Catholic Education Office

The Ballarat Catholic Education Office services 70 schools in the Ballarat Diocese, which covers one third of Victoria. It is within this region that the following study is set. The Ballarat Catholic Education Office Strategic Plan (2002-2004) sets out seven priority areas including, priority three: Staff Development (pp.3-15).

The opening statement on Staff Development highlights the promotion of professional, spiritual and personal development of teachers. The priority statement is supported by eight clearly defined goals that are intended to support professional

learning for teachers across the Diocese as they work with young people in the schools:

- Develop a comprehensive integrated plan that identifies and supports the professional needs of all staff.
- Implement procedures and programs to ensure genuine affirmation and support to staff.
- Encourage staff commitment to the on-going enhancement of their understanding of and involvement in the ministry of catholic education [sic]
- Review professional development and in-service programs and redesign them where necessary so that they support and promote Diocesan goals.
- Work collaboratively with Australian Catholic University staff to ensure broader, more integrated, effective programs of pre-service and ongoing formal professional and faith development.
- Establish further appropriate links with business and industry.
- Establish accreditation of professional development and in-service programs with Australian Catholic University and other tertiary institutions, where appropriate.
- Provide professional development opportunities that will further enhance the skills of teachers in identifying and responding to the diverse needs of students. (Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, *Our Future Now*.2004, p.8)

Within the Diocese, teacher learning is encouraged and generous scholarships are available to teachers to assist with the costs of formal study. The Diocese does value teacher learning as is evident in their strategic plan. Indeed I have also been a

recipient of on-going support from the Diocese as I work towards the completion of this thesis in particular having the benefit of eight study days per year.

However, as will become apparent in the later analysis, there is some dissonance within the Ballarat CEO between its stated goals and its practice. This is particularly evident in the provision of professional development for secondary teachers as the Ballarat CEO's has a major focus on primary schools. The data collected and analysed in this thesis will partly explore this issue and hopefully clarify it to some extent.

2.5 School Based Learning: A Model for Addressing Change

This chapter has so far looked at the traditional view of teaching and school and then examined changes to both. Within the review, issues of teacher learning have also been raised. It is now time to examine more closely a particular view that may be a concept that promotes progress. This is the notion of 'school based learning'.

Professional learning is one way to ensure that the teachers of the twenty first century continue to keep abreast of the changing nature of the teaching profession. The title of this thesis 'Teacher Learning Matters: The interrelationship between the professional and personal lives of rural teachers', encapsulates the desire to represent the belief that learning is a life long and life wide process. In the Chinese language, learning literally means to practice constantly. To many people this may appear idealistic, but what should not be ignored is the obligation of all citizens to educate themselves so that they can better contribute to the community. The growing understanding that schools are places who promote learning for all people who are involved in that organisation, has provided a new lens through which teachers can view their role. In

this section I will concentrate particularly on the notion of ‘teachers as learners’, within their school setting.

There are tendencies in our society toward faddism and quick fix solutions. Evidence cited by Bellanco (1996) suggests that regardless of one’s starting point, beginning teachers will only improve if continuous learning is given a priority and goes far beyond and deeper than fads in education. Clearly teacher learning for beginning and experienced teachers are issues that are crucial in a school, but the distinctions between what is needed for these different teachers is under explored.

Lewis (2002) suggests that teacher professional growth has been limited by the fact that traditionally teachers have not been expected to direct their own professional learning. She cites the work of Linda Darling-Hammond who believes that teachers were prepared for, inducted into and work in a factory model system that had a hierarchical structure. This impeded teachers from taking responsibility for their own growth. Lewis asks a very relevant question in the context of recent attempts by governments to introduce new curricula:

I wonder what would happen if doctors, lawyers, or engineers waited for someone on high to tell them that they need to keep their skills and knowledge updated, then dictated the form and substance of the learning these professionals would need, and then never bother to see whether the professional development had any effect. (2002, p.489)

Fullan summed up the situation, with a sense of exasperation when he wrote “Nothing has promised so much and has been so frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that led to no significant change in practice when the teachers returned to their classrooms” (Fullan, 1991, p. 315). Lewis (2002) also cites the work of Stephanie Hirsh, Deputy Executive Director of the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) who estimates that in the U.S.A. only 10% of what teachers learn in traditional professional development activities is used in the classroom. Likewise Hoban (2002, p.2) notes in his research:

Rarely does a one-off workshop promote change, as it does not take into account the existing complexity of a classroom context or have a framework to support teacher learning through the non-linear process of change.

Clearly there are some hurdles for the teaching profession to leap in terms of viewing adult learning in the workplace as being of importance. In the United States of America Darling-Hammond informs us that even in times of intense interest in reform, neither state or federal governments nor colleges or schools seem inclined to spend much money on the education of the teacher (1994, p.4).

The Fourth International Conference on Adult Education in Paris recognised a concern that a community’s experience in providing the environment in which the right of the learner is apparent and valued has to be acknowledged (1985). This also can be true of a school where the rights of all members of the community to learn needs to be acknowledged and valued. The need to value teachers and their work is

paramount to the success of an effective school. The importance of having a highly knowledgeable teaching force that is actively involved in their own learning is clearly important to the life of a school.

Learning runs through a teaching career. It takes place every day, formally and informally, through a wide range of learning experiences, deepening and revitalising teacher's skills, abilities values and knowledge.
(General Teaching Council for England, 2003, p.2)

Such acknowledgement is central to the success of a successful school and should not be overlooked by leaders. Taack Lanier supports this view when she writes about the new approaches to teaching and learning;

Call for changes in school organisation and operation, closer ties with parents and community, and changes in school culture that require a more unified and stronger profession. (p.x cited in Darling-Hammond,1994)

The time has arrived for school communities to be re-evaluating the roles that teachers play in the success of the school.

2.5.1 Learning in a school community

Many schools have embraced the notion that there is a collective wisdom and skill level within their teachers. However there is also the desire for schools to keep improving the teaching and learning that occurs for all. There is often tension in

schools as they need teachers to be open and available for professional learning opportunities which will contribute to improved outcomes. But they also want teachers to take responsibility for their own continued growth.

Professional learning does however need to be planned in conjunction with the exploration of different structures of schools, and most importantly, the reconceptualisation of the notion that the personal dimension of a teacher's life cannot be ignored. This idea is explored in greater detail in the section that examines the factors that hinder professional learning for teachers later in this chapter.

Evidence in the research literature does reflect the belief that the overwhelming majority of teachers wish to develop and strengthen their practice as classroom teachers (Sturman, 2005). In her study that took place over a two year period, Sturman found that 80% of the teachers who were surveyed did not feel that their professional learning needs were met in full. Her study also emphasizes the desire of teachers to share their knowledge and expertise in general. The biggest impediment to this was the lack of dedicated time provided by their school for such a process. Sturman's conclusions did not suggest that the recognition of the importance of learning in the workplace, called for many years earlier, has been realised. This entails creating a work environment, which is supportive and not restrictive of professional learning, where there is continuous improvement and the opportunity to teach, and teach well, rather than merely survive (Hargreaves et al, 1991, cited in Kee & Luan, 1996).

Rosenholtz (1989, cited in Retallick, (1993. p.3) notes that “The significance of the notion of workplace learning for teacher’s work is profound. The idea of the school as an ‘educative workplace’ for teachers (as well as students) represents a considerable advance on thinking about teacher’s work”. It is not the role of this thesis to explore the concept of Workplace Learning in great detail; however, it does require some consideration. Meier and Ingvarson (2005) refer to the trend for teacher learning to be promoted in the workplace, but link this to increased teacher effectiveness for student learning rather than an emphasis on the central role in school development that teachers have when they are actively involved in their own learning. It is the latter which is the concern of this thesis.

Scribner’s (1999) study examines the relationship between teacher work and professional learning. His research suggests that workplace factors such as school culture and structure can influence teachers’ sense of efficacy and professional motivation and claims that in spite of calls for new approaches to teachers’ professional learning, our knowledge of the influence of work context on teacher learning is limited. Scribner cites Lieberman (1995) who believes that there is a need to “deepen our understanding of how teachers acquire the experience that encourages them to grow and change in the context of school reform” (p.592).

School based professional learning as promoted by educational researchers such as Johnson (1990) confirm that it can be a source of stress as time to meet with other staff is limited and rushed. Meetings are generally held over a ‘cuppa’ or a sandwich, and then teachers return to their classroom to work in isolation from each other. The follow up, the time to synthesise and apply, is not possible as teachers often feel

pressured to follow external pressures. The seeds are sown but not germinated; the fallow time is unproductive as it is rarely followed by fertilisation and spreading of the offspring of good ideas. It is only when teachers share the valuable work that they do with others and work together for the advancement of the profession that they can claim that they are part of a school.

Plato (3,000 years ago) in his dialogue, *Dia Viou Paedaeia* emphasised the obligation of all citizens to educate themselves so that they can better contribute to the community. It is imperative to the life of each school to which teachers belong that they are encouraged to grow continually through participating in opportunities to learn whether the opportunities are formal or informal. Aitkin (1993) views learning as a process that leads to change that enables the learner to perceive differently, adapt, perform, create and recreate. Just like students, adult learners do learn best when they start with their own concerns. This adds considerable weight to the argument that teachers' personal concerns often underpin their interest in professional growth.

Sergiovanni and Moore (1989) believe that it is important to create and nurture the conditions for great teaching and therefore stimulate great learning. This line of argument also adds weight to the belief that investment in a school organisation's most valuable assets, teachers, is imperative for its own life. Barth (1990, p.50) presents an excellent point when he suggests that when teachers stop growing, so do their students.

Interestingly, there is awareness amongst educationists that there are many teachers who are passive about their involvement in professional learning for a wide variety of

reasons. Johnson's study (1990, p.257) revealed that "although many teachers criticized the structure and content of in-service training, few were active in seeking to reform it". Perhaps part of this passivity is a result of not paying enough attention to principles that guide 'adult learning'.

2.5.2 Teachers as adult learners

Teacher learning matters. It matters that it does occur in the workplace as part of a wider professional learning program, where teachers can readily access opportunities to develop skills and interact with colleagues. However it is my experience often professional learning is unplanned for teachers. Often so called professional learning deals with changes in structures and practice in some aspect of the school and is imposed upon the teachers. Teachers are frowned upon if they do not participate and can be labelled as dissenters. Whilst many professional learning programs are deemed necessary by the decision makers in school settings in order to keep the school functioning, unless teachers are convinced that the sessions are going to be of benefit to them, they will fail to commit their emotional energy to them. They have to believe that there is a benefit to them by participating in the professional learning program. They are adult learners. They have to feel motivated and valued as well as valuing the experiences offered to them. Such teachers also make distinctions between learning about new management issues within their schools, and learning that impacts on their own personal professional development. Although both are seen as important, when the former eclipses the latter, teachers lose interest.

Within a school that conceptualises itself as a school, the learners as groups are different. The students are normally children or adolescents. The teachers are adults. This age difference is an important distinction when it comes to learning. At this point it is useful to establish the difference between “andragogy” which refers to adult learning and “pedagogy” which normally refers to the teaching of children. Andragogy is underpinned by an emphasis on self direction, transformation and experience, and it is these aspects which will now be explored.

Andragogy came into use in the mid sixties in acknowledgement of the belief that there is a process of self directed inquiry as distinct from pedagogy, which Knowles noted came from the Greek for leading children and youth. It is interesting to note that in the world of the ancient Greeks, the pedagogue was usually the slave of the teacher who beat unwilling students. Knowles (1998, p.64 -69) argued that:

- Adults have a need to know why they should learn something.
- Adults have a need to be self – directing and decide for themselves what they want to learn.
- Adults have a far greater volume and different quality of experiences than young people so that connecting learning experiences can make the learning experience more meaningful and assist the participant to acquire new knowledge.
- Adults become ready to learn when they experience a life situation where they need to know.
- Adults enter into the learning process with a task centered orientation to learning.
- Adults are motivated to learn by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Similarly Whitaker (1993, p.53) believes that beneficial adult learning can only take place where the following ten attributes are found in the content:

- voluntary participation
- mutual respect
- collaboration
- action and reflection
- organisational setting
- choice and change
- social, economic and cultural factors
- motivation
- critical thinking
- self-direction

These ten attributes are inclusive of the motivational factors that many teaching professionals value in an effective school.

There are other models that focus on adult learning. For example, Cross (1981) developed the CAL model of adult learning in response to her analysis of lifelong learning programs. This integrative model based on the adult learning work of Knowles (1970) and experiential learning of Rogers' (1969) psychology, consists of two variables, personal and situational, and these in turn have been sub variables (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: CAL model of adult learning (Cross, 1981, p.174)

Personal Characteristics	Situational Characteristics
Ageing Life Phases Developmental stages Marriage Job changes Retirement	Part – time vs. full time learning Voluntary vs. compulsory learning

Finally Stoll and Fink (1996) refer to the work of Moore (1988) who proposes that teacher learning opportunities should include adult learning principles such as;

- Be collaborative, involving participants in diagnosing needs, decision making, designing, implementing and evaluating staff development.
- Help learners achieve self-direction and be able to define their own objectives, using professional content to meet their needs.
- Capitalise on learner’s experiences, using them as a starting point.
- Foster participation, with learners helping to decide learning methods and structure the learning environment.
- Cultivate critical, reflective thinking, helping learners examine cultural and organisational assumptions as well as their own practice.
- Foster learning for action, with opportunities for decision making and strategy planning.
- Encourage problem posing and problem solving, as closely connected as possible to learners’ real problems.

- Have a climate of respect, with interchangeable facilitators and participants, opportunities for small group interaction, comfortable furniture and, we would add, food!!

It is evident that there are sets of guiding principles that permeate the literature in regard to adult learning. Deliverers of professional learning who ignore these guiding principles of adult learning, epitomized by the four models presented above, do so at their own peril. Adult learners need to know why they are participating in a professional learning activity, and there has to be a purpose that has to be clearly articulated prior to the session. Thus a collaborative approach to the planning, implementation and evaluation of the professional learning session is important to ensure that adult learner sees the purpose and the benefit.

Presenters should respect and draw upon the experiences of the adult learner. Unlike school students, adult learners have had a wider world experience. Adult learners are more likely to be active participants when they are acknowledged as having experience and their experiences are acknowledged and built upon. Finally a climate that is conducive to adult interaction is important, where the adult learner is invited to participate by the very nature of the physical set up of the room and an atmosphere of acceptance.

Interestingly, although all the above four models emphasise that the experience of adults needs to be accommodated, more cater for or discuss how the length of the experience may be important. Both Cross (1981) and Knowles (1998) attach

importance by acknowledging the personal lives of the adult learner. The importance of this will be returned to in a later section of this chapter.

What becomes clear in considering the notion of adult learning is the need for school structures and processes to change to allow for the acknowledgement of the teacher as an adult learner. In the United States we have witnessed the emergence of Professional Development Schools (PDS) with the aim of providing:

New models of teacher education and development by serving as exemplars of practice, builders of knowledge, and vehicles for communicating professional understandings among teacher educators, novices, and veteran teachers. (Darling-Hammond, 2004, p.1)

Whilst this concept has yet to be adopted in Australia, it is encouraging to note that many schools are well geared for assisting teacher learning in Victoria.

2.5.3 Collegiality and professional learning

One of the critical factors in the models cited in the last sub section was the interplay between self-direction of an individual, and the context of learning with colleagues. In the past, teachers in secondary schools have often seen themselves as individuals, and individual learners. However, now teachers can no longer continue to work on their own. Secret teacher business that happened behind closed doors in the privacy of the classroom is a practice that is no longer relevant in the 'Knowledge' era. Schools that focus on the social relationships between cooperative adults share a common purpose

and values and it is only when there is a sense of shared community that the capacity for school improvement occurs. Kee and Luan (1996), refer to the study undertaken by Little (1982), who concluded that in successful schools, teachers valued collegiality, participated in collegial activities and were focused on continuous improvement. Research undertaken in Chicago by the American Institutes for Research reported that wherever teachers had created strong professional communities, not only have students reaped the benefits of stronger academic improvement, but that professionalism became a personal goal for the teachers and greater collegiality of the teachers was experienced (Lewis, 2002). Hence it seems that the notion of collegiality among teachers is important for schools as institutions and learners, but just as important for teachers' well being and their professional learning.

Rogers (2002) stresses the importance of collegial support and the positive effect that collegial support can have on well-being and professional esteem, as well as professional coping. He posits the argument that there are many natural and transitional demands made on the coping and support cultures in a school including;

- One's personal needs as they interface with one's professional role
- The demands of one's individual role as a teacher
- The daily demands of the school setting

Zemelman, Daniels and Hyde (1998) acknowledge that teachers need regular time together to talk, encourage each other, compare ideas, trouble- shoot when things do not go as expected, and organise cooperation between classrooms. Unlike other professions, where planning meetings, "staffing", and conferences are regular

activities, teaching as it is organized in this country has shockingly little room for professional conversation. And since secondary teachers' work is carried out almost entirely out of contact with colleagues, there's little daily time for informal exchange. Parents and community members who at their workplaces spend many hours in cooperative tasks in department and committee meetings, do not realize how little of this connectedness teachers enjoy and require, but rarely experience.

Butt and Retallick (2002) explored the theme of the work lives of teachers. Their study involved twenty-nine teachers of which 12 worked in a year 7-12 setting. They claim, "It has become clear that school- based collegial relations are extremely important and affect many educational phenomena. Secondly, it identifies and illustrates the link between professional wellbeing and professional learning- that a focus on one necessarily affects and involves a focus on the other" (p.19).

However, teachers work in communities that are bureaucratic. There are rules, procedures and policies that have to be followed. Teachers are responsible for each other whether they acknowledge it or not. Even so this does not necessarily mean there cannot be a sense of collegiality that can be built up within a school's teaching community.

Rogers (2002) acknowledges that colleague support cannot be mandated even if colleagues want support. Figure 2.1 describes the Roger's conception of the complex nature of relationships in schools.

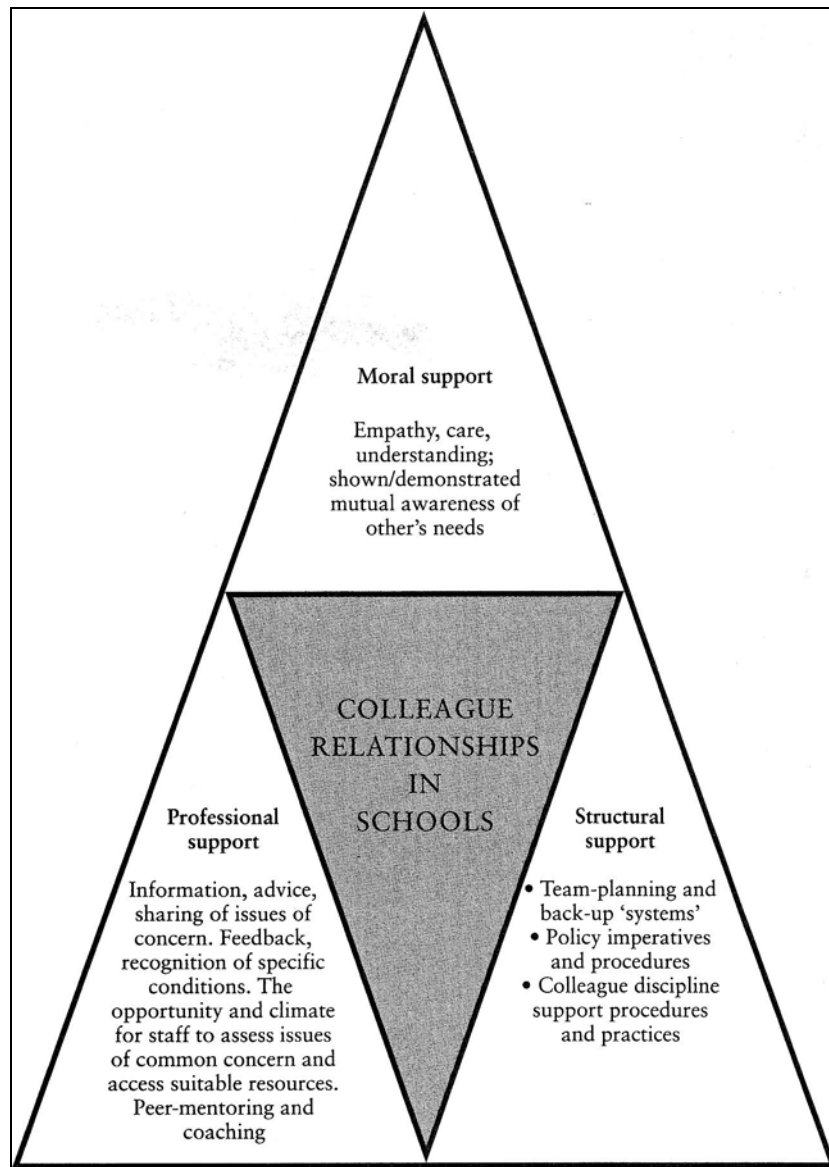


Figure 2.2: The complex nature of relationships in schools.

What Roger's diagram illustrates is that three forms of support are needed to establish collegial relationships necessary for teachers to work collegially in order to be more effective. Each dimension or element demonstrates clearly the factors that can develop relationships which in turn will assist the staff to be more effective. The triangular structure represents the complex but interactive nature of the indicators.

The concern here again is the staff and the importance of collegiality for staff and the importance of active, collaborative learning. (McRae, Ainsworth, Groves, Rowland & Zbar, 2001, p23). Collegiality can also be shared with the students, parents and other members of the community. Each and every person in a school must feel accepted and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The structural support element shown in Figure 2.1 is seen as crucial in this model for an effective school. Within schools that see themselves as learning communities, a strong leadership team to support the learning is needed, so the necessary tools and environment for learning to be exciting and enjoyable can be developed. School based learning for teachers that embraces principles of adult learning, and promotes the collegiality between teachers, calls for new directions from school leaders. The next sub section amplifies this notion.

2.5.4 Leadership responses to work place learning

The literature about work place learning also alludes to the importance of leaders in schools. Butt and Retallick (2002) refers to the work of Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Beresford (2000) as well as Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) to support their belief that the focus of recent research in the area of workplace learning for teachers has shifted to the leadership behaviour of school principals. They assert that there is a need for a positive administrator – teacher relationship if teacher growth and development is to be fostered.

Cole (2005, p.5) notes that school leaders need to assist teachers to better appreciate that the best place for authentic teacher learning is usually the classroom and school.

He cites the work of Hawley and Valli (2000) who suggest that the optimal workplace is one in which learning arises from and feeds back into work experience, and hence learning is considered to be part of work. If administrators rather than teachers shape the opportunities for learning and growth in schools, as Johnson (1990) believes should happen, then they as leaders have an immense responsibility to be aware of the needs of the staff both professionally and personally. They have the responsibility of setting up a culture of learning for all the humans in their organisation, including the teachers and not only the students, and acknowledging that learning is life long.

2.6 Summary

This chapter opened with the presentation of the three research questions;

- How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?
- How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?
- How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

The journey through the literature established a diverse range of ideas. A number of studies indicated that there were many factors to improving teaching and learning, and whilst teaching was afforded a rating of importance, very little mention was made of how teachers' personal learning can contribute to the professionalism of teachers as well as the effectiveness of school improvement. Early models of teacher in-service revealed attitudes and values that the role of teacher was essentially a conduit in a process whereby instruction was given to teachers on the latest initiative devised by

administrators at a systems level, and they were then expected to instruct the students in this new way. The lack of detailed attention to the personal concerns of teachers thus became one theme that I felt important to follow up in the research.

Very little of the literature on teacher learning discussed the teacher as an individual with differing personal and professional needs throughout their careers. This aspect of teaching was one that had begun my curiosity as a professional who has juggled motherhood and a career as well as observing colleagues as a senior member of staff. The question of how teachers balance the need to grow professionally with their personal growth remains largely unanswered in the literature. Although some authors made passing reference to the need to take in to account the personal life stages of teachers, only one model was found that directly and explicitly addressed this issue. There appears to be a reluctance to delve into this area in the literature. This may be due to the economic, market driven environment teachers have become subject to where accountability in terms of both financial and student results are the key foci. It appears that data on teachers' lives simply does not fit in with existing research paradigms (Goodson, 1996). How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future when there appears to be disinclination towards the lived experiences of teachers?

The current literature supported the notion that teachers do make a difference to the life of schools, but it suggested this was optimal when they are active participants in the planning of their own learning. Whilst, many schools and systems are aware of the need to provide quality learning opportunities for teachers, there are many archaic

structures, both organisational and cultural, that currently prevent major changes to occur. These structures are expressed as concerns for teachers as they attempt to take control of their professional lives.

The advent of research into schools that see themselves as learning communities has drawn attention to the importance of the need for all members of a school to be actively learning all of their lives. In this chapter I have avoided using the term 'learning communities' when referring to the three schools in which this study is set. It is quite conceivable that the new discussion in later chapters could be about how these individual schools could become learning communities.

Adult learning is now considered by many educationists as very important and there have been changes in the provision of adult learning opportunities for teachers internally and externally. Thus this emerged as another theme to explore in the research for the thesis. The literature on teacher learning in learning environments is primarily concerned with developing teachers' skills and knowledge to enable them to be more effective teachers of students. In order to be more effective, teachers need to be encouraged to be active in their own learning to be able to contribute to the whole community including colleagues.

Thus in considering this review of the literature, four themes seem emerge that are useful in structuring the study described in the next chapter. These themes are shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Themes emerging from literature

Teacher and school community	How the teacher sees their role in the school community
Teachers' professional lives	The concerns teachers have in carrying out their professional role
Teachers' personal lives	Their lived experiences outside of the school community
Teachers' and the broader system	How the teacher sees their role in wider educational community

This review of the literature provides a broad understanding that teacher learning does matter to teachers and the life of a school community. However within this review there was nothing that explicitly addressed the professional learning needs of rural teachers. Although there was literature that noted that teachers move through stages in their professional lives as they gained experience, this issue did not impact at all on the suggestions of what were important factors for good professional learning. There was even less literature that acknowledged, let alone dealt with, teacher's private life stages and any impact these have on their ongoing professional learning. These three issues, with the four themes noted above, give the context for the study I will outline in Chapter Four.

Chapter Three

Methodology Chapter

3.1 Introduction

Increasingly, educational research has employed qualitative methods in the search for data to inform practice. Educationalists have looked to the work in the social sciences where the “story” is important. Burns (1990, p.10) claimed that qualitative research has encouraged educators to realise that there are multiple realities and that a single reality should never be taken for granted in establishing socially constructed meanings. For this study the stories of the teachers in the three rural secondary schools were at the heart of the matter under consideration. Hence these methods were turned to. But before elaborating on the methods used in detail, they need to be situated within the bigger framework.

3.2 Conceptual Design

There are different aspects of the methodological framework to be considered (see Table 3.1). The paradigm of choice recognizes that different methods are appropriate for different situations (Patton, 1990, p.37), or a choice of particular methods assumes that a specific choice of paradigm will have been embraced.

The notion of Grounded Theory, located in a paradigm of interpretive epistemology and a naturalistic inquiry theoretical perspective, is the methodological approach that is used to explore the research questions for this study. This interpretive framework

incorporates the set of beliefs that informs and guides the resulting actions (Guba, 1990, p.17). Grounded Theory for the purpose of this thesis essentially consists of systematic inductive guidelines for collecting and analyzing data to build middle-range theoretical frameworks that explain the collected data (Charmaz, cited in Denzin & Lincoln,(Eds) 2000, p.509).

Since a Grounded Theory approach is aimed at the development of theory, it has been argued by Strauss (1987, p.5) that it is in fact a *style* of doing qualitative data analysis rather than a prescription. The theory includes a number of features including notions of theoretical sampling, instructions on making constant comparisons and the use of a coding paradigm, to ensure conceptual development and density. The emphasis in this study is to use Grounded Theory guidelines as a form of inductive research rather than as a prescribed method, and hence is in line with Strauss' position.

Grounded Theory is considered to be versatile enough to guide a mixed methods approach that I adopted in collecting data. It has been noted in the literature that researchers have used Grounded Theory methods with either quantitative and qualitative data or both (see Crotty, 1998; Denzin, 2000). This point is also supported by Strauss (1987, p.5) who claims that since the thrust of a Grounded Theory approach is towards the development of theory, there is no particular commitment to specific kinds of data, lines of research or theoretical interests. The emphasis is on the collection of data that leads the researcher to a deeper knowledge of the phenomena under investigation. Strauss (1987, p.7) also expresses the belief that a standardization of methods by Grounded Theory would only serve to restrict the efforts of the researcher. Thus the researcher's ability to engage with multiple data sources is paramount to the success of

the outcome of a particular research project. This description of Grounded Theory certainly fits the approach that seems appropriate for this study.

The key tenet of Grounded Theory is its commitment to building a theory that is faithful to the evidence which is collected by the researcher (Neuman, 1997, p.52). The coding and memoing of data which are integral to the development of emerging themes and notions becomes an important and necessary process for the researcher. It is important to note that Grounded Theory specifies analytic strategies not data collection methods (Denzin, 2000, p. 514). The analytic strategies “check” the emerging themes and assist in the development of theory, which in turn reflects the lived experience of the participants. Using constant comparison techniques, data are extensively collected and coded (Strauss, 1987, p.23). Strauss stresses the importance of the researcher as he/she develops theory, which ought to be developed in intimate relationship with the data (Strauss, 1987, p.7). This relationship is established early as the researcher seeks to understand the emerging themes resulting from an engagement with the participants in the study. Interpretivists support the development of theory by seeking to understand and describe the actual experience (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p.19). The methods employed in this study are described in more detail in the section on Data Collection. At this stage it is sufficient to say that methods were chosen to engage with the participants and provide data that enable the construction of theory that reflected the lived experience of the participants in this research study.

The methods as listed in Table 3.1 seemed appropriate for the study that I would undertake and certainly these types of approaches had been used in studies reviewed in Chapter 2. They are discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

The question of methodological appropriateness is one that is integral to the successful collection of data. Table 3.1 shows how there are different aspects of the methodological framework to be considered. The paradigm of choice recognizes that different methods are appropriate for different situations (Patton, 1990, p. 37), or a choice of particular methods assumes that a specific choice of paradigm will have been embraced.

Table 3.1: Methodological framework underpinning this study

Sources of Data	Surveys, Focus groups, Interviews, Researcher's journals
Methodology	Grounded Theory
Theoretical Perspective	Naturalist inquiry
Epistemology	Interpretive

Once some ideas of methods were considered, other levels of Table 3.1 needed to be considered so there was an appropriate integration. It was considered that the research study described here would have a theoretical perspective of a naturalist enquiry. Whilst this approach is not widely acknowledged by researchers who have held traditional positivist views, it does provide a systematic way to construct meaning from data collected in a natural setting. It also meets the desire of researchers who wish to engage holistically with the data to discover the theory that exists in the richness of the data.

In adopting a naturalist inquiry approach, which includes 'observing interactively, not passively or dispassionately' (Rogers, 2002, p.11) I set out to understand and document the day-to-day reality of the setting under study, in this case secondary teachers and how they engage in professional learning. I made no attempt to manipulate, control, or

eliminate any situational variables, but accepted the complexity of a changing reality that unfolded for me (Patton, 1990, p. 43). Within this dynamic complexity I sought to understand what was important for this group of teachers concerning professional learning. In doing this, I also was on the look out for notions that resonated with the themes and ideas that I had already identified in analysing a portion of the relevant literature.

Finally as shown in Table 3.1, the qualitative methods, the Grounded Theory methodology and the naturalist inquiry theoretical perspective is located within an interpretive epistemology which itself has as its main themes, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. All of these themes underpin the nature of the work of the researcher as she explores the world as she understands it to be.

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods that were employed in undertaking this research. The discussion includes a justification of the processes by which data were collected and analysed, and from which meanings were constructed in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.3 Sample

You cannot study everyone, everywhere, doing everything (Miles & Huberman, 1994 cited in Denzin, 2000). This section describes the people I worked with in this study and the contexts they were in. It was my intention to work with teachers in each of the three Catholic secondary colleges in Ballarat where I live. Ballarat is a small city with a population of 85, 000 people, and located 110 kms from Melbourne, Australia. Since all three schools were in Ballarat, this provided ease of access for collecting data, remembering that I was completing this study part time and still fulfilling my teaching

and administrative duties in my own school. The three secondary colleges are also located in the rural Catholic Diocese of Ballarat. Thus this research may find some application by others across the Diocese. Each of the three secondary colleges has distinct charisms, which underpin their philosophies of teaching and learning. Although this does give each college a certain distinctive character, the over-riding characteristic is that they are all Catholic secondary colleges in a rural city. As has been seen in Chapter 2, there is little reference to rural teachers in the professional learning literature, so this context is important.

3.3.1 The Colleges

Damascus College is a co-educational secondary Catholic college situated on two campuses, seven kilometres apart, formed as a result of an amalgamation of two Sisters of Mercy schools and a Christian Brothers College. Damascus is a relatively new College (established 1995) compared to St. Patrick's College and Loreto College, the other two colleges in this study, although its predecessors date back to the 1920s. The Victoria Street Campus caters for students in Years 7 -9 and the Mt. Clear Campus caters for students in years 10 – 12. Overall 1100 students attend Damascus College and there is a teaching staff of 71 Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

St. Patrick's College, a Catholic school in the tradition of Edmund Rice, caters for day boys and boarders. Established in 1893, it has traditionally educated Catholic boys from country areas in Victoria and southern New South Wales, but more recently overseas students as well. Its current enrolment is 968 students, of whom 31 are boarders, and has a teaching staff of 82 (FTE).

Loreto College founded in 1875, provides a Catholic education for girls in the Loreto Sisters tradition. The school currently has two campuses. Years 7 and 8 are situated 3 kilometres apart from the senior school which accommodates years 9-12. The school has an enrolment of 750 day girls with 71 (FTE) teachers.

All three colleges attract students from a wide catchment area that extends to Bacchus Marsh 75km to the south and Beaufort 60km to the north. The curriculum for years 7-10 in all three schools is based on the Curriculum Standards Framework II recommended by the Education Department of Victoria. The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and Vocational Education (VET) are the key certificates for all three schools at the senior level plus Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at Damascus College and Loreto College.

3.3.2 *My situation*

As will become evident, my role in the study as well as being the researcher is that I am also a member of staff of Damascus College. Thus my role in this study became a Practitioner- Researcher. Robson (1993, p. 446) describes the Practitioner- Researcher as “someone who holds down a job in some particular area and at the same time carries out systematic enquiry which is of relevance to the job”. The experiences that I have had in the teaching profession have given rise to my interest in the professional and personal lives of rural teachers. Consequently, there is a ‘Practitioner-Researcher synergy where “my insights and role have helped in the design, carrying out and analysis of useful and appropriate studies” (Robson, 1993, p.447). As well I have had a role in the Ballarat Catholic Education Office as an executive member of a group who worked with other teachers to assist with their professional learning in the area of

middle schooling. Hence, this section informs the reader of my pertinent background.

As I have progressed through my teaching career, beginning as a young graduate in country South Australia and continuing now into my twenty third year of teaching I have had an interest in the relationship between the professional and personal lives of teachers. My experiences both as a part time teacher when my family was young and we were living in a rural area, and then as a full time teacher with experience in rural schools, have been many and varied I have been a resident of Ballarat for seven years and am currently employed at Damascus College as the Curriculum Coordinator.

Whilst the literature on teacher professional learning is extensive, as noted in Chapter Two, little research appears to have been completed on professional learning in rural areas. Professional learning for teachers in rural areas has particular issues generally associated with distance, time and financial concerns, all of which will emerge as themes in this study. All my own teaching experience has been situated in rural schools, thus I feel I have empathy but more importantly great insight into the situations of teachers in rural areas. However, many of the issues that emerged during this study are also universal to all professional people as they balance professional and personal lives, and not just peculiar to rural teachers. Hence there will be potential messages that inform educators universally.

I deliberately elected to work with the three Catholic secondary schools in Ballarat. There are a number of Government secondary colleges as well as two Independent schools in Ballarat. But it was my belief that my extensive experience in Catholic education in rural settings would be of benefit to a study situated in Catholic education in a rural diocese. As a teacher and a school leader at Damascus, I have had the

opportunity to work with the Professional Development Coordinator as well as members of the Leadership Team and Subject Coordinators as we identified and planned professional learning opportunities for the teaching professionals in our school. This provided me with a valuable insight into the professional and personal needs of teaching professionals in the largest rural Catholic secondary college in the Diocese.

The Diocese of Ballarat has an Education Office in Ballarat that provides professional learning opportunities for teachers in the Diocese. I have been a member of the Executive Steering Committee that planned and implemented a three year middle years professional learning program for teachers in the Diocese. The program, which focused on providing professional learning opportunities that were easily accessible by teachers, was a response to a demand for quality professional learning for teachers in this rural area. The contributions of this program will be commented on where relevant in this study, as it is included in my personal journal as is described in section 3.4.6 as data that informs professional learning.

The Diocesan Curriculum Coordinator's Network meets once a school term with the aim of providing an opportunity for professional learning and networking for the Curriculum Coordinator's in the Ballarat Diocese. The three Catholic schools involved in the study are represented on this executive group. My involvement as a member of this leadership group gives me to a broader understanding of the needs of teaching professionals in rural and remote areas. This valuable insight further encouraged my professional interest in the professional learning of secondary teachers and the inter-relationship with their personal lives

3.3.3 *The teachers*

By and large the teachers who teach at the three schools are committed to the Catholic ethos of each of their schools. They are generally older, experienced staff that have chosen to settle in Ballarat and are long term residents. Staff that are in the schools tend to stay at the one school, thus there is very little movement between the schools.

Within each school I first used a wide data collection technique, surveying, followed by more narrow techniques, of focus groups and interviews. The justification for this and details of the instrumentation are discussed later in this chapter. I distributed the surveys to all members of staff in each of the schools and thus all teachers in the three schools had an opportunity to contribute to the project. However all teachers did not take this opportunity. A profile of those who did is given in the next chapter.

After deciding that focus groups would be a less intimidating method for collecting data from my colleagues, I attempted to target specific teachers who together would be able to give rich insights into professional learning opportunities and experiences available to them, or to which they thought they should have access.

For each focus group I sought seven teachers who had the following characteristics;

- A beginning teacher with 1-5 years experience
- An establishing teacher with 6-10 years experience
- An established teacher with 11-20 years experience
- An established teacher with 20 + years experience
- A part – time teacher
- A teacher with other school related responsibilities
- A professional development coordinator

I settled on these seven characteristics based on the need to reflect the views of a representative sample of the stages referred to previously in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. Both of these points are included in the literature. In selecting such a group, the aim was to explore nuances that are not readily evident in more homogenous groups. Anecdotally, males tend to be more represented in professional learning sessions. Therefore even though it was my intention to balance the gender representation in each of the category samples, it did not seem essential for this to happen for the development of theory as described by one of the guidelines of Grounded Theory analysis: “The analyst should not assume the analytic relevance of any ‘face sheets’ or traditional variable such as sex, social class, race until it emerges as relevant” (Strauss, 1987, p.33).

As it turned out, I was unable to attract teachers to fit neatly this proposed makeup of the focus groups in the three Catholic schools. This in part can be explained by the demographic makeup of the staff in the three schools, where some types of teachers are over represented and others under represented in terms of teaching experience as noted above. This phenomenon is discussed in greater detail during Chapter Four.

3.3.3 The three school principals

The three principals from the three colleges agreed to be interviewed as part of the data collection process.

The Principal of Damascus College at the commencement of my study was Mr John Shannon. John was appointed in 1994 to be the first lay principal and to form the newly developed Damascus College. John has had extensive leadership experience in schools

in rural and regional Victoria. He retired in 2004, but he kindly agreed to contribute to the study via mail. I had worked with John for six of my years as a teacher at Damascus College. However there are no indications that our long-term professional relationship influenced John's responses to my questions.

The Principal of Loreto College during this study was Mrs Ann Fry. She was appointed Principal to John XXIII College in 2005 after 8 years service at Loreto College Ballarat. Ann held senior leadership positions in Western Australia for 13 years before her appointment to Ballarat. Ann was an active and prominent member of many educational committees in Victoria.

The Headmaster of St. Patrick's College, Dr Peter Casey, has had an illustrious career as a principal beginning in 1986 in Traralgon, Victoria, then as principal in Wodonga, Victoria and finally as principal at St. Patrick's College Ballarat. Dr Casey holds many positions of responsibility on professional committees and has had work published within Australia and overseas on educational administration, education systems, and catholic schools.

3.3.5 Ballarat Catholic Education Office

I interviewed two staff from the Catholic Education Office in Ballarat who had responsibility for aspects of teacher professional development and who had a clear relationship with the three secondary schools. This interview was prompted by the third of my research questions; How do secondary teaching professionals inform the governments, bureaucrats and leaders at a systems level of their learning needs now and into the future? Both staff members have extensive experience at a systems level.

3.4 Data Collection

The previous section gave the important characteristics of the people who would provide the data for this study. This section discusses how the data were collected.

Grounded Theory is based upon the premise of constant comparative checking in order to ensure that the research data being collected are authentic and representative of the stories and views of the members of the target sample group. Hence a continuing check of emerging interpretations against all participants' perspectives, a process sometimes referred to as "member checking" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was aimed for in devising the data collection procedures. Although this guideline is normally seen as a reference to the analysis, it can also be employed at the point of data collection. Thus focus groups and interviews were conducted to explore the main themes that emerged from the survey in the first instance. In turn, the principals commented upon the preliminary analysis of the surveys and focus groups. Finally, interviews were held with the Catholic Education Office personnel, when the preliminary analysis of the data was again examined including the comments by the principals.

Grounded Theory methods specify analytic strategies, not specific data collection methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 514). The emphasis is on gathering extensive amounts of rich data with thick description (Charmaz, 1995; Geertz, 1973 cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). With this in mind, the following data gathering practices seemed appropriate; surveys, focus groups, interviews, and professional learning journals where I would ask teachers to record any professional learning that they undertake and reflect on the experience.

Whilst I was able to use focus groups, interviews, and a survey to collect data, I was unable to implement the use of professional learning journals with teachers due to the constraints of their time and my access to them on a regular basis. However I did develop a personal journal as a way to record incidental and anecdotal data. This journal became a very important resource because in the end I was also including my reflective musings on the development of the project, and the analyses of these results, all of which provided me with valuable insights.

Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.25) emphasize that it is not always possible to devise sequential mini-steps for the collection of data. They suggest that the sequencing of the collection of data will depend on the circumstances of what kind of data can be obtained, the teachers who are accessible and the type of data that is required by the study. Certain flexibility had to be employed in this study

My main goal was to gain an insight into what was currently happening in the three Ballarat Catholic schools regarding the interaction of the professional and personal lives of teachers, and how these impacted their views on professional learning. Thus it seemed best to first collect a broad base set of data using a survey. Ideas drawn from a preliminary analysis of the survey data would be further investigated using focus groups of teachers, and individual interviews with teachers when necessary. Interviews with the three principals of the participating schools would further test the reasonableness of the emerging theory from the teacher data. Finally the views of Catholic Education Office staff were sought, using similar interviewing techniques to those employed when interviewing the principals. The development of each of the data collection instruments will now be described.

3.4.1 *The survey*

This instrument was devised to serve as the first step in collecting data. (See Appendix B) Its construction drew on my experience of more than twenty years as a teacher and the analysis of pertinent literature shown in Chapter 2. It is important to recognise the overlap. In educational research, as in many social sciences, the researcher is often a relative insider in the field, studying a topic that he or she already knows quite well (Harry, Sturges & Klinger, 2005, p.7). Such knowledge, garnered with that of the literature, gives great insight into practice as was discussed in a previous section on ‘My situation’. As is the case with the original research questions, which were under ‘constant revision’ (Janesick, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.384) as I engaged further with the literature and the data. Creswell (1998) also recognizes the need for qualitative researchers to “shape” questions as we “explore” ideas with the participants in our studies. He affirms the need for qualitative researchers to “change our questions during the process of research to reflect an increased understanding of the problem” (Creswell, 1998, p.19).

On the first page of the survey, teachers were asked to respond to some questions that would allow the group to be characterized through some important demographic information. These canvassed information using the following questions:

1. Gender type
2. Number of years you have been a teacher?
3. Do you currently hold a Position of Leadership in the College?
4. Are you a full – time teacher?

At this point it is pertinent to point out that the age of the teachers was not asked for in the survey but instead, years of experience was a measure used to gauge length of service. Although years of experience as a teacher has been noted in Chapter Two as important in considering teaching learning, age of the teacher is also important. The lack of the age data did prove to be a limitation and will be addressed in Chapter Four.

The survey items were based on major ideas that had emerged from my original hunches based on my experience as a teacher over many years and the subsequent review of the literature. I have chosen the word ‘idea’ rather than themes at this point of the thesis as this is not to be confused with ‘Themes’ which is a specific term I use in Chapter 4 to label the key headings that emerged as a result of analysing the survey comment, focus group and interview data. Four to five items were crafted around each idea. Table 3.2 lists the ideas and the items. It will be noted that some items link to more than one theme. The final version of the survey instrument is found in Appendix C.

Table 3.2: Ideas and survey items derived from the review of the literature

Ideas from the review of the literature	Items from the Survey
Teacher and school community	1,2,4,5,10,
Teachers professional concern	3,8,9,11,12
Teachers personal concerns	6,7,14,15
Teachers and the broader system	13a,13b, 5,10

The survey instrument consisted of fifteen items, which could be responded to using a four point scale. An opportunity to respond with comments directly below each item was also available. A further space for a general comment at the end of the survey was also provided. A four-point scale was used without a middle neutral option so as to

encourage participants to respond positively or negatively, rather than choose the middle ground as often occurs. The four columns from which teachers were asked to select and place a tick were headed; Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. In the later analysis these were given numerical values of 4, 3, 2, and 1. The survey was devised so that it should not take any longer than twenty minutes to complete. I considered this reasonably short time to be an important factor in determining whether busy teachers would complete the survey.

Robson (1993, p.126) noted that “By presenting all respondents with the same standardised questions, carefully worded after piloting, it is possible to obtain high reliability of response”. I piloted the survey with a group of teachers at MacKillop Catholic College in Swan Hill, Victoria, where I was employed as a curriculum consultant in 2004. MacKillop College is another secondary college in the Ballarat Diocese and is located approximately 320 kilometres from Ballarat.

The pilot survey was distributed to the teaching staff during a staff meeting and a 100 % return rate was achieved. I also asked the staff to comment on the format and wording of the survey to assist me with the formatting of the final form of the survey. Changes to clarify wording were made to items 4, 8, 12, 13 and 14. Overall the teachers found it easy to respond to the survey.

In the three target Colleges described earlier in this chapter, I introduced the research study and its importance at staff meetings. These opportunities were arranged during an initial interview with each of the three principals. My ability to arrange a time to attend a staff meeting in each of the schools that fitted in with the staff meeting schedules, and attend to my own professional commitments at my school, proved to be challenging and

was a further factor in the decision to restrict my research to the three schools within Ballarat. After each staff meeting, staff from the three Catholic colleges were offered the opportunity to complete the survey.

The survey was distributed to the teaching staff with an envelope for its return. A secured box was left in each staff room at each campus of the three colleges for completed surveys. I included a separate sheet with the survey where staff were invited to volunteer to be part of a focus group or an interview. A copy of this sheet can be found in Appendix D. The teaching staff in each of the schools were asked to return the completed survey within seven days. I then collected the returns from each box. Three days after the staff meeting, I organised for an email to be sent to all staff reminding them of the process for the completion of the survey. This process of survey data collection took place over one school term. The return rates could be considered to be adequate with a return of 29 % from Damascus College, 35 % from Loreto College and 42 % from St. Patrick's College, although a higher return of course would have been better.

The survey data from each of the schools provided a rich base from which to further explore themes that had emerged from the literature and my experience as a teacher and school leader. An initial analysis of the survey data confirmed that professional learning is a concern for this group of teaching professionals and generally there were personal issues that determined their participation in professional learning. A more detailed discussion of the data analysis can be found in the next chapter.

The survey instrument had incorporated insights gained from my own experiences and the literature review. In turn, the initial analysis of the data gathered from the survey

guided the development of questions for the focus groups. Hence an evolutionary approach to the development of the data collection was implemented. This had the advantage of incorporating insights gained in an early phase of the data collection process into later phases, and thus a cascading informative process was entered into. Thus the nuances and complexity of the situations were more adequately incorporated in the development of theory.

3.4.2 Focus groups

Focus groups are widely used in qualitative research and are “fundamentally a way of listening to people and learning from them” (Morgan, 1998, p.9. cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.835). Esther Madriz, a social scientist, uses focus groups as a way of increasing the interaction between group participants thus decreasing the involvement of the researcher and the influence that the researcher may have over the interview process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.836). In this way, the voices and experiences of those who need to be heard to providing the ‘lived experience’ are more easily heard.

It was intended that each group would have consisted of the participants as outlined in sub section 3.3.3. However, I was only able to organise focus groups at two of the schools. This was mainly due to time constraints brought about by the fact that the third school was heavily involved in a new meeting schedule, which prevented these teachers taking on extra commitments. The first focus group meeting was held with St. Patrick’s College teaching staff and the second with members of the Damascus College teaching staff. The groups of teachers who participated in the focus groups did not completely reflect the optimistic profile that I had presented in sub section 3.3.3. The profile of the teachers who attended the focus groups is shown in Table 3.3. Even though this did not

conform to my planned profile, nevertheless there was quite a reasonable diversity overall, and sufficient for the purposes of this study.

Table 3.3: Profile of teacher participants in focus groups (including interviews)

Characteristic	No. of teachers
➤ A beginning teacher with 1-5 years experience	0
➤ An establishing teacher with 6-10 years experience	0
➤ An established teacher with 11-20 years experience	1
➤ An established teacher with 20 + years experience	9
➤ A part – time teacher	1
➤ A teacher with other school related responsibilities	6
➤ A professional development coordinator	1

I employed the services of a Research Assistant at the two focus group sessions. This allowed me to engage more deeply with the respondents and enabled me to collect the “rich” data emanating from working closely with the teachers in the study, which would be of importance to establishing themes and emerging theory. I use the term “rich” because it encompasses the lived experiences of the teachers in focus groups including their vision, views and concerns. By employing the assistance of an assistant observer who made field notes as well as audio tape-recording the focus groups, I was free to be able to quickly determine issues that were preventing certain members of the focus group articulating their views and was also able to direct questions to them to keep the participants involved.

The two focus groups that I organised provided an opportunity for teachers to discuss the thoughts that arose from the surveys. These discussions helped to confirm or refute aspects of an evolving theory that I was already developing. I was aware of the complex nature of the make up of the focus groups due to the diverse lived experiences of each of the respondents. My experiences were similar to Rogers (2002), and also believed it was my role to;

Bring a wider interpretive focus from my experience to theirs, as well as from their experience to mine and then to go on and share that experience with a wider colleague base. (2002, p.11)

The questions that I presented for discussion during the focus group meetings are included in Appendix E. These ideas had first been developed from my experiences as a teacher and my natural curiosity and the review of the literature I had undertaken. However they were nuanced in various ways by the initial coding and analysis of the survey data. These in summary were:

- Teacher and school community/system: An initial analysis of the survey data indicated that the respondents have distinct views on their role in the community in which they teach and its relationship with the system.
- Teacher's professional concern: The respondents expressed concern about the professional development opportunities in their community in their survey responses.
- Teacher's personal concerns: Responses to item 10 in the survey (see Appendix C) highlighted the concerns that teachers held in regard to organisers of professional learning overlooking personal needs of teachers.

- Teacher and the broader system: The respondents indicated quite clearly in their survey responses that external initiatives from a systems level was often not well received because they overlooked the teachers at the classroom level.

A more detailed description of coding and memoing, which are central to the generation of my emerging theory, will be provided when the results are analysed in the next chapter. Copies of the transcripts from the focus groups can be found in Appendices H and I.

3.4.3 Teacher interviews

Individual interviews were used to collect data from other teachers who were not part of the focus groups. The interview data 'checked' emerging themes and verified emerging theory from the surveys and focus group data. This continued the cascading approach used for the data collection with one set of data informing the following.

The guiding questions that were used in the interviews were identical to the questions formulated to guide the focus groups. A semi-structured approach was adopted to allow the interviewees to present new ideas which had not emerged in the initial survey data or focus groups. As a result, I was able to be responsive to the lead of the interviewee (Spradley, 1979, cited in Harry, Sturges & Klinger, 2005, p.4).

I conducted three such interviews. Two were with St. Patrick's College staff and one was with a Loreto staff member. These were held after the completion of the two focus groups. The interviews were held at times and places convenient to each teacher. Two of the teachers had thirty years of experience. One had less than two years experience.

The two interviews conducted with the individuals at St. Patrick's College were in response to their preference to be interviewed rather than to be part of a focus group for a number of reasons including a preference to have the opportunity to remain anonymous. It will be recalled that a focus group was not held at Loreto College. Thus the opportunity to conduct one interview with a teacher was very useful. The interviews were taped and later transcribed, coded and memoed to provide data that continued to support the emerging themes or theories. Copies of the transcripts of the interviews can be found in the Appendices J, K and L.

3.4.4 Principal interviews

I was able to interview the three Principals who originally agreed to be part of the study. I made contact with them again after I had analysed to some extent the survey, focus group and interview data, and provided them with a discussion paper prior to the interview based on that analysis. A copy of this discussion paper can be found in Appendix F.

The interviews were conducted in the offices of two of the Principals and via mail with the third who had retired but was happy to correspond. The two face to face interviews were structured in a semi-formal format so as to allow the lived experience of the principal to emerge. The discussion paper was used more as a guide and ancillary questions to clarify and check themes were included where it was pertinent. The interviews were designed to 'check' the themes that had emerged from the teacher data and to explore other themes and ideas that emerged. Two of the interviews were taped with the permission of the principals and examples each transcription can be found in Appendices M and N. The third principal corresponded via mail and this was archived

for reference and analysis.

3.4.5 Ballarat Catholic Education Office staff interviews

Two senior members of the Ballarat Catholic Education Office (CEO) agreed to be interviewed for this thesis. I contacted the two staff after it was decided that it would be useful to include data about professional learning from a systems point of view and help to inform the third research question.

After confirming interview times via phone, a discussion paper based on ongoing analysis of teacher/principal data, was sent to the two Ballarat CEO staff a week prior to the interview so as to allow them time to reflect on the data that was presented to them. The two semi- formal interviews, each of approximately twenty minute duration, were held in the offices of the two participants. The interviews were taped after seeking their permission and each of the transcripts can be found in Appendices O and P.

3.4.6 Personal journal

As a researcher/participant, I kept a journal of the journey that I travelled as a researcher, detailing information and insights that I observe in conducting the surveys, focus groups and interviews, as well as information that I collected anecdotally when visiting the three schools. The journal entries were free form. My professional learning journals will be catalogued and stored in my professional library, and will be available to other researchers.

3.5 Analysis of the Teacher Data

It has been noted above that the analyses of the data was guided by the use of Grounded Theory principals. Grounded Theory encourages the researcher to produce conceptually dense theory based on many relationships in order to gain multiple perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The combination of the analyses of the data from the range of collection techniques used in this study provided me with the opportunity to constantly compare different insights that I gathered at each stage of the coding and memoing. The use of multiple methods reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.5).

In this study, it was planned to have a cascading data collection process with a prior stage informing later stages. Hence as noted above, my own ideas were challenged by completing a literature review that spoke to the area of interest. From this analysis of the literature the survey items were developed. Using this survey technique meant a broad data collection was initially conducted in the three Catholic schools. A preliminary analysis of the survey was completed by a tabulation of responses. This tabulation then informed the development of the focus group questions and discussion paper for the teachers. Finally an initial analysis of the focus group data was undertaken by reading through all the transcripts and noting the emergence of themes. The Literature Review, initial analysis of the survey and focus group data, then informed the individual interviews that I carried out with the teachers. During this period of analysis, I was interested in clarifying with the focus group members and the interviewed teachers any variation to outcomes that I had identified in the literature.

This initial period of data analysis proceeded when the data collection process was still underway. After this period a more detailed analysis of all the data was conducted. The ticked responses to the survey items were analysed using tabulations and graphs. This data became more a structuring device to clarify the demographics of the teacher group. An analysis of the written responses on the surveys helped clarify ideas that had originally emerged in the literature review of Chapter Two. These themes included; time constraints (not having enough time to fulfil both professional and personal needs), financial constraints (e.g. lack of school or personal money to undertake professional learning), organisational awareness (e.g. teachers being aware of the decisions being made by leaders), teacher lack of control (e.g. teachers feeling locked out from avenues to access professional learning), teacher sense of control (e.g. teachers feeling empowered to pursue personal and professional learning), personal needs (e.g. personal factors that need to be considered in light of professional life), work life balance (e.g. balancing the demands of professional and personal responsibility), personal learning styles (e.g. acknowledgement that just like our students, teachers have a preferred style for acquiring and learning new knowledge and skills), and pastoral role of professional learning coordinator (seeing the role as not being purely administrative).

The transcripts from the focus groups, individual interviews, my own field notes and the teacher's written comments on the surveys were then treated as one set of data and Grounded Theory principles were used in a full analysis of this data set. In particular the interrelationships between the emerging themes were looked for. Strauss and Corbin state that, as an "Overarching theoretical scheme" or "central category" is identified, theory development becomes a recursive "search for consistency and logic" that will integrate both complementary and competing strands of evidence (Strauss & Corbin,

cited in Harry, Sturges & Klinger, 2005 p.5). This was a crucial principle that I attempted to adhere to as the analysis progressed.

Grounded Theory is a style of doing qualitative data analysis that includes a number of distinct features Strauss (1987, p.5). The coding consists of establishing themes and categories that are then compared to other data collected as the research continues.

Coding starts the chain of theory development (Charmaz, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.515). It is the role of the researcher to interact with the data and to construct meaning. The constant comparative method of Grounded Theory can include;

- (a) comparing different people (such as their views, situations, actions, accounts and experiences)
- (b) comparing data from the same individuals with themselves at different points in time
- (c) comparing incident with incident
- (d) comparing data with category, and
- (e) comparing a category with other categories

In this study I used all the above points except point (b). There were no opportunities available to go back to respondents to clarify issues raised in focus groups in interviews. The surveys were anonymously completed. For example, I was interested in looking to see if;

- The teachers who responded , especially those from different schools, had similar experiences of professional learning
- The themes which emerged as a result of the survey were replicated or confirmed in the focus groups
- The categories that emerged from the focus groups were confirmed or refuted by teachers who participated in the interviews.

At each stage of coding, memo writing is an important aspect of constructing meaning from conceptual analysis. Memoing is in fact the intermediate step between coding and the first draft of the completed analysis (Charmaz, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.517). Memos lead me as the researcher, to engage with the codes and develop new themes or concepts, or assist in the connection of categories. It is well to note at this point that ‘memo’ is used in here in a specialist sense. It is the initial point at which the researcher has begun coding and is about to embark on the analysis of the data.

‘Memoing’ helped clarify decisions made about the codes and the underlying data as well as prompting me to examine other data that could be useful in ‘checking’ the emerging codes or worth exploring to expand or discount codes. ‘Memoing’ can provide links between thoughts and ideas that I as the researcher have and the emerging theory from the data collection, as well as make links between categories. It is a useful process that can assist me as the researcher with a process for moving forward with the data. Many of my notes in my journal could be considered to be memoing as I explored the realities of the lived experience of the teacher. Table 3.4 summarises and further clarifies the sequence of analysis.

Table 3.4: Stages of data analysis

Stage 1	Reflection on my own experience and analysis of the literature that lead to and provided confirmation of the set of research questions and issues that were the basis of the survey
Stage 2	Development of the focus group questions based on initial analysis of the survey data using <i>Open Coding</i>
Stage 3	<i>Line by Line Coding</i> and <i>memoing</i> of written responses on surveys, focus group data, interview data leading to the development of themes and categories. <i>Checking</i> of the codes and categories
Stage 4	Further checking – “member checking” of emerging themes/categories via Interview data. Further development of codes and categories – <i>saturation</i>
Stage 5	Comparing categories with categories to develop central findings that represent the ‘lived experience’ of the sample

The following technical terms used in Table 3.4 (those that have been italicised), have the following meanings in this context:

- ‘Open Coding’ refers to the process whereby the initial data collected is subject to a general analysis and the emerging themes are noted and compared to see if any can be grouped together.
- ‘Line by Line coding’ refers to the process whereby I refine themes that are emerging by questioning the data. This process leads the researcher to finding gaps in the data and highlights further data collection that needs to occur.
- ‘Checking’ involves comparing the data that I have collected with another source of data; i.e. comparing the emerging themes from the surveys with the focus group data. This can be referred to as the “constant comparative method” – where the researcher is required to compare codes as they emerge so as to develop ‘theoretical categories’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1988, p.106)
- ‘Memoing’ involves writing notes about the data to prompt deeper research or to confirm or dismiss a category or theme
- ‘Saturation’ refers to the point at which new data can be categorised in the established categories thus not requiring its own category. At this stage, many theorists will claim that the research is coming to an end but, as a researcher, I know that whilst this study may become saturated with the data that I have collected, it is not really the end. It could be the beginning of another’s research or a point at which I may explore in detail a category in another context.

This process of coding, memoing, recording, checking and so on, in an iterative process continued for a period of time of two years so as to ensure that I was able to make sense of the data.

3.6 Analysis of the Data from Principals and Catholic Education Staff

After the analysis of the teacher data, analyses of the data from the interviews with the principals and catholic education staff were conducted. The purpose of these analyses was to juxtapose the ‘lived experiences’ of the teachers against that of the principals and Catholic Education Staff. The analyses focussed on whether the principals and Catholic Education Office Staff seem to agree or disagree with those views held by the teachers and why.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

As the data collection was conducted in the school in which I work, as well as a school in which my partner teaches, certain ethical considerations were needed to be adhered to. I felt confident that by abiding by the Australian Catholic University Research Ethics Committee’s requirements and my personal professional standards, I carried out the research at the highest ethical standard. As a member of my school leadership team, I am called to act in a highly professional manner at all times and that includes discretion and trust of staff, students and parents within our community. In working at the school of my partner the same professional regard for the participants were employed.

I adhered to the various ethics procedures of Australian Catholic University (see Appendix A). Formal agreements with the three principals of the secondary colleges that formed the collection sites from this study were negotiated and agreed to. Letters pertaining to the fulfilment of the ethical requirements can be found in Appendix A.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the methods used to collect data and described the people from whom the data was collected for this study. The processes that were used to analyse these data in the following chapter were also detailed. The methods used were also situated within broader methodological, theoretical and epistemological perspectives.

The study is built around the three questions;

- How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?
- How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?
- How do teaching professionals inform the governments, bureaucrats and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

The review of the relevant literature in the previous chapter has shown that these questions are important for the wider educational community. It was also shown that there is little research that has been conducted with teachers who have been in schools for 20 plus years, nor those teaching in rural settings. This study clearly addresses both of these contextual issues.

The survey was developed so that various items dealt with important ideas in the literature, and also clearly linked to one or more of the above questions. The focus group and interview questions were constructed, drawing on the survey items and the initial analysis of the survey data, and hence they too are linked back to the research

question. Finally the data generated from the interviews with the principals and Catholic Education Office personnel directly address the last two research questions respectively.

This chapter has prepared the reader to now consider the actual data that were collected and their analyses. This is dealt with in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

The Analysis of the Teacher Data

4.1 Introduction

The basic question facing us is how to capture the complexity of reality (phenomena) that we study, and how to make convincing sense of it. (Strauss, 1987, p.10)

The intention of this chapter is to represent the thoughts and ideas about professional learning of the teacher practitioners in the three Catholic secondary colleges in Ballarat particularly in regard to the inter-relationship between the professional and personal lives of these rural teachers. This study invited teachers to contribute by completing surveys, participating in focus groups or participating in an individual semi – structured interview. Following preliminary analysis of these sets of data, reactions to the teachers' views were sought by interviewing the three principals of the colleges and Catholic Education Office (CEO) staff (see Chapter Five). Throughout the study I kept a field journal where records of potentially important events, anecdotal comments from school personnel, my own musings and insights that might contribute to the study in general were recorded. These journals help fill out the understanding that grew as I collected and analysed these data. Whilst I acknowledge that there are computer software packages such as N-Vivo that can assist with text analysis, it was my preference to immerse myself in the *rich* data of the respondents (which is extensive in its quality), principals and CEO staff using an analysis guided by ideas embedded in notions of Grounded Theory. This allowed me to experience the 'lived experience' of the participants and develop a deeper understanding of the teachers' responses.

It is intended that this chapter be more like a painting than a photograph (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.522). That is, the story concerning the professional learning needs of these teachers is gradually revealed as well as the lived personal and professional experiences of the teachers from the three schools. However this painting is not a random collection of strokes. The principles guiding the process with which the paint strokes of this chapter are applied have already been laid out in the last chapter. These begin with the following research questions that underpinned this study:

- How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?
- How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?
- How do teaching professionals inform the governments, bureaucrats and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

As noted in the last chapter, Grounded Theory was used as the framework for analysing the data because of its emphasis on the generation of theory (Strauss,1987, p.22).

Reflection on the emergent themes based on the lived experiences of the teacher participant from the three schools, which finally led to a model from which some answers to the above questions, at least for these teachers, could be offered.

This chapter will begin by dealing with the data obtained from the survey. An analysis of the transcripts from the focus groups and teacher interviews, as well as the written comments from teachers on the surveys will then be presented. The chapter will conclude with the development of a model reflecting the teachers' views.

4.2 The Survey Data Analysis

As discussed in Chapter Three, the primary purpose of the data collected by way of surveying staff in the schools was to check whether the ideas that were emerging from the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, were also important for the teaching practitioners in the three catholic secondary colleges in Ballarat. The research questions had been devised prior to this review, in light of my experiences as a teaching professional and after an initial examination of the literature about teacher learning. As I further examined the literature, major ideas emerged around these questions as being significant for teachers as learners. I made a list of the 20 most important ideas on individual cards and arranged them in order of prominence from the literature. These were reduced to 14 issues which were addressed by an item in the survey described in Chapter Three (see Table 3.2 and Appendix C). But before examining the teachers' responses to these items, it is instructive to examine the profile of the groups of teachers who responded to the survey.

4.2.1 Profiling the teachers who responded

The teacher demographics collected by the survey give some insights into the first group of teachers from whom the painting will emerge. The four demographic items the teachers responded to asked about gender, length of teaching experience, whether a position of leadership was held, and whether they were a fulltime teacher.

An examination of Table 4.1 shows that a majority of the teachers who responded are full time teachers. However there is also a tradition of part time teachers in all the three

schools reflecting the differing needs of the schools, and the availability of staff to work depending on their life circumstances. Anecdotal information indicates that in these schools most part timers are experienced teachers and are most likely to be female who have the responsibility of raising families or as carers.

Table 4.1: Profile of teachers in the three colleges

	Teaching time fraction		Position of leadership		Years of teaching	Gender		Number of FTE teachers in the school	Number who returned survey
	Full	Part	Yes	No	Average	Female	Male		
Damascus College	21 78%	6	16 59%	11	17	16 59%	9	91	27 30 %
Loreto College	19 76%	6	16 64%	10	20	19 76%	6	71	25 35 %
St. Patrick's College	30 86%	5	16 48%	19	21	22 63%	13	82	35 43 %

Table 4.1 also shows that respondents with Positions of Leadership were well represented in the data. Hence the data collected is representative of the various assigned roles which exist in the secondary colleges. Respondents with Positions of Leadership represent 20 % (48/244) of the total respondents in the three colleges. As would be expected, those teachers in these positions were generally experienced teachers.

In a recent study conducted by the Australian College of Education (2001) for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, female teachers outnumbered males in all sectors. In the Catholic education sector in Australia, approximately one third of the workforce is male. In each of these three schools female respondents outnumbered male respondents (see Table 4.1).

As explained in Chapter Three, I elected to survey teachers about their years of experience rather than their age. As shown in Table 4.1 the average years of teaching was fairly high reflecting a largely experienced teaching workforce. A recent study conducted by the Victorian Auditor General (cited in Wilkinson, Beavis, Ingvarson and Kleinhenz 2005, pp. 8-9) established that over the next 10 years 45 percent of teaching staff in Victorian schools will reach retirement. Thus the teaching staff of the three colleges reflected the ageing trend of teachers across Australia and other O.E.C.D countries where over 40 % of teachers are in their 50s (pp. 8-9). As a teacher with extensive experience in Catholic schools in rural areas both in South Australia and Victoria, the data revealing the ageing nature of the teaching force is not surprising to me. Finally, although every researcher hopes for a higher return of survey forms, the return rate from the three schools was adequate to proceed with this analysis.

An important issue for this study is to consider whether the staff profile among the three schools are dramatically different. There seems little reason, based on the information in Table 4.1, why the teachers from the three schools cannot be treated as one group. The teachers are mainly experienced teachers who in the main are teaching full time. Most who responded are female, although more so from Loreto College where the staff is more decidedly female in any case than the other schools. More teachers from Damascus College and Loreto College held some positions of leadership than their peers at St. Patrick's, although the difference is not vast. However a closer analysis of this data is warranted. This will be completed by examining the patterns of the responses to the survey items by school.

It will be recalled from Chapter Three that responses of Strongly Agree were given a numerical value of 4, through to Strongly Disagree of 1. Averages for each school, for each item were calculated. These averages for the 15 different items in the survey were graphed by school and are shown in Figure 4.1. This procedure was also followed for each of the different demographic variables. Appendices A, B and C show the results of this procedure for teaching time fraction, positions of leadership and gender. An inspection of these graphs shows that there were very few differences in the teacher's responses by school, and hence suggests the differences between schools are minimal on these issues. There seems little reason to conduct further analysis on this.

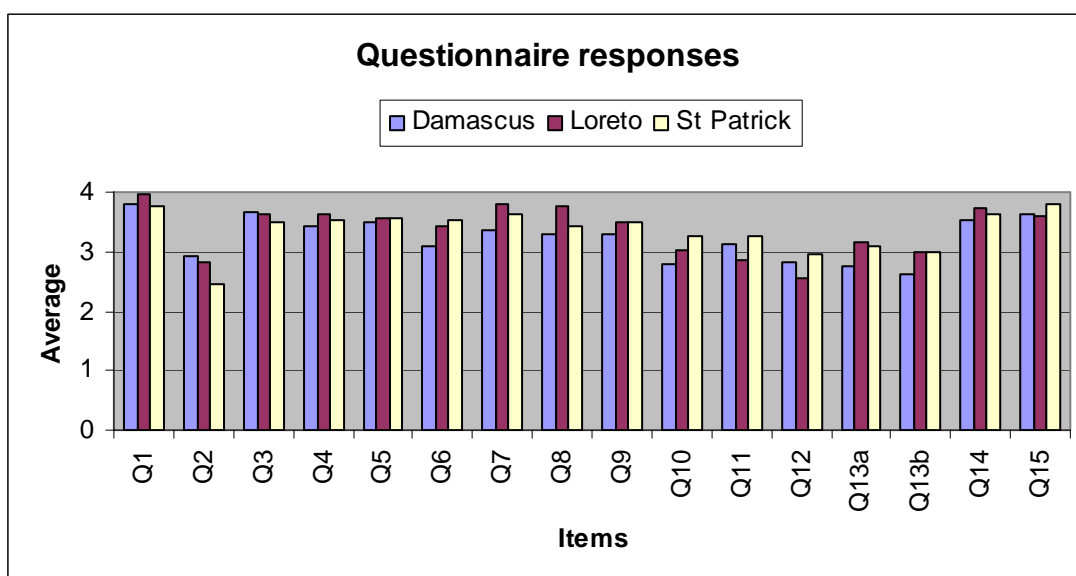


Figure 4.1: Responses to surveys from teachers

Figure 4.2 shows that the teachers are clearly skewed towards a predominance of experienced teachers. This is an important issue for interpreting the data collected for this study. Whilst reference is made in the literature to the importance of professional learning opportunities for all teachers, there does not appear to be a broad body of literature produced about the professional and personal needs of experienced teachers;

that is those with more than 20 years experience. There is acknowledgement that professional learning needs to be broad, but it does not identify the experienced group in particular. Responses to the 15 items by the teachers in the three schools, categorised by experience is shown in Figure 4.3. Again an examination of this graph shows there is no consistent pattern for any groups across the three schools. However given the experienced profile of this group of teachers, the subsequent analyses may speak to this under researched group.

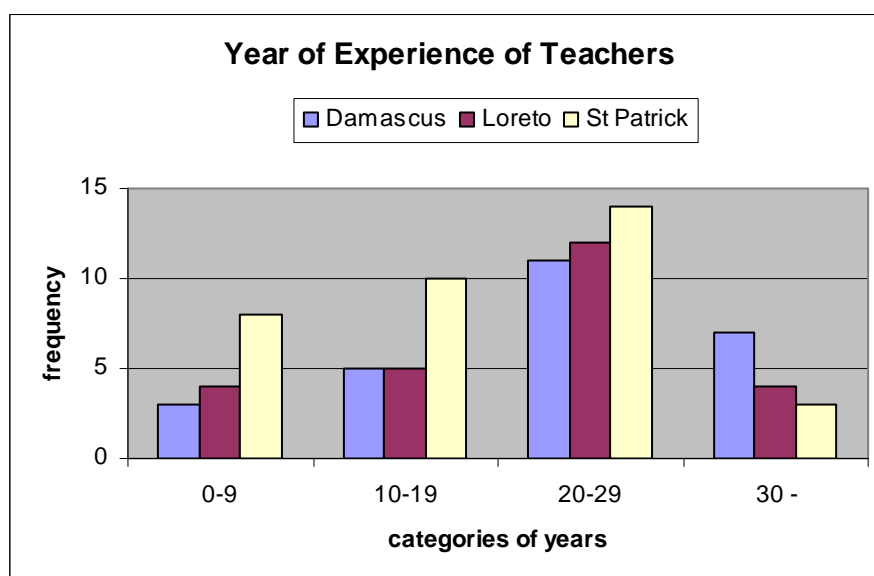


Figure 4.2: Years of teaching experience in the three colleges

In summary, the Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 suggest that for this group of teachers, even though they come from three schools, can be treated as a whole group for the following analyses. This will be the approach taken for the remainder of the analyses.

The final point to make in commenting on the profile of the teachers involved in this study is that they are all staff members of rural schools. It was noted in Chapter Two that there was no specific literature targeted at non urban areas. Hence this rural setting study allows comment on an under-researched area.

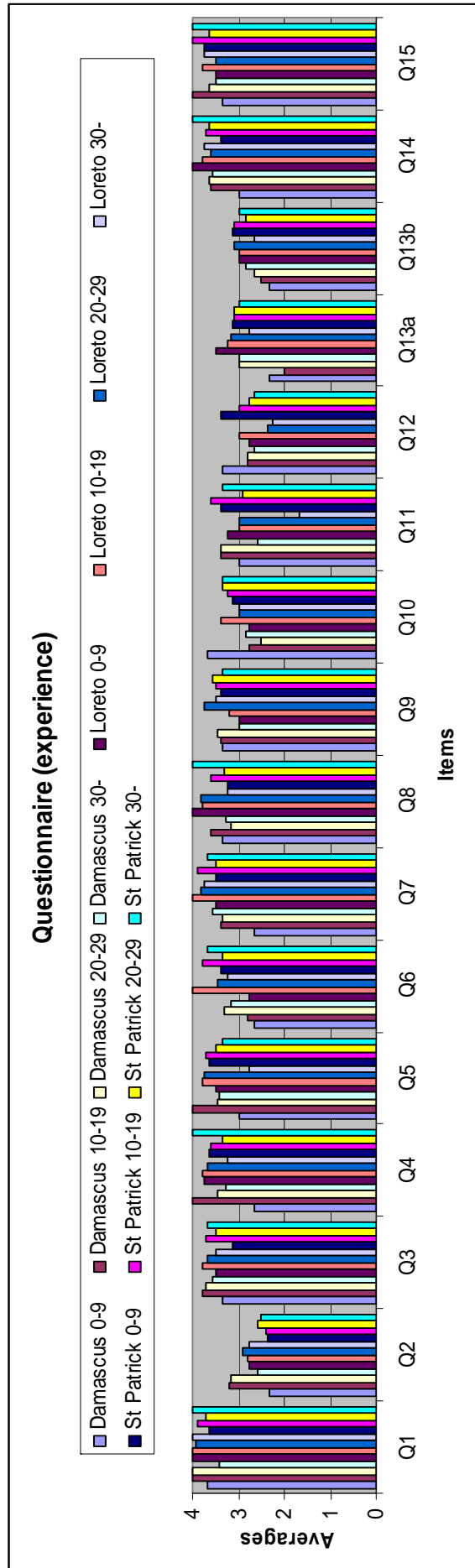


Figure 4.3: Responses to Survey Items Categorised by Years of Experience

4.2.2 Item results

An initial examination of the survey results from the teachers indicates that the average responses to all items are high, suggesting that there is general agreement among this group of teachers that professional learning is important to them (see Figure 4.4.).

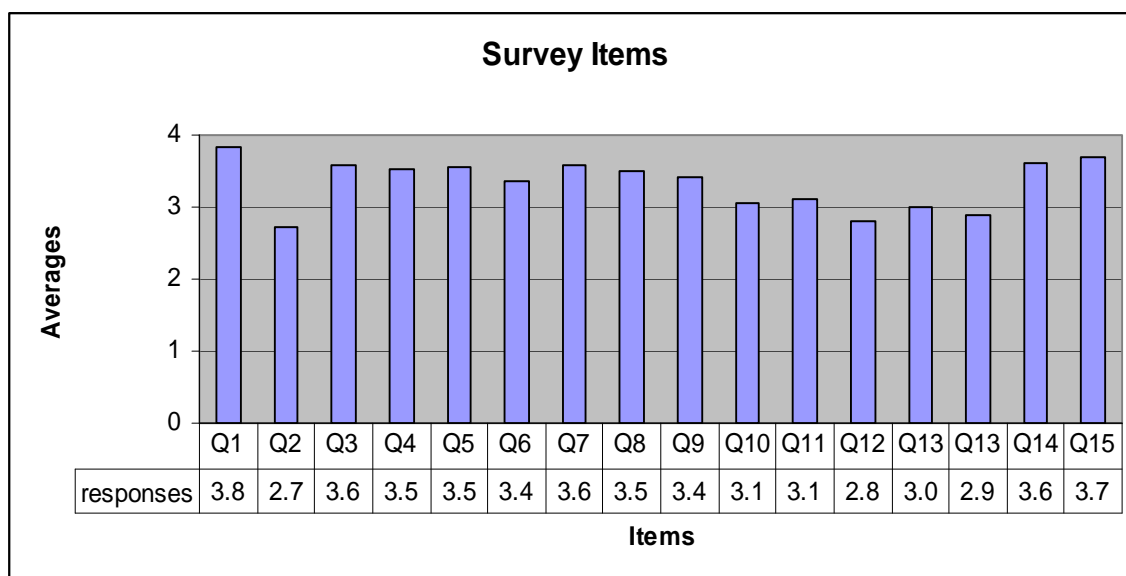


Figure 4.4: Responses to survey items

The overall agreement for all items (2.5, the midpoint of the scale, can be given a meaning of neutral) suggests that staff in the main are interested in professional learning. However some items did receive lower scoring than most: Items 2, 10, 11, 12 and 13 (b). It was decided that there was little to be gained from analysing the responses to item 13 (a), also low, since on reflection it is somewhat of a motherhood statement: ‘Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher’s classroom practice’. Very few if any teachers in my experience would disagree with this statement. In fact it would be interesting to gauge the response to the rapid mandated implementation of the Victorian Essential Learning (VELS) against this statement. However this is not for this thesis to

engage with. To gain more insight into why these five noted items may have been scored lower than others, it is useful to inspect the written comments that were attached to them.

Item 2: Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers

Figure 4.1 shows that teachers from all schools rated this item as neutral to just below 'agreement'. Some of the written comments were:

“This doesn't mean that all teachers take up the offer”

“Currently we are discouraged from attending external PD”

“It's available but not everyone avails themselves of the opportunity”

“There are lots of opportunities- but there are a maximum number of days which could be a problem”

“Budget constraints and teacher replacement will always affect a school's ability to offer PD opportunities”

In summary, teachers who added comments to this question were divided about whether schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers.

Whilst some of the respondents were cognizant of the constraints that schools work under, particularly those of finance and time, there was an acceptance that teachers were largely responsible for taking responsibility for their own professional learning.

Awareness of colleagues and control over professional learning were also two themes that were emerging as a result of this question.

Item 10: 'Organisers of Professional Learning often overlook the personal needs of teachers'

The average for this item was again marginally less than other items (see Figure 4.1).

Some written comments noted were:

“Difficult to cater for all individuals within a group”

“Too often I have heard teachers quietly asking, “What’s the point of this?”

“At times it feels like PD is being done just for the sake of it, not with a look at personal needs”

“I would rather be workshopped than lectured to”

“Organisers don’t always appreciate the needs of teachers”

In summary, the written responses to this item reflect awareness that organisers of professional learning often overlook the personal needs of teachers. There was an understanding of the constraints of being part of a large organisation but many respondents appeared to be expressing concern about the content and appropriateness of professional learning to them as classroom teachers. The style of the delivery of professional learning by external providers also was of concern to some teachers who expressed a need for professional learning providers to vary their delivery modes.

Item 11: 'There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator in secondary schools'

Teachers who responded to this item again expressed views which were marginally different (see Figure 4.1) to other items. The written comments included the following;

“With the rate of change, PD needs to be controlled, monitored and organised”

“Would be good opportunity to give professional development real importance”

“Someone who can coordinate, motivate and point out opportunities”

“Someone who can help teachers plan PD, a Mentor”

“Professional teachers are quite capable of organising their own development”

In summary, generally the respondents agreed that there was a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator in secondary schools. However there was little in the teacher written comments as to why it was not scored more highly by respondents.

Item 12: ‘Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers’

Again the responses were marginal in favour of agreement (See Figure 4.1) but lower than other items. Some of the written comments were;

“What are the costs?”

“Finances and time are huge factors for staff considering further formal study”

“The demands of teaching (preparation, correction) already spill over into personal/family time”

“It is very time consuming”

“Work and study are not a healthy mix; one has to be compromised”

In summary, this item highlights the personal constraints that the teachers who responded to the Survey felt in regard to undertaking formalised study. The themes of finance and time emerged as did work life balance.

Item 13 (b) ‘Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher’s rhetoric’

The responses to this item were again marginal and indicated a general agreement. The written comments highlight the following themes;

“A change of language is easier than a change of technique”

“Large scale initiative such as the CSF, VET, influences school structures, the rhetoric spoken”

“The RSB (Registered Schools Board) and thus teacher practice”

“How many sessions do we have to sit through with no relevance to us!!”

“Where individuals feel that they have control over their professional and personal lives as teachers”

In summary, the respondents indicated that professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher’s rhetoric. There appeared to be emerging themes of negativity and lack of control over the changes.

4.2.3 Summary of survey analysis

In summary the initial analysis of the survey responses provided some useful ideas that were fed into the development of the focus group paper. Although the teachers responded positively to all the items, which were born out by the comments they added, the issues of finance, time, personal needs, different learning styles, and some perceived control over their own professional learning/work life balance started to emerge as particularly important to them. Hence these were taken up in the focus groups and interviews. Not surprisingly then these emerge as some of the important themes in the further analyses of the data. All the written comments on survey items were interwoven with the focus group and interview data and subject to more detailed analysis.

4.3 An Analysis of Survey Written Comments, Focus Group and Interview Data

Data is inert unless we extract meaning. The meaning in this thesis is derived from the lived experiences of teachers. In this section, the focus group and interview data will be

presented and analysed. The written comments from the surveys will also be intertwined with the transcripts from the focus groups and interview. This contributed to the cascading effect of the collection of rich data.

I have been conscious of the need for anonymity for the teacher participants of the focus groups and interviews and have refrained from identifying the teacher by referring to their years of experience, gender, or any other label which could lead to their identification unless this was imperative for understanding the quote. In the case of the interviews, I have not identified the school in which the teacher is a staff member to also safeguard their anonymity.

4.3.1 Analysis of transcripts and written comments framework

As you will have read in the previous chapter, the focus groups did not completely reflect the optimistic profile that I had initially developed. You will also recall from Chapter 3 that it was not possible to organise a focus group at one of the three Colleges because the third school was heavily involved in a new meeting schedule, which prevented these respondents taking on extra commitments. To address these shortcomings I endeavoured to arrange a number of individual interviews with respondents. However this added only three more voices. The profile of the respondents who were involved in the focus groups and interviews is given in Table 3.3. This shows I was interacting with many experienced respondents. But in fact, as noted above, all three colleges had a preponderance of experienced teachers.

Using the emerging themes from the initial analysis of the survey data, which had in turn originated from the Literature Review, the Focus Group Discussion Paper was

devised and presented to the participants of the focus groups at St. Patrick's College and Damascus College. The same paper was presented to teachers who chose to be interviewed rather than to be part of a focus group. The Focus Group Discussion Paper (see Appendix E) was distributed to participants prior to the session. This gave them time to consider the questions. The questions were structured to encourage participants in the focus groups to begin the professional discussion. As the sessions progressed, I was able to use a less structured process as I explored points of interest and issues. This allowed the voice of those who needed to be heard to have an opportunity to provide the 'lived experience'.

The focus group and interview discussions were audio taped with the assistance of a research assistant. Field notes of interest to me as the researcher, which can be found in my research field journals, were written as the discussions progressed. I transcribed the audio tapes, and these were checked for authenticity by the research assistant. Whilst the transcribing was quite laborious, I felt that it was important to listen to the tapes of the focus groups and interviewees and I transcribed them as this provided many valuable insights into the 'lived experience' of teachers and allowed me to revisit the nuances of the discussions.

Although the focus groups and interviews were conducted based on a discussion paper which in turn was built around key questions, the analysis which follows does not set out to answer these questions per se. It was in reading comments and transcripts and seeking to assign meaning to them, that I established categories which I collected under an umbrella of one of the four ideas which had emerged from the Literature Review in Chapter Two (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Ideas as a result of the literature review

Ideas from the review of the literature
Teacher and school community
Teachers' professional concern
Teachers' personal concerns
Teachers' and the broader system

I therefore did not use Grounded Theory in this initial analysis in its purest form since I was structuring the analysis with these main themes that had not emerged from these data. However, from that point, I used Grounded Theory principles to guide the analysis to further explore the existence of these four major themes, and then to see how they were developed by the thinking of the teachers.

I am cognizant of the fact that the process that I developed to code and memo the data was unique to this study. As a teacher researcher, there were many factors that had to be considered in the analysis of the data, including the fact that I had limited opportunities to initially collect data and these opportunities presented themselves over a protracted period of time. Thus, instead of being able to analyse the data arising from survey comments, focus group and interviews as one data set within a neat timeframe, I found it more expedient to analyse each set of data individually. Whilst this did not give me a complete overall picture by allowing the interleaving to occur at the same time, this 'constant comparative' method did allow me to engage with the data sets at each stage, and provided the opportunity to deal with each data set more thoroughly before moving on to the next to develop 'theoretical categories'. This was in line with the process outlined in Table 3.4. I now turn to giving some insight into how I went about coding and memoing the data.

4.3.2 *The coding process*

During the process of collecting data the analysis begins. It is not a linear process but in fact more of a “zig zag” process (Creswell, 1998, p.57). The aim of the research is to keep collecting data to add to “categories” described by Strauss and Corbin (1990, cited in Creswell, 1998, p.56) as a “unit of information composed of events, happenings and instances”. Whilst the process of collecting data is non-linear, the process of analysing the data is systematic. The initial categories are representative of the pieces of information about the “phenomena” being studied. In Chapter 3, I presented material about the initial coding based on the initial analysis of the survey data, remembering that the survey items incorporated insights gained from my personal insights as a teacher and the literature review. These ideas are reflected on by Robson:

The research question(s) and, in appropriate situations, the related literature, will after a period of unstructured observation and, probably gathering supporting information from other sources such as interviews and questionnaires, suggest how the process you wish to study might be captured by various observational categories. (Robson, 1993, p.209)

Table 4.3 illustrates the development of the categories and themes for the coding that is used in Figures, 4.5, 4.6. and 4.7.

Table 4.3: The development of the categories and themes for coding

Research Questions	Focus Group Qs & Interviews	Categories	Themes
How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?	<p>Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers</p> <p>Organisers of P/L often overlook the personal needs of teachers</p>	<p>Individual negative lack of control of professional learning (individual passive)</p> <p>Individual positive in control of professional learning (individual proactive)</p> <p>Personal needs</p> <p>Time Constraints</p> <p>Financial Constraints</p> <p>Individual professional needs awareness</p>	<p>Work Life Balance</p> <p>Teacher sense of Control</p> <p>Financial Constraints</p> <p>Balance between professional and personal needs</p>
How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?	<p>Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers</p> <p>Professional learning (PD) needs to be broad and inclusive of the individual needs of teachers</p> <p>There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator In secondary schools.</p>	<p>Awareness of Colleagues</p> <p>Time Constraints</p> <p>Financial Constraints</p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Teacher learning styles</p> <p>Pastoral role</p>	<p>Accessibility of PD opportunities</p> <p>Teacher sense of Control</p> <p>Pastoral Role</p> <p>Financial Constraints</p> <p>Collegial Awareness</p>
How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?	Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric	<p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Teacher learning styles</p> <p>Individual professional needs awareness</p>	Organisational Awareness

It became apparent whilst analysing the survey data and subsequent data from focus groups that within these themes there were smaller themes and categories.

It became apparent that a more specific model for coding and memoing the data was needed to provide a framework for data analysis for this particular project. The three Figures 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 are examples of the processes I undertook when coding and memoing the data from the surveys, focus groups and interviews. These examples are presented as they were compiled prior to the interleaving of all of the data and consistent with the process of establishing initial categories and then collecting data to establish that these categories are telling the correct story about the data or not.

The left hand side of each of the figures include comments made by the participants from one of the three schools; these are called 'Notes'. The right hand side of each of the figures is the coding of the notes. The bottom box in each figure contains 'memos': these are notes that I as the researcher made as a result of engaging with the data and reflecting on the analysis which had preceded the current analysis. At times the memos also served to remind me to seek more data on sub themes or themes that were emerging as the data was analysed and 'checked' against other data.

Time is probably one of the main disadvantages of the practitioner-researcher role (Robson, 1993, p. 447). This was certainly my experience as I undertook preliminary analyses of the three bodies of data, (written comments from surveys, transcripts from focus groups, transcripts from teachers) sequentially before interleaving them. The following sub sections comments separately on each of these three bodies of data. Later sections will deal with the interleaving of them.

Coding	Research
<p><u>Notes</u></p> <p>I think that schools would like to but budget constraints (PD costs, CRT cover, and time away from classes) do not allow it.</p> <p>Always a time/energy issue</p> <p>When the money allocated to PD of the whole staff is wasted on <u>accommodation</u>, one does wonder how it could be better spent.</p> <p>Not all staff takes advantage of the opportunity they have for PD</p> <p>There are lots of opportunities- but there is a maximum number of days which could be a problem</p> <p>Information about availability of PD can sometimes be hard to come by if you are not the one who receives it initially</p> <p>Particularly given limited opportunities and time and money</p> <p>Varies between schools and some people in schools are provided with more opportunities than others</p>	<p><u>Coding</u></p> <p>Organisational awareness Finance</p> <p>Time / personal needs</p> <p>Organisational awareness/teacher lack of control</p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Time/ organisational awareness</p> <p>Teacher lack of control / organisational awareness</p> <p>Finance/Time</p> <p>Organisational awareness/ teacher lack of control</p>

Memos: some interesting themes emerge in this survey comment data. Budgetary constraints are expressed either through knowledge or perception. Word “they” indicates that there is a passive element to teacher’s personal beliefs. What was interesting is that each of the schools there was a recent communal PD experience that drew much criticism. Categories – system/organisational awareness/finance and time are identified as emerging

Figure 4.5: Example of coding and memoing some of the data from Item 2 from the Survey

Coding	Research
<p><u>Notes</u> Respondent 4</p> <p>“ I think the structures are there”</p> <p>Respondent 2</p> <p>“ There are enough people within the school with enough experience to be able to help people deal with those situations”</p> <p>Respondent 1</p> <p>“ the basis of the situation is that if you have a problem in your class, you’re the problem”</p>	<p><u>Coding</u></p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Teacher lack of control</p>

Memos: PD for teachers moving into schools from elsewhere is an issue – pastoral care of experienced teachers appears to be as important as it is for new teachers. Damascus experience where we had a discussion group with experienced teachers new to our school. – ask teachers involved if can use this experience
‘Check’ this notion of ‘care’ with interviewees and possibly Principals
Organisational awareness is a continuing theme. Teacher lack of control influences both professional and personal lives of teachers.

Figure 4.6: Example of coding and memoing of focus group one discussion

Coding	Research
<p><u>Notes</u> Disappointed in the fact that I have come back with certain courses that I have done and it hasn't been utilised</p> <p>You often see people going off on in-services and so on but you don't hear as to what they have done and so on and I don't know whether part of that is the time frame factor where we are busy people</p> <p>I think the school has been pretty good as they will allow you to go do specific stuff for school and also you know – give you the opportunity to have personal development as well</p> <p>I have done a fair bit(PL) of it in my time over the years and I see it falling into 2 categories– special learning which is specific to say teaching and also the other part specific to my own personal and professional development</p> <p>I'm sure we could quite easily provide an in-service amongst ourselves</p> <p>I think you know us older types also need ...you know motivation and challenges and so on ahead of us – we can keep going through the motions –but it's not healthy necessarily for the kids or yourself.</p> <p>A professional learning development coordinator you know is quite broader than just dissemination of information – um you got to talk to individual people</p>	<p><u>Coding of themes</u></p> <p>Teacher lack of control</p> <p>Time constraints</p> <p>Organisational awareness</p> <p>Personal needs</p> <p>Personal & professional learning – Teacher sense of control</p> <p>Teacher sense of control</p> <p>Personal needs</p> <p>Role of professional development coordinator</p>

Interesting interview with male teacher in later stages of teaching career.
 Frustration- perceived lack of support for teachers in their situation
 Was positive about ability of school allow for professional learning to be shared
 Aware of 2 categories of teacher learning
 Everyday PD – meet needs of teaching students
 Study – broader insight into profession
 Need for pastoral element to professional development coordinator
 Reiterated the frustration of focus group – about school based PD

Figure 4.7: Example of coding and memoing of interview data with teacher with 30+ year's experience

4.3.3 *The survey comment analysis*

As each school's survey data became available to me, I began 'line by line' coding of the written comments. This involved allowing for the four main ideas that I had identified from the Literature Review to emerge and highlighting them as they emerged in the data, but also being aware that other sub themes of these four ideas, or indeed other major themes may emerge. As I highlighted I began to observe sub themes that were running through the data. I started to develop a coding system which allowed me to signify the presence of a theme or a sub theme as is shown in Table 4.3 and then to be able to apply it to other comments as I trawled through the comment data of all three schools.

As I reflected on the responses I began to code. In this initial analysis, I began to more clearly understand the underlying meaning of a statement that I have used earlier; data is inert unless we add meaning. The meaning became evident in the stories that unfolded. The themes that emerged at this early stage that I identified as being of importance were;

- Organisational Limitations
- Budgetary and Management
- Professional concerns
- Personal needs
- Individual Passive: where individuals talk in terms of "they" and consider that they have little or no influence over what happens

- Individual Proactive: where individuals feel that they have control over their professional and personal lives as teachers
- Time: a factor that emerges continuously through out the responses from these teaching professionals, particularly how they felt the lack of time to ‘indulge’ in their own professional learning.

As I began to use the codes, a pattern began to emerge of ‘most used’ terms. I also began to refine the terms used as I coded; thus Individual Passive became ‘individual negative lack of control of professional learning’ and Individual Proactive became ‘individual positive in control of professional learning’. Therefore as the analysis evolved so did the language to account for the changing nature of the themes and sub themes that ran through the comment data.

4.3.4 Analysing the focus group and interview transcripts

The focus groups were conducted after the completion of the collection and analysis of the survey data. The focus group transcripts were read ‘line by line’ and comments which supported the themes which emerged from the survey comments were transferred to the framework templates. Sub themes which were emerging from the focus group data analysis were checked against the survey comment data thus beginning the process of interleaving the data analysis. If a sub theme was not evident in the survey comment data, a note was recorded in the memo section of the framework template and was ‘checked’ in the analysis of the interview data.

A similar process to the above was employed for the three transcripts of teacher interviews.

4.3.5 Preliminary themes

The ongoing interactive process of analysing and reanalysing these data, in what I regarded as the first phase of analysis, took some eighteen months. During this time I made many additional comments on the process itself and on possible interpretations of ideas that seemed to be embedded in the data in my personal journals. Many of these ideas were taken up in phase two of the analysis.

At the completion of the first trawl through all the data sets a preliminary list of themes which had emerged from the data analysis were established and Table 4.4 was created to illustrate the emergence of the themes. A description of each of the themes has also been incorporated into Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Themes and sub themes

Themes	Sub Themes
Time Constraints	The limitations of not having enough time for professional and or personal life
Financial Constraints	The limitations of not having access to adequate financial resources can have on accessing professional learning
Organisational Awareness	Teacher awareness of being part of an organisation and in doing so being generally aware of how the organisation is operated including its resources
Teacher Lack of Control	Teachers who feel powerless in their ability to have influence on their professional lives.
Teacher Sense of Control	Teachers who feel they have power over their ability to have influence on their professional lives
Work Life Balance	Teacher awareness that there needs to be balance between their professional and personal lives
Personal Needs	Teacher awareness that there are personal needs that need to be met at the workplace and or at home
Role of Professional Learning Coordinator	Teacher awareness that the role of the Professional Development Coordinator is primarily an administrative role but has a pastoral or guidance aspect which is important.

A second, more comprehensive analysis was then undertaken and as a result, the themes became clearer and many of the sub themes were subsumed by major themes.

4.3.6 Final emergent themes

Having trawled through each of the three sets of data (written comments on surveys, focus group transcripts and interview transcripts), and then interleaving the preliminary findings to give the preliminary themes shown in Table 4.4, this same process was again employed with an eye to potentially reducing the number of themes. However caution was also employed to ensure the process of reduction did not eliminate important detail which would enrich the understanding of teachers' responses.

It was as a result of this more detailed analysis that the themes of 'Personal Needs', 'Teacher Lack of Control' and 'Teacher Sense of Control' were subsumed by the new major theme of 'Work Life Balance', described as being 'Teacher awareness that there needs to be a balance between their professional and personal lives and part of that balance is about being in control of the personal and professional aspects of life.'

This more thorough trawl through the data also led me to the placing of the theme of the 'Role of Professional Learning Coordinator' into the theme of 'Organisational Awareness'. It became increasingly clear that the teachers who participated in the study were viewing the role of Professional Learning Coordinator in a wider context of the school. Thus I felt that this fitted within the theme of 'Organisational Awareness'.

‘Time Constraints’ was a theme that emerged quite early in the analysis as being important and continued to be a major theme throughout the analysis of the focus group and interview data.

‘Financial Constraints’ was also a theme that emerged early in the survey comment data analysis and was present in the analysis of the focus group and interview data. This theme is a prominent one as teachers grapple with the conflicting issues of continuing to be active professional learners, and the cost of many of the professional learning activities which the schools cannot or choose not to meet.

The resultant rearrangement for major themes and associated sub themes are shown in Table 4.5. In the next section each of these major themes will be more fully described by reference to the data.

Table 4.5: Major themes and sub themes

Major themes	Sub themes
Time Constraints	
Financial Constraints	
Organisational Awareness	The role of the professional learning coordinator Administration of professional learning
Work Life Balance	Personal needs Teacher sense of control Teacher lack of control

4.4 Elaboration of the Themes

In this section the themes that emerged as being important to the teachers who participated in the study are presented and described with reference to the data.

4.4.1 *Time constraints*

Time is a resource that teachers now seem to have less of and it was not surprising to me as a teacher practitioner that the theme of ‘Time’ emerged as a concern for teachers. Increasingly, they are juggling an increasingly demanding teaching role with pursuing professional learning and sometimes a family. Within the theme of ‘Time Constraints’ the timing of and the amount of time devoted to professional learning activities, and the constraints that they had on personal time, are issues that are important.

It was the considered opinion of many of the teachers who participated in focus groups and interviews that organisers of professional learning do not always appreciate the time needs of teachers, especially when the sessions are organised for after school or at the end of term. One focus group expressed disquiet about the fact that professional learning is often organised by people who do not have fulltime teaching loads and if they ever had such a load, may have forgotten the demanding nature of being a classroom teacher. For example, during one interview a teacher with more than thirty years experience commented, “One of the other teachers asked me and be honest – is teaching any busier than it was fifteen years ago? And I said yes and it really is you know.

Many teachers acknowledged the need to continue developing professionally by attending professional learning activities and or completing further study, but many felt that time was limiting their ability to do all of this. “ But you do have a busy schedule that’s in front of you, that is your job, that you’re paid for and they want you to do and that’s your primary task which is to be in the classroom and teach kids, this other stuff sometimes becomes an imposition”, was an opinion of an experienced teacher in an interview. But it was typical of the responses of a number of teachers to the idea of juggling professional learning and teaching.

Another teacher wrote on the survey: “If reasonable, realistic time release was available, I for one would love to pursue study – but I have no time/energy/motivation left after fulfilling teacher & extra –curricular duties – (not to mention personal/family life obligations)”. This comment also captures the opinions of a number of the teachers who participated in the focus groups and interviews.

Time needed to be spent on preparation and correction away from school is a reality for most teachers. After a day of teaching, often ‘after school sport’ or ‘student debating’ occupies a few more hours for many teachers. Thus “if you have small children or family commitments, out of hours study is difficult, not just the personal life, also the professional life – the many hours after school and on weekends that are spent in preparation and correction” explained a teacher in focus group two who had studied most of the time her children were little.

Teachers spoke honestly about their dissatisfaction with increasing work loads which meant more time committed to formal school activities and hence a diminishment of what they regard as ‘their time’. Many of them acknowledged that there were

opportunities, but time is a major determinant when making decisions about attendance at external professional learning and /or undertaking formalised study. “There are lots of opportunities- but there are a maximum number of days which could be a problem” was the insightful comment of a teacher in focus group two. Such a comment emphasises the frustration some teachers felt as they made those decisions about attendance at professional learning activities in the context of their professional and personal lives.

The timing of professional learning is also a major factor for teachers, many of whom face long sessions after a busy teaching day or busy terms: “These things at the end of a busy term, I think are wasted” because “You’re less likely to incorporate that into your teaching, because by the time you’ve come back after an extended period away you have forgotten it. People were tired...” were the comments shared by the teachers of focus group one who, a short time prior to our focus group meeting, were participants in a professional learning activity at the end of a busy semester.

In general then, time emerged as an important factor for teachers as they grappled with the contesting needs of their obligations to their teaching and on-going professional learning. Fullan argues that “Having more time is not the answer to sustainability, it’s having more energy” (2004 Conference Booklet). This will be addressed further in Chapter 6 where a synthesis of the factors which both enhance and repress professional learning for teachers in rural areas.

4.4.2 Financial constraints

This theme encapsulates the finite resource of money. It emerged as a theme in the comment data from the surveys and was reiterated in the focus groups with one teacher

from focus group one commenting “ finances and time are huge factors for staff considering further formal study”.

Increasing fees that students are charged to undertake formal study has had a huge impact on teachers who would like to pursue higher degrees but are unable to fully afford the fees. Some staff in focus group one felt that “If schools are going to benefit from our study, I know we benefit from it as well....there needs to be some sort of allowance made.” Financial assistance is but one important resource the schools can contribute to, the other being time, which was discussed above.

The cost of enrolling in further education qualifications is often only partially met by scholarships and professional learning budgets. “Catholic Education Office funding – that has probably helped things” was the comment made by a teacher in focus group two. There was an acknowledgement from some teachers that there was funding available in the Ballarat Diocese to meet some of the expenses associated with further study and whilst it does not meet the full cost of enrolling in a course some of the other teachers in the other diocese’ are “green with envy!” exclaimed a staff member from focus group two.

“Budget constraints and teacher replacement will always affect a school’s ability to offer PD opportunities” was another insightful comment made by a teacher in response to the timing of professional learning opportunities and an acknowledgement of the limitations that the organisation sometimes has to impose to ensure budget targets are met. The three schools who participated in this study had professional learning budgets and a discussion of the distribution of these funds is presented in Chapter Five.

However it does underline the reality that individual teachers can not hope for or expect

their school to wholly fund their professional learning program. For mid life, experienced teachers who may very well be paying school fees for teenage children, this reality clearly bridges their professional and personal lives.

Hence whilst some assistance was available to staff for the costs of further study, this did not appear to be available widely. Some other teachers who participated in focus group one felt an inequality in the way funds were distributed in their school. “Some opportunities are given to some but not others” was the frustrated view of one staff member.

Conversely the teachers in focus group two were satisfied that sufficient funding was provided to cater for individual requests for assistance for further study in their school. “It’s available but not everyone avails themselves of the opportunity.” And “I can’t imagine anyone in the current climate getting knocked back on something and I think that’s really important the fact that it’s encouraged some people”. These comments indicate an awareness of the limitations that some of their colleagues may place upon themselves. It also indicates a situation where some teachers may feel more empowered than others, a theme which will be further explored in Chapter Six.

The associated travel and accommodation costs for teachers who live in the rural areas were also noted as a major concern, since many of the courses that teachers can enrol in are based in Melbourne. “This is true particularly in a regional city like Ballarat, where travel to and from Melbourne is often required for PD” was the comment from one interviewee when discussing this issue. As a teacher who has lived in rural areas all of my teaching career and having completed a Masters degree I can fully empathise with this.

One of the teachers who was interviewed informed me that “I haven’t paid for any of the courses that I have done but I have paid for travel and accommodation.” But being a young teacher he felt that “I have plenty of money at the moment coming from nothing, but when I start a family it will be lot tighter.” This is a poignant remark and highlights the interrelationship that exists between a teacher’s personal life and their professional life at different stages in their careers. As does the comment from a teacher who has a family and expresses the following concern (My) “Own children’s educational costs – do not allow for self education”

Turning now from study teachers may undertake towards a degree to other ongoing professional learning, finance was again an issue for many teachers. Many of the teachers who responded in focus groups and interviews expressed concern about the seeming lack of available funds for professional learning from within schools. “But the when, where, who pays etc remains a problem” for a teacher who participated in focus group one and was irritated by the seeming lack of funds when they applied to the school to attend a professional learning opportunity.

Great concern was also expressed about budget allocation within schools by teachers in focus group two. I noted that there was general agreement that “When the money allocated to Professional Development of the whole staff is wasted on accommodation, one does wonder how it could be better spent”. This was a major issue for these teachers who are committed to the profession but who believe that an investment in teacher learning is more important than the venue especially when “They (‘Maths Teachers Association’ and the ‘Victorian Association for the Teaching of English’) are very

expensive and as a faculty head, you can't send people to them as there is not enough money.”

Clearly, the financial theme is one that struck a chord with teachers as they grappled with the acknowledgement that professional learning was a necessary part of their personal and professional growth. In particular this analysis highlights the pressure that has been brought to bear by the soaring costs of higher education and the associated costs of travel and accommodation for teachers in rural areas. This theme will be further explored in the analysis of interview data of the principals and Catholic Education Office staff in Chapter Five.

4.4.3 Organisational awareness

This theme became prominent as I worked through the written comments, focus group and interview data. Included in this theme is the analysis of the role of Professional Learning Coordinator and the analysis of the data collected about the administration of professional learning. The teachers' views varied from not needing a separate position

I think structures are there, there is a Director of Pastoral Care and there are enough people within the school with enough experience to be able to help people deal with those situations to the need for a position that was valued because of the complexity of the role

as articulated by a teacher in focus group one, to

We've always had Professional Development Coordinator....it's a senior

role it has to be someone who is well regarded and respected as a teacher and as an administrator and I think that given the status then people should read that from us that we see it as being really important

which were the sentiments of a teacher in focus group two.

Whether this diversity of view was simply a reflection of the different experiences of the teachers in different schools was not clear. However even the teachers in focus group one who did not see the need for a distinct position that looked after the professional learning of staff did concede that some how senior staff needed to give oversight, drawing on their experience, to ensure quality professional learning was undertaken.

Many of the staff expressed positive views about such a role including some suggestions from a teacher with thirty plus years experience who was interviewed.

To me a Professional Learning Development Coordinator you know is quite broader than just dissemination of information – you have got to talk to individual people, it is support counselling, you have to listen to their needs and try and accommodate their needs. It's not just putting pieces of paper in to your pigeonhole or sending an email saying such and such a course is you know being offered.

This pastoral perspective was not one that emerged readily in focus group one and I 'checked' its validity with focus group two and two other interviewees. One of the teachers in focus group one suggested that it could be "Someone who can coordinate,

motivate and point out opportunities, someone who can help teachers plan that is a Mentor”.

Whilst this opinion was valued by the teachers, it appeared that there was general opinion that individual professional learning is the responsibility of the individual teacher. As one teacher in focus group two commented,

I think that staff should be taking responsibility for their own, I don't think that we need to wait for the school to take care of it for us or we're not really professional people I think the school can provide opportunities but I don't believe that the individual needs have to be met by the school.

This opinion was supported in both focus groups where teachers felt that they would like to have more responsibility for their own professional learning. Yet another group supported the idea that “Teachers know what they need”. It was their belief that as professionals they knew what their needs were but also “that it's more so the teachers who need to look at where they need to upgrade their skills.” Thus a strong sense of personal responsibility for personal professional learning was emerging. In Chapter Six, I will explore this point in more detail as the gap between knowing what a teacher's professional needs are as opposed to actually doing something about it.

The teachers linked the need for more control over the professional learning and the Annual Review Meeting (ARM) with the principal in which all staff in Catholic schools have to participate. This is a meeting that each staff member has each year with their principal or principal's delegate. The ARM is described by the Victorian Independent Education Union (VIEU) as a process “To affirm achievements and to suggest avenues

of professional development in line with the Dimensions of Teaching and Professional Standards” (VIEU, 2001, p.4) During the ARM, it is suggested that teachers should have the opportunity to review and discuss their professional goals and determine a plan for the future. A small number of the teachers questioned the value of the ARM. “I think that sometimes it seems to be just a piece of paper that gets filed” and “I had an ARM last year and it’s my TRM (Triennial Review Meeting conducted by peers and Principals where goals for three years are set) this year and I am not sure I got a great deal out of it”, were two of the comments that seemed to capture the majority voice of the teachers. How a Professional Learning Coordinator may deal with these competing issues will be discussed in Chapter Six.

There was general agreement however that there was a need for the professional learning of teachers to be coordinated to some degree within a school. This role was generally viewed as a highly administrative: “If we are going to have somebody whose role it is to coordinate PD – I imagine it would be that person’s role to make it known to people what is available” was one voice from focus group one. Many of the teachers expressed concern about what happened to the information about professional learning which comes into a school. If a Coordinator was appointed, then one teacher in focus group one said it would be “Someone who could oversee the distribution of *info* to teachers and be a central resource person who coordinates etc”. Some concern was raised in focus group one about the professional learning role being disseminated amongst the Heads of Faculty: “The PD stuff is just another thing that is tacked onto the faculty heads role description somewhere down in amongst all the other general things you’re supposed to do”. It should be remembered that a number of the participants held such positions in their school.

The teachers concentrated much of their energy in responding to the role of Professional Learning Coordinator in exploring the availability of professional learning opportunities to them. A number of teachers felt that “often teachers are quite passive and inactive in sourcing” professional learning, but felt that the resources were available if you looked. The majority of teachers in the study felt that easier access to information on relevant professional learning programs would assist them in making decisions about their professional learning.

Clearly in the frequency and quality of responses, to the sub theme of ‘Administration of professional learning’ was seen as very important by the teachers. An analysis of the collected data led me to the understanding that by and large teachers access professional learning activities readily if they are encouraged and motivated. However many articulated the need for more involvement by the school in planning of professional learning activities because they felt that “I don’t know whether often they are aware of what the individual needs of teachers are because I don’t think teachers are very forthcoming”. This was a representative comment of a teacher in focus group one. This sub theme of teacher control will be analysed further in the next sub section of this chapter.

Further concern was expressed about sharing the new learning once teachers returned to school after completing a professional learning activity. Teachers suggested there was a lack of a forum to share what they had learnt. A teacher who was interviewed said “You come back into school and half the time there is never any time to really think that through or go back over it or talk about it with anybody or present it to anyone.” This was identified as a weakness by teachers and best expressed by a teacher in focus group two who said “encourage people to be part of it but the weakness has been that we are

not getting the feedback for all sorts of reasons in terms of what people really enjoy and what they got out of it and so on and it doesn't have to be too long".

The quality of the presentations in professional learning activities also drew comments from the teachers " Too often I have heard teachers quietly asking, "What's the point of this?" quoted one of the teachers who was interviewed. " I would rather be workshopped than lectured to" and "Organisers don't always appreciate the needs of teachers" were opinions expressed by teachers in focus group one. The teachers' comments reflect the ideas expressed in the literature on adult learning as presented in Chapter Two (see Cross, 1981; Stoll & Fink,1996; Whitaker, 1993). The set of guiding principles which were presented in Chapter 2 (section 2.5) clearly articulate the point that organisers and presenters are negligent if they fail to recognise the importance of acknowledging adult learners and the skills and knowledge that they have. This important point will be investigated further in Chapter Six.

There are many factors that impinge on the way in which administration teams deal with professional learning. As a member of a leadership team I am only too aware of the financial and time constraints under which schools operate. Availability of preferred presenters can impact on the timing of the professional learning as well as consideration of the number of days students are away from school and the impact that taking days out of a senior school program can have on the delivery of the curriculum. Teachers are only too aware of the limitations that are imposed on schools from a variety of sources. However, what was overwhelmingly evident in these data was that teachers generally want to be involved in the organisation of their own professional learning and have the opportunity to be consulted in regard to school professional learning as much as possible.

4.4.4 *Work life balance*

There exists in schools the need to assist teachers with balancing their professional and personal needs. Many schools attempt to address these issues in a variety of ways including encouraging teachers to take study leave, financial assistance for accommodation and travel but teachers are still feeling that an increasing demand on their time during and after school hours, coupled with personal commitments, often leaves little if no time for exploring professional learning. Within this theme I will present the analysis of the data on Work Life Balance, through a discussion of the three sub themes 'Personal needs', 'Teacher lack of control' and 'Teacher sense of control'.

Dealing first with the '*Personal needs*', as I observed and listened to the teachers in the focus groups and interviews, and as I engaged with the written comment data from the surveys, the lived experience of the teachers overwhelmingly pointed to the awareness that there has to be a happy balance in life. "I'll do my job and then I have a life too" was the opinion of a teacher in focus group one.

It is within this theme that the generally ageing nature of the teaching workforce in the three Catholic schools in Ballarat emerges as an issue. "It will be interesting with the teaching force ageing....there'll be more people without time constraint but have they got the energy?" asked a teacher who was interviewed. This issue did not arise as a theme as there was insufficient data to prioritise it as a major theme but not to acknowledge it would be neglectful. One focus group member and two interviewees referred to this issue that was succinctly encompassed in this quote from a teacher with more than thirty years experience "The ageing of school teachers is significant and the

teenage children and the ageing parents and the menopause and just the general tiredness, we're getting worn out and I wish we were getting more vibrant people in".

There was general agreement that the ageing nature of the workforce could have some implications for the schools in this study and a belief that lifelong learning was important for all "I think you know us older types also need motivation and challenges and so on ahead of us – we can keep going through the motions – but it's not healthy necessarily for the kids or yourself" explained one of the more experienced teachers who was interviewed.

It became obvious that juggling the demands of increasingly busy teaching commitments and personal time was a stress for many of the teachers who participated in this study. "The demands of teaching (preparation, correction) already spill over into personal/family time."

Thus any discussion about professional learning outside of school time became a source of tension for some of the teachers. "Work and study are not a healthy mix; one has to be compromised" is but one comment made by a teacher in focus group one. The fact that most formalised study ate into weekends, and hence personal time, deterred many teachers from pursuing this form of professional learning outside of school. This in practice means that you worked two weeks without a break missing out on weekends. This was clearly a disincentive. "That's when it hits you, in the middle of the second week when you haven't had a break" commented one teacher who had recently completed a Masters degree through Australian Catholic University and was present in focus group two.

Equally there was a representation of teachers in both focus groups and interviews who had juggled formalised study, their teaching, and having family commitments. A teacher in the focus group two acknowledged that it is “actually committing yourself to do it is probably the hardest thing. “As well as the demands of studying at night and weekends, there are the family commitments. When you do have those responsibilities when you have kids involved in sport you know – it is hard to fit in and then study at night – that can be a killer too.”

Another teacher participant in the focus group one with little children commented; “When you have little kids it’s physically hard to keep your brain going, it’s hard enough when you are working and you have to go home and you’ve got kids to worry about.”

“I could do a Masters..... but do I need a Masters?” was the attitude portrayed by a teacher in focus group one and indicative of the attitude expressed by a group of teachers who felt that formalised study was often not practical. “I read about schools in America, its structures and you’re reading those books – well I can’t apply any of this, it doesn’t help....my job is to teach in the classroom”. This sentiment is heard daily in schools as busy teachers look for practical professional learning to enhance their teaching and the learning of their students. Many are dedicated teachers who both lack the time to concentrate on formalised study, and often do not see any value in study which they can not immediately apply in the classroom.

However there were others who saw their formalised study in positive terms. A teacher in the focus group two said “It’s OK for some people. I mean I did a Masters and that suited me. I didn’t have a social life, I had something else. For some people that’s not

what they want to do.” Formalised study is clearly a very personal decision based on a number of factors including your personal commitments, energy levels and motivation.

It could be concluded that the lens through which the teachers viewed their professional and personal learning was one that was focussed on regaining and or re-establishing the need for them to have much more control over the professional learning activities in which they participate. The sub theme *‘Teacher lack of control’* describes how many teachers expressed concern about a lack of control over professional life. “Large scale initiative such as the Curriculum Standards Framework, Vocational Education and Training, influences school structures, the rhetoric spoken, the Registered Schools Board and thus teacher practice”.

A participant in focus group one articulated the frustration felt by many teachers who are herded into generic professional learning sessions which are often planned by the leadership group. “How many sessions do we have to sit through with no relevance to us!!” An interviewee also felt that “at times it feels like PD is being done just for the sake of it, not with a look at personal needs”. The participants in focus group one and one of the interviewees generally felt that they had less control over their professional learning than the participants in focus group two and the other two of the other interviewees.

Conversely a number of participants felt that they could have control over their own professional learning thus providing support for the sub theme *‘Teacher sense of control’*. “Professional teachers are quite capable of organising their own development” was the sentiment expressed by a participant in the focus group two. A teacher with a senior leadership position felt that “staff should be taking responsibility for their own

(PD). I think the school can provide opportunities but I don't believe that the individual needs have to be met by the school.”

Teachers can make decisions about the sort of professional learning that they require but the support structures within the school must exist for this to eventuate. In focus group two another participant supported the belief that in their school “It's available but not everyone avails themselves of the opportunity”. Many of the teachers who participated in focus group two were confident that their professional learning needs could be negotiated with the school and felt in control of their own personal learning.

4.5 Influences on Professional Learning

As the coding continued and emerging themes checked using comparative checking, a model began to emerge which sits behind the themes and sub themes. This model starts to represent the inter-relationship between the personal and professional lives of rural teachers as they journey through their teaching career.

The model is premised on the data collected about critical influences on teachers' professional learning in the three schools that were part of this study. Hence the model presented pertains to these three schools and I cannot claim that it represents the relationships between the four major themes in other schools. However, as I have noted in earlier chapters, my interest in these issues has spanned many years and hence my research is influenced by my experiences pre-dating this study. So I would also note as an interesting sidelight that the relationships in the model that I now develop between the four major themes have also been noted to some degree in other schools that I have taught in, outside of the Ballarat Diocese.

It became quite evident as the data analysis proceeded that the themes were interrelated. In discussing each theme individually in the previous section, it would have become clear that each of the major themes interleaved with some of the others. This can be seen most obviously when the same quote has been used to give body to different themes and or sub themes. As well, particular issues that teachers discussed could be seen to relate to a number of themes; for example time and finance. Many teachers expressed concern at the lack of time in an already congested teaching day for personal learning or enough time to juggle the demands of a family life and a career.

Some of the teachers in the study also felt that they were not in a personal position to pay for the fees associated with personal study and also realised that the school in which they worked was unable to fully fund their learning. Some of the teachers in the study also felt that professional learning opportunities at their school were limited by financial constraints. However, in this analysis there was only one major theme which interleaved with all of the themes; 'Work Life Balance'.

You will recall that Table 4.4 presented the definitions of each of the themes including Work Life Balance. This particular theme most fully underpins the major concern of the thesis 'Teacher Learning Matters - The interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of rural teachers'. Section 4.4.4 discussed in detail this theme.

However, many of the points made in section 4.4.4 had already been alluded to in earlier sections of the analysis. Nevertheless it was this theme that seemed to draw the issues most firmly together.

The last thing that I want to do in this chapter is to more clearly illustrate the inter relationships between the themes that emerged in the analysis. A convenient way to do that is to model it using a diagram (see Figure 4.8).

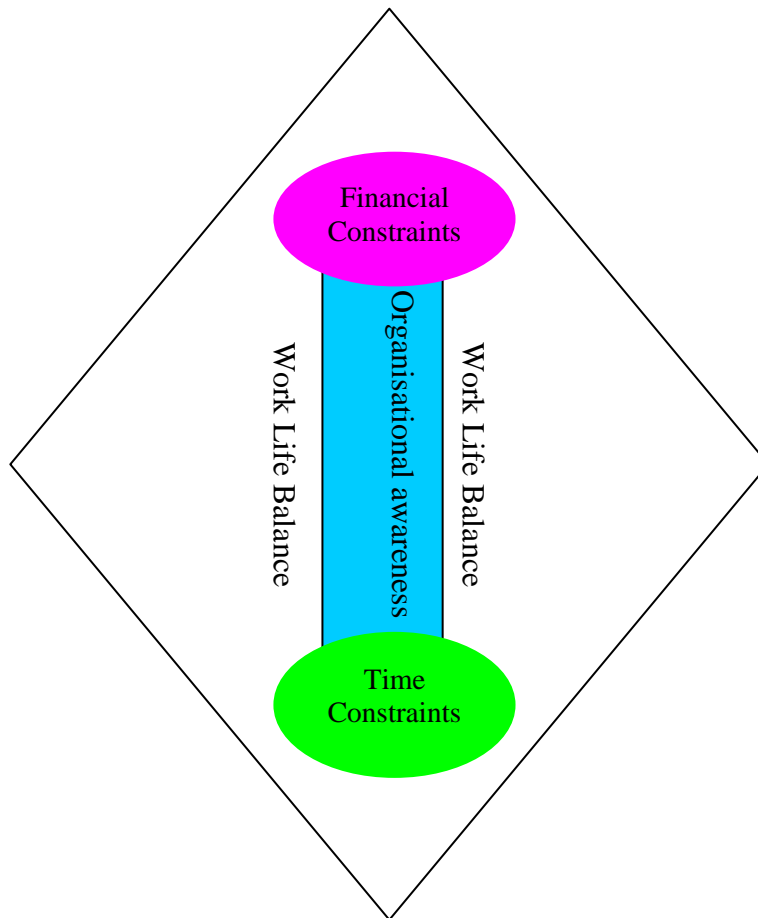


Figure 4.8: Critical influences on teachers' professional learning in their school

The diagram uses the four major themes which emerged from the analysis of the data and places them to illustrate the relationship between the critical influences on teacher professional learning and the balance of life and work.

Work Life Balance is placed as the *background* to the three themes of ‘financial constraints’, ‘time constraints’ and ‘organisational awareness’. This placement is not because the Work Life Balance theme is less important than the other themes, but in fact it gives the framework from which the other three are better understood. The title of the thesis also reflects this central belief that there is a balance between life and work, and there are major factors which help to sustain and support teachers as well as factors which frustrate and impede teachers in their lives. Hence the Work Life Balance theme becomes the central, core base on which the other themes and issues are placed.

The central rectangle ‘organisational awareness’ is a theme which includes the analysis of the role of Professional Learning Coordinator and the analysis of the data collected about the administration of professional learning. The notion of organisational awareness is essential in the professional lives of teachers as often the professional learning that teachers’ access is organised by and /or delivered by teachers with leadership positions within their schools. There was a perception amongst some of the teachers who participated in the study that the organisers of professional learning and or the leadership team did not take the needs of all teachers into account. This emphasises the importance that teachers attach to this theme in that it can have negative, as well as positive, outcomes for them. Whilst some teachers who participated in the study were cognizant of the difficulties organisers of professional learning experienced as they attempted to cater for staff within their schools, some teachers felt that there were too many constraints on their professional learning. Interestingly they had few solutions to offer to overcome the impediments.

Just as some teachers felt that there were constraints placed on their learning by the school, another group of teachers felt that the constraints of 'time' and 'finance' were self imposed.

There were opportunities for professional learning in their school but a number of people did not often avail themselves of the opportunity for a variety of reasons, many of which were encompassed by the theme of 'work life balance'. Hence it is appropriate to have these two themes contained within the boundaries of the theme 'work life balance'.

'Financial constraints' and 'time constraints' also emerged as themes which are seen as products of 'organisational awareness' by some teachers who participated in the study, but not by all. Nevertheless some of the teachers who did not view the organisation as being completely responsible for the constraints of 'time' and 'finance' did see that they could affect a teacher's ability to access professional learning. Thus they are represented as separate themes with equal importance, which are linked together by the 'organisational awareness' theme.

I haven't purposefully tried to make the model fit all schools. This model has emerged from the analysis of data from three particular schools in Ballarat. I see the diagram as a useful modelling tool to describe the critical influences within these schools. I have attempted to reconceptualise the themes as they emerged in a model with the critical point being that teacher learning needs to be supported and reinforced by the school within their capacity to do so.

4.6 Summary

Through the process of analysing the data resulting from survey comments, focus groups and interviews it can be concluded that teachers view professional learning as an integral part of their development as professionals, but they emphasise the point that there has to be a balance between their professional and personal lives. Figure 4.8 is a diagrammatic representation of the interrelationship between the four themes which emerged, and serves to accentuate the concerns expressed by the ‘lived experiences’ of the teachers who participated in the study.

The four major themes which emerged as being of importance to the teachers who participated will be further explored with the Principals from the three schools who participated in this study and two staff members of the Ballarat Catholic Education Office in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Analysis of Principal and Catholic Education Office Data

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of both the principal, and the Ballarat Catholic Education Office staff data. As outlined in Chapter Three, I conducted semi-structured interviews with two of the principals who were still residents of Ballarat and one interview via mail with the third principal. These interviews were structured to test whether the themes which emerged from the teacher data were realistic from the principals' perspectives in the context of the school setting. A discussion paper (see Appendix G) was sent to the principals prior to the interviews.

I also made the decision to interview two staff members of the Ballarat Catholic Education Office as previously stated in Chapter Three. Their views were sought using similar interviewing techniques employed when interviewing the principals. The same discussion paper was sent to these staff as was sent to the principals. The analysis of their data will give something of a system's understanding of professional learning of teachers.

Part of the discussion paper sent to the principals and Catholic Education Office staff noted the themes and sub themes that emerged from the teacher data. These are repeated for convenience in Table 5.1. Instead of using Grounded Theory principles to seek emergent themes in these two sets of data, it seemed more reasonable to interrogate

these data to understand the principals and CEO staff response to the teachers' perspectives.

Table 5.1: Final themes and sub-themes that emerged from the teacher data

Major themes	Sub themes
Financial Constraints	
Time Constraints	
Organisational Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the Professional Learning Coordinator • Administration of professional learning
Work Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal needs • Teacher sense of control • Teacher lack of control

5.2 Analysis of Principal Data

As noted in Chapter Three, I transcribed the two principal interviews I had taped whilst interviewing the two principals residing in Ballarat. I also had a hard copy of the correspondence from the third principal who had retired and relocated. I began the analysis of the principals' data with the four themes shown in Table 5.1 and their incorporated sub-themes. Using 'line by line' coding as described in Chapter Three, I initially examined the principal data looking for evidence of the above four major themes and their associated sub themes. Hence the analysis of these sets of transcripts followed a slightly different pattern than used for the teachers' data. The themes that emerged from the teacher data were in many instances found in the principal data but I

became cognizant of the fact that the principals had a deeper organisational insight into the operation of each of their schools. Thus the initial names given to the themes found in the principal data were changed from those used in the teacher analysis to express the lived voice of the principals. It was my initial intention to establish one set of themes that would 'fit' both sets of data, but what emerged were two different but overlapping sets of themes, which will be discussed in Chapter Six.

'Time Constraints' became 'Time', and 'Financial Constraints' became 'Finance'.

These changes were made because the principals articulated an administrative picture of these themes and did not support the notion that there were constraints associated with them as had the teachers. 'Organisational Awareness' became 'Organisation' to reflect the developed understanding that the three principals articulated in regard to the administration of their schools. 'Work Life Balance' also changed as a theme for the principals to 'Work Life / Study Balance' as they drew directly from their experiences of teachers juggling a professional life and a personal life. A more thorough trawl through the principal data drew my attention to the sub themes that came into play as the analysis proceeded. Table 5.2 summarises the themes and sub themes found in the principal data. A discussion of these findings will now follow structured by the use of the major themes.

Table 5.2: Themes and sub themes from principal data

Major Themes	Sub themes
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal choice • Professional choice
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the professional learning coordinator • Administration of professional learning
Work Life/Study Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal needs • Personal choice • Teacher sense of control • Teacher lack of control

5.2.1 Finance

Whilst the teacher data demonstrated that there was a general negative feeling that there was insufficient funding for the wide variety of professional learning activities that teachers could or maybe should be involved in, including formalised study, the principal data was not so supportive of the negative connotation of this theme. Two of the principals felt that their schools' budgets were generally adequate to meet the competing needs of individual versus school professional learning. One principal lamented the fact that despite providing a generous budget the funds were not often spent:

We make very generous financial provision, which is almost every year underspent, quite significantly. People haven't used up as much PD as we have budgeted for. (Principal one)

Principal two stated; “We’ve grown resource levels and we have \$50,000 in the PD budget this year. That’s putting your resources where your priorities are.” Principal three acknowledged that their budget could have been bigger but still would not satisfy the needs of some staff. “I believe the school made a conscious effort to encourage PD, the budget could have been bigger but that alone would not have been enough to move some people”. What is interesting in the analysis, is that the teachers in the focus group who felt that there was adequate funding were from the school whose principal felt that this budget item could have been bigger. Clearly this is a dissonance in the perceptions of the staff and principal. On the other hand the teachers from this school who participated in the focus group and were satisfied with their ability to access professional learning and felt supported in doing so, were teachers who felt in control of their own professional learning. The principal was cognizant of the fact that not every teacher accessed the professional learning budget, thus there was that impression that there was adequate funding. This may have been a different perception if all teachers accessed the professional learning budget not just a few.

Principal two felt that financial accountability was a key factor in professional learning opportunities and expressed a belief that as far as assisting with formalised study, they were happy to match a financial commitment from the staff member. He also noted that staff could also access Diocesan sponsorship funding, “Going a third, a third and a third, that’s one way....but somewhere along the line there needs to be a contribution by the person”. This view of supporting professional learning reduces the financial resources that the individual teacher has to invest, but is only one aspect of support for teacher learning.

Principal three felt that if teachers considered teaching to be a profession and were prepared to do all the extras “and that includes study”, they were happy to assist with the payment of the courses through the professional learning budget. However there was also an obligation that the school would also need to benefit from the study.

Interestingly, this principal recognised that the financial commitment was but one of the resources that teachers invested and was very aware that many teachers who study, also had families, had a teaching load, and other associated teacher duties.

Principal one who lamented the under use of the professional learning budget felt that adequate resources were allocated to professional learning including time, but felt that the general passivity of teachers in the school about engaging with professional learning was a cause for concern. This prompted the principal to comment that resourcing professional learning with money and time may not be enough. This principal felt that there is an air of passivity in teachers in identifying, selecting and engaging in appropriate professional learning, and felt that this was something that needed to be investigated.

I say to them what are you looking for next year, is there any thing in particular that you would like to prioritise for PD? They go “Oh no, I’ll just wait and see what comes out.” You know, they are not actively searching around and ferreting out the very best PD.

This principal also believed that teachers should be encouraged to take more responsibility in the planning of and participation in professional learning activities

hence more accountable for their own professional learning. In other words she was expecting teachers to be accountable for their own professional learning.

Instead of trying to offer what appears on the surface to be a one size fits all model for professional development that we are certainly going to have to start looking at individual needs much more specifically and I do try to do that. I try every year at the Annual Review Meetings where that question prompts you to ask what priorities are they setting for themselves and what needs do they see themselves having – my general response to that is that teachers are pretty passive about their own professional development portfolio planning, so in a sense it is a bit hard to sit on this side of the desk and say “Come on, this is what I think you need” when you’d like to think that professional teachers get to the point where they could identify some of their own deficiencies or some of the things that they know they need extra help.

Hence accountability emerged as a prominent sub theme within ‘Finance’.

Accountability as used here includes teachers and principals alike. Teachers are increasingly accountable to leadership teams, and principals are increasingly accountable to school boards and systems. Thus policy writing and strategic planning become integral for schools in establishing protocols and expectations. “We have a policy direction that way and guidelines to support it” was the response by principal two in response to the question, how do schools attend to the professional development needs of their teachers, keeping in mind school improvement plans and budgets?

Principal two then expanded on this statement by stating that;

We have a policy we publish, we have published expectations of X number of days per year so people have an entitlement to be out of the place 3 days per year at our expense but there's also that expectation that over the three years they will take that opportunity.

Thus it becomes evident that schools are expecting staff to avail themselves of the opportunity to access professional learning and are putting into place accountability measures. Principal one did not make a reference to policy but it was evident that there was a plan for professional learning “we have been a lot more directive as to what we want people to undertake” and was clear that the school had invested resources into ensuring that staff had access to professional learning opportunities;

Resource wise we certainly budget adequately, probably generously, accommodation, hire cars, you know replacement teachers if we can get them and all that sort of thing is budgeted for.

The difference in belief between teachers and principals about the provision of what is regarded as adequate funding for professional learning is of interest. The previous reference indicates that principal one felt that there was adequate resourcing as did principal two and three. The teacher data indicated that this was not the perception of some of the teachers. “Budget constraints and teacher replacement will always affect a school's ability to offer PD opportunities” is but one teacher comment made by a participant in the survey comments.

Figure 4.5 included in the previous chapter, takes account of an observation I made as a teacher researcher which communicates the dissonance between the perceptions of some teachers as opposed to those of principals;

Budgetary constraints are expressed either through knowledge or perception. Word “they” indicates that there is a passive element to teacher’s personal beliefs.

The difference was included in the interview I conducted with the two Catholic Education staff, who ultimately view this from a systems level and will be discussed later in this chapter.

5.2.2 Time

The ability to finance professional learning is important. But so is the ability to give teachers time to attend activities whether they are formalised study, in-services or time to pursue personal learning. This was readily recognised by all principals.

Time was shown to be a major concern for teachers as they balance professional and personal interests, as illustrated in the analyses of their data reported in Chapter Four. After an analysis of the principal data it became apparent that the theme of ‘time’ for the principals incorporated personal choice as an important element. Thus I redefined the sub- themes within this major theme to reflect the different understanding that the principals had. This theme also interleaved with the theme of ‘Work Life Balance’ thus supporting the underpinning title of this thesis.

Time emerged from the teacher data as being of considerable importance as they expressed frustration about juggling busy teaching commitments, meetings, after school extra curricula activities and personal commitments. The principals again acknowledged the busy nature of the school but expressed little sympathy for the lack of time to complete self-directed professional learning activities, an issue that was prominent in the teacher data. The analysis of the principal data suggests that on the whole they felt there was sufficient time available. For example the practice in one school was;

We have declared Wednesday afternoon, all staff to be free unless they are taking sport of course ... so we will clear it of other commitments and subject meetings and things like that. So Wednesday afternoon we can anticipate that you will be doing professional things. So it could mean that you are off reading somewhere, you don't have to be here but there's the expectation that time because you say you haven't got time for professional learning.

But the crucial issue that emerged was the making of choices about how individuals used their time. This emerged as a sub theme in the principal data and is classified as personal choice, "There's a future discussion here on what it means to be professional and every body wants to be professional between 8:30 and 4 or 4:15 and it depends who you are talking to".

Principal two qualified their view of the use of time and the balancing of time,

You know that balance between when there is a professional and when there is a personal responsibility too and when should a person be asked to use their own time, after school time, holiday time...

This is an acknowledgement that time is a balancing act for schools and their demands upon teacher's time, but at the same time pointing out that there is a personal responsibility in all of this for the teacher.

5.2.3 Organisation

As outlined in Table 5.2, and in the introduction to this chapter, the theme of 'Organisational awareness' was changed to 'Organisation' after analysing the principal data so their 'lived' experience could be better articulated. This also flags a difference between the principals' and teachers' perceptions.

In building vital learning communities in the three Ballarat schools, the leaders are called upon to organise and administer large budgets, large numbers of staff, and endless other tasks all of which carry large degrees of responsibility. This was certainly born out by the interviews and correspondence with the principals. Professional learning is but one of the areas that principals are responsible for, either directly or with the assistance of other school leaders.

Even so, the principals' commitment to professional learning was very evident in their responses to the questions I asked of them. For example "Future school improvement relies on staff upgrading their skills" was a comment from one principal. This reflected

the prevailing mood of the principals as they realised the potential conflict within the system; “I could see how easily it would be that the bigger systemic need would come before the people”. Clearly they did not want this to happen.

The analysis of the principal data revealed that none of the schools had a dedicated position of Professional Learning Coordinator as a stand alone Position of Leadership. You will recall that there was a mixed response in regard to the need for a Professional Learning Coordinator embedded in the teacher data, the balance of opinion being that on the whole schools and their teaching staff would be better placed having such a position. All three principals felt that this role was one that could be combined with another role. Hence in all three schools the position was tied to other senior leadership positions such as the Assistant Deputy who was also the Daily Organiser, the Curriculum Coordinator, and the Deputy Principal respectively. Consequently, although there was not a specific stand alone position tagged to this responsibility, nevertheless the responsibility was assigned to a senior member of the leadership team in each school. This certainly emphasises the importance that the principals attached to this aspect of school life.

Having established that their schools did have a person who had responsibility for professional learning, I checked the notion of the pastoral role of the Professional Learning Coordinator, as had been raised by some teachers in the study. An analysis of the responses from the principals revealed that they did not feel that this was the role of the senior staff member who carried out these duties. They in fact viewed the pastoral needs of the teachers as the domain of a welfare type person; “It is a different thing to professional learning and so we have a Pastoral Care Coordinator and two couch people

...but they would not be looking at their professional learning.” was the opinion of Principal two as he described the role of the counsellors.

A statement from principal one differed little from principal two. It was acknowledged that a more pastoral role was “a lovely thing” for the mentoring of new teachers and felt that it would benefit all teachers “to have that sort of person who sits down and plans everything with you and does things with you and validates them, wouldn’t that be nice?” However the reality is that in schools, this aspiration is not a normal occurrence since the competing needs of staffing and finances take centre stage. The other reality that emerged from the interview with the same principal was that welfare of staff was a separate role from that of Professional Learning Coordinator in the eyes of the school’s Consultative Committee “which was obviously staff based.” The conclusion drawn was that the staff development was compartmentalised into personal and professional and there is a leadership committee who meet fortnightly to deal with the staff who “come in with their (professional learning) applications filled out.”

This view of professional learning has limitations as it alludes to the fact that there may be a dichotomy between the professional and personal growth of teachers in the eyes of this principal. It is a view that will be followed up in the next chapter but also has implications for the next sub section.

5.2.4 Work life/ study balance

The data from many of the teachers indicated that there was a need to have a balance between work and life including study. Many teachers talked of the dilemma they felt in juggling their personal and professional lives, the latter including study. The principals were generally sympathetic to the competing demands of teachers as they juggle work and family life, and sometimes study, but directed the conversation to the concepts of choice and priorities and emphasised the role that further study plays in balancing the professional and personal aspects of life;

People have other priorities in life – say getting 10 hours sleep a night or my child will never be left in the house alone or my husband will never go to sleep at night without me being there.

was a statement made by principal two in responding to a question about work.

Principal one cited experiences that occurred annually;

When people are sitting opposite me and saying they couldn't do that because you know, I don't want to miss contact with my kids and all that, well that is a choice. Where is that line that any professional person has a responsibility to retain their professional integrity and competence and think there is something that says you can't have it all to come out of your working hours.

This sense of frustration with the increasing demands on schools within a school day that has not changed significantly in terms of time is a point that will be discussed in the next chapter.

These discussions of balance lead two of the principals to muse on the concept of professionalism and this was best summed up by principal one;

And I think that is about teachers struggling to see the professionalism of their own work sometimes rather than saying that I employed 38 hours a week by a school whereas, if you see it as a commitment to professional growth over the life time of your career, there is a greater willingness.

What emerged was the administrative overview where it was acknowledged that people have to make choices about balance between their professional and personal lives, but also a firm belief that sometimes there has to be a commitment to growth and this is not always going to be possible within the constraints of a school day. It is at this point that the convergence between work life balance, time, finance and organisation became most evident.

5.2.5 Summary of principal data

Analyses of the data relating to encouraging teachers to take more responsibility for their learning indicates that principal one was cognizant of the fact that “a one size fits

all model” does not work and that “we are certainly going to have to start looking at individual needs much more specifically.” This was supported by principal three who thought that professional learning activities “could have been presented to staff in a more open and encouraging way.”

In having more control over their own professional learning, some teaches queried the accessibility of professional learning activities. This was supported by one principal who expressed the feeling that it was the role of the leadership team to “be putting it in front of people as much as we can” but acknowledged the increasing difficulty of disseminating information because of the preference of professional learning providers to advertise on websites rather than on “lots of coloured flyers.”

The principal data confirmed the themes of ‘Time’, ‘Finance’, ‘Organisation’ and ‘Work Life Balance’ as having significance in the lives of teachers. They however provided, not surprisingly, a much more administrative point of view and presented a wider understanding of the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of teachers both in the classroom and in administrative positions.

5.3 Analysis of Ballarat Catholic Education Office (CEO) Staff Data

I was able to interview two CEO staff. One of the CEO staff worked extensively in schools across the diocese and was able to offer reflections on their experience working with teachers and principals. The other interviewee had a predominately administrative role and was able to provide insights into the system through that lens.

The data will be presented in a thematic approach, as was the process with the teacher and principal data. It became evident early in the analysis of the CEO data that the themes, which had emerged from the principal data needed to be again reconceptualised, although the main emphasis remained. The CEO data reflected a ‘System view’ of the teacher in the workplace. Whilst the principals had a larger organisational insight into their particular schools, the CEO data had as expected a much broader view as they were concerned with the administration of a larger number of Primary and Secondary schools with varying needs and resources across the Diocese. Principally the concerns of the CEO are global deferring school management to Principals who are working in the schools.

Table 5.3 represents the themes which emerged as a result of the CEO data analysis.

Table 5.3: Themes and sub themes from CEO staff data

Major themes-CEO staff	Sub themes-CEO staff
Resourcing Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Finance • Human
Organising the Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Professional Learning Coordinator • Administration of professional learning • Teacher sense of control
Work Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal needs • Professional needs

It is interesting to note that the themes of 'Time' and 'Finance', along with a new sub theme 'Human' were part of a wider discussion and grouped under a major theme of 'Resourcing Schools'. Similarly, 'Organisation' was viewed as 'Organising the Resources' and incorporated the themes of 'Role of the Professional Learning Coordinator', 'Administration of professional learning' and 'Teacher sense of control'. The third major theme that emerged as a result of the CEO data was termed 'Work Life Balance', which was a return to the term used with the teacher data. This incorporated the themes of 'Personal needs' and 'Professional needs'.

5.3.1 Resourcing schools

Finance, time and humans are the three resources referred to in the context of the discussions with the CEO staff. One of the CEO staff drew attention to the need for schools to have a Strategic Plan that considers the structure of the school in relation to the needs of the resources both human and financial. He had previous experience in working in the area of work place structuring over the past few years through the Victorian Catholic Schools Association (VCSA) and proffered a caution about making sure that, "Our certified agreements does not tie us all down too much into a structure which may not meet the needs of the school."

Both CEO staff supported the idea that formalised study was important and commented on the generous nature of the study program and the support that the CEO offers so that teachers within the Diocese can undertake formalised study. Applicants for the scholarships apply towards the end of the school year and these applications are

submitted to a CEO panel who determine the allocation of time/financial assistance depending on the level of the study being undertaken. Teachers may use the sponsorship to pay study related expenses, or as time off as Sponsored Study Leave. Interestingly, the principal data included opposition from one principal to teachers taking Sponsored Study Leave. The type of sponsorship taken is subject to the discretion of the principals. But the CEO staff commented that

Records taken by the CEO in the Ballarat Diocese have clearly shown that it (Sponsored Study Leave) is very important and that formalised study is clearly something that we need to have at least a percentage of our teachers involved in.

They did make it clear that they understood that “it is not possible for everybody at every stage of their career” to study. Their working association with the Australian Catholic University (ACU) has meant that the CEO can have input into the modes of delivery for teachers who choose to study with ACU, thus attempting to provide flexible arrangements to enable formal study to happen. “We have tried to find all sorts of ways to engage people.”

Again caution is reflected in the comments of the senior CEO staff member who acknowledged that even though the funding is generous, it “does not make the difference for a teacher deciding to do a course of study.” But the CEO is “satisfied with the numbers who are (studying) and the range of work that is being done. I don’t think we have to be unduly pessimistic about it.”

The CEO staff was very supportive of the need to have professionally developed teachers in Catholic schools but were aware that formalised study was not always possible for all teachers. “Formalised study is clearly something that we need to have at least a percentage of our teachers involved in.” The teachers, who had accessed the Sponsored Study Leave in the schools where the principals supported the sponsorship being taken as time, had found this to be of great assistance in providing time out from teaching to study. Teachers found that it helped to balance the competing issues of work, family and other life issues with formalised professional learning.

5.3.2 Organising the resources

Having established that the system (CEO in this case) does provide resources for schools and teachers, the next theme to discuss that emerged in the data was ‘Organising the Resources’. Very early in the analysis of the data it became evident that the autonomy that Catholic schools had was being challenged and changed, as pointed out by one of the CEO staff members. “The difference now is that governments have tied implementation of these initiatives to funding so at systems level we had to sign up for that.” This further highlights the increasing accountability that schools are being subject to by government as noted in Chapter Two. It also relates to the sub theme of ‘Lack of control’ that some teachers expressed over their professional learning. It will be remembered that in Chapter Four note was made of teachers believing that government initiatives often had little influence on teacher’s classroom practice. Such initiatives often assume a simple top down initiative will suffice. But the world of schools is far more complex. Hence as so often happens, one-off workshops that are used to support such initiatives simply do not work.

Rarely does a one-off workshop promote change, as it does not take into account the existing complexity of a classroom context or have a framework to support teacher learning through the non –linear process of change. (Hoban, 2002, p. 2)

Similarly, Darling-Hammond (1994, p. 160) believes that “Where teachers are expected to implement changes that they have not had input into there is a poor record of educational success”. Clearly if teachers feel they are not supported in their endeavours to implement change, there is a high chance that change will not happen as envisaged by the change innovators. In fact Hoban, (2002, p. 3) supports this position when he articulates his view on imposed change;

If teachers understand how they learn in the workplace, they may begin to manage their own change that will help them to maintain interest in their job as well as coping with the rapid pace of change swirling around them

One senior CEO staff member expressed concern by the way that the Curriculum Standards Framework 1 and 2 (the government sanctioned curriculum in Victoria) were supported by the principals when they said “principals did not provide enough leadership; there was no conviction that this was a worthwhile curriculum change.” They recognised that “no secondary teachers like being told what and how they should teach by someone outside the school or even someone within the school.” The traditional view of the isolation of secondary teachers was discussed in Chapter Two.

The other CEO staff member supported this belief when they talked about their experience of working with secondary teachers who often view change as “The CEO” telling us what to do. These two CEO staff was cognizant of the fact that secondary schools on the whole organise and distribute resources with autonomy.

The provision of professional development and the associated issues in the Diocese for secondary teachers was presented as a discussion point for the CEO staff. It was evident that the CEO did not provide many professional learning activities for teachers in the secondary schools, “As far as the CEO is concerned, our provision to secondary schools is not as developed as primary schools”. They went on to clarify this by establishing the fact that, “The secondary schools historically have adopted a more independent stance and it is only in recent times that we have employed a secondary consultant and he has a small staff”.

The CEO staff indicated that the CEO does have people who can come to the school to assist with professional learning activities, but the CEO staff felt that the secondary schools did a “fairly good job” of providing that for their staff, sometimes with the assistance of the CEO, but often without.

Neither of the CEO staff felt that the position of a Professional Learning Coordinator had to be a distinct position in a school. This supported the principals’ ideas. The principals covered this role by using other senior staff, but did not have a stand alone position. Both CEO staff demonstrated an understanding from a system’s lens that the structure of leadership positions in a school depended on a number of variables including financing that position. It always comes down to whether it is “higher priority

than other positions” or whether it was going to be a difficulty having to work with two possible contact people in the school. They said they had to often work with whoever covered the role of the Professional Learning Coordinator as well as the Curriculum Coordinator. Either way it was stressed by the more senior CEO member that;

I would want to be open to looking to see what the best way for a school was and that might come back to the very beginning, the years of experience of these teachers and what are the most significant needs of this group of teachers in this school.

In summary the CEO staff felt that the schools were extremely capable of organising appropriate professional learning opportunities for staff in their schools. They emphasised the financial resources that were available to staff in Catholic schools in the Ballarat diocese as well as the staff who were available if schools chose to use them “The distribution of funding and professional development are the two major things we do.”

The teachers who participated in the study recognized the financial contribution to the Sponsored Study Program, but did not demonstrate an acknowledgement of the CEO as a provider of professional learning for teachers in secondary schools in the Ballarat Diocese as they were unaware of opportunities for them to access professional learning. It is my experience as a teacher working in the diocese that the CEO has a professional learning program which is directed more towards primary schools, acknowledging that secondary schools have greater access to resources than the smaller primary schools and

the secondary schools often have their own specific strategic plans and professional needs.

5.3.3 Work life balance

The interrelationship between the professional and personal learning of teachers provided some interesting discussion with the CEO staff indicating that they felt that it was “hard” to keep the “balance between personal and professional” for large schools with large staff numbers. The more senior CEO staff member was guarded about the need to provide personal development.

We have to be very clear that individuals as employees of schools that there are certain ethics around that and there is an ethic around how much is appropriate for employers to be personal

They proceeded to clarify this by stating that “there needs to be a very clear and intentional decision made as to what type of personal professional development is appropriate in the employment setting.” This was supported by the other CEO staff member who believed that good professional development acknowledges the personal aspect but needs to be planned with “some sort of scheme, professional development, goal setting and things like that. So you know where they are going.” This adds support to the theme of Organisation awareness which emerged from the analysis of the teacher data. Generally, some teachers felt that planning and assistance with planning of professional learning was important both in of their growth of members of a learning community.

The interrelationship between the personal and professional was evident when one of the CEO staff commented on the fact that “where you put the boundary is very difficult. To me it would be very difficult to say, well this is professional development and this is personal and you could put a fence between them.” The other CEO staff member felt that there was not an understanding from the principal data that the link between the two was not very evident and expressed the belief that “once you are carving it (time dedicated to professional learning) up like that, it becomes counterproductive.”

Thus there was acknowledgment that the professional and personal lives of teachers are linked. But the provision of personal learning was met with caution as the staff member expressed concern at having responsibility for the personal growth of teachers. This point will be followed up in Chapter Six.

5.3.4 The ageing nature of the teaching workforce

The ageing nature of the teachers in the Diocese emerged as a separate important issue with the CEO staff, but was only tangentially referred to by the other groups. As the researcher, I became very aware of this issue from the initial analysis of the teacher survey demographics. But it was also of some concern to the principals. Interestingly, this was not a huge ‘concern’ for either of the CEO staff members who offered an optimistic and pragmatic view point thus supporting the principals who acknowledged the statistic.

Looking at about 20 to 29 years service you cannot assume that all those people are lacking in motivation. That is actually probably the cause of distracting teaching in our schools. Within that group there are people who are very invigorated

was the view of the second CEO staff member I interviewed. The CEO staff members stated that there were no plans as such to work through the ageing nature of the teachers in the secondary schools in this Diocese. When the more experienced teachers are acknowledged as “amongst the most professionally active in the classroom” it provides a reason not to be too concerned. One of the CEO staff members discussed the recruiting strategy they were coordinating with Australian Catholic University “to offer scholarships” to encourage young teachers to work in the Diocese. They acknowledged that this was fraught with difficulties because they were unable to offer jobs to graduates unless a position became vacant thus losing graduates to schools in other sectors who could afford to offer jobs a lot earlier. This point is supported in the teacher demographic data which suggests that there is not a large turn over of staff in the three secondary schools generally because of the convenience of living in a rural city within an hour drive of Melbourne.

In summary the CEO staff did not think the age profile of staff was a concern, but nevertheless they did discuss it at length. This was in contrast to the principals who had shown concern. Interestingly there was nothing in what the CEO staff said that indicated they thought there was a need to consider the nature of professional learning programs may be different for experienced staff. Nor was there any indication that this type of age profile was of importance in considering ‘Work Life Balance’. This echoes

the lack of notice taken of these issues within the research literature as shown in Chapter Two.

5.3.5 Summary of CEO data

The third of the research questions which underpin this thesis ‘How do secondary teaching professionals inform the governments, bureaucrats and leaders at the systems level, of their learning needs now and into the future?’ drove the inclusion of the CEO data into this thesis. Overall the analysis of the data from the CEO staff provided a lens that supported the inclusion of this data as it began to provide points of interest for further discussion in Chapter Six.

During the analysis of the CEO staff data it became clear that the three secondary schools operated almost independently of the CEO, at least with regards the provision of professional learning for teachers. As the senior member of the CEO explained,

As far as the CEO is concerned, our provision to secondary schools is not as developed as primary schools. That is due to the fact that we distribute the funding to the primary schools of the Diocese and we have a much closer relationship through the appointment of principals to our primary schools. The secondary schools have historically have adopted a more independent stance.

The CEO staff also acknowledged the independence of the secondary schools by the individual ways in which they structure their teaching and leadership positions including the role of Professional Learning Coordinator.

There is more than one way to structure up your school. I suppose I am being quite ambivalent about it because if I was principal of the school, I would not be opposed to doing it this way. But I would want to be open to looking to see what the best way for this school and that might come back to the very beginning, the years of experience of these teachers and what are the most significant needs of this group of teachers in this school? In this case, all three schools in Ballarat are pretty much in the same situation and it may be that if you identified that this group are significantly lacking in professional development that is the most appropriate position to have.

It was evident that the CEO was supportive of the work of the three Catholic secondary schools in their provision of professional learning opportunities for teachers. But importantly for this thesis there did not appear to be a conduit for secondary teaching professionals to inform leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future. This will be a discussion point in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

Having spent my entire twenty three year teaching career in rural schools, and more recently as a member of a school leadership team, professional learning for teachers in rural areas has been an area that has increasingly captured my interest and thus, became the starting point of this study. The very title of the thesis, ‘Teacher Learning Matters; The inter relationship between the personal and professional lives of rural teachers’, describes the complex nature of teacher learning and the need for this learning to be taken more seriously by the school communities and the broader systems in which teachers work. Professional development must, as Scribner states “become an integral part of teacher work and culture in schools” (1999, p. 263).

Such comments describing many Professional Learning programs that teachers have to endure as “teachers are too polite. If this was a group of students they would be going bananas by now”, was made by a teacher who is both experienced and expert in her field. Such comments are not new nor a rarity. They highlight the thousands of professional learning activities that teachers have struggled to become engaged in. Such non engagement occurs for a myriad of reasons. These include a lack of relevance at their stage of their career and the frustration they feel in being herded into professional learning sessions usually in the form of briefings, rather than opportunities for authentic professional learning. It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss the reasons that arose from the analysis of the data in detail, and to make some recommendations for providers

and sponsors of professional learning, whether they are school communities or the broader audience including administrators at a systems level.

Table 6.1 is the summary device that will form the basis of this chapter and the ensuing discussions and recommendations. The Table illustrates the relationship between the research questions that underpin the study, the ideas which emerged after exploring some of my initial ideas and concerns about professional learning as a result of my professional experience and an initial review of the literature in Chapter 2, and the themes which emerged as a consequence of the study. Reading Table 6.1 from left to right, it can be seen that even though the themes did change depending on who generated the data; they sat within the scope of the ideas from the literature, and hence link back to the three research questions.

I will conclude this chapter with an exploration of my three research questions, and then consider some limitations of the study and future research that could extend these ideas. However, before considering them, it will be important to summarise the themes developed in the analysis by using the literature ideas (see Table 6.1) as a structuring device. I will start with considering the professional and personal concerns of rural teachers in the workplace, their school, and then move to a broader scope by considering the teacher within the systemic structure, before finally moving back to the research questions.

Table 6.1: The development of the themes and sub themes

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Ideas from the literature</i>	<i>Themes for teachers</i>	<i>Sub themes for teachers</i>	<i>Themes for principals</i>	<i>Sub themes for principal</i>	<i>Themes for CEO staff</i>	<i>Sub themes for CEO staff</i>
How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?	Teacher and professional concerns And Teacher and personal concerns	Time constraints		Finance	➤ Accountability	Resourcing Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Time ➤ Finance ➤ Human
		Financial constraints		Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal choice ➤ Professional choice 		
How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?	Teacher and school community	Organisational awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The role of the Professional Learning Coordinator ➤ Administration of professional learning 	Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The role of the Professional Learning Coordinator ➤ Administration of professional learning 	Organising the resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The role of the Professional Learning Coordinator ➤ Administration of professional learning ➤ Teacher sense of control
How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?	Teacher and the broader system	Work Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal Needs ➤ Teacher sense of control ➤ Teacher lack of control 	Work Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal needs ➤ Personal choice ➤ Teacher sense of control ➤ Teacher lack of control 	Work Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal needs ➤ Professional needs

6.2 Teacher and Professional Concerns

The literature review indicated that there is a growing understanding that as teachers grow into their profession at different stages they have different professional needs. The teachers who participated in the study expressed concern at the need for the delivery of professional learning to change. They felt strongly that they are adult learners, have different levels of experience and also have many learning styles. The frustrations of teachers who participated in focus group one were aired vociferously as they relayed stories of recent professional learning activities that they had to endure that failed to hold their interest because of one or a number of these issues.

Lewis (2002) suggests that teacher professional growth has been limited by the fact that traditionally teachers have not been expected to direct their own professional learning. But in more recent times this has changed at least to some degree, although not for all teachers nor for some teachers all of the time. In sum there are few teachers in this study who wanted to have the total responsibility of managing their professional learning. One principal in this study expressed frustration that teachers would not manage their own learning, instead either relying on direction from the leadership team or ignoring professional learning as much as possible. On the other hand Item 2 in the survey (see Appendix C) indicated that there was a general acceptance that teachers in this study felt that they were largely responsible for taking responsibility for their own professional learning. Many articulated the need for more involvement in the planning of professional learning. This echoed evidence in the research literature that suggest that teachers are motivated by their purposes (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992), including improvement in their professional knowledge, but may feel constrained by a myriad of factors including Work Life Balance. Hence this study shows again that this is a

contested area. The results imply that although attitudes are changing, there is still ambivalence for both teachers and principals in what is the correct balance to be struck for teachers as a whole within a particular school, and what is the balance for each individual teacher.

There is no doubt that the question of teacher learning is a complex one. “When teachers are studied as individual persons and adult learners, a great many differences emerge. Perhaps the most prominent in terms of workplace learning is the career stage or stage of development of the teacher which is, of course, usually related to age” (Retallick, 1993, p.6). Initially, I thought that the ageing nature of the teaching force in the three schools would be a prominent issue for this study, considering the average length of experience of teachers in the three schools. But as shown by the data analysis, it was not of such a concern that it warranted further exploration. This supported Strauss’ (1987) belief that it is unwise to assume relevance of traditional variables, in this case ‘age’. Rather as suggested by Hall and Morgan (1996), we should focus on the career stage and life experiences of teachers.

A generic ‘one size fits all’ professional learning model fails to acknowledge the differing professional needs of teachers as they journey through their careers and their lives. Robert O’Brien’s work comments on this issue when he states that

perhaps some of the most important factors that should be taken into account when developing professional development programs are the life history and career plans of the participants in the program. Depending on their experiences and their aspirations in their career the participants own objectives for a professional development program will vary and

the quality of the program may be altered by the attitude of the participants. (O'Brien, 2005, p. 45)

This position found support in this study as well. For example, the third interviewee felt that more experienced teachers needed re-energising, and not just more of the same. The second interviewee acknowledged that as an inexperienced teacher he needed a different professional learning program. But things had changed for him over time.

Thus, the key work of Hall and Morgan (1983, cited in author, 1996) in identifying different stages in the developing professional teacher, and supported in the literature by many others including Hargreaves (1994), Fullan (1992), and Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986), can no longer be ignored. Teacher learning does matter, but in contemplating such learning the interrelationship between the personal and professional lives of teachers is a crucial issue that has often been ignored, or even not recognised. For example, as a young teacher and a young mother, my focus in school was on controlling my classes, preparing meaningful lessons, carrying out the duties of a part time teacher, and then hurrying home to see to the needs of my young family. Professional learning was something that I did on the job and on designated pupil free days. I was not available to access professional learning after hours, weekends or holidays. But as my family situation changed, as the children grew older, and as I gained in experience in the work place, not surprisingly my availability, interests and needs also changed. I heard similar sentiments echoed by many of the teachers who participated in the study. So professional learning needs to be targeted to teachers who are in different stages of their career; for example when they are starting out and are 'novices', moving to when they are 'establishing' themselves in their profession, and finally onto when they are seen to be, and see themselves as 'experienced' teachers. In targeting their learning at least in

part to their experiential stage will enable them to develop the new skills and knowledge they require to undertake their professional obligations that are required for the next level of the profession.

An added concern for rural teachers is the accessing of externally provided professional learning. Many of the teachers in the study expressed concern at the time, cost and impact on personal responsibilities given that most of the opportunities for the professional learning that would help them was external to the school and based more often than not in Melbourne, at least four hours travel away for the return trip. It is to these and other teacher's personal concerns that I now turn.

6.3 Teachers' Personal Concerns

Much of the literature about professional learning omits the personal dimension of a teacher's growth. Much research that has been conducted has failed to include the 'lived experience' of teachers. Such research has traditionally been viewed as being too 'personal', too 'idiosyncratic', or too 'soft' for a fully fledged piece of social science research (Goodson, 1997, p. 145). To dismiss the life experiences of a teacher is to reduce teaching to a mechanistic role devoid of humanness. This is quite ironic, given that teaching at its heart is about the growth of the human within us.

As I engaged with the data and listened to the 'live voice' of the teachers, it was obvious that there has to be a reasonable balance in life. "I'll do my job and then I have a life too" best sums up the 'lived experience' of the teachers I worked with in my study. A majority of these teachers were reticent about discussing their personal concerns and tended to talk in generalities about family commitments and the difficulties of balancing personal and professional commitments. Only one teacher

spoke openly about personal concerns in an interview. He expressed frustration and anger about the way he felt he was treated. He was not prepared to discuss his concerns with the professional learning coordinator who also happened to be a member of the leadership team, fearing that he would be type cast as a whinger. He did not feel that he had a forum for his personal concerns.

Choices and priorities were the two key words principals used when commenting on balancing the professional and personal aspects of life. They emphasised the fact that it is not possible to fit all professional learning into a school day, and that a personal commitment to professional growth was also expected from their teachers.

There was only a cursory acknowledgement in the literature about the personal dimension of a teacher's growth. For whatever reasons there appeared to be a general reluctance by researchers to navigate that territory.

On reflection, even though I had used a semi-structured format in the focus groups and interviews, I was unable to truly capture the personal lives of those teachers on this aspect. There was a general reluctance to talk about the personal aspects of their lives. This may be in part due to the fact that as teachers we feel inhibited about airing personal concerns, less we be judged by our colleagues. As a researcher, I felt constrained by the lack of opportunity of going back to the participants in the focus groups and interviews to clarify issues raised in these forums. If the time and opportunity were available to me, I may have been able to shed more light on the personal aspects of the lives of these teachers. I was, however, able to survey and interview the teachers in this study about their views on being part of a school community which also impinges on this debate.

6.4 Teacher and School Community (Organisational Awareness)

In conducting this qualitative study I have been fortunate to hear the ‘lived experiences’ of the participating teachers and principals from the three Ballarat Catholic secondary colleges as they reflected on their role in their school community, as well as two experienced staff members of the Ballarat Catholic Education Office. In this section I will highlight the issues that arose from the study within the context of the school as a community.

There is a repositioning in understanding of the work that teachers are involved in.

“Teaching is not what it was”, claims Fullan and Hargreaves (1992, p.3). The economic, market driven environment has meant that teachers have become subject to more accountability of administrative demands that leave them with increasing amounts of paperwork. Emerging from the data provided by the teachers in the study was the feeling that they were busier now than when they began teaching, for most over twenty years ago. Increased workload was a factor that lead many of these teachers to comment on the lack of energy for professional learning. Fullan (2004) refers to this as being work that is not hard work, but as work that is negative, thus, drawing on the emotional energy levels of people leaving them with a feeling of depletion.

In the current economic environment in which schools and teachers are now positioned, teachers are primarily viewed as being paid to be in front of a class and deliver a syllabus that is seen by many teachers as becoming more prescriptive as it in turn has become dominated by systems wide testing. This was typically acknowledged by teachers in the study as their ‘primary task’. Some teachers felt that they were not

encouraged to attend some professional learning during the course of the school day, instead being expected to be in the classroom. From a leadership point of view, the ability to release teachers for professional learning during the day is limited by the organisational structure of the day and hence the flow on financial costs. Having been responsible for a the teaching and learning budget in my current leadership role, the cost of the professional activity coupled with the cost of replacing the teacher can be an impediment to the professional learning program. In rural areas, the ability to employ emergency relief teachers can be a problem as they are not always readily available. This issue is not peculiar to these schools in Ballarat. “The question of resources for teacher workplace learning is an important and vexed one” and is “related to the business of the daily life of a teacher but is also related to the extent to which teachers are prepared to give their own time to their professional development” (Retallick, Cocklin & Coombe, 1999, p. 34). Thus, money needs to be directed at “practice” with consideration of how teachers can act autonomously within the realistic constraints of being in a school environment, an issue that has no easy answer.

It became evident early in the analyses of the teacher data that factors that hinder professional learning for many of these teachers in their school community included ‘Time’ and ‘Finance’. Many teachers felt that the increasing demands made of them as classroom teachers with meetings to attend and co- curricular activities to run often left them with very little energy for professional learning, which was teacher directed. As one teacher wrote on the survey “If reasonable, realistic time release was available, I for one would love to pursue study – but I have no time/energy/motivation left after fulfilling teacher and extra –curricular duties – (not to mention personal/family life obligations)”. This comment captures the opinions of a number of the teachers who participated in the study. Time emerged as a major determinant when making decisions

about attendance at external professional learning, and in particular when this was in the form of formalised study. You will recall in Chapter Two that a national survey reported in *The Practising Administrator* (2001, p. 2) informed us that 91% of teachers claimed that that they did not have enough time or energy for formal study. This is clearly echoed in the data obtained from the Ballarat teachers.

However, a close examination of the literature about teacher learning, although a difficult issue to resolve and one that needs to be continually under review, supports the notion that investment in a learning organisation's most valuable assets, teachers, is imperative for the life of an effective school community. Thus, 'Organisational Awareness' becomes a vital ingredient in constructing a school community in which collegiality is valued. Teachers at the coalface need to be part of the strategic intentions of their school. From this study it appears that the teachers were often, at least partially, locked out of the bigger vision of the school organisation. Thus, their frustration grows out of a lack of participation in the life of an organisation. Darling-Hammond (1994, p. 29) wrote of her observations about the lack of teacher organisational awareness when she said that "although knowledge about teaching and learning has grown, the odds that teachers will have access to this knowledge are far less than certain". This is a key consideration for school leadership teams as they pursue school improvement. Involving teachers in school policy development in meaningful ways, and ensuring that such policies are available for all the staff, is but one way that I have experienced that gives teachers access to the organisational structures and decision making procedures. A clearer understanding of the life of an organisation would provide knowledge and understanding about resources including 'finance' and 'time'.

This study indicated that very many teachers would be more willing to participate in more professional learning if they had greater control over their own growth. This in their view would include a clearer understanding of the organization and their role within it. Yet when teachers are given such control, relatively few exercise it.

Interestingly, the teachers who participated in this study were not forthcoming with resolutions for the problem. This was even though the initial analysis of the survey data validated that professional learning is a concern, and this position is supported by the literature. Johnson (1990, p. 250) for example is perplexed by teachers' lack of initiative (passivity) to set their own career development milestones and define their own programs. The principal data analysis suggested that at least two of the principals were also concerned about teachers' lack of initiative on this question. Scribner (2003) cites Grant and Sleeter (1987) who argued that "teachers do have room to act, and they do not all act in the same way, in spite of similarities in their present and prior experiences" (p.3). Clearly there is tension between the need for teachers to be open and available for professional learning opportunities, and the ongoing responsibility of teachers to take responsibility for their continued growth, using some of their own personal time. As principal two noted,

I've done it and thousands of other people have done it. You know, do the week end mode stuff, do something in your holidays, because more and more it seems to me people are wanting time release from school to do things whether it is planning, whether it is study, whether it is PD, it always seems to be coming out of an increasingly busy week at school.

There is also the responsibility of school leadership teams to make the knowledge about the organisation more accessible to teachers. School planning tends to be owned by the

leaders and not shared by all of the members of their school communities. Thus, the frustration grows out of a lack of participation in the life of an organisation at the top level, and indeed a shared and appropriated vision for each school by principals and their staff. Leadership style can therefore be an impediment to a shared vision of professional learning in a school.

Organisations such as the 'Special Interest Group on the Lives of Teachers', a sub group of the American Educational Research Association launched in 1999, have arisen because they are professionals who realise that the lives of teachers are extremely important and deserve consideration. Such groups of researchers have the potential to provide research that can be readily utilised in schools to enhance the quality of the teachers, and ultimately the school community. There is a need for schools to be more collegial in their cooperation, and hence for greater dialogue and transparency between the leadership group in the school and the classroom teachers, thus, building 'Organisational awareness' across the whole school.

Teachers in this study expressed their concerns about their role in the school organisation lamenting the fact that professional learning activities do not focus on this issue enough. They felt that there was not enough professional learning related to personal and collective practice. Therefore, what is of particular interest for this study is the discord between teachers and the principals in what defines investment, and whether there is adequate provision of such resources as 'Time' and 'Finance'

As indicated above, the organisation of the 'Finance' for a school was a resource that was something teachers were not privy to in their organisation. This was an area of dissonance between teachers and principals in this study. The general feeling amongst

teachers in the study suggests that teachers from two of the three schools felt that there was inadequate financial support for all teachers within their schools to access professional learning opportunities, yet their principals argued that there was adequate resourcing. Teachers from the third school felt that there was sufficient funding, despite the principal articulating the desire to allocate more funding to the professional learning budget. This discord between colleagues draws attention to the need for clearer communication and a shared understanding of the resources that exist within a school, as suggested by educationists in the literature (for example Rogers, 2002; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992).

The issues within schools go beyond the financial concerns. There are also organisational issues to consider, particularly how schools structured their leadership teams to cater for the professional learning of their staff. In an attempt to capture the professional needs of teachers and to assist with the planning of professional learning activities, each of the three Catholic secondary colleges has a designated position of Professional Development Coordinator. Interestingly in each of the schools, this position is tied to a senior leadership position and could be viewed as a commitment by each of the schools to professional learning. However, this administrative decision could also be interpreted as in another way; as a reiteration of the top down management hierarchy that schools are locked into. This dual interpretation of the position came out in the analysis of the data. Many of the teachers who participated in the study felt the need for a stand alone position in their school. “With the rate of change, PD needs to be controlled, monitored and organised” was a view expressed by one member of focus group one. This was supported by one of the CEO staff members who believed that good professional development acknowledges the personal aspect, but needs to be planned with “some sort of scheme, professional development, goal

setting and things like that. So you know where they are going”. This view also found support in the literature (e.g. Johnson, 1990).

However, it was the opinion of some of the mid to late stage teachers that the position of Professional Learning Coordinator was also a pastoral one. “(S)omeone who can coordinate, motivate and point out opportunities. Someone who can help teachers plan PD: a Mentor”. It became evident that these teachers recognised that they needed more than simple information on a professional learning opportunity to be put in their pigeonhole. They needed a more personal approach. The analysis of the principal data indicated that this was viewed as a nice idea but impractical, as “competing needs of staffing and finances take centre stage”. Again the economic prerogative takes precedent over the adult in the learning organisation, and a dichotomy between professional learning and personal learning emerges. Although there was some support by the two CEO staff for the need for a stand alone position in the schools looking after professional learning needs of teachers, as noted above, on balance their opinion was not surprising in line with that of the principals.

I have underpinned this thesis with the notion that teacher learning matters. It matters that it does occur in the workplace as part of a wider professional learning program, where teachers can readily access opportunities to develop skills and interact with colleagues. However, often professional learning is unplanned for teachers and is imposed because of changes in structures and practice in some aspect of the school. Teachers are not included in many instances in the ongoing planning that goes on within a school and thus, do not feel a sense of ownership or shared vision. This lack of control over their professional lives was an important sub theme that arose early in the analysis of the teacher data, as did feelings of dissatisfaction with the way that teachers were

subject to change whenever there was a perceived need by governments. Hence it is interesting to speculate that if teachers were empowered to contribute to the life of the learning organisation, they would be more likely to understand the organisation and their place within it. It is then that teachers are more likely to see the relevance of their own professional and personal growth. But clearly more research is needed to justify this speculation.

The question to how this might be achieved is not one that has a single simple answer. However, it became apparent from the review of the literature and from the responses of the teachers that the leadership team in the school plays a significant role in the development of an organisation that can implement and maintain a culture of professional learning that is valued by all. Senge (1990, p. 9) maintains that a different form of leadership from that exercised in the past is needed for today's learning organisation. It is evident that the role of the teacher has changed, it is more complex and greater skills are required to embrace learning in the twenty first century. Thus, the learning that teachers will need, needs to be reconceptualised. Leadership teams need to continue work with teachers to develop and promote the school as a place of learning for both students and adults. They also need to reconsider the structural impediments that prevent some teachers from interacting with their colleagues. This as a minimum would involve considering the timetabling of staff, the use of part time staff to free full time staff from time to time, the timing of meetings, and the location of teachers' offices in relation to their colleagues. Greater consideration of the need to engage the thoughts and ideas of the general teaching staff would assist with an improved understanding of the organisation and promote a shared vision for teaching and learning. Further discussion about the question of achieving personal and professional growth for

teachers within the school organisation is presented in the later sections in this chapter on 'The Model' and 'Recommendations'.

School based professional learning activities are more than often planned by members of the leadership team to implement school based decisions emanating from a need to improve or to satisfy systemic or government initiatives. A discussion about the broader educational community is necessary at this stage.

6.5 Teacher and the Broader Community

In the modern economically driven accountability culture, leadership teams often have to comply with systemic demands, in order to receive funding for their schools, even if the reform is ill-planned for a particular school, and lacking adequate resources for appropriate implementation in this school.

A recent example of this was the decision of the Victorian State Government to implement the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) at the same time that the Federal Government was implementing the new A- E report card. The three Catholic secondary schools in the Ballarat Diocese were subject to an agreement made between the Melbourne Catholic Education Office and the State Government to implement both VELS for English and Maths for students in Years 7-10, as well as align the curriculum with the new A-E reports. It was an understanding that principals would lose funding if their school did not comply with the agreement.

The problem embedded in the above scenario that is supported by the literature is that unless teachers are convinced that professional learning sessions are going to be of

benefit to them, they will fail to commit their emotions or energy to them. In the bigger picture, adult learning principles were compromised for these two government imposed initiatives, and the subsequent professional training that was part of each change, which caused considerable stress for teachers. This further highlights the need to work with teachers (Hargreaves & Hopkins 1991).

The tension then arises between the school community and the larger systemic demands. It is a fine line between balancing the needs of the teachers within their communities and attracting funding to enable them to function as a worthwhile school community. Clearly, as discussed in the previously in this chapter, principals and leadership teams need to be cognizant of the fact that if teachers have a greater organisational awareness, they are more likely to feel part of the school community, and hence more empowered to take responsibility for their own learning, even when the demands on all, staff and teachers, is high.

In Chapter Two you will recall the suggestion that teacher learning, which promotes enhanced collegiality between teachers, requires new directions from school leaders. Aspland et al (1995, p. 9, cited in Harrison, et al, 1998) sets the challenge for schools and systems when he advocated

That professional development (learning) should be reconceptualised from a model that is systemically driven, static, top- down and policy oriented to one which is teacher – centered, dynamic and interactive, embedded in the professional practice of teachers and oriented to the active construction of professional knowledge.

If such a model was adopted it would perhaps address the concerns for those teachers who felt they needed to take control of their professional lives. As indicated previously, leadership teams have a large role to play in promoting teacher interest in professional learning. The style of the leadership team has the potential to motivate teachers especially if there is a shared collegial focus. Thus, a collaborative approach to the planning, implementation and evaluation of the professional learning has the potential to assist the adult learner sees the purpose and the benefit of engaging in professional learning.

The formation of Professional Development Schools (PDF) in the United States (see Chapter Two) are underpinned by the belief that “efforts to reform teacher education must be accompanied by efforts to make schools better places for teachers to work and learn” (Darling-Hammond, 1994, p. 2). Whilst PDF schools may not provide the complete panacea for developing a learning culture inclusive of teachers’ personal and professional needs, they are an acknowledgement that teachers are a vital resource in a school community and are instrumental in whole school improvement. If teachers are to be central to school improvement then an understanding of the critical influences that impeded or promote organisational understanding is imperative.

6.6 The Model

The convergence between time, finance and organisation and work life balance became increasingly evident as a deeper and more thorough analysis of the data was undertaken. In utilising the principles of the constant comparative method (see Chapter Three) the Model (see Figure 4.8) in which critical influences on teachers’ professional learning in

their schools emerged. As I discussed in Chapter Four, this was a useful modelling tool to describe the critical influences within these schools.

It was the considered opinion of many of the teachers who participated in the study that they felt a lack of control over the constraints of 'Time' and 'Finance' and whilst they acknowledged that the need for leadership teams to organise schools, there was a general feeling that many felt passive about their ability to actively contribute to the organisational planning for professional learning. Underpinning this model is the issue of work life balance, which emerged as a critical theme for the teachers who participated in the study.

It became increasingly evident that for many of the teachers who participated in this study, coping with the demands of constantly keeping up to date with changes, more demands as a teacher and managing personal time, was stressful. It was not only formalised study or having to attend professional learning opportunities in Melbourne that caused concern and frustration, the timing of the professional learning planned by the schools for their teachers, the quality of the presenters and the venues, as was the perceived waste of financial resources expended on such professional learning, were also causes for concern.

Such a model is helpful in understanding the key issues for the teachers who participated in the study. But hopefully it could be a starting point for dialogue about critical factors that influence teacher learning in any school community. Such a Model could also be a diagrammatic representation of the concerns that I have had as I have journeyed as a professional with a family living in a rural area. At times, particularly when I was part time member of teaching staffs, I have felt disempowered

when I had no influence over the variety and timing of professional learning opportunities provided by the school. If full time teachers feel that they have very little influence over the professional learning that happens in their school, then being a continuing part time teacher can sometimes be even more frustrating. I chose to be part time when my family were younger, but I felt that I needed to keep abreast of changes in the profession, as I knew that I would return to work on a full time basis at some stage.

Frustrated at not being privy to after school run professional learning, I embarked on a Masters Degree in Education and then my current doctoral studies. This in itself was not without stress as I discovered that I had to attend weekend lectures in major regional areas during the academic year. Again I made a choice, as did some of the teachers who participated in the study, some of whom had family commitments and some who did not. I was keen to be actively involved in my own professional learning; I was taking control over my growth as a professional. I did have support mechanisms at home and did secure a part sponsorship for the study, but not for the travel. However, it did involve balancing my personal and professional life. It was only when I moved to the Ballarat Diocese and enrolled in the doctoral program that I was able to secure a sponsorship for the study, which included the ability to negotiate study days from school. During this time I did increase my time as a teacher but was able to juggle the time commitments all the while constantly balancing life and work because I felt I wanted to be active in my own learning.

Not everyone has that drive or ability or such a supportive family life. Thus, this personal testimony is written to demonstrate that it is possible for people to balance their personal and professional careers as teachers if the support networks are available

to them. However, it brings more pressure on schools and the systems within which schools exist to ensure that all teachers are helped in getting the balance right for them.

6.7 Recommendations

In this sub section I will use the three research questions to suggest ways that learning for teachers as they journey through their careers could be enhanced.

6.7.1 How do rural schools cater for the professional needs of their teachers?

Much of the literature about school improvement identifies the need for teachers to be more active in planning their own professional learning (for example Clarke, 1995; Scribner, 1999; Fullan, 1991; Johnson, 1990). Teachers want more control over their professional learning. It is important that teachers develop a sense of control over their own learning by carefully utilising opportunities such as Annual Review Meetings to express their professional and personal needs, and to plan future professional learning with school leaders. It requires teachers to be open to new ideas and willingness to self manage, and to be realistic about what can be achieved in terms of their personal and professional lives.

It is clear that teachers are adult learners (see for example Cross, 1981; Knowles, et al,1988, Moore, 1988; Stoll & Fink, 1986; Whitaker, 1993). There are a variety of ways in which professional learning could occur in the workplace. The work of Cole (2005) that serves to illustrate the variety of possible professional learning activities that could be considered by school leadership teams in conjunction with teachers to develop and sustain a learning culture to enhance school improvement, but being aware of all the

possibilities (including formal study opportunities, membership of professional bodies, week end and holiday workshops etc) is the responsibility of the individual teacher.

At different stages in their professional and personal lives (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Hall & Morgan, 1983) they may be seeking different sorts of learning and could be constrained, or indeed at other times liberated, by finances, time and the organisation. It requires an acknowledgement by leadership teams and organisers of professional learning that at different times in a teacher's career and life they have differing needs and interests (Cacciattolo, Cherednichenko, Eckersley, Jones, Kruger, Moore, Mulraney & Watt, 2005). This appears to be generally overlooked by organisers of professional learning in all of the three schools in this study. This includes having knowledge of the professional needs within the school community and recognizing that the needs of adult learners are as important as student needs. Comments noted in the focus groups and interviews recognise the importance of professional learning, but the learning offered is not particularly relevant to where they are at, or what they particularly need. It became evident that many of the teachers felt that they needed a deeper understanding of the learning that their students required thus, they wanted a greater level of skills and knowledge to meet the demands of an increasingly complex job.

Considered professional and personal goal setting via Professional Learning Portfolios in conjunction with the principal or the Professional Learning Coordinator could be of enormous benefit to the growth of the professional. Teachers from two of the schools in the study indicated that these were in place in their schools, but more needed to be done to gain the optimum benefit inherent in this arrangement.

Critical in all of these is the leadership team with an agenda to become more transparent and invitational so that all teachers had an organisational awareness lens from which to view their role in the school community. I would suggest that there exists a need for a thorough examination of just how teachers spend their professional time and compare that with the expectations of the leadership team.

6.7.2 How do secondary teachers in rural schools balance their professional needs with their personal lives?

Reality tells us that “in rapidly changing times, if you don’t get better as a teacher over time, you don’t merely stay the same. You get worse” (Stoll & Fink, 1996, cited in Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p. 49). It is encouraging to report on the movement away from the ‘deficit model’ of teacher as endorsed by the Deschoolers in the 1960s and commented upon by Fullan and Hargreaves (1991). More and more professional learning is encouraged and supported in school communities. However, all is not as rosy as it might be. Other forces are also at play. In the current milieu of economic imperatives driving the agenda for school reform, the ability of teachers to juggle professional and personal lives will be dependent on the commitment made by leadership teams to improvement and to the style of professional learning that they deem as best.

There are a myriad of ways that schools can cater for the professional learning needs of teachers. In analysing the data and revisiting the literature I compiled this list in Figure 6.1 to summarise the important ways in which schools can best cater for the learning needs of teachers in the Ballarat Diocese. It is not meant as a set of panaceas for engaging all staff in professional learning but as a list of consideration for the three

school communities to contemplate when planning professional learning. The nine recommendations listed include consideration of the fact that the role of teachers has changed.

1. Recognise the individual teacher as an adult learner who has had life experiences and acknowledge their career stage and life stage
2. Seek to engage the teachers in the school community in planning professional learning activities
3. Provide opportunities for teachers to plan their professional and personal learning
4. Use the wisdom and experience of teachers as providers of professional learning if it is available
5. Be brave and restructure meetings for teachers which allow for collegial sharing (and opportunities for staff to report on their learning)
6. Employ professional learning providers who are cognizant of the learning needs of adults in the work place and have a proven track record
7. Provide leadership in professional learning with a position of responsibility that acknowledges the importance of teacher learning
8. Provide adequate resources for the professional learning for teachers
9. Provide a pleasant and appropriate learning context

Figure 6.1: A summary of the analysis showing the learning needs of teachers in a school community

The world has changed. Knowledge has become a commodity and its availability in a variety of modes ensures easier access to it. Teachers are no longer called to be the lone expert in knowledge in their classroom but the navigator of learning; they need regular time together to talk with their colleagues, share knowledge, skills and resources

(Rogers, 2002). The teachers in this study discussed the need to have more collegial time with others on their staff. However, this requires school communities to commit to learning for teachers and provide structures for this to happen within. This could include restructuring meetings to allow for greater collegial sharing (see Figure 6.1), or block scheduling teachers in the timetable to allow teachers in similar areas to be 'freed up' in the timetable to work together during school time.

Many of the teachers who participated in this study expressed dissatisfaction with many of the sessions that they have had to endure that have failed to acknowledge that teachers are knowledgeable and on the whole amenable to new learning (Clarke, 1995). Like their students, they appreciate a pleasant environment in which to learn including, as one teacher in the survey commented, upon 'comfortable seats'. Providing a pleasant and appropriate learning context is important.

The challenge for the three Ballarat Catholic secondary colleges is to consider the learning needs of mid to late career teachers as these make up a large portion of their staff. They need to remember that "older teachers can undergo quite sharp and dramatic reorientations in their career as a result of workplace learning" (Retallick, 1993).

Careful and considerate planning with and for the adult learners will be of enormous benefit to the life of the learning organisation.

Barth (1990, p. 50) makes a pertinent point when he suggests that when teachers stop growing, so do their students. From the data collected in this study it appears that given the opportunity and supported by improved structures which enhance collegiality in their respective schools, many of the teachers in the three schools would embrace professional learning more easily and contribute to the growth of the school community.

6.2.3 How do teaching professionals inform the governments, administrators and leaders at the systems level of their learning needs now and into the future?

In the Ballarat Diocese, the systemic level of governance has indicated that they keep a respectful distance from the three Catholic secondary schools instead trusting in the autonomy of the principle. Teachers have very little access to Ballarat CEO staff unless they are invited into the school thus, the ability to engage with them over issues is limited.

Teachers are increasingly frustrated with what they see as the on-going interference administrators and governments have in schools. Nothing highlights this more than the imposed Commonwealth Government assessment reporting scheme and the Victorian state government's new curriculum (VELS). If governments are serious about improved outcomes for students then dialogue with teachers at the coal face is crucial.

Groups such as the Victorian Independent Education Union and the Australian College of Educators are pivotal in representing the professional and personal needs of teachers. Consultation and involvement by teachers in dialogue has the potential to assist such organisations make representations to governments.

In Victoria the VIT is a statutory authority charged with the responsibility of monitoring professional learning for teachers by an Act of Parliament. A large number of teachers sit on the twenty member council and recently have been successful in lobbying for a review of this body after claims that it has "failed to promote the profession" (VIT, 2006). Both the current Opposition Education Spokesman and the president of the Victorian Principals' Association drew attention to the fact that teachers were unclear of

the role of the organisation thus, were largely unsupportive of the VIT. This further highlights the need for teachers to be informed and consulted in order to feel a sense of control over their professional lives. This also has implications for teachers as they continue to seek representation on committees and boards who claim to represent the professional needs of teachers.

6.8 Limitations of this Study

A robust approach was needed in the research design phase of my planning to reduce the number of limitations but acknowledging that limitations did occur as a result of being a teacher researcher. On the other hand, these limitations may be mitigated to some extent because I was a teacher researcher. In this role I did have immediate and intimate awareness of the pressures the teachers are under and hence can identify readily with them. In my on-going role as a Curriculum Coordinator at one of the secondary college in the study, I was very aware of the situational limitations to being involved in the research process. I was constantly aware of these limitations and ensured that they did not limit the potential research findings.

The other clear limitation of this study is that it only gathered data from three rural colleges. Hence those who would generalise these results to other contexts must take care in ensuring that their context mirrors to some degree the contexts of the three colleges described in this study. However, the advantages of using only three schools in this study was that within the resources available to conduct this study, in-depth data was gathered which allowed for greater insights into the schools than would have been

the case if the resources had been spread more thinly in gathering data from more schools.

6.9 Conclusion

In Chapter Three I stated that my main goal in undertaking research with teachers in the three Catholic secondary colleges was to gain an insight into what was currently happening in these colleges regarding the interaction of professional and personal lives of teachers. From this study it appears that many of the concerns expressed by the teachers who participated are supported in the main by the literature. There are However, some concerns raised in this study that are given glib consideration by the literature including the provision for professional learning for teachers who are mid career and who live and work in rural areas. It was the hope of this study that I may be able to draw attention to these pertinent issues and perhaps ignite some further discussion or research in this area.

The challenge remains for leadership teams in rural schools to work with teachers in providing structures and resources that support professional learning opportunities that are inclusive of all teachers regardless of their life or career stage. In establishing a school community where teachers are invited to be part of the decision making and a shared vision of teaching and learning is the norm, it is hoped that teachers will feel empowered to explore their professional and personal needs with their colleagues. These are vital elements of being a professional in the twenty first century.

Appendix A

Copy of University Research Projects Ethics Committee

Ethics Clearance for a Research Project Approval Form

Research Ethics Committee Register No. V 2003. 04-87

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS
PARTICIPANT'S COPY

TITLE OF PROJECT: Why teacher learning matters.

STAFF SUPERVISOR: Professor Phillip Clarkson

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Mrs Helen Weadon

AND NAME OF PROGRAMME IN, WHICH ENROLLED: Doctor of Education

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research based on teacher learning. It is my intention to survey every staff member of Damascus College by distributing a questionnaire to collect data about the interrelationship between the professional and personal lives of teachers and how it impedes or supports teacher learning. The data I will be collecting will be used in my doctoral thesis.

In order for this study to be effective, I require all staff to complete the survey. The survey will be distributed at a staff meeting after a brief presentation about my research and will include a stamped addressed envelope to return completed questionnaire to the researcher. It is not intended for the survey to take any longer than 20 minutes to complete and at no time will the identity of the participant be revealed.

I shall be collecting data from the three catholic secondary colleges in Ballarat. I will then follow up the surveys with focus groups, which will involve 12 staff members from each of the schools. It is my intention to invite staff to be part of the focus groups. Participants in the focus groups will be invited to be available for a period of an hour at a time that is negotiated between the researcher, the participants and the principal of the school. All focus groups will take place at the school. It is my intention to take notes during the focus groups, which will be coded and not identifiable by anyone other than the researcher. It is also my intention that an assistant will be used to take notes.

Participation in the study is voluntary. As a participant, you may withdraw your permission to continue with the survey or focus groups at any time. Your inability to participate in study at the time of your withdrawal does not exempt you from participating in any other studies conducted by researchers from Australian Catholic University.

Any data collected will be stored in a safe, locked location by the researcher. At all times during the study, confidentiality will be maintained. Each participant will be given a code that is only identifiable by the researcher.

I will be available to discuss any concerns or queries before each stage of the study. It is my intention to explain the procedures associated with the focus groups in greater detail once the participants have been agreed upon. On completion of the study, participants will be given the opportunity to discuss their participation in general.

At any point in the study, you as a participant may direct questions to me as the researcher or to my Supervisor, Professor Phillip Clarkson, on telephone number [03 99533000](tel:0399533000) in the School of Education, St.Patrick's Campus at Australian Catholic University, 115 Victoria Parade, FITZROY 3065.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Investigator or Supervisor and Student Researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the nearest branch of the Research Services Unit.

VIC: Chair, HREC
C/o Research Services
Australian Catholic University
Melbourne Campus
Locked Bag 4115
FITZROY VIC 3065
Tel: 03 9953 3157
Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

Your participation in this project will provide valuable data and will be greatly appreciated.

Helen Weadon
Clarkson
Student Researcher

Professor Phillip
Staff Supervisor.

INFORMATION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

TITLE OF PROJECT: Why teacher learning matters.

STAFF SUPERVISOR: Professor Phillip Clarkson

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Mrs Helen Weadon

COURSE: Doctor of Education

Mr John Shannon
Principal, Damascus College
200 Victoria Street,
Ballarat, 3350

Dear Mr Shannon,

Damascus College is invited to participate in research that explores the notion of teacher as learner. There appears to be a dichotomy between what is perceived to be the Professional learning needs of teachers as decided by 'outside experts', and what teachers believe that they need to perform creatively their daily tasks. The research points to two major areas of teacher growth that needs to be addressed: the need to grow professionally and the need to grow personally. I am conducting the project as part of my Doctor of Education programme.

For this study I require teachers to share their experiences of professional learning in the context of their personal lives. I will be asking all teachers in your school to participate in a survey and I will follow this up by inviting a small group of staff who are representative of a wide cross section of experience as a teacher.

The research will consist of the following processes;

Survey. A visit to your staff to speak about research and invite staff to complete the survey. It is anticipated that the survey will take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

Focus Groups. It is my intention to collate the survey, code the data then produce a position paper that reflects the responses from the surveys. Twelve Staff will be invited to participate in the Focus groups. Participants will be required to be available for a period of an hour at a time that is negotiated between the researcher, the participants and the principal. All focus groups will take place at school. It is my intention to audiotape the focus groups and take notes, which will be coded and not identifiable by anyone other than the researcher.

Principal Interviews. It is my intention to interview all three principals after completing the Focus Groups. During these interviews I will be seeking to use comparative checking techniques to clarify, confirm or dispute any theory that has emerged as a result of surveying and interviewing staff.

If you agree to the conducting of this study at Damascus College, I assure you confidentiality will be maintained both during the study and in any report of the study.

All participants will be given a code and names will not be retained with the data. At any time during the study you would be welcome to seek clarification in any area.

If you have any questions about the project, please contact the Staff Supervisor, Professor Phillip Clarkson, on telephone number 03 99533000 in the School of Education, St Patrick's Campus at the Australian Catholic University, 115 Victoria Parade, FITZROY 3065. Before commencing, you will have the opportunity to ask any questions about the project. You will also have the opportunity to discuss your participation and the project in general after the completion.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University. In the event that participants have any complaint or concern about the way they have been treated during the study, or if they have any query that the Student Researcher and Staff Supervisor have not been able to satisfy, they may write to:

Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee
C/o Research Services
Australian Catholic University
Locked Bag 4115
FITZROY VIC 3065 Tel: 03 9953 3157 Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint will be treated in confidence and investigated fully. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

If you are willing for the College to participate please sign the attached informed consent forms. You should sign both copies of the consent form and retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to me as student researcher. Your support for the research project will be most appreciated.

Helen Weadon
Student Researcher

Professor Phillip Clarkson
Staff Supervisor

APPENDIX B

Swan Hill Pilot Survey

Survey Instrument – Why Teacher Learning Matters

An exploration of the interrelationship between the professional learning and personal growth of teachers during the course of their careers

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Teachers are central to the growth and continued life of a school				
2	Schools generally attend adequately to the developmental needs of adults				
3	Teacher learning is as important as student learning				
4	Professional learning needs to be broad and inclusive of the individual needs and learning styles of teachers				
5	Teacher's personal concerns often underpin their interest in professional growth				
6	The personal life of teachers impacts on their ability to pursue professional learning				
7	Individual teachers should have more input into professional learning sessions offered at a school level				
8	Organizers of professional learning often overlook the personal lives of teachers				
9	There is a need for Professional learning coordinators in secondary schools				
10	Undertaking further study is not realistic for most teachers				
11	Professional learning that takes place as a result of government initiatives is not satisfactory as it is imposed				
12	Teachers at different points in their life cycles have characteristically different orientations to change and improvement as well as different needs in terms of professional learning				
13	Personal commitments and personal fulfillment result from learning opportunities that are highly inclusive of a teaching professional's availability to be actively involved in their own learning				

Your comments:

APPENDIX C



Survey Instrument – Why Teacher Learning Matters

Thank you for agreeing to part of this survey. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

I welcome any comments that you wish to contribute to support your answers. I also welcome any general comments that you wish to make at the end of the survey. Please enclose completed survey in the addressed envelope provided and return within 7 days.

Please complete the information that is requested below.

1. Gender (please circle) Male
 Female

2. Number of years you have been a teacher ?

3. Do you currently hold a Position of Leadership in the College? (please circle)

- Yes
- No

4. Are you a full – time teacher?

- Yes
- No

- Please place a tick in the column directly next to each statement that best reflects your belief about the statement.
- Your comments about each of the statements will be welcome.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Teachers are central to the development and continued life of a school				
	Comment:				
2	Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers				
	Comment:				
3	Teacher learning is as important as student learning				
	Comment:				
4	Professional learning (PD) needs to be broad and inclusive of the individual needs of teachers				
	Comment:				

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	Professional learning (PD) needs to be inclusive of the differing learning styles of teachers				
	Comment:				
6	Teacher's personal concerns often underpin their interest in professional learning				
	Comment:				
7	The personal life of teachers impacts on their ability to pursue professional learning				
	Comment:				
8	Individual teachers should have the opportunity to have more input into professional learning opportunities offered at a school level				
	Comment:				

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	Teachers are more likely to be committed to professional learning when they have had the opportunity to be part of the planning				
Comment:					
10	There is a need for Professional Learning coordinators in secondary schools				
Comment:					
11	There is a need for Professional Learning coordinators in secondary schools				
Comment:					
12	Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers				
Comment:					

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13	A) Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's classroom practice				
	B) Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric				
Comment:					
14	Teachers have different orientations to change and improvement at different stages during their teaching career				
	Comment:				
15	Teachers have different needs in terms of professional learning at different stages during their teaching career				
	Comment:				

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Please feel free to comment on any aspects of this survey in the space provided below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to provide comments on the survey.

APPENDIX D

Separate Sheet Form For Volunteers for Focus Groups and Interviews

I am interested in being involved in a focus group that will inform Doctoral Research on Teacher Learning.

My name is:

I have been teaching for ____ years.

I can be contacted on the following email address:

I can be contacted by phone:

The best time to contact me is:

My preferred night for a focus group is:

My preferred time for a focus group is:

Signed: _____

Thank you for agreeing to be part of the focus group. Please post this in the box labelled Helen Weadon's Research in your staffroom.

APPENDIX E

Focus Group and Interview Paper Why Teacher Learning Matters

Helen Weadon

An initial examination of the survey results from the three catholic secondary colleges indicates that there is general agreement that Teacher Learning is important.

Whilst there is general agreement that P/L is an important part of the role of the professional teacher some questions were of particular interest because they evoked some poignant responses. I have included the questions that were of interest to me in my initial examination. I would ask that you give due consideration to the questions and points of interest that arose from the surveys over the next few days.

Q 2 –

Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers

If this is the case what is it that schools do?
If it's not the case then what could be done?

Q 4

Professional learning (PD) needs to be broad and inclusive of the individual needs of teachers.

How do schools cater for individual needs of teachers?
How can schools cater for individual needs of teachers?
What structures need to be in place to allow for teachers to take responsibility for their own PL?

Q 10

Organisers of P/L often overlook the personal needs of teachers

How can the personal needs of individual teachers be considered in developing PD?

Q.11

There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator In secondary schools.

Could be someone who could oversee the distribution of info to teachers & have a central resource person who coordinates – helps individual teachers plan?
Is it just another administrative role??

Q 12

Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers

What sort of incentives could be made to teachers to enable those who want to continue with formalised study?

13b

Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric

Is it the fact that change is being imposed that teachers find difficult? Or are there other mitigating factors?

APPENDIX F

Discussion Paper for the Principals

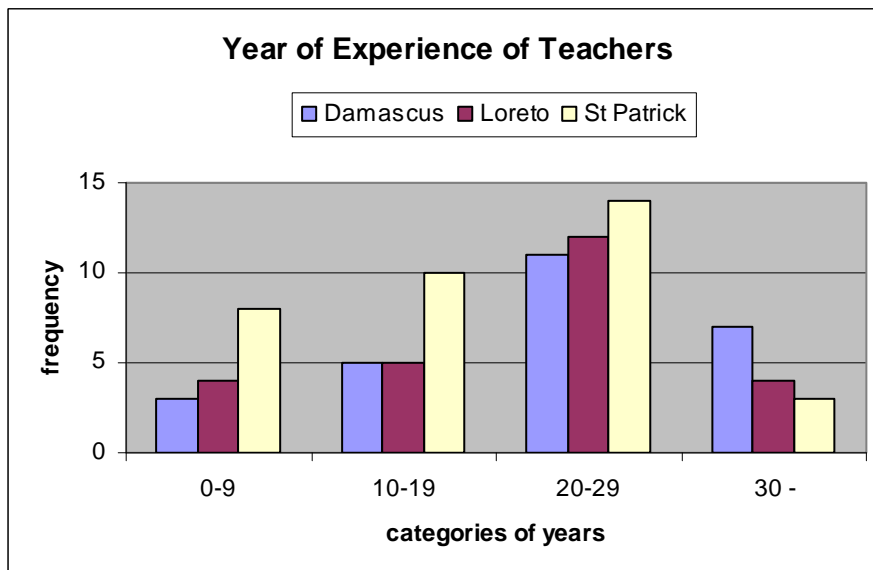
Initially it was my intention to treat each school as an individual study but as the initial survey data was analysed – it became apparent that because of the similarity in demographics and the analogous responses, that it was one Case study about three catholic secondary schools in a rural setting with distinct messages about the professional and personal lives of teachers.

With 2/3 of my research completed, I present the following for comment and analysis.

Table 4.1 provides a breakdown of the respondents to the survey.

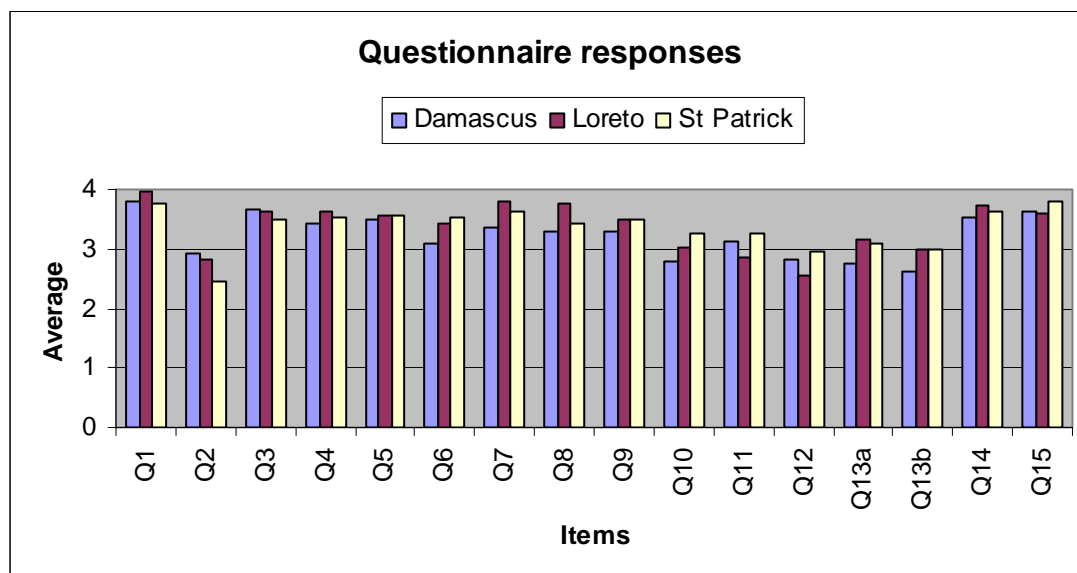
	Teaching Time Fraction		Position of Leadership		Years of Teaching	Gender		Number who returned survey	Number of teachers in the school
	Full	Part	Yes	No	Average	Female	Male		
Damascus College	21	6	16	11	17.1	16	9	27	91
Loreto College	19	6	16	10	20.1	19	6	25	71
St. Patrick's College	30	5	16	19	20.8	22	13	35	82

At this point it is pertinent to draw your attention to the average length of service of the teachers who responded to the survey



What do you believe to be the implications for your school in regard to catering for the professional needs of staff whilst remaining committed to school improvement?

The following questions were of particular interest as these were the questions where there was high disagreement within the items. The graph illustrates the responses and the table highlights the items that were further explored in Focus Groups and Interviews.



These are the questions that were of most interest and these formed the basis of the Focus Group Sessions

Table 1.0

Question 2

Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers

Question 10

Organisers of P/L often overlook the personal needs of teachers

Question 11

There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator In secondary schools.

Question 12

Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers

Question 13b

Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric

I wish to discuss these with you

APPENDIX G

Discussion Paper for the CEO Staff

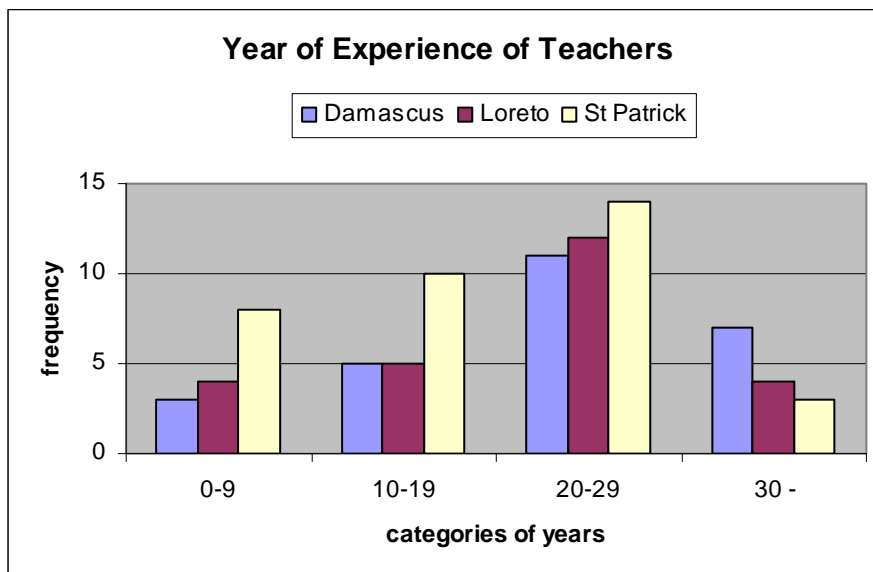
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St. Patrick's College	30	5	16	19	20.8	22	13	35	82

At this point it is pertinent to draw your attention to the average length of service of the teachers who responded to the survey



What do you believe to be the implications for your school in regard to catering for the professional needs of staff whilst remaining committed to school improvement?

This is what the Principals said:

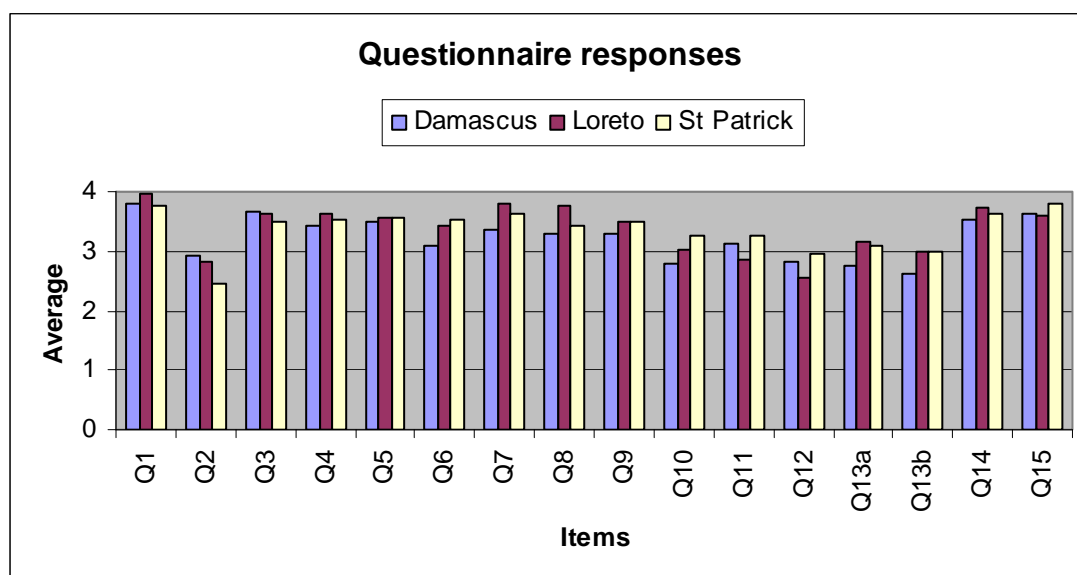
I think the ageing teaching workforce is going to throw up huge challenges not only in terms of PD but we are facing it here all of the time in the sense of people wanting to go part time, and once they are part time getting them involved in PD is even harder. We are having issues with people not wanting to go on School camps, excursions because that is at the end of the school day and they don't feel fit and agile enough to do it. So I think the ageing teaching work force will provide many interesting challenges as well as professional development. But I want to say in defence of the ageing teachers that they are amongst our most professionally active teachers –there is a great group of very committed experienced teachers in that age bracket 20 – 29 years of teaching and some of them are the ultimate professionals, and still want to go to PD because it is good for them and good for their students and some of them are still studying. It's not generalised at all but we are lucky here that we do not have a large number of teachers, who are sitting here waiting to retire, so our older teachers in terms of their classroom expertise, superb. So I don't have a lovely quirky response. It may be that in future Awards there may be some productivity trade off between PD and salary increments, it may be that with V.I.T registration that teachers

will get a sense to maintain my currency and registration that I will have to demonstrate that I have been to some PD. We might have to get a whole lot smarter and cleverer about how and who and where PD is presented for people so that it is in manageable bites so that it is enticing, it is relevant, it is my sense that it would require a systemic response. I think because schools are going to be more competitive with each other in getting teachers while there are subject specific shortages, those that can offer the best PD and best PD programs will be advantaged so that force schools into being more lateral in their approaches.

Where would we have been without Jeff Kennett then? In terms of the number of packages

What if any plans has the CEO made to cater for the ageing nature of the staff in the secondary schools.

The following questions were of particular interest as these were the questions where there was high disagreement within the items. The graph illustrates the responses and the table highlights the items that were further explored in Focus Groups and Interviews.



These are the questions that were of most interest and these formed the basis of the Focus Group Sessions

Table 1.0

Question 2

Schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers

This is what the Principals said:

Well I imagine the biggest one is to trying to be more targeted in a sense – instead of trying to offer what appears on the surface to be a one size fits all model for professional development.

My general response to that is that teachers are pretty passive about their own professional development portfolio planning, so in a sense it is a bit hard to sit on this side of the desk and say “come on, this is what I think you need” when you’d like to think that professional teachers get to the point where they could identify some of their own deficiencies or some of the things that they know they need extra help in a response.

You know, their not actively searching around and ferreting out the very best PD. Or Dennis Higgins of CEO Sandhurst said there’s the support and there is the pressure and so he would support a case where on one hand in terms of leadership in a school, you need to be there to support your teachers but you also need to offer them some accountability and some pressure to look forward in their skills and expertise.

Many were reluctant to undertake PD of any sort, on the other hand, some were prepared to do one and above.

The budget could have been bigger but that alone would not have been enough to move some people.

People haven’t used up as much PD as we have budgeted for. So ours is not a resource problem in a general sense. My sense would be that there is- you know looking at that, looking at the age of our teachers and certainly knowing that already, looking at the very different needs people have – is being very strategic about what to offer – being a lot more descriptive.

I would agree that, – I’m not sure that it is overlooked in there sense that people don’t even think about it –I certainly think it misses out if you prioritise things because clearly we have thought about that sort of mentality and where we mention immediate needs we have got like a new study design, a new timetable structure, we’ve got VELs ,we’ve got the new RE curriculum we’ve got the new National Safe Schools Framework – all these big project items that we have to be ready for and

when a person comes to me and says I really have to go and do some personal renewal or look at personal well – being or how to balance my life – I could see how easily it would be that the bigger systemic need comes before people.

What is your experience of the provision of professional development from a systemic view point in secondary schools?

Question 10

Organisers of P/L often overlook the personal needs of teachers

This is what the Principals said:

Staff were asked about personal PD and some did undertake I.S in areas such as mental health, I.T skill development, positive relationships etc. Maybe it could have been presented to staff in a more open and encouraging way and time given to help this happen.

You know that balance between when there is a professional and when there is a personal responsibility too and when should a person be asked to use their own time, after school time, holiday time to do that sort of thing.

I suppose one thing that we take on board is the staffs personal development and that is why we have instituted a residential in-service –

We split our budget between College PD largely and our personal well being and that is one side of it – the second side of it is breaking it down to school based activities and to individual activities. So we have a College plan, College PD plan, and the School's plans and through out ARMS and TRMS put in place a personal development plan.

well that is a choice, where is that line that any professional person has a responsibility to retain their professional integrity and competence and think there is something that says you can't have it all to come out of your working hours.

That's where I had to be very careful in my own analysis of people that I did not allow my passion and my drive to actually stand in the way of other people's choices that they made.

How do you as a CEO staff member, view the provision of personal development and how important is it in having a system where teachers who are catered for both professionally and personally?

Question 11

There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator In secondary schools.

This is what the Principals said:

We don't have a designated professional development coordinator as such

In a school the size of XXXX there is a need for a position of Leadership in Professional Learning. It could be done by a DP or other senior role and be combined or it could be done separately.

Future school improvement relies on staff upgrading their skills, being better qualified to do their job.

One of the Schools in Sydney has a Director of Professional Learning and that is an interesting position. Has a Deputy status and that is their whole thing managing people's PD, accessing it, managing it, doing the bookings, keeping the records – mind you they have eleven Directors, in this School. There's a Director of Professional Learning Director of everything- Human Resources- all on Deputies salaries. Here it's not. It is combined with Curriculum and we look at the requests on a fortnightly basis in our Leadership Team. So they all come in with their applications filled out where they want to go, why they want to go so it is dealt with by a committee.

Is it imperative that there is a designated position of PD Coordinator from a Systemic point of view? What concerns, issues, occurs from a Systemic level when offering PD to the Secondary Schools in this Diocese?

Question 12

Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers

This is what the Principals said:

You and I have discussed this one at length. It is difficult juggling work family and leisure, but it is unrealistic to consider yourself a professional, or want others to think

of you as a professional if you are not prepared to keep abreast of changes in your profession.

Many of us have combined study with work and family; often it is those with the more responsible, time consuming jobs who undertake study.

I think sometimes it depends on your personal view of teaching. If it's a job- you resist extra work or study; if it's a profession you do all the extras that will benefit the students, the school and that includes study.

That can vary, according to age and stage and being outside of the metropolitan area We found the biggest draw back was HECS and that is probably everywhere now. But then availability, the money side of things, getting more of the idea of using Diocesan Sponsorship going a third, a third, a third that's one way. I hate the idea of people taking study days – it gets in the way of what they are paid to do and that is to teach. At the same time is there that opportunity as part of our policy we won't give HECS funding to anyone who has not at least applied to the Diocese in the first instance. And I think that is about teachers struggling to see the professionalism of their own work sometimes rather than saying that I employed 38 hours a week by a school. Whereas, if you see it as a commitment to professional growth over the life time of your career, there is a greater willingness. I do know that my response to that question is very much formed out of my own perspective. You know, it's hard to not think (even though I don't say it) well God help me, I've done it and thousands of other people have done it – you know do the week end mode stuff, do something in your holidays, because more and more it seems to me people are wanting time release from school to do things whether it is planning, whether it is study, whether it is PD, it always seems to be coming out of an increasingly busy week at school.

How important from a systemic level is formalised study for teachers in the Ballarat Diocese.

Question 13b

Professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric

This is what the Principals said:

It colours their rhetoric. I tend to agree that these externally imposed programs are very hard – it's hard to engage people's professional imagination. With the campaigns, the kits especially the ones that are easy to file away and put almost out of sight. Unless someone has the designated time and energy, to do the pushing, that is very hard. So I think that is true. Unless it somehow comes out of a personal need or perceived need within a school community, or even if there was a perceived need across a broad range of state or nationally, teachers see the common sense and they see the goodness and they see the merit of those programs but those that appear to have more to do with political sensibilities and political correctness don't ever seem to engage teachers imaginations or practically.

I think this can be true of many older teachers who become a little cynical about change. The attitude "we've done it all before – just under another name!"

Government initiatives such as CSF and VELs can impact but often this is resisted, slow to accept and ultimately not done in the spirit intended by the change. Of course I hasten to add this is not true of all teachers and most do embrace change, but we've seen many staff who struggle.

APPENDIX H

Transcript of Interview with Focus Group One

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: Introduction and warning re taping

RESEARCHER: When I looked at the material that the staff presented in this survey there were a few points that stuck out as being of particular importance, what I thought we might do, is to just look at some of the points that I thought were pertinent and then for you to come up with some answers to, some suggestions or some reasons as to why you think that might be so, now that might be personal or could be school based, but is that a way forward for everyone? Is that Ok with you?

Murmurings of agreement from group.

RESEARCHER: Now if we start with Question 2 for this staff this is one of the questions that got a wide range of disagreeance in. The question is that schools generally attend to the PD of their teachers, I am saying if this is the case what is it that schools do and if it is not the case then what could be done, so what ... a really wide... some people said yes they do it really well and others said no they perhaps don't do it really well at all, I so it is over to you.

RESPONDENT 1: Just a question Helen, do you know what subject areas those people responded from?

RESEARCHER: No, because they were all anonymous

RESPONDENT 2: That would probably make some sort of difference I suppose

RESEARCHER: Do you think that within your school, depending on what faculty they actually belong to would depend on?

RESPONDENT 1: It is hard to say for some that lean towards it better than others.

RESPONDENT 3: And possibly it would vary between schools, because there has been quite a bit of middle school PD that has been particularly into boys' education; and there's been the learning communities CEO that has been just completed. The Developing a Learning Community at the Junior School, the junior school people but at senior school anything the senior school people have been through has been much broader. Possibly not relevant to individuals, it has just been presented as we are going to do this and not people being able to opt to do it or

RESEARCHER: So, what people, were coerced into it or were they ...

RESPONDENT 3: We have a PD week and these people come and talk to you and sometimes you think well it is all very nice, but I don't think it is particularly relevant to where I am at or what I particularly need.

RESEARCHER: So you don't feel that, do you feel that you were consulted about it or do they just organise this PD based on perceived needs or ...

RESPONDENT 3: I think at the general sessions they organise people on perceived needs. Come on guys, come on.

RESPONDENT 1: I'm on board, I am listening! Another great school

RESPONDENT 3: I can't actually remember what I wrote on the response; whether at that time was thinking that the professional, but looking at it in retrospect I think that there are some issues there.

RESPONDENT 2: It is not always easy to know what is available at XXXX, it is on the website, but unless you actually go there and look, which I suppose is our responsibility, but we have other things to do it would be nice to be made aware of what is available as it comes in, without just having it on a website that you may never see

RESEARCHER: That was one point, that one of the points raised by a number of people that they didn't feel that there was easy access to the provision of PD that they didn't know what was going on in the school and that came through very clearly from a variety of people that

they didn't know what PD was available and then the other point was that they didn't feel that not everybody was able to apply for it. Is that a truism or not

RESPONDENT 2: Fairly accurate

RESPONDENT 4: I think what happens is that the Head of a faculty probably some of it is faculty ,you know, look at the website and can tell you these things are on.

RESPONDENT 3 : This is a head of faculty does not look at websites

RESPONDENT: I only found that stuff on the website because I was looking for something else. I never knew it was on there until I found it accidentally

RESPONDENT 4: Some do and some don't and I suppose that this year too the week in the middle of the year when we had a day in XXXX on the chapter. There was no question whether it was good PD we did it, it was XXXX stuff, but I suppose we had to hear about it I am sure there was mixed reaction about why we should be, it was an afternoon actually wasn't it? Pre drinks

RESPONDENT 1:I think the afternoon PD was much better

RESPONDENT 4: On the Chapter?

RESPONDENT 1:Na, the pub ...

RESPONDENT 3 : Didn't us ...

RESPONDENT 4: We got up there 10 to 11

RESPONDENT 3 : But the whole day on the Friday was devoted to the Charter and to

RESPONDENT 4: Charter not Chapter

RESPONDENT 3: Fr. XXXX who was, that was fine, but there was a lot of time dedicated to what seemed to be a small...

RESPONDENT 4: No, we only had him in the morning then we had lunch and went home

RESPONDENT 3: Oh, OK that's right we did to

RESEARCHER: One of the things that came through about that XXXX experience a few people wrote about that they felt that it was not worthwhile, the money that they spent on accommodation could have been better spent perhaps providing a better... a better quality of PD. Is that a fair observation?

RESPONDENT 1: I don't know, I think the 2nd day was very good I got a lot out of it, the first day was a waste of time period.

RESEARCHER: Why was it a waste of time?

RESPONDENT 1: Because 2 XXXX talking about something that they did not have any enthusiasm for.

RESPONDENT 4: 2 XXXX. Talking about ...

RESPONDENT 1: On XXXX and one XXXX, I don't know which the ex was and which was not, but anyway...

RESEARCHER: So how did that make you feel as professionals, having to sit through?

RESPONDENT: It is frustrating, I know we are supposed to be, we need to be aware of what is going on in terms of the charter and that sort of stuff but you don't want to sit there and listen to it...give me the handbook I can read that.

RESEARCHER: So if you were to look at this question and tease it out a bit more, would you say that your school was adequately attends to the PD of staff or do you think that in your particular situation there is a lot more that could be done and if there is a lot to be done what could be done to engage you?

RESPONDENT 1: I think that the first issue is: Is it the school's responsibility to do that or is the individual teachers responsibility to because you don't look for PD therefore it is your problem, end of story, so all that other stuff we talk about becomes irrelevant, if you are the person who has to do it and that's the school line then there is no point in us talking any more. If on the other side the school says righto we understand you live a busy life because we want you to do a job therefore to help you in that job we will bring forward to you these things, so do you know what I mean? Which way is it meant to be or...

RESEARCHER: Or is there another view of that, that we are dealing with a whole group of professionals that we want our teachers to learning continually we don't want teachers sitting in our school that who got their degree 20-25 years ago and have stopped learning. Is it the schools responsibility to ensure that the people who they employ are updated or is it the individuals, I mean

RESPONDENT 1: That's the question

RESPONDENT 4: I think it is a combination

RESPONDENT: If we are going to have somebody whose role it is to coordinate PD I imagine it would be that person's role to make it known to people what is available and make sure it was meeting the needs of individuals, I mean these things are supposed to be identified through our Annual Review Meetings where we need and that we may need PD, so yeah..

RESPONDENT 4: I think a lot it is still VCE dominated so for example whatever it is Comview, is it still comview?

RESPONDENT 3: VCAL

RESPONDENT 4: No, there is commerce related that come out this time every year, some people say, righto I'll save up for that one the (Unknown voice: Subject related) Australian History one comes out every March. The VCE subject thing might dominate the thinking I have to know that because I have to know what boys have to learn, or I don't know about yourselves. I think that is probably pretty clearly announced, people should know about them I suppose, down the line it is more or less the heads of school someone decides this we should

do like Middle school we have been doing at Junior School a dozen people have done it now over the last 2-3 years. And it has been decided for us in a sense sure you are asked you know we want 4 to go next year or something like that. There might be a lot of benefit from that but it is you, you and you go because it might be good for the junior school if you all went; rather than what are you interested in doing?

RESPONDENT 3: Or what do you think because we have gaps in our um where we personally feel that we need development quite often you don't know what to do, where to go or what to look for in those kinds of things and if there is time to do it and money to do it, that is an issue to.

RESEARCHER: I guess tied in here is the personal needs of teacher, because there are stages in our career you have different needs don't you and if you have been teaching a long time you have got the behaviour stuff under control is that then time to look at new pedagogy is that then time to identify within ourselves and as you said in the ARM that is part of the ARM to identify areas that we need to develop do we feel that the school caters for individual needs or do you think it is done as a collective? Is it possible to do something individual?

RESPONDENT 4: Yeah, I was interested in reading the daily messages in the absentees: XXXX OH &S. What's XXXX done? Must be crook, but no XXXX was off on an OH & S course. Now I knew nothing about it, so he must have put up XXXX hand, I assume unless someone told him you're going. So that would be something made public, but it certainly wasn't in this case. I don't know how he found out about it, he would be interested in it, certainly is.

RESPONDENT 1: Through the union I think.

RESPONDENT 4: But I am just guess he saw it and said I'll try that out, I don't know.

RESPONDENT 1: Just going back to the question: Is PD designed to make you a better teacher or is it for upward movement in the system? Do people grasp at these things quickly and then turn around because they get themselves up the rungs as quick as they can and therefore consume a lot. Do some people, quite happily let others go in front of them, because they are not particularly fussed. Do people who teach certain subjects get buried by

work load as opposed to others who teach other subjects where they don't? To me there is no balance in the system. English exams especially, I'd much rather correct a Maths one, so much easier, so much less thinking. In that situation, people have different loads that they teach so does that turn around and make it more difficult for them to disappear for a week. Do you feel pressured yourself? I know a couple of years ago XXXX said to me when I was in the boarding and rowing, I had everything "I am not saying we did, but we may have made it hard for you to do anything." Because you are 24 hours a day, pretty much! I'm still doing rowing and I don't mind doing that, but, you know for 7 years I could not do anything, but never mind, moving on. You know what I mean? So is there some people that get stuck in a system, I'm not saying I am a hero, people get into their job and do their job; and something like PD is PD for me a good idea, Christ it is just another work load. Is it meant to be this will help you in your teaching? Some people think I grab this, get out of here and go somewhere else; it is only a thought Helen.

RESEARCHER: It is a useful thought in that there are many reasons why people undertake PD. Some people like learning, they just love learning and they'll continue to learn and they'll just keep up with what's happening so they'll do that. There are various motives and they might like to aspire to positions at schools and they think that by doing that study they'll be able to be in a better position to apply for those jobs. And there are people who undertake PD because it is imposed upon them. What I am basically asking is: How can schools cater for all those individual needs in a school I mean there are people who for a first year teacher has very different needs to someone who has been teaching for 25 years, how do you keep a 25 year experienced teacher going and refreshed and reinvigorated, and how do you keep a first year teacher in the classroom and keep them sane. I mean how do schools cope with that?

RESPONDENT 3: How do you get someone to go to PD, if you think that they probably should, can be a very difficult one as well, if they don't want to?

RESPONDENT 4: I have been teaching for over 25 years, I have done my stint in administration. I went to Year 7 4-5 years ago, after 20 years, and now I am ready for another change another challenge, but whether that will happen or not is another question, I think one of our challenges is that we belong to a school; I don't want to be in the junior school for ever.

RESEARCHER: So do you think that in your stage of your career that the school has catered for your individual like personal needs?

RESPONDENT 4: No, it is up to me to find something, what can I do now? In Humanities, I have done all the admin. Stuff, not be Year 12 coordinator, no bloody way!

RESPONDENT 3: What about teaching Year 12 English?

RESPONDENT 4: It is almost, you get the feeling, I feel it clearly, and probably XXXX, OK, and you have decided to go to the junior school we prefer you to stay there. That might be convenient, but there should be a fair amount of flexibility, did 15 years in Year 12 English, so it is not impossible.

RESPONDENT 1: I heard my brother say when they want to get rid of a worker, they put him on the belts for a week. Shovelling under the belts, the bloke's gone by the end of the week. So is there motivation to send people to where they don't want to be? I am just being cynical aren't I?

RESEARCHER: Well you have got a position as a professional learning coordinator or someone designated in that role haven't you?

Group Mumbled discussion about who on staff is the PL coordinator or whether it is a committee.

RESPONDENT 4: XXXX is driving the new stuff; I have been to meetings recently and said we have decided that this is going to be our PD. I have asked that question in my head ten times I think, I can't remember ever actually saying

RESPONDENT 4: Mumble ...

RESPONDENT 1: XXXX needs to be more productive... need to be proactive and direct people some times. You know if it is all up to us, we've got our job, then I'll do me job and then I have a life too.

RESEARCHER: So at the moment you have been saying from what I can gather there is PD available but it is often very difficult to find the courses and you have stumbled across a website that has been useful for some. You have said that some people pass on information readily at school but some people don't do it. You feel that the ARM should be the way that you are able to express your needs but you are not sure that this information is passed on or used and

RESPONDENT 3: I think that sometimes that it seems to be just a piece of paper that gets filed and

RESPONDENT 4: I like the ARM's if it is going to the Head but does it ever get there? You have to go and see XXXX if you want XXXX to hear something you want to say and be sure that he's heard it

Mumble

RESPONDENT 4: Through the system, maybe

RESPONDENT 4: He's got a lot of paper to wade through.

RESPONDENT 3: There is only some of it that goes to him specifically.

RESEARCHER: Is there a PD committee that meets or consults with

RESPONDENT 3: As far as I know they only look at the applications that come through and approve-yes or no, and if there is a faculty perspective such as so many people going out, not got the money in or whatever

RESPONDENT 4: There is a committee?

RESPONDENT 3: There is a committee, well I have to put it through, in order to get it approved if it is a faculty one. I'm aware that there is never enough money, so I am very vary what I put through as far as English one's with LOTE I just get told what is happening there.

RESPONDENT 1: They have the... not that I have had the good fortune, but I have XXXX experience, a lot of that still goes on doesn't it?

Mumble about where XXXX is

RESPONDENT 1: Anyway, They turn around and have the XXXX experience and once upon a time and I don't know if it still is but every body went, they'd cycle through and everyone would have to go; but they'd follow up. You'd think that if we are going to have PD then maybe we have to follow through to make sure everyone goes and do something with their PD. If the system can follow people, although I seem to mumble

RESPONDENT 4: Too much rowing and boarding?

RESPONDENT 1: Boarding, Well I just missed it, because of the boarding. If I escaped it, they did follow up on most teachers though. Sent people along and most people got something out of it. That's a particularly Catholic, XXXX> Thing they had

RESPONDENT 5: It was seen as a priority

RESPONDENT 1: If your in History, RE or Maths what ever and you have been here for a couple of years we are going to make sure you go this PD and say to you righto this year make sure you go

RESPONDENT 2: Didn't you go to XXXX?

RESPONDENT 1: Never been

RESPONDENT 5: Neither did I

RESPONDENT 3: Is it a week? What is it?

RESPONDENT 5: Like an Induction

RESPONDENT 3: I went to the day one, that was only a???

RESPONDENT 4: I went for 2 nights. I remember they put the grog out and said that it was for two nights, but they had to buy more the next morning.

RESPONDENT 3: At XXXX, we had XXXX for 5 days

RESPONDENT 1: My idea was do you follow through on people righto you've got a group of people here through your schools but you get more and more heads and things that it just dissipates out you know there is so many heads.. Who is actually in charge of anything? But if we are saying that the man or woman's who is in charge of PD actual job is to do this, then they have a list of their staff and they say righto there's three years no PD, what is happening? Mick why aren't you do something?

Murmurs

RESEARCHER: You don't feel there is any follow up?

RESPONDENT 1: No, there is not, there is platitudes and talk, you need to and all this sort of stuff and it will be good for you and we want you to and all this sort of stuff, then you has your job

RESPONDENT 2: Murmur of assent

RESEARCHER: One of the points that came through very clearly was the fact that many people feel hamstrung by the lack of knowledge, um that they felt that um, there was not a lot of resource put into the professional development in the school and that money and time that the school would actually prefer you to stay at school than to actually leave the school. And they would say, a couple of people said that the lack of money is the reason they are often given for not being able to go or that they had been out of the school too many times, yet they might only have been out twice, so is that a general sort of

RESPONDENT 5: Well having come from small rural schools before this I found that, Helen knows this anyway, I was just stunned because we were used to having to pay for any PD we

had to pay for it ourselves. You know, you had to pay the registration fees, accommodation or anything like that, you paid for it; suddenly you come to XXXX, they paid, the school pays for it, fantastic. But I get the perspective that other schools might even have more money available, it is the feeling I get.

RESPONDENT 2: There is a percentage of the payroll that they have tomumble

RESPONDENT 3: Mumble legally they have to...

RESPONDENT 4: One of the things, going back to XXXX and costs thereof accommodation and all that sort of thing; I reckon there was a very strong feeling coming away from that: How much did this cost? Um, and the benefits were I would really would argue is that it is good to have the whole staff go somewhere, but when people found out something of how much it cost, you know a Motel situation whatever it was, and for a meal it was fairly ordinary, um you know it was really quite expensive, um and you know we could go to XXXX or something like one of those XXXX places. probably couldn't accommodate us, but um even though last time the year before we went to the Ballarat place, Ballarat lodge...

RESPONDENT 4: I would guess that to stay in Ballarat would have been fairly expensive, but the whole notion of getting people there for the night, sure we probably got full, opened up, said more things there than we'd probably would have said um or some of us, excuse me, um there is a benefit in that, but to go to a really classy place or an expensive place yeah classy expensive yeah

RESPONDENT 1: Its quality of the presentation (Murmurs from group) Its as simple as that the two blokes the day before that did stuff were crap, really, you know they were just awful

RESPONDENT 5: Tell us what you really think

RESPONDENT 1: Well they gave us, the book now talk about it, what the point about talking about it? You know you launch something, this is me you have launched the thing then you say lets talk about it, I mean hang on you have launched, launched the ship now let's make it, it is just dum, to me it attacked my brain so badly that the ship down the slip way and its off

floating in the harbour, now lets design a ship, that's what it was to me. It is so dum yet we sat there in groups and talked about it, but

RESPONDENT 4: You would not do that with your kids

RESPONDENT 3: But the thing you yourself that we were so crowded and on top of one another and had no sort of symbolism symbolic um significance attached to it and yet what you are presenting is very symbolic

RESEARCHER: How did that make you feel as a professional? I mean you were herded up and taken off to XXXX

RESPONDENT 3: We weren't fed adequately (Murmurs of assent and laughter, someone unless you got in early)

RESEARCHER: That is always one of the keys, when ever there is a survey they always have something about food, teachers always comment on (Mumbled conversation and laughter from group)

RESPONDENT 1: The next speaker we had the next day you felt good at the end of the day you thought jeez I wish I could do stuff like this, now obviously he does the same talk over and over again, he's got it down pat (murmurs of agreement from group) fantastic, now I felt good after that felt good and the staff sang their song, but other wise I felt good

RESEARCHER: He was a quality presenter

RESPONDENT 1: Brilliant, brilliant

RESPONDENT 1: When you are flat as a tack, and home as a breadwinner you're up and bounce you're into it

RESEARCHER: What, what made that more brilliant, I mean?

RESPONDENT 1: The quality of the guy doing the job and obviously they've gone around though we had to put up with the XXXX, they could have been in that order that they were, but they could have done that in 15 minutes.

RESPONDENT 3: They could have done that at school and would have been more significant

RESPONDENT 1: Yeah, yeah, I wouldn't have brought that on the Chapel

RESPONDENT 4: Fr. XXXX also made it very light he had some decent stuff amongst it, but he really loaded it up with jokes and stories and

RESPONDENT 1: A professional presentation

RESPONDENT 3: I usually hate people that tell jokes and that show cartoons

Group Laughter

RESPONDENT 5: I thought that the presentation made to XXXX was totally inappropriate

Group Laughter

RESPONDENT 1: Just thinking on the PD day there well, you know, you could have had him at XXXX in the library in the performing arts centre in anywhere and it would have been good.

RESPONDENT 3: Yea

RESPONDENT 1: Didn't matter where I am not worried about where never bothers me where, what does bother me was you are sitting there and you are given a sheet of paper which I have read you tell me what we are doing which is fine, I don't agree with you , but I was a bit opposed to the idea of dumping the XXXX and going for XXXX because I just think that it is an insulting way to treat men that dedicated their lives for years, but anyway that's just me, well I accept this because that what I have to accept, so I do that and I move on, but the presentation was

RESPONDENT 1: No, but I accept it because I have to, that's fine, but I think the presentation was appalling and I think that if that was professional development then we are kidding ourselves if that classes as Professional development then it is a joke with a capital J

RESEARCHER: Are you aware of the fact that the VIT are looking at um registration for teachers in so much that every 5 years you are going to have to a log book of PD. Is that being made obvious at your school and has there been any discussion or reading of any sort

RESPONDENT 3: We just get the bill for \$60 and what do we get for it? A little pamphlet that comes in the mail and ask you to pay your \$60 in a hurry or you won't be registered.

RESPONDENT 2: There was something in the last, what do you call it 'I Teach' I think

RESPONDENT 3: Do you read those do you?

RESPONDENT 2: Oh, it doesn't take long, there was something in there about the portfolio or stuff. Which is what XXXX is talking about; I mean XXXX said that we need to develop a portfolio

RESPONDENT 3: XXXX hasn't made it clear that its going to be conditional

RESPONDENT 2: No, no

RESPONDENT 3: Or connected to registration

RESPONDENT 5: One of the things that I found in my inbox and I keep meaning to read is a couple of emails from XXXX about some professional learning literature that we are meant to have read and discuss at the next staff meeting, but I don't remember it coming up

RESPONDENT 3: When did that come in? because...

RESPONDENT 5: About two weeks ago, I just have not got to reading that email because I'm busy doing other things

RESEARCHER: So what structures, obviously you have talked about the experience if you're able to have a round table with the leadership team what sort of structures would, what sort of things would you be asking for the school to provide in order to make you feel that your professional learning is valued? What sort of...things?

RESPONDENT 2: There's two levels of what we need to do as PD one of them is to address the needs of the school, the school has some needs in terms of, you know, dealing with boys and behaviour management and all those sorts of things that I don't think are addressed through PD arr, and then there is the teachers pd

RESPONDENT 5: Do you think there is a shared responsibility that teachers have to take on some of the ownership of finding their own PD and joining it?

RESPONDENT 2: Absolutely, in terms of the schools needs where are they identified? And who does that? I just find the structure of the school with the senior, junior and middle, I don't know if it works

RESEARCHER: So do you think, there is possibly things happening but not everyone are aware of it?

RESPONDENT 1: Yeah

RESPONDENT 2: Look, anyway, XXXX was in town a month or so ago

RESPONDENT 3: That was snaffled up by the Middle school
Murmurings

RESPONDENT 2: Why didn't we hear anything about it?

RESPONDENT 3: But nobody else was allowed to go, because there were half a dozen people already going from the middle school, so the rest of us weren't allowed to go

RESPONDENT 3: XXXX is from WA a guru on

RESPONDENT 4: A guru on education

RESPONDENT 2: And that one just wasn't made public

RESPONDENT 3: XXXX has based a lot of his development of the middle school on the reading from XXXX, um and the ideas that XXXX has raised, so half a dozen of them went to it, but the rest of us, but really if we are talking about the school and it should have been an opportunity for XXXX to say he's over here lets grab him.

RESPONDENT 2: Yeah, he should have been brought into the school to do a whole school presentation.

RESPONDENT 4: I think that probably he would have been quite expensive for those half dozen individuals

RESPONDENT 3: He was

RESPONDENT 4: And probably enormously expensive for the whole school, but what XXXX first day cost would have met it

RESPONDENT 2:/RESPONDENT 3: Yeah

RESEARCHER: You need 2 – 2.5 thousand for someone of his calibre and if registration is \$500 each which is what I paid to see Michael Fullan

RESPONDENT 1: We'd have \$8000 left over

RESPONDENT 2: And then some (laughter)

RESEARCHER: What I am hearing is that there are things happening at St. Pats and people are going out to things but it is not made aware generally to a whole host of people and that came through in the surveys, that people felt very frustrated by the fact, they knew that there were things going on, but didn't know where the information was coming from and who was actually attending, so that's, and how about the personal needs of individuals teachers, I've

talked about the structure before, what could the school be doing to enable you to feel more empowered as a professional in terms of your own needs at the particular stages of your career? If you were able to give some suggestions to the school.

RESPONDENT 4: I reckon school starts the beginning teachers relatively well
Murmurings

RESPONDENT 4: I don't think we look after people new to the school at all well so XXXX, XXXX would be, aware of this just recently, um people who are experienced and come into the school, my first year at XXXX after 16 years was my worst year in education

RESPONDENT 3: It is very hard

RESPONDENT 2: If I had not just had my year in England it probably would have been my worst year too.

RESPONDENT 4: Sink or swim stuff and its your problem, there's no, no recognition of, no acceptance of new people, experienced new people may have some difficulties, it's the culture of the place or what ever it is. It is probably a combination of a lot of things

RESPONDENT 2: Yeah

RESPONDENT 4: And its part of the culture of the boys that they see you as fair game.

RESPONDENT 3: Also it part, a lot of it is that your teaching practice has to change and that's possibly one of the hardest things that I've found moving from girls, co-ed, girls, you have to rethink your whole way of presenting material

RESEARCHER: Were there opportunities for you to be able to explore that within your school like did to get some help

RESPONDENT 3: I was drowning and treading water, drowning and treading water, sometimes but not very often

RESPONDENT 4: School does not recognise that people you know are experienced therefore you know how to cope; the fact the reality is um people perhaps don't...mumblings

RESPONDENT 2: XXXX is unique, it different type of school and you need to prepare people for that I think

RESPONDENT 4: I think we need to accept firstly that in my time there 12 years I don't think it has ever been accepted that people can have problems and maybe need assistance with dealing with it.

RESEARCHER: OK, so if you were able to, is that something you'd articulate to the leadership team?

RESPONDENT 4: Yeah, I've tried a couple of times

RESEARCHER: Then what structures do you think could be in place for that?

RESPONDENT 4: I think the structures are there, there are a Director of Pastoral Care and that sort of stuff

RESPONDENT 2: There are enough people within the school with enough experience to be able to help people deal with those situations, but ...

RESPONDENT 1: But...

RESPONDENT 2: Doesn't seem to get offered

RESPONDENT 1: The basis of the situation is that if you have a problem in your class you're the problem

RESPONDENT 3: That's right

RESPONDENT 1: So therefore, why would you advertise the fact that you have got a problem?

RESPONDENT 3: And if you do, you do

RESPONDENT 1: You can if you've got someone your comfortable with you can talk to someone, but if you're not comfortable with someone there is noway known, because you are the target of their accusations

RESPONDENT 3: Things like, don't put XXXX out in the corridor and send them off to me and then you follow those through or the buddy system, you have a teacher which you can buddy with and send kids off to, they don't last, they fall through it's a this is what we're supposed to be doing but if you try and do those things it is not consistent

RESEARCHER: Is it formalised? Are you saying it is not formalised? Like you not actually buddied up with a mentor or

RESPONDENT 3: No, you're supposed to do that yourself

RESEARCHER: How do you know that you have to do that yourself?

RESPONDENT 3: Well that was the comment that was made last year at one stage when it was raised that we should all have a buddy that was on when we're on and we could send kids off to if they are being difficult

RESEARCHER: MMM

RESPONDENT 1 /RESPONDENT 2: I didn't know that

RESPONDENT 3: Well, that's what I was told, when I was fighting with that Year 11 class

RESPONDENT 1: When you walked out the door and they all laughed; in the staffroom they said she really thinks it's true

Laughter

RESPONDENT 1: I am sure they didn't, I am sorry

RESEARCHER: In light of all that conversation all that dialogue, the professional learning coordinator people said that it could be someone who could oversee the distribution of information, which you are saying doesn't really happen and have a central resource person who coordinates it helps individual teachers plan, I mean from the comments in the survey says it doesn't obviously happen very well and is it just another administrative role? Some cynical person wrote on theirs that it is just another administrative role and that it actually kept another teacher in the classroom, like it just kept classroom teachers busier; because you have released another administrative role so um.

RESPONDENT 3: The PD stuff is just another thing that is tacked onto the faculties head role description somewhere down in amongst the all the other general things you're supposed to do there is a reference to the PD for your staff, I think

RESPONDENT 1: Well can they maintain, I hate to say this but can they maintain a register and say right well you know XXXX you have been slack

RESPONDENT 5: I think they do, they do keep a register

RESPONDENT 1: At the triennial meeting they do, I mean what happened to this year where did it go? Phew, gone! This year it's gone hasn't it, so you can have all the good intentions on Earth

RESPONDENT 3: Yeah

RESPONDENT 1: But you do have a busy schedule that's in front of you, that is your job, that your paid for and they want you to do and that's their primary task which is to be in the classroom and teach kids, this other stuff sometimes becomes an imposition where as, you know the idea is to say this is going to be good for you,

RESPONDENT 1: But it becomes an imposition

RESPONDENT 3: Also what do you go into? If you go into, like the Middle Years stuff that I've done; I did 3 days and two single days that were so stretched out over the year that by the time you went to the last one you were thinking, Oh my God, what am I going to do and I've really lost the focus of this and all the rest of it. But you've got to follow through because the money's been spent and the commitments there and all the rest of it, um, you come back into school and half the time there is never any time to really think that through or go back over it or talk about it with anybody or present it to anyone, the last thing I think people want to do is go to a faculty meeting and have, (sighs) well I think it is anyway, and talk about ...um

RESPONDENT 5: The last conference they went to?

RESPONDENT 3: The last conference they went to.

RESPONDENT 2: That's supposed to be one of the requirements for doing the PD. You are supposed to disseminate the information, but there is never an opportunity to do it.

RESPONDENT 3: And even if you do

RESPONDENT 2: And you're never asked to do it anyway.

RESPONDENT 3: People don't have time to deal with anything other just give them a piece of printed paper and maybe think that sounds like a good idea, I know that Gavin and Anthony went to the new young teachers one and came back with some great ideas and they gave us all these great ideas, but I don't know we walked away from that meeting with a wad of paper and how much of it has any of us taking on board? So...

RESEARCHER: XXXX are you saying that even though you do go on PD and you do come back there is not a forum you to be able to share that or are....?

RESPONDENT 3: And there is often not a forum for you to actually take it on board yourself, time for you to take it on board

RESEARCHER: Why, why not?

RESPONDENT 3: Because if you ... go out for the day and come back there are 70 emails waiting for you, there's um class stuff you have had to leave a class that is meaningful work, that is quiet work so often there is marking, extra marking for you to pick up, there is a you know just a pile of stuff and quite often you think that's really good I'll just put that there on my desk and it just gets covered and you come across it later on or I'll dig it out and say I want something from there, but to actually really be taken on board understand it and make a part of it what you are doing, to impact on what you are doing...

RESPONDENT 4: I think that's a part of what you do

RESPONDENT 3: Yeah

RESPONDENT 4: This is right, um the notion of reporting back to staff that you have been wasting your time two days, I think you have got to say that even if it's true, but they don't want to hear that

RESPONDENT 3: But maybe

RESPONDENT 4: Maybe feel guilty for not paying attention, but you know it would be interesting to report on XXXX day one there's been no...

RESPONDENT 3: There was

RESPONDENT 4: There's been no follow up to that has there?

RESPONDENT 3: No, not till that sitting there, sitting at that staff meeting writing those comments, we sat at a staff meeting and we actually did a review of the XXXX experience one afternoon.

RESPONDENT 3: But there's been no follow up to the comments that were made because I know a couple of them were fairly (indecipherable) caught me unaware

RESPONDENT 1: Mumble, I just thought that Father XXXX description of the mass and that sort of thing was really good and I think we have these huge school masses and if we taught the kids about Mass, what a Mass is, that's just an RE sort of thing, would be great thing, if the staff were taught what a Mass is it would be a great way to start, so he sort of started on that, you know, your spirituality and, you know, come and gather around the table which is one part of it, not all would be aware of at all, so righto we need to go further. I spoke to XXXX and it's not his job, but I thought we could do really well here, we could actually give staff when they go to Mass, rather than just look at the boys strangely they don't know anyway. It's pretty central to what we are, the other day I forget, I just forget Saturdays lalala never happened, never happened Saturday

RESPONDENT 1: Or what ever was the first day, Tuesday Thursday

RESPONDENT 4: Friday

RESEARCHER: So going back to what you were saying that

RESPONDENT 3: Thursday, Friday

RESPONDENT 1: Thursday, Friday hey

RESEARCHER: So going back to what you were saying before, um, do you think it is ever possible for people to be able to report back on their conferences, some schools have a policy whereby they have to send more than one person to it, to a conference, I mean is that possible, I mean, what other things can be happening in the school? How, how could you as professionals encourage your school to be a bit more open to set up some sort of structure, by which, or do you think it is another imposition on peoples time to sit and listen ton someone talk about what they did

RESPONDENT 4: The Middle school did, we heard nothing

RESPONDENT 3: No

RESPONDENT 4: Now I hope the middle school the one's that didn't go heard something, but I don't know that that is true.

RESPONDENT 3: No

RESPONDENT 4: Did anyone else know?

RESPONDENT 1: Which school are you in?

RESPONDENT 4: I am in junior school

RESPONDENT 1: True

RESPONDENT 4: But the whole school could have picked up heaps of stuff from that, well you pay your people to go but it should have been if he's such a guru a whole school event from hearing some report back. A whole staff meeting is probably the time to have that but whole staff meetings are taken up with important matters,

RESPONDENT 2: Things that could have been emailed to us?

RESPONDENT 4: Yes, usually are

RESPONDENT 5: Probably have been to

RESPONDENT 3: OK, sorry, when I was at Monivae, it's not always profitable to refer to back to other schools you have been at, but, they actually with their PD week, we'd actually discuss what are some of the issues and actually, sorry?

RESPONDENT 3: Get somebody in that the school had decided that was the focus that we wanted to go down, then we would have 2 or 3 days with the presenter working as a whole school, so you'd actually have time to work through part of the project or the idea and then you'd go away and you'd come back the next day you would build on what you had done the next day, so you'd actually felt that by the time you'd been through your PD week...

End of this side of the tape

RESPONDENT 3: Little token drops in the ocean and then you rush madly on and then there would be something else thrown at the wall and then you'd be rushed madly on

RESEARCHER: So you don't think that there ever is a lot of time to actually absorb what you have learnt or tried to integrate into your teaching anyway or, is that a general feeling or not?

RESPONDENT 4: XXXX for example, on a Friday morning we have lunch, then wander back to school for end of term and there were two weeks off

RESPONDENT 3: MMM

RESPONDENT 4: There was stuff there that was really brilliant, you know a lot of it was funny and the charter the day before???

RESPONDENT 1: I took some of his stuff into class, I had forgotten it there, but I took it in because it was in my head and

RESPONDENT 4: But, the whole staff, they were away on holiday, no body really cared.

RESPONDENT 3: But also people were very tired, they always are and, I mean, I did it myself cutting out the door at lunch time; so were lots of other people and um

RESPONDENT 4: But to return to what he said, no

RESPONDENT 3: No, and even if we'd been what, some of the others said to me was, they had there PD week in the week going back to school, they'd had their holidays and then came back for a week; and done it that way, instead of the way we did it.

RESEARCHER: So the timing of the PD is critical?

RESPONDENT 4: Well certainly, he was good;

RESPONDENT 4: But there was no chance to follow up; we shot off home, end of story

RESEARCHER: You're less likely to incorporate that into your teaching; because by the time you've come back after an extended period away you have forgotten it.

RESPONDENT 2: These things at the end of a busy term, I think are wasted...at the start of the term ...

RESPONDENT 3: MMM, what they tend to do at the start of a term with the PD is come in and go from meeting to meeting and you don't have time to actually get yourself organised for the next day and that's very much in peoples mind

RESEARCHER: Just moving on a bit, I'm just aware of the time. Formalised study: Mick you made a comment about: You felt that formalised study often is a way for people to move up the ladder a bit

RESPONDENT 1: Fess up

RESEARCHER: How possible, how realistic is it for most teachers to undertake formal study?

RESPONDENT 3: Uni?

RESPONDENT 4: I think it's something you need to do, I did it as a father of 2, 3, 4, 5 and it was bloody hard work. Sitting up to 3 am in the morning trying to write essays, um because I was always working till the last moment too. Um, but I got my Masters and you know what's the point now?

RESPONDENT 4: It kept my head moving, maybe?

RESPONDENT 4: But there are, we've just been through the process of the diocesan scholarships/ sponsorships is that the right word? Sponsorship, scholarship, and you know, XXXX is you know, saying it's your last chance, last chance, so there was that opportunity to take it up. I assume from the email, it's you last chance, that not many did.

RESPONDENT 4: There is also not very well advertised a fund for study through the ... sounds like, my understanding is that goes to selected few who are encouraged to do something or rather, but it's not, you know take the Diocesan funding first and essentially that would pay for, that would pay for your HECS, but you are giving up a weekend 8 times a year I suppose to do you know, that's coming here or

RESPONDENT 3: But that's, but is that

RESPONDENT 4: A few times a year anyway

RESPONDENT 3: RE, Christian?

RESPONDENT 4: Leadership, administration

RESPONDENT 5: What ever course you want to do

RESPONDENT 3: Alright, That's also not made clear how broad

RESPONDENT 4: Essentially, it's essentially weighted to leadership or religion

RESPONDENT 1: I started study years ago, which I've dumped, which is good because I get back my HECS bill, which is great, but anyway, Special needs Education That interests me, I went into and I thought, This is, this is, I can't apply any of this, how can I apply any of this, maybe 2 years down the track I could have. I could have seen what the hell am I doing this for they were very quick, I read about schools in America, its structures and your reading those books; well I can't apply any of this, it doesn't help. I spent hundreds of dollars on books, but I can't bring it into a room. Probably I could say : I had stuff there I could take in, my idea of a PD is you know you go away and they say here's 5 good lessons you could use, here you go, you go away and say I can really use some of this. It builds you up in your own confidence and things like that, but most of them; this is not to do with the school because? can't handle it, but most of them tend to be talked at, you know, telling you moaning and complaining or stuff you cannot apply, masters, I could do a Masters of RE, it would be really good to learn more about it, but do I need a Masters? You know, cut that back to what I really need to know to teach the kids there. If you're in WW2 and you're a pilot you teach them how to fly a plane you know, you don't have to teach him everything else., he just has to

fly the plane. Now our job is to teach in the classroom a certain level and that's what we need to know and I'm pretty well read, but I'm thinking look at that's a lot of time and effort for what, I don't want to be a REC so why would I want my Masters of Catholic Education?

RESPONDENT 4: I suppose just the opportunity (indecipherable) some scripture stuff, but I also did a wonderful unit here on Danny Mannix, the most useless thing I ever bloody did. Why did I do it? Because that was the only unit I could pick up to finish it

RESPONDENT 3: Danny Mannix?

RESPONDENT 4: Reverend Daniel Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne

RESPONDENT 3: Oh OK

RESPONDENT 4: Why did we do it? (Indecipherable interruption from other speaker)
Aquinas

RESEARCHER: So sometimes you think some of the study that is offered is often not appropriate and often you are forced into doing those units because they are the only units available and they are the ones you need to finish off your degree?

RESPONDENT 4: If I had run off to Melbourne, to what ever it was, Christ of, what ever was available now then

RESPONDENT 1: I'm pretty brutal, if you can't take it into the class room what's the point of doing it?

RESPONDENT 3: I was trying to do my Masters when I was at Monivae and it was a scholarship thing through RMIT and it really put me off the whole thing, because every time we went to anything the ball game changed we'd find out there was more we had to do, what we had to do was never very clear. So in the end I just bailed out, it was just too much. With class room work we try to get the paper shuffling happening, I could not imagine myself doing study and being a head of (laughs) faculty

RESPONDENT 2: Do you know how many teachers have actually started Masters and dropped out

RESPONDENT 3: Stopped (laughs)

RESPONDENT 2: There's a real; high drop out rate

RESPONDENT 3: Bail out rate, yeah

RESPONDENT 2: I've had two goes at it and....

RESPONDENT 1: My opinion

RESPONDENT 3: At one stage all I wanted to do passionately was to do my Masters

RESEARCHER: Why did people drop out? I mean, you just said, by the time you balance, um, a study work load and got a position of responsibility in the school there is often extra pressure combine that with your family and trying to maintain some sort of decent lifestyle are they the sorts of things

RESPONDENT 2: And the relevance of what is being taught

RESPONDENT 3: Or the relevance of the organisation

RESPONDENT 1: Fatigue

RESPONDENT 3: Every time you go that the goal shifts, I don't know, it probably was RMIT, I felt like that I was being used as a PhD Monkey; that they were using me to do their own PhD's, and they were going to write us up in a sense. And that's ridiculous

RESPONDENT 1: (interjecting) I just think that if you can't take it in what's the point?

RESPONDENT 3: Excuse me I got better things to do that be your (laughs)

RESEARCHER: I'm using you at the moment

RESPONDENT 3: Yeah, but it was different, like you know, we were there trying to study trying to learn to try and develop and it came back to it was a different person in front of us each time, and you think well you are doing your PhD and you've got another little way that you want us to think and work through and next time it will be someone else who comes in. They couldn't agree

RESPONDENT 4: So I did my Dip Ed. Mumble and then I did my Masters and that's 4 years here. I did it because I thought it was helpful. At this stage I was Principal and it was helpful in that sense

.

RESPONDENT 3: Yep

RESPONDENT 4: But, some of the RE stuff was helpful in the classroom, Year 7 not so helpful; but I did it because I wanted to do it

RESPONDENT 4: Because I thought it was good for my head to do it. Then when they said we want you to do a PhD, I said stick it. My wife wanted to do a Nursing degree.

RESPONDENT 3: Well I started out very excited and wanting to but it just got to a stage where I

RESPONDENT 4: Interjecting) I finished it because I'm a stubborn bastard, I suppose

RESPONDENT 4: Knew I was going to cough up somewhere along the line so,

RESEARCHER: So are you saying that it's really difficult to sustain that momentum

RESPONDENT 4: Absolutely

RESEARCHER: While studying

RESPONDENT 3: You feel that something's got to give somewhere along the line

RESEARCHER: MMM

RESPONDENT 3: It's the study or you

RESEARCHER: What sort of incentives could be, what sort of

RESPONDENT 4: Time, time

RESPONDENT 2: If schools are going to benefit from our study, I know we benefit from it as well but if schools are going to benefit there needs to be some sort of allowance made

RESPONDENT 3: Very definitely

RESPONDENT 1: I think it should be

RESPONDENT 3: When I started, it was a school project that I was working on, but the school was going to get massive benefit out of it and they'd still have their big program and all those kinds of things, um and I understood that there was going to be time or some kind of support, but there really wasn't so

RESPONDENT 1: Why can't you have, universities, this is going beyond us, why can't we have a unitised work system. We don't have to do a PhD, Masters, or whatever you call it, bloody thing, turn around and say righto, Romeo and Juliet; we are doing a term on Romeo and Juliet at Christ College here or whatever in Melbourne

RESPONDENT 3: That would be nice but it would

RESPONDENT 1: A term on this and at the end of it you get a little certificate you've done a

RESPONDENT 3: Like doing a summer school?

RESPONDENT 1: Yeah, a little certificate that says you've done Romeo and Juliet, and you'd walk into the classroom and you are ahead of the kids, rather than one page ahead you are actually a little further ahead. Know what I mean? So that's just my way of thinking so righto I'm doing history

RESPONDENT 4: Mumbled comment leading to laughter

RESPONDENT 1: You know what I mean? Sometimes

RESPONDENT 3: Don't look at me out of the corner of your eye

RESPONDENT 1: I want to know what I am doing now, so I can take it in there, there's

RESEARCHER: So you're thinking that professional learning should be of a very practical use

RESPONDENT 1: It's too dull otherwise

RESEARCHER: There's another perspective where you actually do it for your own growth and own development and even though you're not able to apply it in the classroom you have grown as a person, I think that

RESPONDENT 3: I think there's a place for both

RESPONDENT 1: You can grow outside the bloody education place, seriously, you don't just grow inside a university.

RESEARCHER: No, no

RESPONDENT 1: Your brain doesn't sit idle every day, I mean you read other stuff. I read plenty of stuff that has got nothing to do with what I do. I just enjoy that, and I'm quite happy to dig a hole for 6 months that doesn't bother me either.

RESPONDENT 5: And put a car in it.

RESPONDENT 1: Yep, just did some work. It's specific, I go away and come back after a thing and say righto I've got to do Romeo and Juliet, you staff who aren't interested don't worry about it, but the other, this is what we did, here's the sheets of it, this is good shit you know, you hand it out and you go bloody hell we can go now we feel better

RESEARCHER: The subject conferences like the Math teachers Association, VATE

RESPONDENT 1: I don't think the (indecipherable)

RESPONDENT 3: They are very expensive and as a faculty head, you can't send people to them as there is not enough money. You can say this is on when and we can subsidise you or we can't subsidise you at all. Is anyone interested? But they are quite expensive from a point of view, I mean, one school I have been at paid for everyone to go to the conference, it was great, and it was really enlightening and you felt as though you were growing personally in your discipline, but also there were things that you could take back to the classroom that you were there with your cohort, it was great; but it cost the school money.

RESEARCHER: Did anyone take any study leave? Has anyone had any sponsored study leave from the CEO?

RESPONDENT 1: Probably, I mean XXXX, he took a Thursday off, didn't he?

RESPONDENT 4: Yeah, some people have taken some time off. XXXX's doing something

RESPONDENT 3: (Mumbled conversation in the background) She doesn't get, particularly a lot of time off. She gets a day here, here and there. XXXX gets a day here and there, but they're very much here and there and the pressure that they, you know, they don't get any allowance of don't do a course because you are doing study or something like that.

RESEARCHER: Yeah

RESPONDENT 2: They're motivated to do it

RESPONDENT 3: Do your sport extra and do this extra and do that extra as well

RESPONDENT 1: It was good tonight, I enjoyed it

RESEARCHER: Hang on one more

Laughter

RESEARCHER: The last question was professional learning imposed on teachers as a result of Government initiatives has an influence on teacher's rhetoric. Is it the fact that change is being imposed that teachers find difficult or are there other mitigating factors? You know with the new curriculum reform even though they said the CSF was not going to disappear and it is um

RESPONDENT 3: And what are they calling it?

RESEARCHER: Standards

RESPONDENT 3: Standards, domains, dimensions and um suddenly we are going to be responsible for ICT, thinking and, I can't even think what else is on that yellow form

RESPONDENT 4: You know what you're talking about

RESPONDENT 3: I have just been to curriculum meeting, yesterday...um

RESPONDENT 1: But is that learning something or are we just learning a new language

RESPONDENT 3: Well they're going to, the annotated works samples that they have already got, which I think are basically useless for English, they're going to use the same one's but relabel them. So I mean that is going to be even more money that is going to be thrown, and I think, when you look at them my god if my kids were working at that level, maybe we should find it reassuring, but you know, you sort of, yeh,

RESPONDENT 1: But I don't know. Are we actually learning something new or are we just learning a new language? I mean, learning a new language just go on doing what we have always done,

RESPONDENT 2: Go on with what we have always done.

RESPONDENT 3: Shift the ball game

RESPONDENT 1: It's sort of like A, B, what is it, BC and BCE. BC is still what people use, BCE has been in for years now, but people still use BC because that's what they understand. (Mumbled) it's just chuck a new language in

RESEARCHER: The rhetoric is there, but do people take any notice of the rhetoric? Or do they just use it (Indecipherable) do what they're doing originally anyway?

RESPONDENT 1: (Interjecting) I don't know about that, but you get sick of it. Every second year they decide they're going to do something new. Every time they have a change of government or want to belt someone they belt teachers and say we're going to do something new.

RESPONDENT 3: We have had the RSB audit we've had the curriculum audit, next year we're going to have the essential learning validation and we're going to have the pastoral care review and we are going to have a, an assessment review. So we're going to be busy little people next year.

RESPONDENT 4: I can't understand how you remember all that crap.

RESPONDENT 3: Because, yesterday I was actually happy....

END OF TAPE

APPENDIX I

Transcript Focus Group Two

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: I guess the first thing is that anything you say tonight is not going to be used against you in the court of criminal intent

RESEARCHER: but I just have to make sure that you know that this is being taped and that the discussion is confidential and only I'll be able to identify you.

Alright when I initially looked at the survey there were a couple of questions that XXXX teachers varied in their answers on so what I thought we might do tonight is look at some of those questions that people responded to (a handout what distributed by research assistant) and I have a few little questions underneath and if you have any other information or a n issue that you would like to share, this would probably be a good time to share it a do well but the focus of t his thesis is Why teacher learning matters so do you want to start with question 2? Is that a good way to do it?

First Question – schools generally attend to the professional development of their teachers – if this is the case what is it that schools do, what does our school do? If this is not the case then what could be done? So does anyone want to open up?

RESPONDENT 2: – I'm sought of be interested in hearing from Jacinta first because I think we sought of lead I guess lead the charge in this and I think we are doing alright

RESPONDENT 3: Well I see it as well it's interesting well I went on one with XXXX on Friday and well I think the fact in at our school it's a fairly generous budget compared to other schools and I mean I can't imagine anyone in the current climate getting knocked back on something and I think that's really important the fact that it's encouraged some people I mean never go and take it up but it's there and encouraged and we were at one of those film text thing on Friday and there was a lady there from one of those private Fintona that's right and she was saying that this her budget was so tight and got Principal managers now and it is just hideous and they can only afford one person from a faculty to go to things like that and You know it's one of those big Private schools and everything comes down to the last dollar and I must admit in my

experience as an ordinary classroom teacher I have plenty of opportunities and those sorts of things – there probably needs more I mean I know you've got boards and things but I think there needs to be a kind of way even if it's an electronic email - something that goes through encouraging I don't know perhaps looking at different things not just in relation to your subject area but you know sometimes you see something on the board and you think oh God it's only on next week or something like that and I know that a lot of it is actively going there yourself but if there was perhaps some way of actively drawing attention or even having a spot

In the staff meetings where not in a compulsory sense but in a nice sort of way or even in briefings or something just for people to talk about some of the professional development that they have been to – so I must admit from my personal perspective it's adequately attended to – it's whether people take it up and I think sometimes it depends on your subject areas and the relevance I know in English that there's lots available and I don't whether it's the same for Maths or something like that

RESEARCHER: It's interesting what you are saying because when I had a focus group at XXXX last week they said exactly the same things. That they knew there was PD around but they didn't actually know sort of PD and they would like to have been alerted more to the PD that's around and also the feed back from the for that they felt that that there wasn't an opportunity for people to feed back. Schools are just so busy therefore is not available.

RESPONDENT 3: It was interesting at the PD Coordinators meeting I was at a couple of weeks ago –St. John's in Dandenong through a best practice type procedure but they had been given funds to actually set up a PD newsletter via their Web and so there's proformas for people who go on PD – part of their responsibility is to fill in a little proforma which then gets written up for that newsletter and it becomes a means of sort of advertising things to people and it did appeal to me know that the majority _ I mean it's only really up until this year prior to this year that people in the main have not used email –it hasn't really been a communication tool. And it is now and I quite like that idea – I think it was a good idea.

RESEARCHER: Like a bulletin Board on the intranet?

RESPONDENT 3: yeah – you just click on it. But there is an obligation for people who go on PD to actually fill something in and talk about what they learnt so that

becomes a learning tool or maybe a screen board for other people. I might after reading what you have learnt is able to say can you give me some info about Lantana as a film text –it provides that communication a bit faster maybe. Although there is some administrative assistance – that’s where the money came in to actually type up those proformas– people aren’t sitting there you know creating their little newsletter piece– they put in just basic information and that gets created for them. That’s the trick because if you are asking people to actually write all that up they won’t they are just too pressed for time.

RESPONDENT 4: But there’s possibly some facilities through SIMON for us to be able to do that fairly simply too

RESPONDENT 3: I would think so

RESPONDENT 4: What you would normally write up to give to someone else to print up – you could do easily.

RESPONDENT 2: I think that’s the only I think that’s the weakness in our current structure. I think its – the opportunities are terrific really I feel in terms of all the sorts of things we invite staff to be part of from our own in-service days which you know vary I suppose in the quality and the interest for people but I think nevertheless have been thought through in terms of them being appropriate for the most part to other you know activities that staff engage in either at meetings or you know going away to in-services to the sort of courses that we encourage people to be part of. but the weakness has been that we are not getting the feedback for all sorts of reasons in terms of what people really enjoy and what they got out of it and so on and it doesn’t have to be too long but I think there would be two aims with it one that when people are when they go just evaluating how it was for themselves and a bit of reflective stuff and b- that then being available to other staff who may well be looking for a course and if they see look and see the one that XXXX did was fantastic, I’d really be interested in that because of what was written and so on we haven’t been successful in terms of that feedback at KLA’s,

RESPONDENT 3: we tried at one stage to have it at a staff meeting but it didn’t work terribly well , the staff meeting would get cancelled or whatever and then it would be three months or something and like it was almost became irrelevant

RESPONDENT 2: but I think – you fill in a form to go to the PD and you fill in a form when you return – it almost goes out with it – this is what you have to fill in when you come back but that as XXXX said would go on SIMON you know really small –it doesn't have to be huge but as you say the reflective stuff plus it's available to everybody else. I think really just improve so much the outcomes for everyone.

RESEARCHER: So we generally agree I mean we are just looking at question two – about attending adequately to the professional development of teachers so the general agreeance at our school t least that staff's professional development needs are met adequately – does everyone sort of agree with that?

RESEARCHER: Well moving on to the next question, then how do schools cater for individual needs of teachers –I mean we talk about people going away for PD, I mean obviously different people have different needs – is it possible to cater for every single need or do we have to have a really broad sort of approach to it and what structures need to be in place to allow for teachers to take responsibility for their own

RESPONDENT 4: I think that last question is the crucial question –I think that staff should be taking responsibility for their own, I don't think that we need to wait for the school to take care of it for us or we're not really professional people I think the school can provide opportunities but I don't believe that the individual needs have to be met by the school.

RESPONDENT 5: I think the portfolio goes along way to responding to that. I think the way that XXXX has structured those people can identify where their own needs are and indicate what they would like to do I think again the weakness in that system is that once a year at the Annual Review meeting (we've only really started on this in the last year or two anyway), we get to talk about it – the Principal and staff member and it's in the context of a whole lot of other things that you are talking about it as well and I 'm not sure that necessarily you get down to the real nitty gritty with everyone Well you don't. But again it shouldn't rely on that and I agree with XXXXX and I think that people you know – we all recognise our weaknesses in our professional learning and where our needs are and it's a matter of indicting those and

that's what I like to do and ensuring that it happens. But I think the portfolio goes a long way to doing it.

RESPONDENT 2: I think on the portfolio –what might help I know you kinda have got it in the sections but perhaps to have an A4 sheet with just examples of PD it isn't necessarily formal training or an in- service board but professional learn---all kinds of things because sometimes people who consider themselves time poor can't do a lot of that formalised stuff it can remind them that there's creative ways to still engage E professionally and

RESPONDENT 3: I think it is there , it's in the appendix but also and I think this might help, I think next year we are actually asking people to keep a record of their own PD. Mainly because I think this is a hoop that the V.I.T are going to make, you're not only having to do Police Checks I think you're going have to do this hoop as well to get registration in the next couple of years and one of the viable ways that they can really do it on mass is to people will have to demonstrate their professional development and will have to have kept their own record and that's a whole range of things and I have actually put examples of that in the portfolio as well. That might go a long way in perhaps solving that problem. But there is an appendix –well there was an appendix in it that gave different categories and different ways that you could focus on professional development which isn't just going out of the school. I mean in actual fact what we are doing now is professional development and you would put that down –you know put it down in your record as something – this is something that I have done.

RESPONDENT 6: That was one of the reasons that I ticked that I would be part of this (and apologies for being late) but because coming back into teaching, I am acutely aware of gaps and things that I need to be updated on. I haven't seen the portfolio but I think it is when you are talking about individual needs of teachers I think there are certain groups of teachers that perhaps need more help like myself who have been out of teaching for a while perhaps to highlight what are the most important things. I think that some of the whole PD days that you do, do highlight some of those areas quite well but I think that within that you can look at that individual needs in two different ways – different groups, returning teachers young, just new teachers or perhaps teachers that have been in one area for a long time and think they know everything but in the school's interests we need to encourage them to update too.

Someone could be teaching the same thing for twenty years and think they do a good job but they might

Yeah

RESPONDENT 7: one year's experience twenty times over you mean?

RESPONDENT 5: one of the things and I'm not sure how we would do it I think from doing those portfolios is we don't know what other people have filled in on them. There could be other people who are having the same interests or same XXX say there was an ability to know who else was interested perhaps that would be a good thing to do?

RESPONDENT 4: Yeah, I think XXXX right, I mean there are - we can clearly identify the different needs aright across the school, there's probably like new teachers, teachers coming in after a time away, teachers who have been teaching for twenty five years – there's probably a multitude of needs there and sharing some of the ideas would be fantastic.

RESPONDENT 2: I think too um , what strikes me about next year is people who are all moving into different positions that there a whole lot of leadership type issues that some of us would probably need some mentoring on but that won't – it sort of won't happen in a sense. We have got huge leadership changes for next year and we will be expected to be mentors but who is mentoring us? I actually see that as a bit of a problem for us next year.

RESPONDENT 4: I think it is less of a problem for um Principal's and Deputies in leadership positions because there is a network of those that meet regularly and share ideas and concerns and maybe even Curriculum Coordinators but it's that other middle level of management isn't it? House Leaders and so on – they don't meet with people from other schools.....

RESPONDENT 2: Even your assistant deputies and – I can remember when I moved into the job, xxxx had gone and you know, it was sink or swim sort of thing – and I was actually organising the mentors for everyone else- it is a bit of a hole I think.

RESEARCHER: I think you are right when you take on a POL- it's sort of assumed because you have applied and that you have actually got the position that you can do it and yes you probably can do it but who's looking after your needs as well?
Ok probably scuffling along a bit – Do teachers only get involved in PD if they have a vested interest in it?

RESPONDENT 2: A majority of our teachers do get involved in PD there is a small minority where it doesn't look after their needs but I think a majority have a go

RESPONDENT 4: I think It depends on how you read that question I think – certainly it would be true if you were asked to teach RE and you decide to do a Grad Dip RE or a Bachelor of Theology or something –you have a vested interest in teaching it and I don't see – I see that as being really good –I think what we are suggesting here is that they only sort of get involved in it because it's about the day to day stuff they need to know to stay in the job sort of thing. Now I don't think many do that there maybe one or two but I think that the majority are open to a range of experiences.

RESPONDENT 4: and I was also thinking about the types of days when you bring in something like with the leadership team who bring in someone who they think is really important. Do most people get involved or have you got a majority of people who think I 'm not really interested in this and ...

RESPONDENT 2: Generally a majority of the people do go with an open mind as John said there are the odd one or two that we can all identify with apart from that most people go with an open mind and are willing to give it a go and they might not feel that way by the end of it and think it's a bit boring or whatever but they generally approach it with an open mind.

RESPONDENT 5: I think the Faith Development Days are an example of that. Although you could say that they have a vested interest because work in a Catholic school but the interest part is not always invested in the topic but people do come along and participate but there are some who are there who do not participate but a majority do

RESEARCHER: and sometimes, Personal concerns were overlooked in favour of whole school interests

Silence

RESPONDENT 5: overlooked by who?

RESPONDENT 2: RESEARCHER: by the school

RESPONDENT 3: Personal concerns of the Admin?

RESEARCHER: personal concerns of the Staff – my point there is sometimes school wide interests are bigger than the individual interests and sometimes we have to look at when we look at professional learning and when we look at professional learning for teachers sometimes the school is going in a particular direction and they need to in-service the staff in that sort of direction or assist them and sometimes some people are not ready to go that way .and so sometimes they get left behind .because then they are not up to scratch and so is that true and you know what can be done and how do schools normally cope with the wide variety of professional needs that exist within the school?

RESPONDENT 4: I don't know whether – I suppose it is true to a degree with some people I mean when you are looking at Curriculum for example and trying to develop a whole school curriculum and a particular direction and the way that we do it and that sort of thing there are always going to be people who don't like it and are somewhat resistant to that but I don't think that you can hold that one on the broader interests for the sake of one or two individuals who you need to eventually draw them along

RESEARCHER: this is just a comment from one of the surveys that one person felt that they –well there a couple of people actually who thought that their personal concerns are overlooked and the school concerns were bigger than them. The question that I have written here are (big cough distorts the clarity of the tape)

RESPONDENT 4: It is the individual's responsibility to follow up on their own concerns isn't it? That mightn't be something that everyone has to do .but it goes back to that taking responsibility.

RESPONDENT 2: Though I suppose that one of the things that we have made a real effort to try to do is to cater for individuals , individual learning styles, and so on and so on – we did Myer Briggs this year and we offer different approaches to different aspects of curriculum . Um we made a real effort to maybe not to their individual concerns but their individual learning styles. I agree with XXXX individual concerns is something that the individual person needs to take up. We're making a big effort to meet individual learning needs and learning styles so it's really difficult when you have a large staff with a smaller staff you would probably be able to do that more effectively.

RESPONDENT 3: See – I see that question as - I think you do – the PD days that I have been here for this year there has been a range of pretty good choice but it would have been interesting to see you know how there was one compulsory unit on the last day, nearly everyone put that down first like they wanted to get it over and done with you know and it was just an interesting thing I think

RESEARCHER: And the feedback ranged from very good to don't ever bring that person back here again

RESPONDENT 4: and it might also depend on what they've had to do with that person before too.

Laughter and mumbled responses

RESPONDENT 1: it's also a 2 tiered approach – you have your whole school then you have your individual and I mean I see I, I mean unless the only PD you were ever doing was the school Pd which I see as the school thing I mean professionally I would think that most people would know their direction that their moving in and do the things that they want to do and of course if you are not doing any of that of course your professional needs are not being met.

RESEARCHER: So it sort of goes back to what XXXX was saying that professionals need to be responsible for their own professional learning and being in control of their own destiny if you like. OK I think we have covered then question 10 how can the

personal needs of individual teachers be considered in developing PD programs – I think

RESPONDENT 2: It's interesting with that I probably have not done as much about PD in the portfolios as I could have done in terms of going through them and trying to pick up trends and maybe them trying to group people um but probably you know I got turned off that task because I was constantly chasing the dam things to get them in so while I think it is something that could be done but you have got to have them into try and do that so

RESPONDENT 5: perhaps it could be done in a different way so that you don't have to go through them but who ever and if we could come back to some proforma on SIMON that you can look up yourself what other people's interests are and take some responsibility yourself for ..

RESPONDENT 2: there are probably ways around it – we've got the electronic document but we've – it's just a word document so possibly we could get XXXX's brain ticking but there are ways that we could address that and do that better um I 'm not making excuses but time is certainly one thing

RESEARCHER: and a lot of the advertised PD comes through in electronic form so that could actually be placed on a Web site or on a bulletin board somewhere on the home page so that people could look at what is available and

RESPONDENT 1: the form the actual PD form could actually also be there some where easily you know what I mean? Easy to kind of access you know the white form-mumble mumble people get busy and then 2 days later it's too late

RESPONDENT 3: I think the other thing that gets back to vested interest I think that most people do it for a reason whether it's personal, but so it's also a vested interest for the school if most people are doing it you know and should be acknowledged or rewarded by either as you say following up with the folders that people are acknowledging or um you know people are pretty busy and if they are taking time out to develop it should be known that Damascus staff are doing this and that whether it's just in house or in the media – it's just another good way of marketing the school showing what a commitment that there is here in terms of professional learning

RESEARCHER: We're very well known in the Diocese as a school for excellence in supporting professional learning and in fact if you got to professional learning opportunities run by the Catholic Education Office they'll tell you that this college really supported the PD that they have run over the past 5 – 6 years.

RESPONDENT 2: and if you look at the sponsorship of people doing further study – there's a definite trend there.

RESPONDENT 4: but whether the local people are sending their kids to the school or thinking about sending their kids to the school know that is the point that Min is probably raising and it could be a marketing tool but it's not we've sort of used I mean you know apart of one of the many comments I have made on the wards night you know congratulating people for being involved in the areas they are involved in we don't really make much out of it

RESPONDENT 2: I 'm just thinking Pam Russell next year, the new curriculum, taking us down that path it's quite obvious a marketing tool that we could use

RESEARCHER: Yeah also – we do from time to time and John has from time to time in the newsletter put down the names of people who are studying or completed courses, that's only in-house really isn't it? We're not really letting people know in the wider community

Question 11 was an interesting response from people about the role of a designated Professional Learning Coordinator in Secondary schools – there really was an interesting response to that and could it be a person to oversee the distribution of information to teachers and have a central resource person who coordinates and helps individual teachers plan or is it just another administrative role? One cynical person said it was just an administrative role that created another hoop to jump through and created another teacher that had time to do admin and weren't in the classroom- it ranged from that to another response from another interview that I did last week who said that it was a very pastoral role the Professional Development Coordinator and they thought that it could be a role that is well developed and did see the role on its own and one where you sat with people with their professional development portfolios and actually went through it with them. So there was a wide variety and every sort of opinion in between. So I don't know quite how people feel – know

XXXX you have been in the role for a couple of years now and how have you seen the role evolving and how do you see the role evolving?

RESPONDENT 2: it's evolved in terms of mentoring and in turn things become much bigger and I see that as part of professional learning not just an add on to my job it comes under that umbrella. um and certainly that has evolved getting VIT and all that stuff um yeah it could be, um it could be a much bigger job it could get that way but at the same time it's still coming back to what XXXX said about people taking responsibility. But to be paying someone to be helping people plan and so on depending what that meant, if you are a teacher you are a professional you've jumped through –you've had four years at least of some sort of training so um yeah I don't know.

RESPONDENT 4: I think it is important for what we loosely call the interns now um the Provisionally registered teachers I mean I think that sort of role with them through mentoring via the PD coordinator overseeing it is important and I think we've discovered that it's really important that we look after those who are returning to the workforce as Min was saying um for that sort of assistance and to be there – I think there is a time when people ought to be given professional responsibility from their own development and needs and that sort of thing that we have talked about. I think that if there is a role in this its in those two quarters? Um we've tried different things here I suppose over time – we've always had a Professional Development Coordinator whether it was part of Curriculum in XXXX's time or as part of the role as Assistant Deputy –it's a Senior role – it has to be someone who is well regarded and respected and um as a teacher and as an Administrator and I think given that status then people should read that from us that we see it as being really really important –it's a really important role certainly in a school this size unlike schools with only thirty on your staff.

RESPONDENT 2: The KLA coordinators in a lot of ways should be leading the way in professional development. I have to say in the French area, you've got your French teacher's magazine and you throw around and a lot of good development comes out of most learning areas have their own

RESPONDENT 2: Most of that doesn't come through me – I just get general stuff

RESPONDENT 3: So I think you can take too much away from them – it's the bigger picture stuff I suppose

RESPONDENT 2: Yeah that's the bigger picture stuff and having I suppose a plan of where you are hoping curriculum wise to take the school and terrah terrah

RESEARCHER: It's also giving it the status that it deserves as John was saying. In some schools it's not seen as a particularly big role but in our school it's seen as a very important role.

OK and the last question-on the question of formalised study and the responses varied from um time – not enough time to formalised study –teaching is busy enough without that extra responsibility\, family and other commitments, perceived benefits for the individual teacher or the lack there of are major factors in teachers not pursuing extra study. Some people say I have a Masters Degree but I still can't get a Coordinator's role. What good has it done for me? And . What sort of incentives could be made to teachers to enable those who want to continue with formalised study? So there was a whole gamete of comments from teachers – a lot of people thought that formalised study – the people that did formalised study only did it as a means to an end – and they didn't actually recognise that sometimes formalised study is for your own personal growth as well. We had an interesting discussion with another focus group last week about that. Some people firmly believe that those who do formal study are only doing it to climb up the ladder so...

RESPONDENT 4: I think there's also the danger that some people who do formalised study um think that by it's very nature that they should be entitled to a senior administrative role and yet they are not necessarily suited .to that a senior administrative role. They often decide that that's what they want to do but other people have a different view of their ability. And I think that can be disappointing for some people if that's reason that they did it. Others just want to know more about what it is they're meant to be doing and how to do it better and formalised study can be helpful. All those factors are hindrances – there's no doubt about it –finding time – I mean I think we have all done study but I'd have to say it was a hell of a lot harder years ago when you did have kids and all those responsibilities to more recently when they were sort of off your hands and you didn't have those responsibilities and um to be able to find the time so I think they are very legitimate concerns.

RESEARCHER:: We also have the diocesan sponsorship too that financially makes it easier

RESPONDENT 2: there are people outside this diocese who are just green with envy – I gather in Melbourne or wherever they just cannot believe the support that we get – we are very lucky!

RESEARCHER:: and even within our own school if we want a day fro study we can come and ask for a day and if there's not much on there's an opportunity for people to take advantage of that.

RESPONDENT 4: I think the time in terms of school, is not so bad it's really when these things eat into weekends – every second week end or third weekend or something like that if you don't have those sorts of responsibilities that we were talking about with little kids and all that – it is a bit easier I think ,um from when you do have those responsibilities when you have kids involved in sport you know – it is hard to fit it in .and then to study at night - that can be a killer too – I'm putting up barriers here but I'm justifying why people say those things .Um it depends on how ken you are to improve your knowledge and understanding of things that you might want to be involved in.

RESEARCHER:: Is that everyone else's experience as well?

RESPONDENT 3: Yeah, I certainly agree with you XXXX that when you have little kids it's physically very hard to keep your brain going you know – it's hard enough when you are working and you have to go home and you've got kids to worry about . It will be interesting with the teaching force ageing at the moment there'll be more people without that time constraint-but have they got the energy? It's having the e energy I suppose to do it!

RESPONDENT 2: and it does – I know next year I can't do any over summer because that's when I like to do them - I've got to do one and I can't do it in Ballarat because I have done them all so I have to go to Melbourne so I know in February I know three will be two weeks where I will be working fourteen days straight .and that happens again in March and that's nothing to look forward to I'm afraid – well I don't I hate it

RESPONDENT 5: that's when it hits you in the middle of the second week when you haven't had a break.

RESPONDENT 2: and I know that's coming up next year and I didn't have a choice. Second semester I have gone correspondence.

RESEARCHER:: That's what someone else was saying that I interviewed, they were talking about the fact that it's OK to say yes that you will sign up for a Graduate Diploma in RE or a Masters in RE but you get to the Uni and you find that the course that you want to do is unavailable close to home and you have to either go away or it's not often at the time that you want so those can be quite detrimental to your own sanity sometimes.

RESPONDENT 4: and yet in many ways in Ballarat we're so fortunate to have two universities on our doorstep. Um people out in the sticks or even in Melbourne could very likely have an hour to travel just to go to the University so we're all five or ten minutes away. So the opportunities are great for us.

RESPONDENT 3: Would most people acknowledge that it is rewarding once they do it – but the actual getting, committing yourself to do it is probably the hardest thing

RESPONDENT 2: and the actual thought of going (group consensus) – but once you get there it is fine. It's the thought of going then driving down and back again and going again Sunday – you think oh my God why did I do this

RESPONDENT 3: and you are saying this and I haven't done much formal study since I qualified but have done lots of short courses and that but I have really enjoyed them once I have got there but as you say the effort of organising yourself for a whole weekend or whatever , you thinking why am I doing it but maybe we need to promote the fact that it is worth it in the end and that you do get something out of it even though it has been hard – I don't know.

RESEARCHER: _ have you done any formalised study XXXXX

RESPONDENT 3: my last lot was off campus. I did my Masters off campus and I did it for that very reason. Um I wanted to do a lot of travelling and Um and I found it

easy because all I was doing was reading and writing essays which suited my style um and I have often said to people do something that way because it's not that much of a , you can fit in through the bits and pieces and I think it would be nice sometime forward perhaps in the winter or whenever it is to have a chance to remind people that yeah you can do it study and there are different ways and options- perhaps get a couple of people who are currently doing something and to say and you know I look especially I suppose at people my age or a bit younger ten or fifteen years in the job and I think people feel stuck – they get to a stage where they feel stuck and I think that's where some people do need some type of mentoring and I know that if faculty coordinators could perhaps take that on a bit more actively, then I look people and think if someone could just encourage you this way that I think that's sad when you look at people and they perhaps do not have a lot of confidence in themselves , feel a bit stuck and a bit bored and what they really need is someone to push them to enrol in something but there's no one there to do that it's alright if you have motivated to do that but I look at a couple of people I was thinking that they just need a

H:Nudge

RESPONDENT 4: Yes- to see how they could do it too. It doesn't have to be a full on Ph.D or Masters but it doesn't have to be like that and it doesn't have to be – it could be just for fun-it doesn't have to necessarily be in your subject area. So I think any sort of study is valuable you know if you are teaching to say I had to spend last night writing an essay or you know if you do it just for yourself I mean because some teachers have forgotten you know just for yourself often it is valuable because the kids then see that education is always and often they mention that their mum and dad is doing some stuff and I see it as valuable and it doesn't need to be huge and onerous for climbing up the ladder or anything but for some people need to see that it is not quite that hard and can be enjoyable.

RESEARCHER: end of interview and thank you – did not appear on tape.

APPENDIX J

Interview with teacher with 30+ Years experience School One

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: Anything that you say is highly confidential, it's really a case of you sharing with me some your inner thoughts and working through some of the questions. OK so did you want to speak to me basically about professional learning in general or.....?

INTERVIEWEE: I think I will start off with professional learning , I have done a fair bit of it in my time over the years and I see it falling into 2 categories you know – special learning which is specific to say teaching and also the other part specific to my own personal and professional development and it is difficult to distinguish between the two but for instance um professional development whereby I can go to the course and take from that course ah information that I can impart to the kids and then professional development such as doing the Masters which gave me a broader insight into different areas rather than specific – does that make sense?

RESEARCHER: Yep

INTERVIEWEE: So specific educational type stuff that I can take to the kids and use in my everyday teaching circumstances and the other which is much broader I mean I still use it in my day to day work but it's much more general global type development of knowledge.

RESEARCHER: Yes – and while you have been learning have you felt supported in that role at a school level?

INTERVIEWEE: from the point of view that they paid some of the HECS fees and gave me time to do these things but I felt to a certain extent but disappointed in the fact that I have come back with certain courses that I have done and it hasn't been utilised I mean I did the Catholic Education... the Melbourne Catholic Education office sponsored some of those Student Welfare Course and it hasn't been utilised by

the school anyway I did a mentoring type process induction program for new teachers and I spent lots of ..

It was one of my main focus areas of one of my--main studies and put a lot of time into that and a new principal came in and “ No don’t want that” um and I have seen what has been done since and talking to some of the newer teachers and they have gone through that and have not been happy with it – you know it’s a kick in the teeth sort of thing where you put in an effort and they haven’t utilised taking up some of the things that you have done

RESEARCHER: Yeh – do you know – can you give me an indication why – it was really interesting talking to the focus group- they were saying that they felt often quite frustrated by the fact that they had been to an um in-service and they weren’t able to pass that information on – because they didn’t have a forum...

INTERVIEWEE: this is true that’s right yeah

RESEARCHER: Do you agree?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I think so-you often see people going off on in-services and so on but you don’t hear as to what they have done and so on and I don’t know whether part of that is the time frame factor where we are busy people – I’m sure that we should be able to find appropriate time to focus in on some of that information... that important information

Agreeance from Interviewer

RESEARCHER So do you think that schools generally attend adequately to the professional needs of the staff?

INTERVIEWEE: From the point of view of making it available yeah I think so yeah - the school is quite generous as far as that is concerned. Um I can only talk about XXXX School. I’m not sure whether we take on board some of that info on a more global scale ora broader scale the information people gain from their in-services which could be then given on to others

RESEARCHER: So as a teacher if you think back over your whole teaching life do you think along each stage that your professional needs have been met in terms of being in a school or do you think that schools often overlook the more personal needs of staff and generally go for a more general PD program?

INTERVIEWEE: No well I think XXXX school has been pretty good as they will allow you to go do specific stuff for school and also you know – give you the opportunity to have personal development as well – I think perhaps also funding from the CEO and so on –that’s probably helped things and that’s you know been a significant factor – you can meet some HECS fees and stuff

RESEARCHER Do you think the financial aspect of further study puts people off or.....

INTERVIEWEE: Well you know as far as courses say at different Universities – depending on different stages of your personal life and your professional life –um I mean the school is good in relation to one off courses and so on and so if you have to do a days in-service or a couple of days in-service – they are good as far as that is concerned I’m not sure that they are particularly good as far ad their own in-service procedures go as far as I can see

RESEARCHER that was one of the issues that this came up in the focus groups

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah Um – yeah look the last couple of we’ve had over the past you know have been pretty ordinary – yeah you know I have not got a great deal out of them but no doubt other people have other people benefit.

RESEARCHER: And that was one of the things that came out very clearly in the survey that quite a number of people felt quite frustrated by at the local school provided PD. They felt very dissatisfied with some of the access – that was certainly echoed in the focus group.

INTERVIEWEE: Good I mean Yeh –there's no need to go on about it but really I agree with that

RESEARCHER: What more? I mean do you think – one of the questions on the survey was alluding to the fact that if teachers were involved more in PD planning that the PD might be more relevant – do you agree?

INTERVIEWEE: Probably –we are all professional people but I'm sure we could quite easily provide an in-service amongst ourselves – you know through our own talents and abilities um to staff with out having to spend megabucks on these whiz bang presenters.

RESEARCHER and they do come at quite a price don't they?

INTERVIEWEE: I believe so, yeah

RESEARCHER: So when you actually go to an in-service –when you come back and you have all this knowledge, do you feel that you are given support to include those sorts of ideas in your own teaching or do you find that there are factors that prevent you from doing that?

INTERVIEWEE: I haven't – I don't think that I have actually been on any specific departmental in-service this year when you know in previous years I went I always used to write a report to give to the administration or head of department and I do not know what was done with it after that whether it was filed away or whatever yeah can I go back to your question again um

RESEARCHER: When you actually come back to school do you feel that there are structures there in place to use that information or do you after you have been away for the day think that was a really great idea but there's no time or

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah that's an important factor um I suppose you know that often you go to an in-service and you have to move out of your comfort zone and when you come back with these whiz bang ideas and yeah moving out of that comfort zone is a

bit threatening at times and then you say I'll leave it here and then more time goes on and um yeah you sort of let it lapse but at the same time you know um I think we are pretty free to do what we want really within frameworks um and if it's relevant and it's appropriate well yeah go ahead

RESEARCHER: So you certainly feel that there is enough of an opportunity for staff to um to be able to pursue professional development that is of interest to them

INTERVIEWEE: Well I have but as I say there are probably two perspectives and I believe that is I want to change or implement different things there's not a great deal which is going to say no unless it's really something radical but um Yeah

RESEARCHER Question 10 was another awkward question for??? I suppose it's the broad inclusive individual needs, I'm suggesting here that at some stages at different stages in people's careers they have different needs

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

RESEARCHER: How well do you think that schools actually cater for that I mean if you are a new teacher it's very different to if you have been a teacher for twenty or twenty five years

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, Look in the time that I have been here my needs have been met in different ways I mean I have done a couple of Post Grad courses and a Masters course you know of my own choosing um and at the same time there has lots of in-service work. And with some of the in-service work like I have had to things for the Aus Swim you know I had to go on the week end and do a three hour CPR update you know and I mean yeah I went in there feeling pretty negative because it is pretty basic really

However I did learn a couple of new things which I suppose is the bonus part of it But you know I feel I could have done an hour that would have been sufficient because it's only a matter of revision. So there are certain courses which you know are mandated which you have to do – Level 2 First Aid, CPR – you have to do these

every two years, one year whatever um so there are some things which you don't necessarily enjoy doing for a second or a third or fourth time

RESEARCHER: But you have to do it

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah – you have to do it um yeah I did this Aus Swim years ago and I let my registration lapse and I had to spend X number of hours redoing it and it was just absolutely, I mean painful yeah you know I didn't enjoy it one bit

RESEARCHER: And why did you allow it to lapse?

INTERVIEWEE: I just forgot about it – I just presumed that I had done my Aus Swim, I had been teaching for a number of years and its there I mean you know for sure that if you had done a refresher course for an hour whatever but not for twelve hours or something like that we had to do some huge amount of time –it was ridiculous

RESEARCHER: So do you think that in the course of your teaching career that the emphasis in qualifications has become more pronounced? Like when you first became a teacher you could do your certificate and you could assume that it would be OK but do you feel there's more pressure on teachers now I mean if you are obviously in an area where um upskilling and updating is very important I mean is that a big pressure for teachers as well? Quite a bit has to take place in your own private time?

INTERVIEWEE: Um yes it does I look from a professional point of view, I think yes but again I suppose I need to balance that out by saying if you chose not to then I don't think that there would be any huge pressure to do it Ok one day , two day in-service or workshops um they're quite a bit of pressure on the faculty but a Post Grad course is up to you –you create your own pressure then and I suppose perhaps you know if you think of career changing or career movement then yeah you probably have to have a certain amount of runs on the board

RESEARCHER: You do and increasingly so to there are probably more people now with Masters Degrees

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah

RESEARCHER: And qualifications. Yeah – Professional development or professional learning coordinators that was another question that um attracted a wide variety of um responses um what I am asking here is, could it be someone who oversees the distribution of information to teachers and have a central resource person to coordinate and helps individual teachers to plan or is it just another administrative role?

INTERVIEWEE: I think it's more than , I think that um you know to me a professional learning development coordinator you know is quite broader than just dissemination of information – um you got to talk to individual people you've got to I mean it's support counselling um you have to listen to their needs and try and accommodate their needs. It's not just putting pieces of paper in to your pigeonhole or sending an email saying such and such a course is you know being offered I mean you know you need that information but I think the role should be seen as far more important but in the bigger picture I don't think it is seen as being important because again different pressures, different time constraints and so on um don't um give it the status that it needs. I think there's a real need for something to be in place for professional development but for say the Curriculum coordinator to put out flyers or whatever, there's more to it than that.

RESEARCHER: I like your word that you use – counselling – it is a counselling role isn't it? When teachers do their ARM, um it's meant to help the school plan isn't it I mean when you go to your ARM do you feel that's part of that and that your professional development comes out of that

INTERVIEWEE: Well I had an n ARM last year and it's my TRM this year and I'm not sure I got a great deal out of it.

RESEARCHER: Was there any professional or personal learning that took place within them?

INTERVIEWEE: Not really, no.- and when I was in England a few years ago, they had a sort of em professional development mentoring type program in place in schools in England and to me it was far more encompassing than what we do and we had these questions to answer – you could download the questions with the answers you gave last year but then you might change a word or two I mean I'm not really sure whether the processes and procedures we follow um are for the right reasons and I know where you are coming from there should be there should be a professional developmental mentoring

RESEARCHER: Affirmation whatever

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah well hear it just seems – put it on paper so that you are accountable and tick the box when you have done it. Yeah that's the impression that I have had over the past two years

RESEARCHER Do you have a PD portfolio to fill in or some sort of PD planner?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't think so – well I haven't been given one - I was asked why I hadn't done any professional development and I just felt that the courses that were on offer with in the PE faculty weren't really relevant. I want to go into another area and you know I talked about that but there wasn't any sort of encouragement to do so I mean I have got off my own bat – there's been a couple of programs or funding programs which are being made available and I have applied for those but I haven't heard anything from them – I mean I have got the Principal's signature

RESEARCHER: that's the main thing isn't it?

Laughter

INTERVIEWEE: But no none of this sort of encouragement which you know I believe - you have to show that empathy and understanding

RESEARCHER: Nurturing isn't it almost

INTERVIEWEE: Well

RESEARCHER: Well going back to what you were on about before the Professional Development Coordinator's role – like a counselling, nurturing, helping people

INTERVIEWEE: I believe so and encouraging and saying OK you know giving people a little bit of a push or a Shove... I don't mean a kick but well OK look why don't you – well you are at the end of your career as far as PE is concerned and you know let's see whether we can find another tangent , a different tangent or a different perspective for you to move into. That's what the process seemed to me to be about in England – you know you had mentoring, a mentor who watched you and came in and em you watched them , it was a long process whereby you know you shared your different views and you know concerns and so on and so on – do you follow?

RESEARCHER Yeah- it's a program that V.I.T is looking into in terms of the new teachers, they have made it a mentoring nurturing

Mobile phone interference blurs discussion at this point

INTERVIEWEE: I think you know us older types also need ...you know motivation and challenges and so on ahead of us – we can keep going through the motions –but it's not healthy necessarily for the kids or yourself.

RESEARCHER: And that is what I want my study to reflect – that at different stages during a teacher's life and their journey through their career that there is actually (mobile interference) and um all through it.

INTERVIEWEE: I think the biggest (interference from cleaning staff) – Ballarat is a great place and there are some terrific schools here but I don't think we have the scope for movement um that you might have say in Melbourne or closer to Melbourne. Um and I suppose the fact that you've got you know your house , you've got your family to consider and you want to move somewhere then you haven't really got that scope for that movement and it's a restricting factor I think, here.

RESEARCHER: So growth could be further study, movement within a school or opting to broadening your horizons by moving around a bit

INTERVIEWEE: Look I'm sure if we were living in Melbourne , you know I would have changed schools two – three times and you OK – I could move to XXXX but I mean it's virtually the same sort of environment that you are going to be in and you know it's not such a bad place here um so why move? I mean professionally you should do but capital wise you think I'll put up with it – I know the system, I know how it works – does that make sense?

RESEARCHER: yes, oh yeah, yes, especially when you've had eight different schools – says she who has taught in eight different schools

INTERVIEWEE: But with each of those eight moves you have had a challenge, you had a new focus and so on and so on which um I haven't had.

RESEARCHER: Ah – but that doesn't mean that you can't grow and develop by staying in the one situation as you said before you look for a different challenge

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah you do but you know em but em when the administration staff you know you've gone past your use by date

RESEARCHER: Oh – that's not true!

Laughter

RESEARCHER: Then-isn't it the school's responsibility to um help you move into another area – or do you think that it's you recognising maybe I am sort of at the end of that part of my teaching and I do need to be looking at something else.

INTERVIEWEE: It's a bit of both I think – I think the school needs to encourage and to for you to do that – this is why I said this mentoring process program em professional development – I can't remember the exact name

RESEARCHER: I should look that up –it sounds very interesting.

INTERVIEWEE: TP – no I'll find out what and I'll let XXX know. This is when I did my International Teaching Fellowship exchange. Just in the county that we were in they were just introducing this process as it were and it just gave people an opportunity to move in different directions – I mean it may not have done I mean if you felt as if you needed a move then perhaps you could discuss it and so on and so on.

RESEARCHER: Right that sounds good and is there anything else that you would like to share with me or are you done with it?

INTERVIEWEE: I have probably done a fair bit of talking

RESEARCHER: No that's great talking so – the personal needs of teachers is that possible for that to take place – when in reality if you had a Professional development Coordinator – you talked about the nurturing so how can the personal needs of teachers be considered? Is it through that counselling and touching base with the staff?

INTERVIEWEE: I Believe so – I believe you have got to have the time and I suppose the confidence of the person who you are going to talk to and it may mean someone from outside the school coming in and explaining their role and giving people the opportunity to access you know – again I suppose in inverted commas that “confidentiality” perhaps which is important um.

RESEARCHER: I hadn't considered that – it's a really important point – we work , we exist and work with our colleagues every day and if one of them is the PD coordinator and you do have to do some very sensitive planning you might not feel comfortable might you with some one else who is on staff?. Have you thought of the idea of having an outside person come in and doing some PD sort of work with even planning with the staff .That's a really interesting sort of concept isn't it in terms of teacher development

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah at times you think, you feel guarded as what you want to say to because Big Brother is watching and it's going to go back and say so and so is not

happy and so and so is dissatisfied with the situation and for people who are a little bit more reserved. I don't know – I might just be....

RESEARCHER: I think it is quite natural sometimes if you have to share with someone who is on staff and going to report back but someone coming in is going to be perhaps one step removed – they might be a little bit more objective too – do you think that's fair?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I think so Yeah

RESEARCHER: A little more objectivity?

INTERVIEWEE: Yeah

RESEARCHER: We might leave it at that – thank you for that.

APPENDIX K

Interview with teacher with over 30 Years Experience from School Three

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: It's really interesting when you actually talk to different people. The actual survey data. If you went by survey data alone I think you would get a very skewed sort of view of the three schools and I think that's why I was really keen to interview people so that I could actually get the information behind the data because I can use that data to show anything.

RESPONDENT: Of course you can with data and if you just based it on that and of course it then depends on who actually filled in the subjects for us as well, so.

RESEARCHER: I had a good return from XXXX, which is pretty good but some people didn't bother to fill it in, which is fine and that is their prerogative. But I think it is a really good thing to do and hopefully the information that goes back because I will give all of these results to Anne when it is finished and so we will see how we go. So our first question is or the statement really is school is generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers. If this is the case, what is it the schools do? If not the case, what more could be done?

RESPONDENT: I think up until lets see last year most people if they wanted to go away to do something were able to do that. There were some that got limits to numbers who were going and I know the maths people didn't get all the maths people wanted to go to the maths conference and of course there were some curtail on that and they got their noses out of joint. Now that's because that's the only thing they ever do because there is not much offered. So there are out of school things and there are some people who do go to a lot of things and there are other people who don't do anything and I think that is a concern. But certainly the thing that you get from KLA coordinators is that normally, not in the last two years but normally the money is available for you to do two days in each subject. So if you, if you are teaching three subjects areas you can go off to something like that. There has been an increasing- I think because of the change in staff people seem to be more people seem to be

reluctant to go over there to Melbourne to do professional development. So you get some people, I know up until I haven't been much the last couple of years but prior to that I did a lot of professional development. You know I would go off to different things and there was never, there was never an issue. The different thing I always found was if you went off to something it would bring you back into school and where is the opportunity to do that and to do it with any effectiveness and the only way you can do that is if a number of you go. To send one person off it's very difficult. Okay that is good personal development but your favour to actually say to the rest off the staff is pretty limited.

RESEARCHER: So, do you have a rule whereby two people should go or is it generally if you see something and you're interested in put your name down and go?

RESPONDENT: We have had other, two institutions where people have actually signed up to go to somewhere and they only know that they are both going when they get there.

RESEARCHER: Oh really?

RESPONDENT: And we have had some very interesting situations like that where both lots of people have had to hire cars to go to Melbourne and don't realise that they are both going. Which partly is XXXX's problem because he is, it all goes through him. Now he maybe either presumes that they know that each other is going and so I think you should be sending two people or you should be saying to somebody well you can go with you. Probably the most effective recent professional development has is something the CEO ran You know the professional learning team thing and because a group of people were targeted for that and they went they then had each other to then introduce that back to the school. So that was actually.

RESEARCHER: That was the Middle Years thing with David Anderson wasn't it?

RESPONDENT: Yes and they actually came back and created you know actually pushed that instead of having these incredible staff meetings that we have and that they actually interdispersed those with what we call Professional Learning Teams

(PLTs) People got together and had to do something and not talk about it, you know not talk about it they actually did something and some of the PLT's they. Last year and some of them have been very effective, in that they have really pushed ahead, others were effective in a smaller way and others sort of definitely have to do it, have to do it and that's right. I think that was effective because of the group of people who.

RESEARCHER: Do people willingly participate or are there some people

RESPONDENT: Most of them were volunteers there were a couple of people probably, I don't know whether it was five or six people and a couple of people less than committed shall we say but there was enough commitment from three or four and there was probably a couple of people who went along for the ride a little bit.

RESEARCHER: And everybody had to be in a professional learning term?

RESPONDENT: Oh yes, yes they had to sign up. There was a whole load of areas created and then you would, supposedly I would be given the choice of one, two and three and you were supposedly allocated to your first or your second choice. Know I don't know how I get into the one I get into but you know there was a couple of people who ended up in some that they were less than committed to. But others were quite energetic and actually the thing I liked about it was that people were you were sixteen hours of school from four until five but you were actually doing something that would help you rather than, so that, that worked for a lot of people but didn't work for some people. That was always going to happen.

RESEARCHER: You are not going to be able to capture everybody are you? So do you generally then feel that your experience as a teacher that you felt that you have been adequately catered for in terms of your own professional development?

RESPONDENT: I believe personally I have had tremendous opportunities to do things but I suppose that is because I am a seeker after new knowledge and I always have been and I like to go in things like that and I feel it has just been something that keeps me alive as a teacher.

RESEARCHER: And renewed isn't it?

RESPONDENT: Oh absolutely and I have found out then something that was talked about last week that in the last couple of years I have found that there is less and less that really captured me. You know like you look at stuff and you think oh no been there and done that, you know there is always as if it feels start to recycle and so you know I haven't been in much lately because there doesn't seem to be much that is around really. I have been on heaps, I have had heaps, I have personally have had heaps of opportunities and I have taken them.

RESEARCHER: How did the opportunities present from school, do they, is there a notice board or is there a bulletin board or how do people know what is on?

RESPONDENT: There is a notice board and also the KLA coordinators will circulate stuff and sometimes you get it a bit to late but the information is there is you want it and you know it comes across your desk and I think what is going to happen to teachers now is people are busy and you think that would be nice and then you put it to the side and then forget about it and then suddenly it is to late and I have been like that with a GIS workshop that I keep meaning to go on but I haven't quite got the chance to go on one.

RESEARCHER: What is GIS?

RESPONDENT: It is a global pattern thing that is computer based

RESEARCHER: Alright, so it is global imaging.

RESPONDENT: Yeah, something or other satellite, something or other. It shows you how much I know about it and I keep meaning to because it would be something I could use in the classroom if I knew how to use it and we have got all the software, all the software is on the system and I think we get too busy and I think maybe that....

RESEARCHER: Is that the lament of a lot of teachers?

RESPONDENT: I think yes, I mean I institute lots of opportunities when I was in charge I would choose things that were easier for me to get away because I didn't have a big teaching load. I also felt it was really good for me to get away because it meant other people got to do my job, you know and I was quite happy to leave other people to put the pieces into place because of all that, you know nobody is indispensable.

RESEARCHER: That is succession planning too as well.

RESPONDENT: Yeah and so it is probably less easy if you are a VCE teacher and you are stuck for time and that would be my criticism of you know probably what happens in some places that people get very precious and they think they are special and so they can't, they don't get themselves the opportunity to go in and do stuff. The other side of professional development is for the school to bring people in and that there, I think you mentioned something about professional development being imposed on people and you are never going to be able to suit people. We have had a number of teachers coming in some of them have been good some of them have been less than good.

RESEARCHER: it is worth a gamble isn't it?

RESPONDENT: Yes.

RESEARCHER: It is a big gamble and you never; you never ever ever are going to be able to capture the imagination or the interest of every single staff member. It is just like a classroom full of children there are different learning styles and different learning needs and we have to really take that into account. So do you reckon that then schools generally cater for individual needs of teachers?

RESPONDENT: I don't know whether often they are aware of what the individual needs of teachers are because I don't think teachers are very forthcoming

RESEARCHER: Why do you think that way, because they don't want to appear to be less than perfect in the eyes of other teachers or?

RESPONDENT: Yes, I think you know teachers are you know they like to be seen as professionals and you know even though we have these annual review meetings with Anne I don't know whether people are as honest as they should be and I think people you know people close up short when they get into the classroom to a certain extent and yeah I think people need to be a bit more honest if that's what they need to make their job better. I don't think they often are as honest as they should be.

RESEARCHER: No, and when you do talk to other people and there is often a reluctance to actually ask for it because it might make you look less than professional in the eyes of your peers and I have heard of teaching be described as the secret service.

RESPONDENT: I mean you know I often think there is some fantastic stuff going on in many of the classrooms but there is also some very ordinary stuff going on in the classroom but there is no way of comparing and there is no way that you know that you can get one person in one classroom doing a fantastic job and another person doing a very ordinary job and they both get paid the same and in fact sometimes in some schools you would have people who are doing a less than perfect job and you know providing they keep their head down the kids don't complain, you know life goes on. So, as for accountability we are not good as teachers at being accountable.

RESEARCHER: No, so does the school cater for that? I mean is there, what, like the question here, what structures need to be in place to allow teachers to take responsibility for their own professional learning. Is that possible?

RESPONDENT: Well, XXXX is starting to get involved in the PEEL Project and she has got a group of people who have chosen to be on that small team at the moment and but I know the people who are there were probably not the people who really need to be there and the people who need to be there won't volunteer for something like that and at various times over the years we have had day things about mentoring or you know pairing up with somebody and then coming in and saluting at your classes and you know vice versa and it just doesn't work and you get often the very able teachers are the ones who think oh yeah I will be in that and but the people who

need to be there won't be there because they are too nervous about somebody coming into their classroom and particularly at the senior side that is far more so than you see at because there is a lot of moving around between classrooms because of the younger kids but people get very sort of closed up.

RESEARCHER: Very anxious don't they about sharing.

RESPONDENT: Yeah and you can see it when, even when the thing goes up for student teachers. You know, people have to go okay oh no they are too much trouble, you know.

RESEARCHER: I loved having student teachers.

RESPONDENT: Well I did until last year and I had a very bad experience.

RESEARCHER: Oh okay.

(OMITTED DUE TO SENSITIVITY OF CONVERSATION)

RESEARCHER: That would have been a good learning experience in retrospect for you though to actually have to deal with someone who was probably struggling.

RESPONDENT: Struggling badly, I mean SOSE that was her main love should have known as well but knew nothing but you don't expect people to know everything because I don't know everything and I kept saying well look here is the text book and you know I had to learn about World War one last year and you will have to learn this year. You know no knowledge basis, no I don't think she even knew where Europe was, just complete lack of general knowledge and it was very hard but couldn't spell, couldn't write on the board, couldn't speak properly kept calling the kids "you" it was awful. I have had some fantastic people in the past as well, so I don't know how you get people to open up more especially secondary. I think primary teachers have it all over us in that they are used to being a bit more open in their classroom.

RESEARCHER: Do you think it is because secondary schools tend to be discipline based rather than like in primary schools they tend to teach the students whereas we tend to have a very disciplined base sort of criteria don't we? I teach English and so never the twain shall meet I actually have actually had this discussion with a maths teacher, I think that has probably been, they call it the balkanization of teaching.

RESPONDENT: It is a very old fashioned view but I think it is still very much there.

RESEARCHER: Do you think it is because you have got older teachers?

RESPONDENT: No I think it is worse with younger teachers to be honest I find the younger teachers far more balkanized than the older at our place, than the older teachers. I think there is like a group that I'm part of that are far more student censored than some of the younger teachers. You know we have got a far better big picture approach to education than some of the younger ones do and that worries me even some of the student teachers that you see coming in um you know don't seem to have that big picture view of education. They're still very much like; "I've got his body of knowledge that I have to impart to these kids" and um that can be a real problem. I think it has something to do with the "dumbing down" of teachers and when we were going into teaching we were probably some of the top people you didn't get into University unless you were very, very bright but people are getting into teaching now that are average and ordinary and they have an average and ordinary view of education. So if you are average and ordinary and don't have a wide interest you concentrate on the content so it's only the content that gets taught. If you don't know very much yourself what the hell is going to get down to the kids because obviously you have to compartmentalize and simplify your knowledge to pass onto the kids. If your knowledge is pretty minimal then a minimalist view gets down to the kids you know

RESEARCHER: I worry about that era of the last ten years where they've really struggled to get teachers into teaching

RESPONDENT: And if you see some of the people I know from even from here, that have gone into teaching you think "oh my god" don't even mention then, they

probably know even less now. That's not to say that there's not lots of really great teachers coming through, but there's some very average ordinary ones and they all get jobs.

RESEARCHER: Do you find that at your school that the individual needs of teachers are being met?

RESPONDENT: If they want to? If they accept their needs they'll be met.

RESEARCHER: Would you say that one of the biggest problems that you felt was actually getting that knowledge back into the classroom and incorporating it into your teaching?

RESPONDENT: I can do it in my classroom but how do you influence other people? "I've got this good idea and how do I make sure that my colleagues are aware of it so they can introduce it themselves? That's always been a problem and it's not a very new problem.

RESEARCHER: Having surveyed now the three schools it's actually an issue that's cropped up – "I've been away, I've learnt these skills, I have learnt this knowledge and I want to share it but there's no way of – there's no structure in place for it to happen.

RESPONDENT: And also you can see people's eyes glaze over as well and they say, "She's been on another in-service again and yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean I got into the whole middle school thing years before it became popular mainly because it was significant and I was coming back saying you should be doing this and instigating this and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And people just looked at me as if I had horns you know. And it was fairly frustrating and but I think we need to give people time to do things and one good thing that's happened quite recently and I don't know that there was enough work and handed it over to staff or something like that but Marg Ferguson has been given some extra time to do a lot this and she's the best person for it because she has an absolute commitment to teaching and learning that's her love that's her passion and the interesting thing is that she has been given time to do all

this but that takes her away from the classroom which – how do you balance that you know?

RESEARCHER: Someone was saying the other day too that often some of your really good teachers are taken out of the classroom. They land up in POL positions and they are so versatile because of their professionalism and they're taken out of the classroom.

RESPONDENT: It's such a catch 22 situations but I think teachers need to rather. I think it's – its one thing that I get fed up with is because I have been on both sides of the fence – I get fed up with the whinging of teachers – I wish they would actually do something about it you know.

RESEARCHER: Do you then think that it's really the responsibility of individual teachers to look after their own professional learning?

RESPONDENT: Absolutely – yeah, yeah. You know and it's the job of the school to facilitate that. You can't go around telling people what they need, people need to accept that responsibility themselves but then that involves personal reflection and I don't think teachers.... which is what the PEEL thing is all about. Of looking at what you teach, why you teach and how you could do it better and what you need to do to make it better. I often put people of the same type????

RESEARCHER: Type???

RESPONDENT: And I am a firm believer having gone through you know the position that – like I came back after Long Service Leave and went back very quickly into a full time teaching load and I nearly died – It was terrible full time teaching is.

RESEARCHER: Full on

RESPONDENT: You just can't do it. I can't do it. I said that to XXXX you know – I did it for two years and I was commuting as well because of the two sites, and this was impossible –you can't do this. (Objectionable noises) and I said it was not fair –

you just can't do it. So she made me a Coordinator so I dropped a class and I can now manage what I am doing and do things effectively.

RESEARCHER: You can see how full time teachers find it extremely difficult to harness the energy to even think about leaving the classroom let alone enrolling in any professional development because it becomes very difficult because you have to set classes and then you have to turn around and come back then often mark the work you have left so and often you have to swap yard duties as well so they land up doing twice as many yard duties in the week as you would normally have to do.

RESPONDENT: You know the most interesting thing that I heard of in the last couple of years is the Loreto school in Normanhurst which reduced everyone's teaching loads and they took a class off everybody and I'll make up figures here say my maximum teaching load was twenty six but it went down to twenty two, but there was a catch –of course, that we are going to do this but we are going to expect such and such and um that gave people time and responsibility. Everybody had to choose what they were going to concentrate on and yeah you are accountable for – “you said you were going to revamp this unit rather than going to the folder from last year – no wonder people do that – I do that!

RESEARCHER: It's really hard work being full time in the classroom and tending to the needs of all of your students as well as attending to your own personal and professional needs and I think this is what I am talking about here is the personal needs of teachers too. Like you said you found it very difficult to go back into the classroom full time after having a POL position, um how can the personal needs of individual teachers then be considered? I mean you said earlier that you derived also personal learning from going on professional learning – how do schools then cater for the personal needs of teachers or can they?

RESPONDENT: I don't think they humanly can. There's a lot of You know those nice nuns that used to wander around the place asking people how are they? I think that's a real sad loss. We don't have people now who have time to go around looking after people. I think we need to look after each other and instead of why don't they? It should be why don't we? I think it can happen in groups and people can fall through

the cracks and I think there are people who suffer very quietly and sometimes go under. I think some people do get more than their fair share of caring. Like XXXX, the best way to get looked after in this place is to cry. If you are not someone who goes in weeping to the Principal, you are just expected to

RESEARCHER: Soldier on

RESPONDENT: Soldier on. But there are some people who are quick to tears. I think also it happens with Anne and I 'm sure it happens with other people, that there are some people who have her ear and who do get well looked after. If she's aware of someone's problems, she will help them and I think sometimes people will abuse that and some people don't use it at all. I can't see how the administration can look after the needs of sixty odd people. They can't you know.

RESEARCHER: If you want to be a professional, you have to have a balanced personal life as well don't you? Like a lot of people are coming to school or to work and they might have ageing parents to look after or they might have a teenager who didn't come home last night and there are all those things that people need to be aware of and in a large school it's probably even more difficult.

RESPONDENT: There are people who are not prepared to fess up for their professional needs are definitely not going to fess up for their personal needs and I think that's a problem and when I say that people should look after each other, if you have a high teaching load, you are less likely to be able to look after each other because you are all just surviving. I think to that extent teachers survive. Some schools seem to be better at giving time to people but time is not always the answer.

RESEARCHER: No, and certainly people need to learnt that professional learning is not just about going away all the time often it's about developing yourself personally as well like attending those Covey workshops or taking advantage of those situations rather than doing a degree or a workshop or something like that.

RESPONDENT: Most teachers I know wouldn't go on a Covey workshop if you pushed them because they are "wanky" and equally that happens with school based

conferences or school based you know – increasingly we have a lot – Anne has tried to present more learning experiences – Spirituality and all that sort of stuff – you can see people go “yeah, yeah, just get over it”

RESEARCHER: The eyes glaze over, the shutters come down and that’s it

RESPONDENT: I think sometimes it’s unrealistic to expect to be able to do all those things but then we have to keep on trying doing we?

RESEARCHER: I do like the concept of the old Nuns walking around or the Brothers walking around asking how you are and being a presence in school especially catholic schools.

RESPONDENT: And you know we have liturgy coordinators and faith development coordinators and they are all task related and we have become such task people and yeah people just don’t have time any longer.

RESEARCHER: Going on to the next task if the Professional Learning Coordinator, there’s been a few interesting comments that people have made – is it someone who oversees distribution of information to teachers. Do they help teachers plan? Is it just another administrative role? Or is there a pastoral side to the professional learning coordinator that’s been overlooked?

RESPONDENT: Oh completely. I think it’s often because of the sort of people who go into those roles. And often I would say they are people for example – I wouldn’t be a Curriculum Coordinator, too many pieces of paper – you often get in all due respect to yourself and XXXX if you know what I mean – it’s often people who are actually very good organizers and administrators who go into those roles and equally I remember ages ago, it was deputy principals’ thing –XXXX from Melbourne came and it was Curriculum Coordinators who were becoming more successful in applying for Principalships than Deputy Principals –Deputies Pastoral Care, Deputies Curriculum, it was curriculum people going into Principal’s jobs and you’ve got those very task oriented blue green type people going into those jobs who are not very gifted or it’s very hard for them to seek out the personal and that’s why when the

Nun's moved on that's what we lost. Because we have got good organizers and I think now in many schools we have got managers not leaders.

RESEARCHER: And that's a real issue isn't it? That's a whole different study that I could possibly do but you are right, I think people have become very task oriented and schools have become very busy places and I know in my role just thinking about next year, we've got a School Review, we've got the VEL's happening and we have the RSB

Laughter

RESPONDENT: It's crazy

RESEARCHER: Absolutely.

RESPONDENT: What happened to Stop! you know? It's just mad. I see XXXX at our place who is a very good organiser - he will sort and organise things really, really well but I don't think he has a real handle on what the individual needs of individuals are because he is too busy organising.

RESEARCHER: He probably doesn't have a lot of time because he probably has a teaching role and an administrative role and there probably isn't time to develop that is there?

RESPONDENT: That's where the XXXX of the world fit in and need to be cared for and nurtured. She's got that pastoral side to her - she's a very effective classroom teacher; she's very good at preparing. She prepares things and gives them to you and you take them away and they work. But she doesn't see herself like that at all. She often puts herself down. The task that she's been given this year is a very difficult task for her and she's already suffering from a lack of contact with the classroom. But that's what we need. We need someone who is an organizer but we need someone who is wonderful for teaching and learning and sees it from a student's perspective not from up here (gesturing upwards with a hand) but from down here (further gesturing with hand pointing downwards).

RESEARCHER: And that doesn't seem to happen a lot. A lot of people in the higher positions get less and less teaching and get divorced from the reality of day to day.

RESPONDENT: How long has it been since you have had a full time teaching load?

RESEARCHER: Six years

RESPONDENT: That would be shorter than a lot of people. Most people in admin have not had a fulltime teaching load for twenty years. That's why I moved back into the classroom. It was an amazing eye opener for me. I expected people to do more than survive their classrooms.

RESEARCHER: So a Professional Development Coordinator needs to be someone who has his or her finger on the pulse? Is it a single role in the school? Should it be coupled with something else?

RESPONDENT: I don't think that one person can be all things to all people. So I think the roles – instead of having one person with so much time that their not teaching – why not share the jobs around and have someone but use the gifts of people rather than just applying for a job that suddenly you have all these jobs that you're not very good at.

RESEARCHER: But do you think though that the mentoring of people in a coordinating role doesn't happen a lot either. Just because you apply for the job doesn't mean you know how to do it.

RESPONDENT: Oh yes – it's lamb to the slaughter sometimes. And I am sure it happens with Principals as well. I know they get a mentor but they just get thrown in and their not good at succession planning because they are also not good at delegating. And often people in those roles don't delegate a lot. So it's like an unknown quantity. The Professional Learning Coordinator is an interesting title. Why should this one person be expected to know all things? People are very critical of Professional Learning Coordinators because everyone is an expert so they are at the bottom

looking up If they have never had the perspective of being in those positions – it was one of the reasons I got out of admin – I was getting so cynical of teachers that I thought this is not me and I was beginning to talk about them and I thought “I didn’t want to be here” and I didn’t want to be talking about teachers like this because I knew there were good people there

RESEARCHER: Some people are very generous with their time and if you think they have a full teaching load and coaching after school sport and they’ve got meetings as well, it’s no wonder that teachers are basically wrung out

RESPONDENT: Absolutely and ageing as well. The ageing of school teachers is significant and the teenage children and the ageing parents and the menopause and just the general tiredness, we’re getting worn out and I wish we were getting more new vibrant people in, instead of getting people coming in and doing the same thing. We’ve got two people at Loreto that bring in the freshness with smiles on their faces – they are special people. We’ve got other people who have come in as young teachers and you would swear that they were eighty. They are older fashioned than I ever was. So I don’t know what the answer is but it’s a hard one and it’s something that it basically comes down to – you’ve got people working hard and they are tired, you can’t do it.

RESEARCHER: So formalized study is not realistic for some people is it?

RESPONDENT: Yes. Yes. It’s OK for some people. I mean I did the Masters and all that sort of stuff and that suited me. I didn’t have a social life I had something else. For some people that’s not what they want to do. So you either send people of or you bring them in and that doesn’t suit them either so.

RESEARCHER: So it’s the whole thing about keeping teachers renewed and it’s quite difficult isn’t it in a school situation.

RESEARCHER: Incentives ...I'd imagine that it wouldn't matter what the incentives were for some people they wouldn't consider formalized study because of their personal lives and it's not possible.

RESPONDENT: Some people would never do it or they pay lip service to it – they start things but they don't finish. We were in a position a while back where a teacher dug his heels in and said I read you know New Scientist, I do this; I do that, that's my professional development and he's right you know. You shouldn't have to document going to in services that are less able than ourselves. So we need to put it all in perspective about what professional development is. It's not formalized courses – extra study is good for some or working for taking on some responsibility for a year level and working with people with people in a year level. And saying “look I will prepare a unit of work for such and such. That's often not recognized in the schools. I know lots of people who the movers and the shakers are in the school and I don't think those people would ever get pats on the back from Admin -that's presumably that they even know what's going on

RESEARCHER: We're getting back to that clandestine sort of approach again aren't we?

RESPONDENT: And if XXXX wants something he goes into the Principal and brag about how wonderful you are but that's taking who you are at face value meanwhile there's other fantastic stuff going on that people don't brag about and they are just seen as doing their jobs and that's not acknowledged and the other person who is. I get a bit fed up with people getting congratulated for doing their job. I think people should be congratulated for doing more than the job. And now and then people get yeah, yeah, yeah, fantastic – for doing the job. I don't know where the answer is?

RESEARCHER: Probably somewhere between all of that. People who want to do formalized study will – there are Diocesan Sponsorships – I mean I think that they are very good,

RESPONDENT: I benefited form all of those.

RESEARCHER: They are terrific and other Diocese' don't have that. But I guess Professional Learning as you said has many lenses and we have to be more aware of that don't we in schools and not cater for a generic sort of imposed structure.

RESPONDENT: We all know about mixed ability classrooms well we have mixed ability staffs as well who all learn in lots and lots of different ways. And there are some people who the best thing that they can do for the school is run twenty-five sports teams, because that's what they love to do and they are god at that. Obviously you have got to have balance but those people need to be counseled in the balance of what they do but not making them feel that what they do is rubbish and not as good as those doing a Masters Degree. But it's about professional balance. And it has to go around the idea of knowing what people are doing and having an extra knowledge of people and I think we are becoming increasingly more fractionalized in schools – I don't think that there's as much caring and sharing going on because people are just too busy. One of the other teachers asked me – and be honest – is teaching any busier than it was fifteen years ago? And I said yes and it really is you know.

RESEARCHER: It's frenetic isn't it?

RESPONDENT: And it's not to do with the fact that I was fifteen years younger, it's much busier, the demands on people is phenomenal and I was looking at the Education Age last week on Assessment you know and there wasn't anything in that article that I couldn't agree with you know giving kids more information, tracking kids, being able to compare, seeing some progress. In theory it's absolutely wonderful but how in the hell do you do it?

RESEARCHER: How do you incorporate that into your already busy day?

RESPONDENT: I've been fortunate – I don't know if the kids have been fortunate, I've got some kids who I have had for years 8, 9 and 10 and sometimes in 11. and I usually end up with a mix of SOSE and R.E. Actually there are some kids who I had in year 8 and now I have them in year 10 SOSE, on the last assessment piece (because I have a fair old memory) I was able to write – I remember writing this on your assessment piece in year 8 and you haven't progressed, you haven't changed what you

are doing – do something about it. That’s because I know and because I can remember. If I wasn’t their teacher this year they wouldn’t know that they have been doing this for the last two years and they haven’t actually progressed but that’s just because I remember things. I remember what kids do rather – I can’t remember what I taught them but I remember how the kids work. And that’s fine that’s anecdotal, it’s not part of a process – I actually don’t know how you do it – how do you track?

RESEARCHER: And I think that’s the problem too that lack of sharing that lack of information that gets passed on form year level to year level. People don’t have time. We’re not having the collegial conversations that we used to have and.

.....(Muffled recording at this point)

RESPONDENT: They are trying to do something at College along those lines but at great cost to their staff. The expectation of the College for the staff at the moment is horrendous that are trying to do it and if they are being forced to do it. How do you do that when you are teaching kids?

RESEARCHER: But it’s forcing people to develop professionally and that’s not going to bring about change.

RESPONDENT: No

APPENDIX L

Interview with First Year Teacher

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: Is there anything that you want to respond to in that survey? Or did you find it OK?

RESPONDENT: I just thought I would help out. RESEARCHER: Thank you for that

RESEARCHER: This is your first year?

RESPONDENT: This is my first Year

RESEARCHER: All right! So how have you found the professional development aspect of teaching this year? Have you found that you have been able to do a lot or....

RESPONDENT: I've done quite a bit umm a lot of it has been on weekends too so if you choose the exact PD that you want to do you have to sacrifice a bit umm and then a lot of the time if there is something that you really want to do you make it (sic) through part of it because you can't get time release. So that's the biggest thing that I have found with professional development

RESEARCHER: SO being a PE teacher do you find that more things are offered on weekends than during the week or...

RESPONDENT: Yeah Or the only PE professional development that I do is the ACHPER conference this year, which was fantastic, and it was done very well but outdoor Ed is where I am struggling to get the professional development. When you start a new course and you are constantly having to upgrade things so you have to do it on weekends.

RESEARCHER: And how do you then find that, working all week and PD on weekends and then coming back the next week?

RESPONDENT: Laughs – Ahh –yeah, I’m used to it now and because I’ve only been teaching two units I’ve done it all year and especially since I am involved in rowing as well and that’s a weekend commitment. SO at times it will frustrate me and I’ll think – why am I doing these extras.

RESEARCHER: As a first year teacher, I mean the mentoring the VIT registration umm PD, how has that gone?

RESPONDENT: Fantastic umm the PD that I received from the VIT, really the initial conference – there was 2 conferences – the initial conference was ah very limited and it was just basically getting to know other first year teachers in the area umm and sorting out whether or not people had mentors and things like that so really there wasn’t much value in that because we were already set up and had mentors and so forth. And the second one was ah basically developing our portfolios and probably could have been done a little bit earlier – and it was left to about August, somewhere around there so there –

RESEARCHER: Really!

RESPONDENT: Yeah so umm most people had started and had to change elements because it had been much later

RESEARCHER: That’s a yearlong thing isn’t it?

RESPONDENT: Yes – it’s a single unit –you have to do an evaluation on a single unit and er an analysis of a teaching and learning unit that you have been doing in the first term It’s something that you might spend one period per week on it or something – not even that and other than that go for it all year

RESEARCHER: Do you get time for that though?

RESPONDENT: No but you do get a first year teacher’s allowance.

RESEARCHER: How difficult did you find it to meet up with your mentor or someone?

RESPONDENT: Oh it was very easy – because I had Jeremy Daniels who teaches PE as well and we were timetabled on maths and PE at the same times so we would go in and out of each others classrooms teach each others kids a fair bit.

RESEARCHER: All right – the mentoring was good by the sound of it.

RESPONDENT: Yeah

RESEARCHER: Ok one of the other aspects um I guess for umm probably teachers who have teaching a lot longer is the fact that umm they didn't feel that they're individual needs were being met. They thought that the school generally provided enough PD but not individually do you think that it's possible for schools to cater for individual needs of all teachers or do you think it's up to the teachers to do that for themselves?

RESPONDENT: I think its more so the teachers who ah need to look at where they need to upgrade their skills and chase that up a little bit and if that involves doing weekend courses and after school courses and things like that they should do it and maybe there could be some time in lieu system

RESEARCHER: Yeah

RESPONDENT: So after the weekend they could have their (sic – hard to detect exact word) free day so they don't have to come in on the Monday or something like that

.

Laughter

RESEARCHER: Well what structures need to be in place to allow for teachers to take responsibility for their own professional development or their own professional learning?

RESPONDENT: Ahh – well we've got- on the intranet and there's a list of PD there

RESEARCHER: Which we can go through and have a look at to see what we want to do umm or by just reading professional journals

RESEARCHER: And these are available for teachers to read?

RESPONDENT: Yeah – it's only the ACHPER journal so I look up that for anything that I identify that I might need for example I have a cross country skiing trip next year so I know that I have to get some well cross country skiing qualifications for that and at the start of next year I will have to do weekend up there and er get some instruction so er it's just a matter of finding who does it and identifying what you need and finding out...

And will the school then come to the party with payments for that or...?

Yeah – a lot of the time it's the - with that particular ski resorts who will say if you are going to bring 60 kids in the next couple of months we will give you this weekend and the training.

RESEARCHER: All right - that's good for

(Interference in background)

RESPONDENT: And its continual business or them as well for their staff (sic) but at the same token the school especially with Outdoor Ed – they're really good with umm although you might have to do things on the weekend's equipment wise the school provides most things.

RESEARCHER: I guess being in like Outdoor Ed the safety factor is much higher? And so you have to have really good qualifications and you do really need to know what you are doing to take students away don't you? But do you think it is possible to consider the individual needs of teachers, the professional development coordinator, or the school to actually assist people?

RESPONDENT: I think it would be hard umm here over the whole school with such a big staff I think it's sort of more relevant er more relevant to the head of faculty who

does what PD. And whether or not and then they should negotiate with the daily planner and deputies and work on their behalf to get them time.

RESEARCHER: You don't think that money is a restriction some times?

Respondentia well I haven't paid for any of the courses that I have done but I er have paid for travel and accommodation sometimes so er for me it's not because I have plenty of money at the moment coming from nothing but when I start a family er it will be lot tighter

RESEARCHER: But part of my study was looking at the different needs of different life stages of like when you are a brand new teacher so you have a little more money and you don't have many commitments yet that an older teacher might have – so that way it frees you up a lot more – do you agree?

RESPONDENT: Yeah definitely.

RESEARCHER: Umm one of the other issues was the um need for a professional learning coordinator – some people in the survey said no – as a first year teacher do you know who the professional learning coordinator is? Do you think that it is a valuable role within the school?

RESPONDENT: Um I couldn't say there's an exact position but it has to go through XXXX but XXXX is the PD coordinator I think –so it's up to XXXX and XXX the daily organiser

RESEARCHER: Before it can be approved

RESPONDENT: Yeah And it has to be signed off by our head of faculty as well so there is a fair bit of paper work involved to get something up and going

RESEARCHER: Alright – when you go away to PD do you get the opportunity to share that information with people or

Yeah when you come back you can – that’s generally um one of the conditions of going that you come back and report to a meeting or run a workshop or do something

RESEARCHER: And you would do that with in your faculty or...

RESPONDENT: Ash I’ve done one with the Maths Faculty and I’ve got one tomorrow with the PE-reporting back.

RESEARCHER: All right and (distorted dialogue) and how difficult is it sometimes when you get back to actually include new learning into your own teaching as a first year teacher?

RESPONDENT: Really easy because you are not set in your ways and a lot of the time you have to develop your program from scratch-how you are going to teach them so...you try activities that are generally good teaching practices or seem to be good teaching practices so you improve by reflecting on your own teaching

RESEARCHER: Oh that’s interesting because people who are who have been long time teachers find it difficult sometimes to find the time.

RESPONDENT: Yeah I can see the problem there – I can see myself doing it the next year –how did I teach it last year how that worked –do it again – now I haven’t taught anything last year so I can throw anything I want in.

RESEARCHER: H – without the baggage.

RESPONDENT: Yeah

RESEARCHER: Well I guess across the board teachers who are long time teachers or they let um they get into a rut don’t they or sometimes but not always – especially if they are teaching a lot of classes or a variety of classes.

RESPONDENT: it’s probably an expectation they have been teaching for a while too and that they are known as a top teacher and it has worked for them.

RESEARCHER: Yeah – yeah interesting isn't it? What about formalised study um quite a lot of teachers said that formalised study was unrealistic for them um and how do you feel – you have just finished a degree and would you be keen to do some more study or do you see any problems with doing further study?

RESPONDENT: I'm keen to do some more study but wouldn't be for a couple of years. I thought about it in second semester this year about starting something and then I thought I will just enjoy myself for a while

RESEARCHER: Well what sort of incentives could be made available for those who want to study? To do more study?

RESPONDENT: I don't necessarily think that there has to be any incentives I think it's something that you do to improve your own knowledge and for me I will do it to improve career prospects um if there's...um I think if you had study days or something like that which I know some people do that's' more of a bonus I think.

RESEARCHER: affirming noises

RESPONDENT: ...than actually an incentive

RESEARCHER: Well I get eight study days a year which is really good but I never use them very much because well ...

RESPONDENT: you have to leave extras

RESEARCHER: Yes. Ok and the last one – I think it goes back to the um initial discussion that we had about the professional learning which is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives like the V.I.T – has very little influence on a teacher's rhetoric – do you agree with that

RESPONDENT: I would say because it is imposed, a lot of people go in thinking that it's a waste of time and I don't want to do this with a negative attitude. If you can get past that – like with the V.I.T you go in with some sour grapes but you do learn things

from it so there is merit there but it's often you know putting away the negative thought in your head.

RESEARCHER: Is there any thing else about professional learning – thank you

RESPONDENT: No.

APPENDIX M

Transcript of Interview with Principal One

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: One of the questions I have is – what do you believe to be the implications for your school in regard to catering for the professional needs of staff whilst remaining committed to school improvement?

PRINCIPAL: Well I imagine the biggest one is to trying to be more targetted in a sense – instead of trying to offer what appears on the surface to be a one size fits all model for professional development that we are certainly going to have to start looking at individual needs much more specifically and I do try to do that. I try every year at the Annual Review Meetings where that question prompts you to ask what priorities are they setting for themselves and what needs do they see themselves having – my general response to that is that teachers are pretty passive about their own professional development portfolio planning, so in a sense it is a bit hard to sit on this side of the desk and say “come on, this is what I think you need” when you’d like to think that professional teachers get to the point where they could identify some of their own deficiencies or some of the things that they know they need extra help in a response

Most of ours when I say to them what are you looking for next year, is there any thing in particular that you would like to prioritise for PD? They go “oh no, I’ll just wait and see what comes out” You know, their not actively searching around and ferreting out the very best PD. We make very generous financial provision, which is almost every year underspent, quite significantly. People haven’t used up as much PD as we have budgeted for. So ours is not a resource problem in a general sense. My sense would be that there is- you know looking at that, looking at the age of our teachers and certainly knowing that already, looking at the very different needs people have – is being very strategic about what to offer – being a lot more descriptive.

RESEARCHER: One of the other things that came through was – from the staff was the fact that they were a little bit hesitant about going away from the school because of the work load that it leaves other people.

PRINCIPAL: I think there are two parts to that; one is the hesitancy about the workload that it creates for themselves in the sense that they have to arrange – because a lot of this is out of Ballarat, they have to arrange the hire car, though we do that for them, but there’s a personal effort involved, getting yourself up early, getting to Melbourne for a 8.30, 9.0’clock start. That certainly is one issue. There is the idea of the preparation of work that they have to leave behind, which we do still insist upon for a teacher being absent for the day and I think there is a collegiate sense of this is going to have an impact on someone else and someone else will have to do an Extra, we use an extraordinary amount of emergency teachers, it’s not always possible to get them, particularly when it’s a half day involved, we struggle like – when someone says they have to leave at half past one to get to Melbourne for a four o’clock start, we often have to give extras, because we haven’t been able to get people in for that particular afternoon, and I think the other pressure is the impact people have, sense of their own classes they leave. Particularly that would be true of our VCE teachers who say “I can’t leave my class”. So they are taking a short term view there in a sense, prioritising this group that is in front of them and where it’s in two or three years time that the next class may well have benefited from the PD that they did this year. But I think all of those things are true – yes – the impact on the classes they leave behind, the impact on themselves and the families to do the rearranging and impact on colleagues – although I would have thought that, that would a third in the band of responses but you know people would see things very differently from me I’m sure of that. I have a very different perspective as the Principal of the school. Absolutely – I am becoming more and more conscious of that - what I perceive to be their issues, are quite distorted.

RESEARCHER: And that is what I got when I actually did my study, being a Curriculum Coordinator – what I actually thought was happening, wasn’t happening at all and quite alarmed at some of the things that people do say. As a Principal then, in a school where people are not accessing PD, how do you actually encourage people to do it and realise the benefit of it?

PRINCIPAL: Well I suppose it is incumbent upon myself and XXXX and the other people on the leadership team to be putting it in front of people as much as we can and certainly when it is used to be a paper trail, you used to get lots of coloured flyers, that was easy in a sense to keep control of, now so much from subject associations is on their websites that I don't necessarily see what's there to be going and offering to people. All the CEO stuff is done through their website, so you're not getting that constant prompt of flyers saying this would be fantastic. So part of it is myself and the leadership team being aware of what is available, when it is available, who is presenting it, the quality of the presenters, using our own Networks- Principals, Deputies, Curriculum Coordinators to make sure that we are listening for good comparisons because they can speak about bad PD, good PD, good presenters, poor presenters. So there is that element of it and awareness and then using middle management resources in the school, heads of department, year level coordinators, to be vary specific in their feedback to me about what is needed eg someone desperately needs classroom management or in terms of behaviours or special needs driven then going out and ferreting that out. So we would use our middle management team, annual review meeting time is an interesting time to review what people have actually committed to for the year and sometimes that is woefully inadequate in terms of what they have done

RESEARCHER: How do you address that, when you have someone sitting there in front of you and you know that they need some kind of refreshing or some sort of professional learning – how do you do it?

PRINCIPAL: Well we have just finished all our ARM meetings and I am reasonably direct with some people because some people are extraordinarily negligent and are basically coasting along on the pre-service training they had 25years ago. And they know that and sometimes are in denial. I am very direct about that and say I really know expect you to undertake study, professional development, reading, professional conversation whatever it is – sometimes you have to start very small but it is reasonably directed. The Level 2 process was interesting a couple of years ago at least that had a little bit of bite to it. That was one whole criteria that people had to meet but once it is met it is met for life. I found that, that was helpful and I knocked several

people back on their applications on those exact criteria. But at an annual interview you can push and shove

RESEARCHER: and getting them to realise that the rewards can be intrinsic as well.

Well we do talk about that particularly - one of the issues for RE Accreditation and getting people to undertake the necessary study for that and if you were teaching a method you weren't trained in it would be very stressful there's no reason to think they learnt at school – that is one area that they need huge amounts of professional development both study and pedagogy to make them enjoy their RE teaching and take a lot of the stress out of it. So that is one area that we have been pushing rigorously and that's a classic area where people are teaching beyond their knowledge and content familiarity. We're very prescriptive there but when I revisit some of those ARM interviews in my head some of them have been pretty blunt and it gets to the point where you say this is beyond your personal choice – I am insisting that you are undertaking some PD and lucky I haven't had anyone bluntly refuse. I don't know and I have never researched what my industrial rights might be to insist that someone undertakes PD.

RESEARCHER: The VIT might take care of that for us

That's right – that will be an interesting year when those registered teachers have to apply for re- registration and present their portfolios and I think that it is well under the radar – I don't think that teachers have picked up on the subtleties of it yet.

RESEARCHER: Or the implication for the professional bodies yet

We have done a few for our new graduate teachers – we had two graduate teachers here last year and at the end of the year, their portfolios were magnificent. I would think that a lot of our experienced teachers would struggle to present what their professional learning has been over the last five years

RESEARCHER: It's interesting to do a resume though isn't it- that's an interesting exercise for someone applying for another position – you do have to list PD and can make you look quite inadequate if you haven't done a lot either.

And I know having been recently through that and on reflection it is extraordinary in terms of what they have done and you think “when were they ever in their school”

RESEARCHER: And then they might be highly motivated individuals too. So we will go through some of the questions – when we went through the surveys there 15 items and the following items were of interest – I think we have covered number 2 that schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers.

PRINCIPAL: I think resource wise we do that I think resource wise we certainly budget adequately, probably generously, accommodation, hire cars, you know replacement teachers if we can get them and all that sort of thing is budgeted for. But whether that is adequate because we can say that we have done that resource wise, when we've looked at the human capital in that – it's probably less clear and a lot of it is assumed that the teacher will do the selection and the teacher will identify, will procure what to go to. Now that may not be enough

RESEARCHER: And certainly the response to that came through in the Focus Groups and the Interviews where people said that they like having that autonomy to be able to choose but at the same time schools have to move along that school improvement model- how do you actually carry people along with you? If you have a strategic plan they you will actually have these goals- you've got teachers who then want to go off on their own tangent – how do you actually manage all of that when teachers have personal interest as well as professional development

PRINCIPAL: And there does lay a tension, there is no doubt. Like from our Curriculum Review that we had, we have been a lot more directive as to what we want people to undertake and one of the recommendations was the introduction of the 10 -4 period day timetable so we've been going and encouraging our teachers to specifically in terms of the longer lessons to the PEEL Project, Thinking Strategies,

those sort of classroom management things that will help them with longer lessons and more engaging pedagogy. That has taken a priority.

RESEARCHER: And have they received that well?

PRINCIPAL: Yes, but I think initially people were a little hesitant that we were not giving a blanket OK to everything. Because previously it would have been unheard of that anyone would have been knocking – backed for a PD application but now we ask people to say where this fit into your learning area goals does, how is this going to help for the preparation for 2006.

RESEARCHER: The personal needs of teachers then, what came through in the surveys and the Focus Groups that they have other things in their life other than teaching- that work/life balance came through? How do we care for the personal needs and special needs – how do we cater for all of those?

PRINCIPAL: I would agree that, – I'm not sure that it is overlooked in there sense that people don't even think about it –I certainly think it misses out if you prioritise things because clearly we have thought about that sort of mentality and where we mention immediate needs we have got like a new study design, a new timetable structure, we've got VELS ,we've got the new RE curriculum we've got the new National Safe Schools Framework – all these big project items that we have to be ready for and when a person comes to me and says I really have to go and do some personal renewal or look at personal well – being or how to balance my life – I could see how easily it would be that the bigger systemic need comes before people. We encourage certainly our RE teachers to undertake a retreat of their choosing so say if a teacher came and said I want to go on the XXXX course or colloquium about spirituality of teaching or I want to go to the Good Sams and ???(Phone interruption) Ok I would say personal needs we are not good, we try to meet spiritual needs by offering by the way of retreat. We are offering our staff a residential PD themed up around the idea of personal well- being, stress management, sense of personal renewal that is our PD next year and we do give one day of the year as a teacher renewal day – basically it is a bit of a holiday but if we see that there is as much purpose in rest and enjoyment and relaxation- meeting some of those personal needs in that sense instead

of sitting someone down for a day of pedagogy... So that has been well received and I do think that if I was looking at a whole batch of applications that if someone wants to go to VELs or someone wants to go to RE, someone wants to do anti – bullying and then someone saying that they want to go and do massage – I'd be saying take a long look at that one. You know that balance between when there is a professional and when there is a personal responsibility too and when should a person be asked to use their own time, after school time, holiday time to do that sort of thing.

RESEARCHER: There was a general reluctance by some people who I interviewed and in the survey to use their own personal time because that was their own family time and moving down to undertaking formalised study – many people did not think that it was realistic because it ate into their family time and they could not see the reward in doing anymore formalised study. And also there were people who said – yes it was good and I have grown, I have developed, I have taken that time.

PRINCIPAL: That's a difficult one for me because my own personal experiences, similar to yours, I have done a lot of that, you have chosen to do that whilst your children are young and having done it, then when people are sitting opposite me and saying they couldn't do that because you know, I don't want to miss contact with my kids and all that, well that is a choice, where is that line that any professional person has a responsibility to retain their professional integrity and competence and think there is something that says you can't have it all to come out of your working hours.

RESEARCHER: No and if you look at other professions, if you look at the Physiotherapists for example, they have a certain number of hours that they have to complete and they often have to do that in their own time and there are other professions.

PRINCIPAL: And I think that is about teachers struggling to see the professionalism of their own work sometimes rather than saying that I employed 38 hours a week by a school. Whereas, if you see it as a commitment to professional growth over the life time of your career, there is a greater willingness. I do know that my response to that question is very much formed out of my own perspective. You know, it's hard to not think (even though I don't say it) well God help me, I've done it and thousands of

other people have done it – you know do the week end mode stuff, do something in your holidays, because more and more it seems to me people are wanting time release from school to do things whether it is planning, whether it is study, whether it is PD, it always seems to be coming out of an increasingly busy week at school.

RESEARCHER: That's where I had to be very careful in my own analysis of people that I did not allow my passion and my drive to actually stand in the way of other people's choices that they made

PRINCIPAL: And that must be very hard as a researcher. It's certainly hard as a principal to sit back and say think I've done the hard yards and I coped without childcare and all this so it's a bit hard to be objective but we'll come back to 12 more fully will we?

RESEARCHER: Professional Learning Coordinator – that was an interesting question. Some schools have gone along the line of having a designated position and some have tagged it to another position and there was an interesting concept that I though was really nice was a couple of people who I interviewed were lamenting the fact that in days gone by there was generally an old nun or brother who would actually be around the school to deal with personal needs of the staff and they said they felt that there was more of a mentoring role in the Professional learning Coordinator. They wanted someone who could sit with them and plan with them.

PRINCIPAL: Well the lovely thing last year when we had two graduates which is very rare for us, eventually the role that developed between the young teacher and their mentor – that would be a lovely thing for every teacher to have with that sort of person who sits down and plans everything with you and does things with you and validates them, wouldn't it be nice? And similarly I have worked in schools where people have had a similar role and always pick up that person who seems out of sorts or disgruntled and could do those sorts of things and that would be a lovely luxury wouldn't it? Our POL structure that we have just done, a staff welfare person was asked for in a submission that came in looking for a person who had that designated time, but interestingly the Consultative Committee which was obviously staff based, didn't support it. That was an interesting little exercise. Strongly came through for

those sorts of things – someone to be the person who noticed birthdays and milestones and looked out for people. It didn't survive the robust nature of our Consultative Committee. One of the Loreto Schools in Sydney has a Director of Professional Learning and that is an interesting position. Has a Deputy status and that is their whole thing managing people's PD, accessing it, managing it, doing the bookings, keeping the records – mind you they have eleven Directors, this Loreto School. There's a Director of Professional Learning Director of everything- Human Resources- all on Deputies salaries. Here it's not. It is combined with Curriculum and we look at the requests on a fortnightly basis in our Leadership Team. So they all come in with their applications filled out where they want to go, why they want to go so it is dealt with by a committee.

RESEARCHER: And these were generally the sorts of things that came up. And the last question that professional learning that is imposed upon teachers as a result of government initiatives often has little influence on teacher's rhetoric

PRINCIPAL: It colours their rhetoric. I tend to agree that these externally imposed programs are very hard – it's hard to engage people's professional imagination. With the campaigns, the kits especially the ones that are easy to file away and put almost out of sight. Unless someone has the designated time and energy, to do the pushing, that is very hard. So I think that is true. Unless it somehow comes out of a personal need or perceived need within a school community, or even if there was a perceived need across a broad range of state or nationally, teachers see the common sense and they see the goodness and they see the merit of those programs but those that appear to have more to do with political sensibilities and political correctness don't ever seem to engage teachers imaginations or practically.

RESEARCHER: And that certainly came across with the teachers. Ann, as a principal, in terms of professional development, how do you see that operating in the Ballarat Diocese from your own school's point of view? What needs to be done?

PRINCIPAL: I think that I don't see things at a Diocesan level happening. When I think the best PD we have run here at school would be individuals that we have brought in ourselves like Julia Aitkin and Loretta Gazelle, people who we have

brought from outside the Diocese to work with our school community. My sense is that individual schools are doing interesting things but are doing them at schools rather than combined. I'm not aware of much at all happening here in the Diocese in my eight years here that were good regional Pads. I think one day in the Jubilee year in 2000, there was a combined attempt to bring the three secondary schools together, and that seems to be a very sensible thing to be doing when we are sharing that common commitment to religious education and spirituality. Getting real quality people and sharing the costs among the three secondary schools is remarkably sensible. I'm aware that Damascus has invited us over the years to a couple of RE Pads and I think we have reciprocated but often because we don't have the same closure days, big groups can't be set – one or two individuals might go but what appears to be emanating out of the CEO doesn't seem particularly enticing. We send because we have to, people to the Literacy Coordinators Day and the Numeracy Coordinators Day, they go pretty reluctantly I would have to say. We send people to the Special Needs, this seems to be a bit better in terms of it being quite useful but there doesn't seem to me to be a whole lot coming out of the Office. Peter Waters used to run a bit after school but I have not been aware of this happening with Gina. I don't think there's much happening. I show my very poor ignorance of what is there but I don't think there's much happening there.

RESEARCHER: And just generally overall, going back to the ageing nature of the staff, other than just encouragement, what else you can actually do acknowledging the different life stages of people in their careers. How does the school manage all of that?

PRINCIPAL: Look, I don't have a particularly well thought out response to that other than I think it is something we need to be increasingly aware of and with awareness will come a more sensible response. I think the ageing teaching workforce is going to throw up huge challenges not only in terms of PD but we are facing it here all of the time in the sense of people wanting to go part time, and once they are part time getting them involved in PD is even harder. We are having issues with people not wanting to go on School camps, excursions because that is at the end of the school day and they don't feel fit and agile enough to do it. So I think the ageing teaching work force will provide many interesting challenges as well as professional

development. But I want to say in defence of the ageing teachers that they are amongst our most professionally active teachers –there is a great group of very committed experienced teachers in that age bracket 20 – 29 years of teaching and some of them are the ultimate professionals, and still want to go to PD because it is good for them and good for their students and some of them are still studying. It's not generalised at all but we are lucky here that we do not have a large number of teachers, who are sitting here waiting to retire, so our older teachers in terms of their classroom expertise, superb. So I don't have a lovely quirky response. It may be that in future Awards there may be some productivity trade off between PD and salary increments, it may be that with V.I.T registration that teachers will get a sense to maintain my currency and registration that I will have to demonstrate that I have been to some PD. We might have to get a whole lot smarter and cleverer about how and who and where PD is presented for people so that it is in manageable bites so that it is enticing, it is relevant, it is my sense that it would require a systemic response. I think because schools are going to be more competitive with each other in getting teachers while there are subject specific shortages, those that can offer the best PD and best PD programs will be advantaged so that force schools into being more lateral in their approaches.

APPENDIX N

Interview with Principal Two

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

Principal Two: What would you like out of this session?

RESEARCHER: For you to give me some feedback on the questions and I don't know if you have had time to have a look. One of the things that became very evident early on was the high number of years of teaching across the three schools. I'm wondering whether you could comment on what that means for your school in terms of improvement.

Principal Two: The first comment I will make is on the data, do you know how representative your sample is of the total school population? In other words if you are saying that relatively if you look at the 20 -29 category, that's the biggest band and the level of experience of the teachers and my question is, is that reflective of the general population? Have you sited that?

And so you have that data and, this is because quite often I would have thought that possible the younger teachers might have been keen to help out by filling in the survey. So, therefore you could have a disproportionate number of younger people compared with old fogies who don't want to do anything.

RESEARCHER: No I have got the age range. I've done the range

Principal Two: In terms of National comparisons we are saying that people who responded to this are in the 20-30 year experience, so therefore we're looking at 45

RESEARCHER: I've been looking at OECD data where over 40% of teachers are in their 50's right across the OECD nations

Principal Two: In Victoria and across Australia the average is 48

RESEARCHER: I looked at the most recent stats – 2000/ 2001 and we fit right there in the Ballarat Diocese in terms of age

Principal Two: Where would we have been without Jeff Kennett then? In terms of the number of packages

RESEARCHER: We weren't in Victoria at that stage so I'll note that down as a note that I might need to revisit

Principal Two: It's an interesting thing because currently we have the incentive to leave at 54/11 which is something phased out now with the new arrangements and that was certainly an incentive for government school people to retire before they turned 55 which then leads to a natural lowering of the age of experience in the teaching service and the second??? with the Kennett era was as they say with the voluntary redundancies which were around, many people who could get up and go, got up and went and that stage I was able to pick up two heads of faculty who had just been able to pay off their houses and they were happy and they weren't able to pick up a job in the government service for 4 years and that was people above 40 and they were good pick ups. In terms of the age of the teachers in the government sector, that once selects 12 years on. So these things have impacted but across the board you are saying that we are well endowed with experienced teachers in our schools. Which is good! Then the question is what have we been doing to renew the skills and the capacities of those who have stayed? Professional learning takes on a whole new significance because of the teaching population.

RESEARCHER: Briefly, if you look at that data you can see that we have a large number of teachers you can have 20-25 years experience as a teacher but are you an expert teacher? Have you rested on the laurels of having achieved that degree 20 – 25 years ago and have not done much since?

Principal Two: The other question is – have you had 25 years experience or have you had the experience of one year 25 times over and just looking at applicants for leadership positions and asking what have you done since you left teachers college with a four year B.Ed or a Diploma of Teaching and a degree – that is the extent of it.

So in terms of formalised PD that is one side of it , the other thing is what level of in-servicing and professional associations, professional reading – yeah all of those things and so what would motivate them to do that? Or Dennis Higgins of CEO Sandhurst said there's the support and there is the pressure and so he would support a case where on one hand in terms of leadership in a school, you need to be there to support your teachers but you also need to offer them some accountability and some pressure to look forward in their skills and expertise.

RESEARCHER: The ARMS have they given you the opportunity to explore in more detail with staff their professional learning or their professionalism.

Principal Two: I was asked a question and I think that ARM is becoming a serious thing. This is our second year of doing a tri annual review, which is evidence based so we are in early days with that but part of this is drawing up a personal professional development program or plan but the ARM and I have a case in point where someone comes to me after I have sent them a personal email – they are about to have their ARM with this person Head of Faculty and Director of Studies and a teacher within their faculty – they had their ARM and we identified the need for fresh experiences and or expertise in the I.C.T area. So for this person to do reports contributing to the faculties' data bank comments or whatever, we identified this as an issue as a result of his ARM. We are going to sit down next week and he has done nothing in the meanwhile so what do we do then? At that stage I said that half of the process of the ARM means that you have to work with the people and say if you can identify areas, you have to work on next year or we agree this is what you have to work on next year, come back twelve months down the track and if nothing has happened then why? What was I supposed to do? So I has in dealing with this, we identified this and life has caught up with you and you haven't had much of a chance so how about we do a couple of things? This is how I suggest the ARMs work with the senior staff. We clearly delineate the problem and ask what possible resourcing from the school would help the problem to be addressed. So another person in the same faculty has been working with the University of Ballarat as I suggested they've been asked to demonstrate for other classes in the faculty. This is someone who we thought was incompetent in a certain area and he's known as a shining light elsewhere. The point is we came back to him with a concrete plan to say this is the area of need, this is the

course we think will start progressing that, you do that and the school will pay for it. And that is where ARMs can be fantastic as long as people are honest. And that is where PD – regional based will fall apart I believe, on the basis that you can't be a friend and a professional colleague at the same time. So part of the deal is finding concrete ways to give the staff member an avenue to follow.

RESEARCHER: So you have a designated PD day

Principal Two: We have declared Wednesday afternoon, all staff to be free unless they are taking sport of course, it's the afternoon because in terms of doing ARMs, & TRMS we are making an imposition on people so we will clear it of other school commitments and subject meetings and things like that. So Wednesday afternoon we can anticipate that you will be doing professional things. So it could mean that you are off reading somewhere, you don't have to be here but there's the expectation that time because you say you haven't got time for professional learning, Wednesday afternoons and that is when we are currently conducting style guide in-services so that is a Wednesday afternoon activity to book in to because everyone needs to know what the style guide is – it's run over 2?? Meetings and I know that the Heads of School will be free to meet with me if need be so that is something that we are doing.

RESEARCHER: That sounds good. When you have a look at you staff and you have a larger number who are 20 years plus how do you plan in terms of keeping them motivated when you are on a school improvement cycle how do you bring those people along, I'm not saying that all people are tired or need refreshing but for those people who do need refreshing how do you do that?

Principal Two: It's just process, process, process and that is working within the schools like the Junior School who are working in terms of teams. The idea of collaborative sharing and demonstrations, what works for them in terms of best practice. I think in 7& 8 those things are working judging by the team leaders and appointments of Head of School in a curriculum role rather than saying that they have an administrative role that is where our current Head of Junior school has been brilliant, then there's the Middle School where the 2 Year Level Coordinators work with the Head of School and the leadership group but in terms of trying to harness the

energy of both the young and the old, there's lots of getting people together and talking and time to get them to document what they are talking about too. So they can share what's going on.

In the same way a??? has taken place in Faculty Groups to try and have a 'show & tell' what works for me, demonstrations, and the hallmark of good learners is to demonstrate what you have learnt. So we tried to get that in and I think that is where in our case we have been looking at the Senior School and ultimately having to factor in teaching and leadership strategies effectively, that is why we moved back to 6 faculties and ??????? but that is where in my experience we have got more experienced people working with diverse subject areas etc like years 7-9 people are much more open to integration and cross fertilisation of views that has come out with VELs but once we get into Senior School, working down from year 12, people are saying they need to be subject or discipline based therefore it's too hard to get them talking about relating one subject to another, they tend to say that "I am the only one that knows my subject and if there is 2 of us we'll have a cup of tea but that's it. So that's why our most highly experienced people are competent, they know their externally marked so they don't have to worry about it and that tends to cut across the professional dialogue a lot.

RESEARCHER: And that is what teachers want more of – a chance for professional dialogue rather than meetings

Principal Two: And that is where I come back to my point about leaders of faculties or subject coordinators not being leaders rather, managers because they get a truck load of paper coming in which needs to be dispersed or responded to. They've got assessment which should be coming out of the teaching and leaning and they have assessment which needs to be managed, like comment banks need to be updated every time there is a change in units. They probably like most schools change their reporting system every three years or more frequently and these are very time consuming and then try and sit down and have a cup of tea with someone.

RESEARCHER: That high level of accountability has crept into teaching too and there's a vast amount of paper work that we have to do and I think that people become overwhelmed by it.

Principal Two: Just reading the VIT publications, it's symptomatic of lots of things including teacher accountability.

RESEARCHER: Principal one made an interesting point this morning and I don't think she'd mind me sharing it with you about how she feels that there are a number of teachers on her staff who do not expect to do anything out of hours. And she thought that was a burden for the staff member and the school in many respects and she was finding that more and more staff are expecting to do all of that during the course of the day and she thought that it impeded the professionalism of some of her staff in her school. But looking at my study and going back over the transcripts there's certainly an element of teachers who thought that most of what they needed to do should be done in the time from when they began school and when they went home and after that was their own personal time

Principal Two: There's a future discussion here on what it means to be professional and every body wants to be professional between 8.30 and four or four fifteen and it depends who you are talking to so mass professions vs. traditional professionalism to generations X,Y & so on have a completely different world view and time at school is time at school and some of them work very hard but ultimately, I do this that and the other thing and why can't I work from 6 o'clock to one a.m. in my part time job when it's my time. Why can't I have paid employment as much as I want away from school because the schools pays me from 8.30 – 4.30 and that's a real tension because in terms of why do we only work 200 days of the year ? What's the extra time for and??? Somewhere along the line people tend to say if I work hard for the time I am here and my 10 weeks holiday are my 10 weeks holiday and don't ask me to do any professional development during that time. I'm pleased to say that I think that is the minority but there is that element and when you come down to negotiating with the staff how they to do their PD, with what's fair and reasonable there is always that element of people who say, about the subject association, sorry the VATE conference has now gone to a Sunday, Monday and I'm not prepared to give up my Sunday, I'll go for a day and things like that.

RESEARCHER: In South Australia when the State Government reviewed professional development, teachers who worked in the government system get an extra week's holiday if they complete the required PD during the year. Those who don't complete it during the year get to spend the week doing professional development. When that came in the teachers thought it was awful and asked how they could do that but people have adapted and they have found the time during the year to accrue the points they need to satisfy the requirements of the Department for professional development.

based on the survey. When you actually look at the statistics, they are very wishy washy in terms of

Principal Two: Any differentiation

RESEARCHER: Yes and that was quite?? We then looked at what were some of the bigger issues or themes that were coming out. Question 2 Schools attend adequately to the professional development of their teachers very mixed response from people.

Principal Two: So this was a five point Leikhart scale?

RESEARCHER: We didn't have a neutral. We decided not to have a neutral

Principal Two: So you wanted a 4 and a 3

RESEARCHER: Or a 2 and a 1 so what generally happened was that in the Focus groups and Interviews especially, there was quite a diverse amount of opinion about what the term adequately meant and what the term professional development meant and schools generally attended adequately to the professional development of the staff so we had some very interesting discussions. From a Principals point of view how do schools attend to the professional development needs of their teachers, keeping in mind school improvement plans and budgets?

Principal Two: Interestingly here, we have a policy we publish, we have a published expectations of X number of days per year with an average over three years, so people

have an entitlement to be out of the place 3 days per year at our expense but there's also that expectation that over the three years they will take that opportunity.

RESEARCHER: So is that cumulative?

Principal Two: Yes that's right because over three years they rotate through their subject associations or they go to an ACER Conference and things like that. I suppose I am saying that we need to have a policy direction that says that schools need to look after their best resource that's the teaching staff and the admin staff and we make no distinctions??? SO everyone has access to the bucket of money. So we have a policy direction that way and guidelines to support it, a professional development committee that sits in judgement on all the applications which encourages staff to forward applications directly. We are through our on line website – we are trying to get a place there where there is a mailing system so when there is a PD that comes into the place that if you have registered interest in the particular descriptors, the computer will automatically send it off for you, automate the opportunity that you have had so anytime that you want to look at a session or you want to verify that you have been doing something, Ok well that is all on line. But once again it is data processing and ultimately, engaging people in getting excited about professional development. My mind goes back to the schools I went through???

RESEARCHER: Do you think that you from what you are saying generally do attend adequately to the professional development

Principal Two: I'm saying there are lots and they are a growing priority, we've grown resource levels and we have \$50,000.00 in the PD budget this year. That's putting your resources where your priorities are. Having accountability for what people do how their using the money or whatever.... And that can be in the form of a presentation back to a school group or a public presentation

RESEARCHER: One of the things that came out of the surveys and the Focus Groups was the time to share and whilst the theory was there, finding the time to do that not just here but across the schools was quite difficult

Principal Two: That's where you are looking at differentiating between school meetings and teaching and learning meetings vs. faculty meetings, so you are looking at three different sharing experience is made already available because you have got scheduled time to do it. The biggest problem we find is getting people to the meetings because of the 40, 000 other things that happen, including sport. So that's why across the schools here we are trying to clear Monday nights of all activity so we can have at least one night of the week where you will know that you have a staff meeting or a school meeting. We have three schools so a full staff or a school or a teaching and learning teams meeting on a three week rotation. So we know that it is an attempt to clear one night. And we are saying that we are also sitting on Wednesday nights as a professional learning time slot.

RESEARCHER: Question 10 then; Organisers of P/L often overlooks the personal needs of teachers, I think that can be at a systemic level and at a school level, and generally people were saying that their personal needs were overlooked. My study looks at the different stages of teachers as they journey through teaching from the Novice stage to the mid career stage to the late career stage

Principal Two: So when you are talking about personal are you talking their personal well being or my individual professional development?

RESEARCHER: Both for example looking at the fact that I might be a 35 year old female teacher with 2 little children and I work part time how do I remain a professional and meet the needs of my family and also looking at the fact that I might be a 55 or 56 year old teacher and I can no longer teach certain subjects or I'm asked to teach something else how can or how are my needs being met? And I guess in a large school and the three schools are all quite large how do we acknowledge the needs professionally and personally?

Principal Two: I suppose one thing that we take on board is the staffs personal development and that is why we have instituted a residential in-service – 2 days off site just looking at issues of personal well being and spirituality and that’s got nothing to do with any professional teaching area – so that is one aspect. And even in that is that we do give people the option to opt out in terms of a bus back if there are family requirements. So that is one way. What I am reading in this is tailoring professional learning to the needs of the individual. We split our budget between College PD largely and our personal well being and that is one side of it – the second side of it is breaking it down to school based activities and to individual activities. So we have a College plan, College PD plan, and the School’s plans and through out ARMS and TRMS put in place a personal development plan.

RESEARCHER: Everyone does it?

Principal Two: Over a three year period on our??? plan will have 100% of staff will undertake the TRM and that is all staff not just teachers and as I said this is the second year and we are going through these at 3 a week or however long it takes us to go through our TRMs.

(shows me the paper work for a TRM)

RESEARCHER: Alright moving on to question 11- There is a need for a designated position of Professional Learning Coordinator In secondary schools. There was a very interesting response to this question – in some of the schools some of the people didn’t realise that there was a professional development coordinator.

Principal Two: We don’t have a designated professional development coordinator as such,

RESEARCHER: That’s right and there were some interesting responses like if you make another position it takes time away from others to create that position to what a fantastic idea but what about someone who wasn’t situated within the school but

might be a free lance sort of professional development coordinator who people felt would be more of a confidante to help them with their own planning because they weren't comfortable about other people in their school knowing about some of their personal or professional needs. And two – a very nice pastoral role where the person actually took on the care of planning their professional development with them but also their also taking a more pastoral care and often people talked of the time when there was a Brother or Sister in the school that would take care or always be floating around taking care. So there was quite a range of responses to that but people felt there was some need for a professional development appointment not necessarily on its own or tagged but a designated position

Principal Two: I'd say someone that takes responsibility

RESEARCHER: But the difference in what people were expecting was just.... and depending on the years of experience too that had implications as well.

Principal Two: I think you go back to basics and the definition of professional learning vs. someone looking after the well being of staff. First of all it is a different thing to professional learning and so we have a Pastoral Care Coordinator and two couch people so we have all sorts of people available ok but they would generally not be looking at their professional learning or the fact that they just need a cup of tea and a lie down and things like that and that's where having an old Brother or Sister in a school was an advantage but I think that's completely different

RESEARCHER: How do you think it can happen in a school? How does it happen you obviously have a person that looks after that area?

Principal Two: So currently we my one and only deputy with the overall responsibility for staff and their professional well being then we have the Director of Studies for curriculum development Director of Development, Director of Faith Development, Director of Administration – so they then form the PD committee So it

is in their court to plan the whole college's PD plan, to accept the School's plans and then to sit in judgement of the applications for professional learning.

RESEARCHER: That's more of a team approach

Principal Two: Yes it's a team approach; in the meantime the deputy accepts responsibility for all the paperwork in establishing the ARMs – so he does that. I conduct the TRMs and someone in leadership does the ARMS With the TRMS – you have the staff member, a professional colleague, (they choose) and someone from line management and myself. We sit together and talk about the evidence that has come from the surveying of students (2 classes) and this is probably a loop hole because they can choose the classes that they like and not the one they feel less confident in but anyway they have evidence from 2 classes, they have observation from a colleague and someone from line management and so on the basis of that they do a reflection of where they think they are up to. And then we sit and talk about that and then it's all annotated and sent out as a draft and forwarded with the guidelines for what they want to do with their lives in terms of where they are heading and what they need to do and what we need to do to support them professionally. That's the process as it stands at the moment.

RESEARCHER: It's a very concrete process in terms of

Principal Two: Well I think it is and it is evidence based and that is what people are now working out of and in an opening line with the TRM as the invigilator I ask 'how have you found this and they say it's a bit like the ARM but so they work out that actually having someone protect them because there are kids speaking in????????????? that it's anecdotal for research.

RESEARCHER: For people who do it are they generally comfortable – has anyone felt uncomfortable at all?

Principal Two: The first time round people have a natural curiosity about what the kids might say not an animosity about what the kids might say – so that is the greatest thing. One of things we have tried getting in is that all the survey forms that come in from the kids should be administered by the buddy or the professional colleague so that professional colleague so that something is outlandish or particularly unattractive that someone going through the process should have to see that and they should be taken out ???? It means that if the kids are critical or just over the top it should come out and ideally I would think that the professional colleague should collate the responses. That's something that we are working towards.

RESEARCHER: And that would be developing collegiality too – something that the teachers would want – that other level of collegiality with another staff member

Principal Two: And I think the process is – the overwhelming response from... and the weakest point at this stage is the student's response to my teacher dada.....with engaging and interesting lessons that would be the one thing across the board that kids will rate teachers lower down on the scale with their response to level of engagement

RESEARCHER: That's interesting and I guess if you look at society and the high level of stimulation that students get from TV and visual media – teachers are then called to be entertainers

Principal Two: This is part of the problem because our kids want relevant methodology and all that sort of thing – delivering relevant material in an engaging manner so that's what the kids want. These are theMy teacher gives clear instructions, my teacher is punctual to class, the teacher shows enthusiasm and interest for the subject, My teacher makes lessons interesting, I feel free to raise ideas or questions with the teacher He reels off the criteria for the evaluation of the teacher by the student – which I don't feel is relevant to my study but is interesting for another study.

That's been the biggest worry for teachers; I think it's a natural thing that teachers should be more accountable for what happens in the classroom.

RESEARCHER: Are teachers more worried about what the students might think of them than their colleagues?

Principal Two: Yes, because they are normally working with someone they respect or they see as a friend. Once again that's part of educated people working with mentors or colleagues who can be critical and still maintain a relationship.

RESEARCHER: And if you think logically in any relationship where there is trust, be it a school relationship or a friendship there should always be that ability to talk critically to people

Principal Two: I know that we are all precious!!! It's a human condition but it all comes out of a traditional school room model that I shut the door and what happens in there is up to me and if I make too much noise someone might come rushing in but other than that no-one knows.

RESEARCHER: Undertaking formalised study is not realistic for most teachers

Principal Two: That can vary, according to age and stage and being outside of the metropolitan area in Wodonga – we found the biggest draw back was HECS and that is probably everywhere now. But then availability, the money side of things, getting more of the idea of using Diocesan Sponsorship going a third, a third, a third that's one way. I hate the idea of people taking study days – it gets in the way of what they are paid to do and that is to teach. At the same time is there that opportunity as part of our policy we won't give HECS funding to anyone who has not at least applied to the Diocese in the first instance because there is a way for???? money in there and have money for conferences, etc and we have been forced to sit down and work out an international policy and that's it we will go thirds with anyone but somewhere along the line there needs to be a contribution by the person

RESEARCHER: And does that bring up the idea of ownership and responsibility of it

Principal Two: If it's too easy people walk away and if the school is paying my HECS off then it's just gone past census date and it's too hard I will walk out. Then the

school is left with the debt and that's part of accountability in the same way that before a student pays the second semester fees, we should see that they have passed first semester.

RESEARCHER: We do that with our VET students otherwise they pull out after the date and you are left with the bill.

Principal Two: Also for some people with young children some people say it is great because they say I will do the night feed or the night walking. but formalised study – I would disagree with that statement

RESEARCHER: I was talking about this with XXXX this morning and both her and I had young children and both of us had managed to study but luckily we both had lots of support but I mustn't as a researcher allow that to colour my thoughts

Principal Two: But other people have other priorities in life – say getting 10 hours sleep a night or my child will never be left in the house alone or my husband will never go to sleep at night without me being there

RESEARCHER: They are choices that we make aren't they

Principal Two: That's right but there are choices but to say that it is not realistic might be that some people's personal choices are unrealistic too.

End of tape and end of interview.

APPENDIX O

Interview with Ballarat CEO Staff Member

(XXXX replaces the name of the respondent and the names of any staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: OK so thank you XXXX for agreeing to see me

INTERVIEWEE: It's a pleasure, it's interesting

RESEARCHER: : We might start with the first question on the second page, what do you believe to be the implementation with the Principal, what are the plans as a CEO made for the aging nature of staff

INTERVIEWEE: OK, that's the question, before I go to the question, can I talk about an interesting thing that I have found here

RESEARCHER: Yes

INTERVIEWEE: Just in reading it though, is that the Principals are talking about it, they seem to be talking about people going part time and perhaps not undertaking PD and what comes through to me is, is what is the whole school of expectation that comes from the book? It doesn't really seem to be much, mainly there is, but it doesn't come through and therefore you could very easily have a school approach. They are also talking about that the aging teachers are among the most professionally acted teachers. They are also saying that in terms of their classroom that they prefer. And at the same time you are getting _____ on the PD, so you are the negative to say, you really are wondering what the break down is. Reading between the lines here, I would say do we have the proper, is age a problem. Maybe it is not, there maybe another problem and that was what came across to me. We do need to have better guidelines, but to get down to the question, "What are any plans that the CEO may be coping with aging staff" As far as I know, I don't think there are plans. I would say that in regard to the aging nature - do we need plans to replace them? Or if so, probably no, we don't have anything there. It would be difficult to make plans because up here, you have got, you have issues with people not going on school camps and excursions because that is the end of the school day and they don't sort of think they need to do it. But on the other hand you have got as I said before, they are among the most professionally active in the classroom and their classroom is extremely superb. So the plans, or what we would need to do, I would think, is do a survey just on the aging nature and see what it all comes down to. Then to see if you can actually do anything.

RESEARCHER: Yes, I think that would be good because without a doubt the ability to run camps is actually having an impact on schools and whether or not, is it age the problem or is it something else that has to be looked at

INTERVIEWEE: I would see here, probably have the same problems as the school does. It seems to me to be, that they want to move people out, especially if they are older, regardless of what they have achieved. So I think a lot more needs to be done to find out exactly what the problems are. If I was a Principal, thank goodness that I am not, if I had to be professionally active in the classroom, I would be wanting to do something to make allowances to not going on excursions. I would not have the control in the school. But then that means that they need a clearly articulated plan.

RESEARCHER: They do say to kids that they are aware that they don't have a one night little plan, that does happen doesn't it. Alright, OK that's good for that and then there is that class there, of the questions, you probably know the credits, there was nothing there that was truly outstanding in terms of response and that is why we got this group together and have study nights with the three individual schools.

INTERVIEWEE: That sounds like a good idea to me.

RESEARCHER: Question 2 was Schools provide adequately to the professional development of their teachers and I have given you a summary of what the Principals have said. I would like to know from you, what is your experience of the provision of professional development in the secondary schools

INTERVIEWEE: My experience, specifically curriculum is that I work with the curriculum coordinators which as you know, are just a wonderful group and I can really talk about professionally active, they are really good. I work with the facilities with the schools and I work with individuals too. Largely, and I suppose I can say this, it is all curriculum, is largely in planning except in certain circumstances, like your XXXX Faculty . It seems as an organisational change, they do, but when it comes to actually teachers learning, they don't and probably the difficulty of having people on leadership teams that are not curriculum minded. Something I know that has happened here, is what your Principal has said about it largely comes out of the deficit model. Once again, it is my view, you could have I would say, some sort of scheme, professional development, goal setting and things like that. So you would know where they are going.

RESEARCHER: Which is one of the aspects of one of the schools and this day they are moving towards that way. Quite interesting in terms of the whole thing about professional development and personal development. If people are aging or have different needs, then I guess there are two extremes that you need, professional and personal.

INTERVIEWEE: The part that doesn't make sense to me is that people haven't used as much PD as was budgeted for, so ours is not a resource problem. That doesn't match with the professional against the preferred, which was mentioned in the other question. It is a bit hard isn't it to see what follows from what.

RESEARCHER: I think one of the Principals actually said that they knew that they weren't actually encouraging staff enough, they thought they could have done a bit more. I guess, the three of them are fairly big schools that perhaps a little bit more effort needs to be on the staff development.

INTERVIEWEE: And try and keep that balance between personal and professional, they find that hard obviously.

RESEARCHER: Yes, they do and I don't know that there is any sort of division

INTERVIEWEE: And not saying that

RESEARCHER: And we have traditionally done that haven't we. You send someone along to a PD and they should know more now and they should have fresher ideas and that doesn't take into account their personalty or their age. The next question is question 10 and that was organising professional learning overlooking the personal needs of the teachers, regarding to the questions before. I think the Principals have made some pretty interesting comments there. How do you as a CEO staff member, view the provision of personal development and how best does it cater for both professionally and personally

INTERVIEWEE: I would say extremely important as one impacts on the other. You really can't separate them it's very difficult except in very narrow areas in terms of professional development and the effect on my personal life. Where they talked about in personal development someone developing a particular relationship – a positive relationship with the students even and the overlap there seems to be too much emphasis on the overlap.....

RESEARCHER: Do you think that the principals have an understanding about how they are inextricably linked?

INTERVIEWEE: Not by going on what they have said here because they are talking about the balance where there is personal and professional responsibility too and when they should use after school time, holiday time etc and once you start carving it up like that it becomes counter productive.

RESEARCHER: Ok question 11, looks at the actual role of professional development coordinator in the secondary school. In some schools there are professional learning coordinators and in some schools they are attached to another role. What I want to know what is the designated role of PD coordinator from a systemic point of view in terms of relaying information available from across the system. What concerns issues occur from a systemic view?

INTERVIEWEE: It's an interesting one –it probably depends on the way that the position operates –I suppose I would not like to work with you the curriculum coordinators and then have to go to the professional development coordinator to work out what exactly is going to happen. So I would like it to be a very specific position . It should work well but then if it is a

dedicated position, it is important that it goes over not just the curriculum So I am unsure – obviously it is not a priority when the principals have stuck it on to something else and from what they say here. From a systemic view it would be hard to have to go to two people to organise something.....

RESEARCHER: I was thinking in terms of recently where the CEO in Melbourne put out a paper asking for feedback on people accessing some PD programs that they are offering and one of the thoughts that I had was could a PD coordinator fulfil that role and would that enable them to circulate the information

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, once again for me it's organisational rather than whether the position itself is desirable. So what I am trying to say I think it is not as desirable as it can be if it is not coordinated with another position because that implies that people talk to each other but organisationally does that mean that it works

RESEARCHER: It was interesting when I was talking to the staff, from the three schools there came through an idea that the role of the professional development coordinator was a pastoral role rather than a paper shuffling role and a couple of people thought that it would be a really good idea if the role was not a school one but more like a consultant and the consultant would come in because they said they would feel more comfortable talking to someone outside of the school because where the PD coordinator's job is attached to a deputy they would be wondering whether that information would be used against them and so they were wondering and pushing really the point that there's a big pastoral role to be played in the professional development coordinator and not just filling out a piece of paper and a PD portfolio and they should actually be guiding you

INTERVIEWEE: so that is actually showing you once again that the personal and the professional are linked

RESEARCHER: I thought that was a really nice statement and one teacher actually talked about the fact that they lamented the time when there would be a brother or a sister wandering around the school offering TLC or advice and that personal touch seems to be missing so I think they were linking the personal with the professional.

INTERVIEWEE: the concerns for us , that it can often be seen as the CEO is telling us what to do and that is a really hard one and the way I tend to move with that is that I say that I am going to learn as much about this as you are and that's where most of the work I do comes out of with the teachers. Once they have that in their head it's not quite so hard. There are also competing pressures in schools and that can be a very difficult one because you can say that we are having VELs andso they are going to try and split themselves between the two which means that the priorities need to be articulated –that's a hard one and the idea from

a lot of people is that change will come and go so why bother so whilst that is a difficulty, it's also something that makes our jobs a little easier

RESEARCHER: and going back to the imposing of PD – are you generally finding that teachers are expecting once you have worked with them that there will be a continuity of visits and building up a relationship with a school – the way that it doesn't work with one offs

INTERVIEWEE: We don't do those any more or we try not to – some times a school will ask you to do it and generally we say no – definitely we want to build up a relationship and working with that – to whether it's accepted or not. Some schools are better than others and generally for some things I find like to GET REAL PD, I did that – it's initially something to get your head around but what happens after that is so important and having stuff to take away that is what they are generally on about.....(poor voice projection)

RESEARCHER: in one of the focus groups, one of the teachers was very strong on only going to a PD if there was something that they could take away and use immediately in the classroom – they wanted hands on ready to use material that they could just use the next day – on the other hand, people were concerned about how they would go away to professional development or had a professional development opportunity at school and there was no time given to implementation when they returned.

INTERVIEWEE: It certainly is a difficult one and when I try to organise PD I like to take them to the theory about what is that we are meant to be doing and then into the implementation and then into a way that you could start. People want to know how you can actually use them in the classroom.....

RESEARCHER: It's interesting that the principals had a very different view of the role of the PD coordinators from we don't have one as such to recognising that there is a need for a position in the school whether it be tied or untied and improvement relies on staff upgrading their skills being better qualified to do their job, so there is that recognition

H. OK question 12 – we are asking the staff and the principals whether taking formalised study is realistic for most teachers – it is my experience from doing this study that there is a reluctance to do so - one principal felt that teachers should not use school time to do study not let's try and help them as much as we can- so how important is study for teachers in the Ballarat Diocese?

INTERVIEWEE: Very important – and we provide a sponsorship program – something that I was quite impressed by was the fact that we do and try people

RESEARCHER: It's very rewarding to know that it's available and it's very generous

INTERVIEWEE: It is isn't it? That's when you see a comment like the one here – I hate the idea of people taking study days – once again is it a personal view or are we looking at cut backs because of the school band or somethingwhere is the plan?

RESEARCHER: and the vision

INTERVIEWEE: The plan has to come out of the vision

RESEARCHER: Thank you !!

APPENDIX P

Interview with Ballarat CEO Staff Member Two

(XXXX replaces names of staff or schools)

RESEARCHER: My thesis called teaching Learning Matters is about the relationship during the personal and professional lives of teachers and pretty much convinced, from a personal point of view, that I am hoping teachers will actually show me this; you cannot have professional growth without personal growth. I have interviewed staff at three secondary schools and I've interviewed three principals and I have interviewed teachers and conducted focus groups and what I have tried to look at is the actual provision at administration level and academic level and to see that professional development actually occurred in schools. Initially I was going to treat each school as an individual study but as you can see in the graph, on the second page, if you look at the questionnaire responses, they were all very similar so I decided to do, was to treat the three schools as one case study. Being in Ballarat and being in a country diocese I thought that might inform, not only the Catholic diocese, but any other country diocese' of implications of having teachers professionally developing, looking at their personal lives as well. So the first lot of data I wish to draw your attention to is the data on table 4.1. These particular, the ageing nature of our staff in the secondary schools and the ageing staff. I asked them what they believed to be implications of their school in regard to catering for professional needs of staff. Looking at the aging nature, and I was just wondering, what if any plans had the CEO made to cater for the ageing nature of the staff in secondary schools in the Ballarat diocese.

RESPONDENT: OK. Well two levels. Firstly at a PD level, we have had a teacher future planning for the teaching courses immediately working for the last seven years to my knowledge that is as long as I have been here. That is looking at ways that we can attract young people to teaching. That is at a state wide level. Within the diocese, one thing we are doing at the moment is we are part of a scheme with ACU, like a scholarship, two people in the teaching service to facilitate their teaching in the diocese. We have also been involved in promoting teaching in the secondary schools. We have had some videos made. We also tried to be present at open days, ACU open days to encourage people to seek teaching as a possibility. So certainly those things, part of the difficulty that we have had, we work closely with ACU. But part of the difficulty that we have had is that the universities are not in the process and can certainly not take any more students any way. The other thing that is not quite answering the question but you can filter it out. The other thing that we find is a

difficulty for our planning is decentralised governments in our schools, where at least the best graduates tended to be taken by the schools that are able to employ them. Whereas our schools have to wait for vacancies to occur, which is often later in the year. So we have some planning, but it is not co-ordinating work place planning.

RESEARCHER: You have talked about introducing younger teachers into teaching, but have their actually been any thought or planning into the fact that, many of the teachers are actually in the work force at the moment are probably 48+. How we actually cater for them in terms of professional development. We have had a very successful middle school program where we have been able to involve some staff members that ... how do you invigorate, renew, refresh if necessary, the teachers who are highly experiences, but sometimes are needing a little bit more.

RESPONDENT: Professional development hasn't been targeted according to age. So that has not been around, that feature. However, I think a lot of those people have been involved in professional development, but it has not targeted that issue. The work we did with our primary sector, just in Ballarat, was consulted with the promotion committee certainly took on this issue of people who have run out of enthusiasm when teaching and how they can be reiterated. The challenge was actually issued to each school community to, I believe that would have had to change to the individual because within that group, I am looking at about 20 to 29 years service & you cannot assume that all those people are lacking in motivation. That is actually probably the cause of distracting teaching in our schools. Within that group there are people who are very invigorated and _____

RESEARCHER: And that certainly came through when I actually talked to people that there was lots of enthusiasm amongst staff. I think the biggest frustration for some staff was the increasing amount of administration that teachers had to be doing and they were saying that more and more they would really like to be doing a lot more in their class rooms but the administration stuff was actually taking away from that.

RESPONDENT: It is not going to change either.

RESEARCHER: There were four questions that were of interest and if you look at those graphs there is really not a lot of difference in terms of anything that stands out as being a big, a huge concern. We narrowed it down to four questions and the first question was that we looked at was schools generally attend adequately to the professional development of teachers

and just from the CEO's point of view, what is your experience of provision of professional development from an ____ point of view in secondary schools? Are they doing enough? You just talked about the gift and....

RESPONDENT: That was in relation to primary. As far as the CEO is concerned, our provision to secondary schools is not as developed as primary schools. That is due to the fact that we distribute the funding to the primary schools of the diocese and we have a much closer relationship through the appointment of principals to our primary schools. The secondary schools have historically have adopted a more independent stance and it is only in recent times that we have had employed a secondary consultant and he has a small staff and in terms of the secondary responsibilities of the part time staff. Our work with secondary schools tends to be more on call than primary schools. Whereas in primary, we develop and co-ordinate a program with the key priorities ____ that they are teaching and so on. So, that probably answers what you are seeking about secondary schools. I believe, by having a quick scan of this, that the secondary schools are quite independent and as you know, professional development ____

RESEARCHER: Why is that? Talking to the principals, they, one principal in particular was talking about the fact that they cater, they have adequate finances and adequate facilities that the staff are not actually taking up the opportunities to do that. That was a bit of a frustration then also. One other principal felt that they probably weren't doing as much as they probably could, but at least they were aware of it. I think they are very aware of what the professional needs are within their schools. Question 10 - organisers of professional learning often overlooking the personal needs of teachers. One principal said that they had a residential in-service once a year, to look after their personal development. I think it is bigger than that. I am asking how do you see the CEO staff members give the provision of personal development and how important is it having a system where teachers are catered for both professionally and personally.

RESPONDENT: I have given a lot of thought to this because there has been discussion at a state wide level about the development of an institute of spirituality for teachers. So my first comment is that we have to be very clear that individuals as employees of schools, there are certain ethics around that and there is a _____ around as to how much is appropriate for employers to be personal. That is not to say that we must never touch the personal, but there will be different views amongst the employees of the relevant services of professional development of the role of the school and I think there needs to be a very clear and intentional

decision made what type of personal professional development is appropriate in the employment setting. Take the example of spirituality - I think it would be appropriate that any work on spirituality would be very much tailored to the spirituality of ones professional responsibilities of the school. That is getting involved in one's individual personal life is not appropriate. Where you put that boundary is very difficult. So that is the first _____. It is also, to me it would be very difficult to say, well this is professional development and this is personal and you could put a fence in between them. I don't believe you can because I don't know whether you are aware of the work of Parker Palmer for example. To me, a retired person is oriented towards what teaching is; now that would be very appropriate personal professional development to me. We have undertaken some of that and I know XXXX has pushed some of it; she works with some of that in some of these schools. Is that giving you some idea of ...?

RESEARCHER: No, that's good.

RESPONDENT: I think it is quite _____ and one that any authority whether it is a school or a system needs to be very, very clear about what it is doing and what boundaries are around before taking it on.

RESEARCHER: That is a point that I am arguing too. You cannot have professional growth without personal growth when you are having a learning experience you change as a person.

RESPONDENT: Yes.

RESEARCHER: So what we are trying to do is encourage people to continue to learn.

RESPONDENT: For example, if you are going to have work around in teams, as teaching in teams, that is a mainly personal growth for everyone involved. Because some people are quite shy because a lot of people are _____ to teaching, particularly secondary teaching because they think you are a sole operator or not at all. That is a huge challenge which is personal. Some people are reluctant to make that decision.

RESEARCHER: I think, given an opportunity and given the course, people can bridge that gap.

RESPONDENT: Sometimes that resolves in quiet personal growth.

RESEARCHER: Oh yes, that is right. Question 11 was interesting, is there a need for designated provision of professional learning co-ordinator in secondary schools

RESPONDENT: Was that was something that was said by staff or contractors? Or both?

RESEARCHER: That was one of the questions that I asked and that came out of the literature that I had been reading. This is the principals had a mixed response to that. One school said they don't have a designated professional development co-ordinator. One school said that they felt it was really, really important and they tied it to another important role. One of the schools, the catholic schools in Sydney has a director of professional learning and so there was a whole different model for those different situations that schools pride themselves in. Is it imperative that there is a designated position of professional development co-ordinator from a ___ point of view? What concerns, issues occur from the ____ level that offering PD to secondary schools in this diocese? Is it easy to ...

RESPONDENT: I'm not quite sure about the position of the professional development co-ordinator. I have signed a lot of forms authorising payment of conference attendances. I am not sure about a designated position in that area. When I looked at your account on this school in Sydney I can see if you did designate that position and really developed around it a whole process of professional learning of appraisal, of the development of professional learning, goals, ____. If there was follow up with individuals you might be able to do that. However, is that a higher priority than other positions which require deputy salary. Are there other ways of doing it? One who likes integration, one who likes professional learning needs to be integrated with all of the other aspects of being a teacher. So I feel a little different about that but then you are asking about _____. I think that as a system office, and that is what we are. One of our priorities is professional development. If we look at the vast majority of our staff, they are involved in professional development, teachers, in all sorts of rooms. Not just in offering events, but most of the work of advisers, special education advisers, is assisting teachers to ____, so I think that is professional development. So that is probably almost what we do together with the distribution of funding and professional development are the two major things we do.

RESEARCHER: Quite interesting the aspects that came out of the work that I did with the teaching staff was a need for a professional development co-ordinator, whether it was a type position or s designated individual position, for it to be a lot more pastoral so, to help teachers

with their planning. One of the issues that came through was a teacher who was no longer able to teach in one faculty and was asked to teach in another and that person felt that they needed to have some sort of pastoral development as well as the professional. They did not think that the professional development co-ordinator, necessarily wishes to form had more of a pastoral role in helping teachers.

RESPONDENT: I have been asked the question, what about the key learning area co-ordinator in that situation.

RESEARCHER: That is interesting that because in some schools the learning area co-ordinator are managers only. In some schools the learning area co-ordinators are visionaries and curriculum people so depending on which school you are actually attached to, ...

RESPONDENT: That's right because there is more than one way to structure up your school. I suppose I am being quite ambivalent about it because if I was principal of the school, I would not be opposed to doing it this way. But I would want to be open to looking to see what the best way for this school and that might come back to the very beginning, the years of experience of these teachers and what are the most significant needs of this group of teachers in this school. In this case, all three schools in Ballarat are pretty much in the same situation and it may be that if you identified that this group are significantly lacking in professional development, that is the most appropriate position to have. But it may not be the case in this situation.

RESEARCHER: Just to go back to the strategic plan.

RESPONDENT: That's right and it is certainly going to the work that I have been doing in the last few years through the VCSA, we have been trying to make sure that our certified agreements don't tie us all down too much into a structure which may not need to be in place in the school.

RESEARCHER: And you are right, you have to have the moulding structure too doesn't there because the population of the school changes, the teaching staff change, there are very different needs

RESPONDENT: That's right

RESEARCHER: OK, question 12 - are the undertaking formalised studies not realistic for most teachers needs. Once again the principals had very different views on formalised study. One principal did not feel that having study leave was a good idea. I know that the diocese is very generous with their funding. Another principal was a little frustrated because they did not feel that their staff actually took up the opportunity, so even within the prep schools themselves, there is a little bit of difference in what they believe. How important is it from a ___ level that formalised teaching for teachers is available in the Ballarat diocese?

RESPONDENT: Once again we show that it is very important. It is not possible for everybody at every stage of their career, but the fact we are consistently found the need to facilitate alternative forms of delivery going right back to the RE right through from there. The primary and most importantly ___ are very closely involved and our sponsorship program here. I suppose I can trust with the one eye on the professional development table and so the formalised study is clearly something that we need to have at least a percentage of our teachers involved in. Some of them work very hard at facilitating them.

RESEARCHER: Yes, and it is very generous, the, and it is the envy of quite a number of diocese too.

RESPONDENT: It doesn't make the difference for a teacher inside wanting to do a course of study. I would like to see what percentage of our teachers actually are taking courses of study, heading into their time. I would be quite satisfied with the numbers that are, and the range of work that is being done. I don't think we would....

RESEARCHER: I don't think so in fact, I know there are at least five of us who are having a professional doctorate within the next couple of years. I mean that is a very high proportion of the diocese.

RESPONDENT: That's right.

RESEARCHER: I think there are a large number of teachers, I know at Damascus there are a large number of teachers who have received funding in the past to do all sorts of study.

RESPONDENT: I think it is good and it is not for everybody at every stage of their lives. We are trying too, with our leadership development module, we are trying to provide some middle ground between the one off days and the full formal course which is not everyone is able to

do. These models actually can articulate and do the study later on. We have tried to find all sorts of ways to engage people.

RESEARCHER: I think that is what we need to do, but professional learning is not just about getting a degree or diploma. It is about growing professionally in a variety of ways and if it means reading journals on a regular basis coupled with attending some professional development, it has got to be a collective approach.

RESPONDENT: It has got to result in a teacher who has the flexibility and the curiosity to be able to embrace the change and not be like, I was master at the time of the pretty serious change of VCE. The first flush had gone through and we had one or two older teachers who just wanted to dismiss all change. They did not want to change at all. They were very good teachers but they were actually limited their effectiveness by not getting on board with the changes. Interestingly enough, we have been undertaking much professional development . Patterns emerge.

RESEARCHER: They do and I think that is what happens in the schools too and I am hoping that my study, might eliminate some of those issues and perhaps there might be a way forward for them. And then I guess we are coming to the one that is foremost in our minds at the moment as we embrace ... I am asking what has been your experience on the limitation of government initiatives in secondary schools in this diocese.

RESPONDENT: My experience has been in two. One with the CSF and the CSF2 when I first arrived. Now I cannot really talk about my experience with the valves because it is unfolding as we speak. CSF2 was seeing some options. Principals do not provide enough leadership, there is no conviction that this was a worthwhile curriculum issue to embrace. The difference now is that the governments are tied implementation of these initiatives to funding and at a system level where we have had to sign up to that. So there will not be the same degree of voluntarism if you like on the part of schools. The schools probably know more about that. Catholic secondary education has been highly independent and highly school centred. The decisions about implementing government initiatives have been school based up till now. That is why I say that I cannot talk about it now because I think letters are flying through the post at the moment, they might arrive this week. It really shows the change has shifted and we are expecting our first letter today and it will be very interesting. These discussions are really not answering your question I guess, well it is in a way.

RESEARCHER: It is, it is yes. I think going back to what you said before it is true of many older teachers who have become cynical about change, the attitude that they have done it all before, just under another name. That is what you were saying before.

RESPONDENT: I think that the experience, if I can project it based on my general contacts with the department here in Ballarat and elsewhere, but particularly here. My projection of the experience would be exactly that. That teachers are exhausted with change. We have been known to take this back to our own post and also take it out. Perhaps Damascus have embraced those initiatives more quickly and more whole heartedly than most schools. When there is no choice about it, the change is mandated, the teachers are not able to rule it out, no secondary teachers like being told by someone outside the school or even someone within the school. I think that is going to be part of this, part of the curriculum co-ordinator, the principal has to give the word. It has got to be presented not as we have got to do this because it says we have to do it, but this is what is going to change to improve outcomes. We are going to do it, and this is the way we are going to do it and if it is presented properly, things will change. You just have to use the book and you have to do this sort of stuff. It is often the way that it is done too.

RESEARCHER: I think we need to go back to Michael Foreman and Michael Hargreaves and look at "The Manageable Change" and certainly I think, that any other bell that we change.

RESPONDENT: Fortunately, there is one going around at the moment that is important. The Commonwealth have made it part of the accountability requirements to enable us to get increased funding from what we are receiving that we implement on this time. I have got a letter on my desk or coming to my desk today, seeking a little modification on that. Really the flexibility that we want, actually is not there

RESEARCHER: Anymore

RESPONDENT: Anymore. That has changed a bit.

RESEARCHER: Accountability

RESPONDENT: But teachers take a few years to catch up with it and they don't like it

RESEARCHER: No

RESPONDENT: Especially when it comes from a particular government that they did not vote for, and they can be very frustrated. But they continue to work to constraints. Teachers have understood but...

RESEARCHER: I think that, I think teachers have become very resentful because as their profession they are dictated to by such a large number of people and everyone ...

RESPONDENT: We are not as tightly organised, see the medical profession has been able to maintain huge independence, teachers haven't.

RESEARCHER: No.

RESPONDENT: Governments now are very much in the driving seat with education.

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