A Case Study
of the
Exploration of Authentic Leadership and Learning
in four
Catholic Primary Schools

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of the degree of Doctor of Education

CERTIFICATE

I certify that this thesis has not been submitted for any degree,

nor has it been submitted as part of candidature for any other

degree or award.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me, and that any

help I have received in preparing the thesis, and all sources used,

have been acknowledged.

Signature of Candidate

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ABSTRACT

Schools and school systems across the world are seeking ways of improving student achievement, in response to growing public recognition of the importance of education for individual success and societal progress. School leaders are being challenged to maintain focus on authentic learning in schools while under government pressure for accountability measures linked to student achievement in test scores. In Australia, the introduction of the *National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy* and the uncertainty of the government use of the results, increases pressure on School leaders to ensure successful student performance under test conditions. Leaders are asking questions about the moral imperative of education and the need to meet increasing government accountabilities.

This thesis will report on an exploration of a professional learning program to assist schools and teachers in transforming their teaching and learning practices. The specific purpose of this research is to explore how inferential discussions and critical reflection lead leaders to extrapolate and question the embedded values that underscore decisions and actions in their leadership practices associated with improving learning in the context of their school.

The research explored the participants' journey of decision-making through the lens of shared and distributed leadership, reflective pedagogy and authentic learning. It analyses a variety of approaches as to how the moral imperatives of the profession impact on and promote authentic leading. It explores processes of reflection and dialogue in four primary schools as leaders and teachers examine their own practice and develop insights into the characteristics of learning and leading.

The epistemological framework of the research is constructivism using the interpretive perspective through symbolic interactionism. A case study methodology was chosen for the research to provide a rich description of the journey taken by the participants. Data was

collected from four Catholic primary schools by examining the personal and professional experiences of participants in the *Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners* project through the use of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and reflective journals. The process of mind mapping was used to visually represent the transcribed data and to enable in-depth analysis of the data.

This research project asked the question "**How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of the relationship between leading and learning?**

In this research, principals and teachers engaged in a professional learning experience that provided an opportunity to collaborate and reflect on developing their leadership capacity. The research revealed that collaborating with colleagues on a project that explored the moral imperatives of leading and learning within the specific contextual nature of their school led them to rethink leading and learning. Further, when an ethical framework was provided, leaders were able to reflect on the values that shaped their decision-making and further develop their self-awareness as leaders. A deepening understanding of the complexities of decision-making in the educational setting provided the impetus for the development of teacher leaders and fostered a culture of leadership and learning in the schools. These findings are represented graphically in a model of contemporary leadership that captures the relationships of the major components of this linkage between leadership and learning in schools.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

1.0   Introduction

Schools and school systems across the world are seeking ways of improving student achievement, in response to the growing public recognition of the importance of education for individual success and societal progress. School leaders are being challenged to transform learning and learners in their schools, whilst at the same time responding to government pressures to implement policies that expect students to meet predetermined benchmarks and to achieve excellence in external testing. These expectations create tension as the educational leader tries to align the purpose of schooling with the perspective of understanding learning, both as a moral activity and an intellectual activity, where human, economic and civic concerns are integrated. Most of this tension emanates from constraints of economic rationalization that appear embedded in our culture, political agendas and practices that do not necessarily reflect the true purpose of schooling: in particular, primary schooling. In implementing government policy, school leaders often become caught up in the day-to-day activities of management and rarely consider whether these modifications actually address the "moral vacuum" (Starratt, 2004, p. 2) in the school that often empties the work of students and teachers of its authenticity and significance.

When leaders in schools are challenged by external influences in their decision-making processes and faced with complexity, uncertainty, and ambiguity in their daily operations, they often lack the necessary skills to provide a moral and ethical response that sustains leading and learning within their school community. The work of Fullan (2003, 2008) and Starratt (2004, 2008) on the moral imperative of school leadership conveys both an urgency about the desperate need for authentic leadership and a view of moral leadership that is deeply passionate, as well as intelligent, in its commitment to transform schools. Transformation in learning will not occur by chance, but will require authentic leadership to bring about such

change. One of the main themes emerging from the literature is the importance of an authentic approach to leadership. Where the responsibility for leadership in schools is shared and distributed, it is more likely to bring about transformation in learning (Burford & Bezzina, 2007; Duignan, 2006; Fullan, 2003, 2007; Starratt, 2004, 2008).

This chapter will describe the context of this research, the impact of government policy on school leaders and the challenge to bring about the kind of change and improvement needed to deliver authentic learning through the transformation of the learning process. A program that was designed by the Australian Catholic University, titled Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners (LTLL) was developed to address this context and the challenges are also described. This program was utilized by four Catholic secondary schools and five Catholic primary schools to confront the complexities of authentic leading for learning. This research focuses on the experiences of leaders in four of the Catholic primary schools and their involvement in the project provided the professional learning experience from which the data for the research were gathered. The questions that were formulated to address this research problem and the overall purpose of the research are also included in this chapter.

1.1   General Context

Experience over the last 15 years would suggest that expectations regarding the purpose of schooling of all stakeholders: parents, teachers, students, leaders, politicians and community members, are different from those of previous decades. Education is experiencing unprecedented change. This change emanates both from within the school and system structures and also from a rapidly changing world in which market forces and globalization are becoming dominant (Fink, 2005; Hargreaves, 2003; Starratt, 2004; Whitty, 2003). The dialogue itself has changed: values education, emotional intelligence, innovation in schools, resilience, deep learning, target setting, benchmarking, accountability practices and national curriculum standards are dominant in educational discussions in Australia. Conference topics

of three recent Australian Educational Conferences were abstract yet contemporarily direct. These titles included moral leadership, ethics, leadership and learning, authentic learning, creating community, global citizens, global impact, building capacity and sustainability, acting nationally and locally (Australian Council of Education Leadership, 2008; Australian International Education Conference, 2008; Curriculum Corporation Conference, 2008). Fifteen years ago similar conferences were more likely to cover supervision, administrative leadership, teacher education reform, shaping the vision, vocation education, school-based management and school effectiveness or mentoring in educational administration (Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, 1993).

These changes, at even the simplest level, have an impact on educational leadership in schools. Effective leadership in schools has always been essential for teaching and learning. However in the current political environment, leadership in schools matters more than ever (Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves, 2003; Pierce, 2003). Dean Fink (2005) puts it this way "schools for tomorrow will require leaders who are passionately, obsessively, creatively and steadfastly committed to enhancing student learning" (p. 1). Additionally, educational researchers (Duignan, 2003; Fullan, 2007; Hargreaves, 2003; Starratt, 2004, 2008) point for the need for leaders to build capacity in themselves and others to respond swiftly, knowledgeably, and responsibly to the constant currents of uncertainty and change, often initiated by accountability pressures from external agencies.

Fullan (2003) suggests that most systems have endorsed government or system accountability policies in the absence of conceptualising and investing in practices that would increase the capacity of educators to perform in new ways. Barber (2002) and Fullan (2003) agree that informed professional judgement is one way forward for school leaders, but argue that this is "not enough to capture the moral imperative and enduring full capacity image of schools to which we should aspire" (Fullan, 2003, p. 27). They also suggest that to transform the current

school system we need to search for ways of pursuing moral purpose so that all students experience an optimum learning environment, so the gap between high and low performance is reduced, and what people learn enables them to be successful citizens and workers in a morally-based knowledge society.

Duignan (2006) has also shown concern for this challenge, "Managing the external and internal challenges and expectations make considerable demands on the time, energies and emotional wellbeing" of educational leaders (p. 1). This often leaves them feeling apprehensive, and to a certain extent, frightened of the complexities involved in the decision-making process.

The case study in this research will explore these challenges and investigate the connection between leadership and learning. It will also explore how leaders understand and deal with the underlying moral and ethical issues that occur in their schools every day and how they use these understandings to inform future practice.

1.2   The Impact of Government Policy

A critical element of this research is the manner in which educational leaders deal with the challenges presented by increased accountability pressures from external systems as they endeavour to maintain authentic learning for their students. Stoll and Fink (1996) argue that authentic educational leaders should be passionately and persistently focussed on enhancing student outcomes. However, the impact of government policy on curriculum, standards and targets, monitoring, assessment and reporting often means that teachers and leaders are challenged to maintain a balance between supporting the full humanity of the individual and meeting these external expectations and requirements from stakeholders (Degenhardt, 2001; Fink, 2005; Starratt, 2008). Educational leaders are often placed in a paradoxical position in their decision-making, as they try to support authentic learning in their schools in the midst of state and federally mandated school curriculum reform and administrative restructuring. This

has become increasingly evident since the Carrick Report in 1989, the Education Act of 1990 and the establishment of the New South Wales Board of Studies (1990), and with the corresponding shift in policy from attention to inputs to a fixation with outputs and standards (Rowe, 2004).

The Education Act of 1990 also gave the Minister of Education in New South Wales (NSW) the power to formalise accountability processes in all schools. By the end of 2006 in NSW there were numerous accountability measures available to the minister including Basic Skills Tests in Literacy, Numeracy and Computer Skills in Years 3 and 5; English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) and Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) in Year 7; and the School Certificate in Year 10 and the Higher School Certificate in Year 12. The NSW Board of Studies also adopted a standards framework as the basis for curriculum development, teaching practice, the monitoring of student achievement and reporting to parents (2006). Additional pressure on school leaders is currently being experienced with the introduction of a national curriculum and corresponding assessment accountabilities, evidenced by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2009. The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the twenty first-century (1999) provided Australian State and Territory Governments with a framework for curriculum development in eight key learning areas and formed the initial collaboration between the states and territories for the National Curriculum agenda. In 2008, the National Curriculum Board in Australia was formed to review the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling resulting in the Australian Education Ministers formally releasing the Melbourne Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in December. The goals represent a commitment to promoting world-class curriculum in eight agreed learning areas and to strengthening accountability and transparency in the educational sector.

In 2007, the Australian Government's agenda for school leaders stipulated that they have a major role in identifying and promoting national standards and priorities for students: reporting nationally comparable data on student achievements and improving reporting and accountability on outcomes to parents and the wider Australian community. All policies, at both the Federal and State government level, impact on the educational practices within schools and create additional tensions for educational leaders as they endeavour to promote, encourage and support the primary purpose of schooling: quality teaching and learning. Many teachers believe that instead of encouraging students to develop independent learning and to engage emotionally with that learning and with one another, they are increasingly preoccupied with preparing students for standardized tests (Webb, 2003). Standardized testing, such as the Australian National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) introduced in 2008, can be utilized for the analysis and development of teaching practice. However, it can also lead to a situation where teachers forsake authentic learning to focus on testing processes and test scores.

The pressure of these reform agenda, high stakes testing, accountability measures and the incongruity of matching these with being authentic in leadership and learning combine to create a powerful dilemma for leaders in schools (Duignan, 2003; Fink, 2005; Gross, 2004; Hargreaves, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1999). These types of pressures, particularly when linked to issues of funding between the states and the Federal Government, can allow inauthentic learning to take place in schools, where the test drives the curriculum rather than the curriculum driving authentic assessment practices for learning (Starratt, 2004).

Until recently, there has been little attention given to how leadership practices impact on learning. In particular, until recently there has been limited research on the theory and practice of leadership and professional development that supports teachers as leaders and learners within the educational environment. There is also little research that explores the nature of how

teachers and leaders connect the school curriculum and pedagogical practice to the lives of the learners in an endeavour to support students and contribute to the greater good of their community and society. Burford (2007) believes this is what is meant by transforming learning and learners. Until recently, as shown in Robinson's (2007) research, there has been limited research into understanding the relationship of leadership to transforming teaching and learning in schools.

This brief overview of the impact of government policy provides some insight into the dilemmas faced by educational leaders in today's milieu, as they struggle to find appropriate understanding and balance between the pressures of external accountability processes and the need to provide authentic learning experiences for all learners. These dilemmas were the concerns for the development for the LTLL project and this subsequent research.

1.3   The Context of Leaders Transforming Leading and Learning

The dilemmas identified as influencing the development of the LTLL project were seen to be focussed on issues related to the moral purpose of learning and the values and ethics of leaders. Shared moral purpose within educational communities has been steadily recognized in the international literature as one of the basic requirements for bringing about the kind of change and improvement that will deliver desirable student learning outcomes through the transformation of the learning process (Duignan, 2006; Fullan, 2007; Sergiovanni, 1999; Starratt, 2004, 2007, 2008). The challenge is to discover ways to explicitly position moral purpose in the educational setting and to craft it as part of the school discourse so that it is entrenched in practice. Starratt (2004) highlights the importance of bringing moral purpose to the forefront of learning when he clarifies its meaning in the symbolic and cultural aspects of the school learning environment. He believes that moral leadership "involves the moral activity embedded in the conduct of leading" and that ethical leadership is the "attempt to act from the

principles, beliefs, assumptions and values in the leader's espoused system of ethics" (Starratt, 2004, p. 5).

Recent research by Bezzina (2007) highlights the importance of having clarity and detail in the way that moral purpose is understood and, in particular, about the values that underpin it. In writing on the moral imperative of school leadership, Fullan (2003) agrees that the context of education is changing and that moral purpose is at the heart of the matter and that education has always been about common good. In speaking of the public school system in general, after conducting a policy audit with colleagues in Ontario, he stated that the public education system is the main system for fostering social cohesion in an increasingly diverse society and that schools must serve all children. The narrowing of the gap between high-and-low achieving children must be of the highest priority. In England, this is known as "the tail of under-achievement" (cited in Fullan, 2003, p. 3) and, in the United States, it is the focus of the federally funded No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. A focus on academic achievement must also include citizenship and, what some people call, character education. Academic achievement and personal and social development are core purposes of the public school system (Fullan, 2003; Power, 2006; Stoll & Bolam, 2005).

In Australia, as part of the Federal Labor Government's commitment to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, a national goal has been established to halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievement within a decade. This national goal, combined with the yet to be formalised national curriculum, will once again place pressure on school leaders. This goal will need to be addressed through the moral imperative of leading and learning, ensuring that teaching and learning for all students is authentic. Fullan (2003) concludes that if the leader in a school is serious about improving the learning for all students, including closing the achievement gap, then the "moral imperative of the principal includes leading a deep cultural change that mobilizes the passion and commitment of teachers, parents

and others" (p. 41). Fullan maintains that leaders will need to "engage with others in ways that raise each other to higher levels of motivation and morality" (2006, p. 127) to transform both the learning and the leading in the school community.

The complexities of leading a deep cultural change to engage with others and to raise each other to higher levels of motivation, often requires a rethinking and re-conceptualisation of the role of the leader and of the practices of learning in the school. Using Starratt's (2004) example of an educational leader struggling to clarify the moral task confronting him, members of the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* at the Australian Catholic University summarised aspects of the work on inauthentic learning to explain what can result from the pressures of state-mandated curriculum standards: an impersonal appropriation of information, with the learner disconnected from the subject/object of study; concern for right answers to the teacher's questions in order to get a passing grade (or job) is common practice; the student has superficial, formulaic, understanding of the subject/object of study; and the individual is left fundamentally unchanged as a human being (Bezzina, 2005). This information was used to develop a professional development experience for leaders and teachers in a new program titled *Leaders Transforming Learners and Learning* (LTLL), which attempted to address the need for a deep cultural change in leadership and learning. The LTLL project, investigating how leaders transform learning and learners within their schools, was funded by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the Catholic Education Offices of Parramatta, Broken Bay, Wollongong and Maitland-Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia.

An overview of the LTLL program is outlined below and sets the scene for understanding the involvement of the four primary schools in developing practices of leading that link to authentic learning in this research.

1.4   Overview of the LTLL Program

The underlying foundational principle of the LTLL Program was that "authentic leadership can transform learning in Catholic Schools and, if educators are authentic and ethical in leadership then this will transform teaching and learning into unique and authentic experiences" (Bezzina & Burford, 2007, p. 2). This principle forms an important aspect of, and is relevant to, this research. Collaboration, sharing and mutual growth were emphasised throughout the program between the schools involved, their Catholic Education Offices and the Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership staff.

Schools were invited to apply for selection by four partner Catholic Education Offices. Nine schools were selected to participate in the LTLL program. Leadership teams from these four secondary schools and five primary schools developed individual project initiatives for improved learning in each of their schools. A conceptual framework was designed by the LTLL management team and was tested by the schools as they implemented their projects. Each LTLL project team was to be made up of the Principal and three other teachers in the school. The program formally began in July 2005 and concluded in October 2006. Some of the participating schools continued their project initiatives into 2007 and a second model of the program (2007-2009) is presently in operation. A web site was developed to support the program and was the source of materials, project developments, conversations, shared learning and management between all program participants. The content relating to the LTLL conceptual framework explored in the program was supported by both Australian and visiting International academics.

1.4.1   The LTLL Conceptual Framework

The first task of the LTLL management committee was to harness the existing consensus in the research and theory and build a conceptual framework that would enable practitioners to understand the relationship between leadership and learning in their schools. The conceptual

framework proposed the formation of educational communities where children encounter transformative learning. The framework supports the experience of transformative learning as dependent on the underpinning values which inform how we view what is ethical in our teaching and leading. The ethical approaches and the moral challenges associated with these are at the core of developing learning communities where children are free to learn what is meaningful and transforming. The LTLL program was designed to support schools as they engaged in projects which reflected these priorities (Bezzina & Burford, 2007).

1.4.2   The Development of the LTLL Conceptual Framework.

A major component of the LTLL program was to enable practitioners to actively engage with university personnel using the context of the project initiative in their own schools as the basis of professional dialogue that integrated the LTLL conceptual framework. An invitation was extended to the Catholic Education Offices of Parramatta, Wollongong, Broken Bay and Maitland-Newcastle to be part of developing a different form of professional development based on the innovative thinking about authentic, transformative learning. Current research and literature on how leaders can make a difference to learning underpinned the professional development model which was grounded in school-based initiatives and informed by emerging new understandings of the ethical basis of learning. A steering group was created to make the broad conceptual framework a reality. The group included staff of ACU, diocesan representatives and school personnel.

The National Quality Schooling Framework [NQSF] (Cuttance et al., 2003) was a significant influence on the evolution of the LTLL framework. The NQSF was a web-based tool used to enhance professional learning and to ensure a focus on quality learning outcomes. It was used to provide practical resources for schools and included information for school and teacher effectiveness and school improvement and innovation.

The NQSF tool had 10 dimensions:

1. Beliefs and understandings

2. Curriculum, standards and targets

3. Monitoring, assessment and reporting

4. Learning

5. Teaching

6. Professional learning

7. School and class organisation

8. Intervention and special assistance

9. Home, school and community partnerships

10. Leadership and management (Cuttance et al., 2003)

The NQSF reflective tool asked schools to provide evidence statements for their own practice and to identify practices about which they would like to learn more. The LTLL project team made adaptations to the original 10 NQSF dimensions, adding a further 12 which allowed a greater alignment with the context of Catholic schooling (Bezzina & Burford, 2007, p. 7). The resultant 22 dimensions were grouped into four clusters: Values, Ethics, Leadership and Learning and these formed the domains of the LTLL conceptual framework as visually represented in Figure 1.1 below.

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSFORMING LEARNING IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

VALUES	ETHICS	LEADERSHIP	LEARNING
		Participative practice	Curriculum standards and targets
Catholicity	Authenticity	Evidence based practice	School and class organisation
Excellence		Professional learning	Pedagogy-Teaching
Justice	Presence	Sustainability	Pedagogy-Learning
Transformation		Community and Culture Change	Intervention programs
Common Good	Responsibility	External networking	Monitoring, assessment and reporting
		Capabilities	

Transforming Learners

Figure 1.1   The LTLL Conceptual Framework (LTLL Orientation June 2005)

The additional dimensions in the values and ethics clusters grew out of ongoing work in Catholic Education Offices relating to the identity of Catholic schools and of the stimulus provided by the work of Starratt (2004). The literature is almost universal in its endorsement of the need for shared moral purpose. The work of Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann (2002), Duignan (2006), Fink (2005), Fullan (2003, 2005, 2007), Shapiro & Stefkovich (2001) and Starratt (2004, 2008) all focus on the compelling influence of moral purpose in educational decision-making and learning.

The NQSF "Beliefs and Understandings" dimension was refined through a process of engagement with system and school personnel to better capture a holistic view of the essential

values base of Catholic education. Thus the single element of NQSF was subdivided into a set of five values (based on practitioner input) and a set of three ethics through which these values would be expressed, using the work of Starratt (2004). Evidence-based practice, Sustainability, Culture and community and Change management – all of which are evident in other dimensions in NQSF- were made discrete dimensions within the Leadership cluster of the LTLL conceptual framework to give them a prominence in line with practitioner feedback. The notion of Leadership Capabilities – drawing on recent ACU research was also added to this cluster (Spry & Duignan, 2003). The NQSF tool asked participants to provide evidence of the extent to which each indicator was present, but for LTLL, participants were asked additionally to rate the extent to which such evidence was present. A sample page from the LTLL tool is attached as Appendix A. The effect of the LTLL conceptual framework is discussed by the participants in this research.

1.5   Understanding the LTLL Conceptual Framework

The LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) proposes the creation of educational communities where students experience transformative learning through the dynamic interplay of an explicit moral purpose for educative leadership and authentic learning expressed in values and ethics (Burford & Bezzina, 2007, p. 6). Each of the four domains of the framework has been broken down into various elements. The first domain, *Values*, shapes behaviours and is reflected in the actions and conduct of teachers and leaders in schools.

1.5.1   The Values Domain

This section of the LTLL conceptual framework provides an overview of the specific values that were identified to generate professional dialogue in the participating schools for ways of redesigning and integrating leadership, teaching and learning from a whole school perspective. Five values were identified as specific to Catholic schools. These were Catholicity, Excellence, Justice, Transformation and the Common good. The defining shared

characteristic of the schools involved in the research is that they are Catholic. Catholic schools must, like government schools seek the very best outcomes through quality teaching and learning for all their students. However, in Catholic schools, authentic transformational learning must be immersed and anchored in foundational Gospel values.

Excellence, justice, transformation and common good would be viewed as being represented as core to all schools. However, some of these values have special emphasis for the Catholic school given the teachings of the Church. For example, excellence, the second element of the *Values* domain, would symbolise in Catholic schools "a special attention to those who are weakest" (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1997, n15) and are "at the service of society" (n16). In addition, Catholic schools are challenged to be inviting, inclusive and just.

A value espoused by all schools is that of transformation of learning and this is named in the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) as the fourth element of the *Values* domain. In the *LTLL reflection tool*, transformation is described as teachers sowing the seeds for the future, where the learner becomes a fuller, richer, deeper human being and schools are places within which students gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes to critically engage with their society as they become effective global citizens (Appendix B).

Starratt (2004) argues that learners need to connect personally to the academic curriculum, so they can continuously transform their understanding of themselves, in order to engage positively with the challenges and possibilities of their lives. Duignan (2006) explains that this process is sometimes known as transformative learning, where the learner develops as an authentic and capable human being (p. 129). Schools must also ensure that the learning promotes the common good of every person in the school, the system as a whole and wider society.

The *Values* domain underpins the second domain of *Ethics*. Values strengthen the ethics that form the foundation for the moral way of living in the school environment. How the leaders in the case study understood the importance of the ethical domain is a main focus in this research.

1.5.2   The Ethics Domain

This section provides a description of the ethics that underlie the moral educational leadership approach. Having reviewed several models of the use of ethics in education, such as that shown by Shapiro & Stefkovich (2001), it was decided to utilise the model developed by Starratt (2004) because of its capacity to embrace leading and learning. Starratt believes that the morally focussed educational leader cultivates an environment that is simultaneously intellectual and moral and enacts the foundational ethics of what he describes as presence, authenticity and responsibility and that these same ethics should characterise students' learning (p. 3). These three ethics are included in the LTLL conceptual framework within the *Ethics* domain (Figure 1.1, p. 13). They provided the participants in the research with a framework to discuss the moral imperative of leadership and the paradox of decision-making.

1.5.2.1   Ethic of presence

Starratt (2004) claims that as educators, we are under an implicit moral imperative to be present to the people and the things around us and being present enables us to be authentic and responsible. Presence implies a dialogical relationship between the learner and the content under study. When people are mutually present to each other a relationship is possible, a relationship bonded by telling and listening. According to Starratt, being present in the activity of learning has three elements, an affirming presence, a critical presence and an enabling presence (2004, p. 93).

1.5.2.1.1 Affirming presence

Affirming presence communicates the message that others have the right to be who they are and are invited to express their authentic individuality, thus enabling them to bring their talents to the life of the school. In the process of discussing ideas and interests, the leader makes known "the strong belief that the primary work of the school – student learning, is enriched by the plurality of talents, interests and backgrounds among both students and teachers" (Starratt, 2004, p. 93).

1.5.2.1.2 Critical presence

Starratt (2004) believes that a critical presence is based on compassion and hope for the human condition and " calls on us to respond to the other, to listen carefully to what it tells us about itself and to respond to what it asks of us" (p. 98). He sees critical presence working in two directions: either in a critical appraisal of oneself as the cause of a blockage to authentic communication, or in a critical appraisal of something in the other's presence that blocks the ability to communicate authentically. Awareness of something in our mutual presence leads to a sense of responsibility in resolving the distortion, so as to release the possibility of authentic communication.

1.5.2.1.3 Enabling presence

Starratt (2004) believes that, it is through affirming presence and critical presence a person acts to respond to the possibilities and the predicaments of the other, to the enabling or limiting aspects of situations and arrangements. Further, he concludes that, an enabling presence starts with the premise: "I can't do it alone; you can't do it alone; only we can do it" (p. 99). The leader's enabling presence can also "empower teachers to own their professional development, embracing the school's efforts in capacity building and bringing to that effort the force of their own personal talents and creativity" (p. 103).

Starratt concludes that we require a presence that is more proactive and "that is intentionally dialogical, offering the possibility of authentic relationship and when this is reciprocated authentic dialogue ensues. This enables us to grow to be present to who or where people are, and to grow to be open to who they can become and where they might journey" (2004, p. 92).

The second ethic included in the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) is authenticity which involves human beings in their most basic moral challenge: namely the challenge to be true to themselves, to be real (Starratt, 2008, p. 11).

1.5.2.2   Ethic of authenticity

Supporting the work of Starratt (2004), Duignan (2008) maintains that authentic educative leaders bring their deepest principles, beliefs, values and convictions to their work. This means being in mutually affirming relationships with others. Starratt (2004) insists that as teachers are close to the core work of the school, which is learning, they "are obliged to be true to themselves, true to their relationships, true to the nature of learning and the dignity of knowledge, and true to their civic responsibilities" (p. 76). Duignan (2008) further argues that "authentic educative leaders challenge others to participate in a visionary dialogue of identifying in curriculum, teaching and learning (especially pedagogy) what is worthwhile, what is worth doing (moral purpose) and preferred ways of doing and acting together"; furthermore that educative leaders support and encourage others to "commit themselves to quality professional practices that are *reflective and educative"* (italics in original, p. 3). Starratt (2008) asserts that both the ethics of presence and authenticity require dialogue in their action and imply a third ethic, the ethic of responsibility. The ethic of responsibility is exercised by learners and leaders through the good of learning by the "understanding of, and participation in the worlds of nature, society, culture and history" (p. 13). Authentic educators "recognise the limits imposed by schooling" but have a responsibility to "always test those

limits in order to increase the quality, depth, and richness of the learning experience" (Starratt, 2004, p. 78).

1.5.2.3 Ethic of responsibility

The concept of responsibility is seen by the educative leader as a serious component of leadership practice and one that often causes much anxiety when juggling responsibility with ethical decisions. Starratt (2004) maintains that educational leaders must be "morally responsible, in a proactive sense of who the leader is, what the leader is responsible as, whom the leader is responsible to, and what the leader is responsible for" (p. 49).

Starratt (2004) contends that the educational leader is expected to be administratively responsible as a human being, an educator, an administrator, and as a citizen. As a human being, the leader is responsible for taking a stand with other human beings and in sharing fully in the human condition. This implies "both an expectation of the best that humans are capable of and an acknowledgement of human limitations and failings" (Starratt, 2004, p. 21). Feeling responsible as a human being enables leaders to be empathetic of others. It also necessitates that leaders understand that human fulfilment comes from family and friends and the fostering of cultural and practical interests that also bring their own responsibilities and expectations, as well as the work they are engaged in.

Starratt (2004) also clarifies what he sees as being a responsible leader in the educational setting. He concludes that, as an administrative leader, the leader is well educated in the responsibilities of school administration and leadership practices and understands school culture and school restructuring and as an educational administrator, the leader seeks to bring into focus the primary mission of the school – quality learning for all students. Additionally, as a "citizen administrator, the leader is responsible for promoting the mission that has been entrusted to him or her by the community to serve a particular common good – namely

education for its future citizens" (Starratt, 2004, p. 51). Further, educational leaders are also "responsible to a variety of stakeholders: students, teaching staff, support staff and parents, as well as district authorities, the school board, and the community at large" (p. 52). School leaders are responsible to their students as learners and as young citizens who are in the process of learning how to be good citizens. Leaders also have responsibilities to teachers, support staff and parents as human beings, learners, professionals and as citizens and should treat them with the dignity and respect that all human beings deserve.

Starratt (2004) also states that an educational leader "is responsible for cultivating a caring and productive learning environment within the school for all students" (p. 55) and concurs with Bonnet and Cuypers (2003) that the educational leader has to be responsible for devising learning activities that connect authenticity in learning with responsibility to and for the content students are learning. While teachers are responsible for the quality of their teaching, educational leaders are also responsible for ensuring quality teaching by all teachers. Starratt (2004) argues that "without a broad vision of what authentic learning is, administrators cannot lead, nor can they muster the moral passion needed to engage the school community in the arduous yet exhilarating work of making authentic learning a reality" (p. 62).

Starratt (2004) believes that the ethics of responsibility, authenticity and presence are basic to the understanding and implementation of moral educational leadership and that these tenets must underpin learning in the educational setting. The three ethics permeate and complement each other, provide a foundation for the moral educational leadership being explored in the LTLL program and are pertinent in answering the research questions. The participants in the case study explored these three foundational ethics, as they formed the basis of the discussion in describing practices that lead to authentic leading and learning in their schools. The primacy of these experiences has been captured by their inclusion in the LTLL project.

1.5.3 The LTLL Experience

The LTLL program focussed on leadership that was actively engaged in the transformation of learning in schools and included the full support at system level. Directors from the four Catholic Education Offices involved were represented at the LTLL plenary sessions and on the LTLL management board, providing contextual input into the professional development program. An important aspect of the program for the four directors was to understand the explicit link of the Values and Ethical domains of the LTLL conceptual framework and the link with the purpose of Catholic schools. The pilot program consisted of a series of professional learning seminars and events (Appendix C) and ran from mid 2005 to the end of 2006. A unique characteristic of the program was the close collaboration of academics and system and school personnel throughout the planning and implementation stages of the program.

Each of the nine participating schools was asked to choose a project initiative that was relevant to the context of their school environment. This would form the basis of the eighteen month professional development program. The purpose of these nine individual initiatives was to ensure that the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) would be tested through the discourse of the different experiences of the participating schools. All stakeholders were collaboratively involved in the formation of the program's research activities. The resultant professional development program had a "series of nested structures" (Bezzina & Burford, 2007, p. 8). At the broadest level, participants used a series of plenary sessions to conceive a framework which might inform their initiative. Each plenary day had a similar outline.

At system level, schools were supported by system personnel by sharing advice and structured experiences. Participant schools also received additional financial resourcing, the amount of which varied between Catholic Education Offices involved in the LTLL project. At school level, the school steering group (which was made up of the principal, a curriculum leader and 1 or 2 other staff) provided opportunities for the school colleagues to work with the emerging

ideas in their particular project initiatives. The eighteen month program for the LTLL plenary sessions is outlined in Appendix D.

The general pattern of each plenary gathering consisted of: sharing among schools, input and new perspectives, opportunities to consider the implications of this input both on a single school basis and across schools, and finally the chance to modify the action plans of each school's project implementation. The format moved from practice to research and theory and back again in a series of cycles across the 18 month period. The input from key speakers was used as a catalyst for further questioning and to challenge participants to clearly articulate the practices of leading and learning that underpinned their projects, rather than merely flesh out the model. The period of direct engagement among schools, systems and the University concluded in October 2006 with a full day conference, at which each school presented its project.

Whilst all four schools in the case study began their school-based projects with the NSW Basic Skills Test as the motivator, they began to ask questions aligned with Eisner's (2002) thinking: "Aside from literacy and numeracy, what do we want to achieve? What are our aims? What is important? What kind of educational culture do we want our children to experience? In short, what kind of schools do we need?" (p. 577). A key component of the LTLL plenary program focussed on leaders being actively engaged in the transformation of learning in their schools.

1.6   The Research Problem

Recent research by Robinson (2007) on *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: indentifying "What Works and Why",* found that school leaders who promote and participate in teacher learning and development have a statistically, educationally significant impact on student outcomes. Other current literature (Bezzina & Burford, 2007; Duignan, 2006; Fullan, 2007; Starratt, 2004, 2008) supports the notion that educational leaders need to focus on nurturing the

learning and teaching environment that stimulates authentic and transformative learning through an ethical framework that sustains shared leadership. With the fast-paced political agenda impacting on the educational setting, leaders are often challenged to define the ethical framework they use to make crucial decisions; the problem is that they often have a limited frame of reference to interpret a moral and ethical response to these challenges so as to sustain leading and learning within the school community.

The opinion and research of Bezzina (2007), Burford and Bezzina (2007), Duignan (2006), Fink (2005), Fullan (2003, 2008) and Starratt (2004, 2008), suggest that it is appropriate to question whether traditional education can provide the structure, knowledge and skills needed for the demands of the modern era. Consequently, educational leaders are being urged to take up the challenge to openly elucidate the moral tasks confronting them, thus ensuring that schools focus on teaching and learning. This means an education that can respond to the needs of all students, and provide them with the appropriate knowledge and skills needed to fulfil meaningful lives (Burford, 2004; Duignan & Marks, 2003). Research on the impact of leadership on student outcomes, or on the development of teachers within schools is limited.

There is a view that education and learning, like authentic leadership, is a moral activity, which makes administering schools different from other contexts because it engages students in a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of their lives (Goldring & Greenfield 2002; Hodgkinson, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1996; Starratt, 2004). The case study in this research assists in identifying dimensions of leadership that nurture the development of authentic learning.

1.6.1 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to capture the understandings of participants about leadership and learning in the context of a school improvement project.

1.6.2   Significance of the Research

The notion of authentic learning and its relationship with leadership is a newly articulated concept. There is limited research examining the participation of leaders in a professional development experience that explores pathways to connect leadership with learning. Additionally, many teachers and leaders cannot critically analyse what makes some aspects of, and approaches to, learning more authentic than others. An extensive search of the research literature has identified a lacuna concerning leading and its relationship with learning and what this looks like in practice.

A key responsibility of leaders is to develop leadership in others and at the same time provide the type of leadership experiences that transform schools into places where the learning is authentic and the learner becomes a fuller, richer, deeper human being (Starratt, 2004). This research has emancipatory intent in extending social consciousness of a more holistic view of leadership - a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon - which cannot be separated from what leaders value, and this research incorporates this focus.

The data collected from this research will provide valuable insights towards an approach of leadership for learning, as well as providing a conceptual model of leadership for other schools, especially those in the Catholic sector. Being able to reflect on experiences of leadership and learning will give structure to the very complex processes associated with educational change. This research is also important because it provides educational systems with the opportunity to critique emergent theories of leadership and learning in the light of the challenge of achieving learning that is more authentic and leadership that is ethical.

The findings of recent research (Duignan, 2003) strongly indicate that leaders in contemporary organisations require frames of reference that can assist them to manage situations of complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity. Many educators in leadership positions have had little

or no formal exposure to ethical analysis or reflection (Starratt, 2004). This research could assist educators to engage in educative processes that draw on their shared experience and inner wisdom so as to better equip them and others to make informed and wise choices in situations of paradox and dilemma, a need identified by Duignan and Marks (2003).

Understanding the practices of reflection and sharing between educational colleagues could offer the opportunity for educators to develop a frame of reference to further their own leadership and probe the underlying moral and ethical issues that occur in schools every day and to use these understandings to inform future practice. Therefore, this research contributes to the body of knowledge of leading and learning. To guide and focus this research, a number of research questions were developed.

1.6.3 The Research Questions

There were several dimensions to developing a conceptual understanding of leading and authentic learning that this research sought to explore through a number of relevant questions. The central question of this research is:

How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?

Other notions clustered around this central idea include those aspects that contribute to authentic leadership: ethical leadership, shared leadership, professional learning, partnership, evidence-based practice, collaboration and community, all of which contribute to shared responsibility for student learning. The central research question grounded within this conceptual framework was used to generate the following questions to guide the research:

1. How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

2. What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?

3. How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

4. How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

These questions prompted a research design and methodology that would answer the questions presented. An overview of the research design is provided in this chapter, while a more detailed description is found in chapter three. Definitions of key terms are also included.

1.7   Definitions

The following definitions provide an overview of the concepts utilized throughout the LTLL project and are therefore important for understanding the meanings associated with these concepts in this research.

1.7.1   Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is defined by Begley (2003) as a form of leadership which is shared, distributed and democratic whenever possible. Additionally, Begley implies that authentic leadership means a genuine kind of leadership; a hopeful, open-ended, visionary and creative response to social circumstances. Leadership for authentic learning assumes that the leader also moves beyond the notions of efficiency and effectiveness to include a commitment to ethical leadership, in order to meet the moral imperatives in the learning situation. Authentic leadership includes leading from a values orientation and adopting ethical behaviours in decision-making.

1.7.2   Authentic Learning

According to Hodgkinson (1991) *authentic learning* is essentially, a moral activity. Authentic learning involves moving beyond the assumptions of efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery and performance of learning, to an understanding of learning as essentially a moral activity that integrates human, economic and civic concerns.

1.7.3 Ethics

Ethics is understood here as the underlying beliefs, assumptions, principles and values that support a moral way of life (Starratt, 2004). For the purpose of this research *Ethics* is defined as the norms and virtues by which members of a community bind themselves to a moral way of living. The ethics of authenticity, responsibility and presence underpin the LTLL framework referred to in this research.

1.7.4 Moral purpose

In this research *moral purpose* refers to how individuals act with the intention of making a positive difference in the lives of those in school communities, the teachers, students, parents, leaders and community members. Fullan (2001) believes that moral purpose evolves over time, especially in relation to how people relate to each other.

1.7.5 Values

Values are the psychologically resident conceptions of the desirable characteristic of individuals and shared by groups and other social collective units like organisations and societies (Begley, 2003). In this research the key values identified are Catholicity, justice, excellence, transformation and common good.

1.8 Research Design

A case study design was chosen for this research. The purpose of a case study design is to gather qualitative data to enable the exploration of a phenomenon or issue: in this case, leaders transforming learning and learners in their school. An interpretive approach to the research is considered most suitable in elucidating and valuing the activities of leaders. The data gathered for the research were collected using focus group interviews, observation, personal documents and individual semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using a mind mapping program known as *MindGenius* Education (Mindgenius, 2004).

1.9   Participants in the Research

A review of the literature on leading and learning indicated that there were different ways of conceptualising the authenticity of leading and learning in the context of the purpose of schooling. This research explored participants' responses from four primary schools involved in the LTLL program, and the challenges they faced in understanding and implementing practices of leadership that nurtured authentic learning in their schools. A fifth primary school was not included in the research because its initiative was a combined schools' project with the local secondary school and the interwoven nature of their project with the secondary participants meant that, contextually, it was substantially different from the individual primary school initiatives. The context of each school is described in chapters four to seven where each chapter represents a school participating in this research. The participants represent the school principal and up to five other teachers in each of these four primary schools included in the LTLL project, organised through the educational systems of the schools included in the LTLL project in collaborative partnership with the Australian Catholic University's *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership*.

1.10   The Organisation of the Thesis

This research is organised into nine chapters. An overview of the field and the scope of the research problem is provided in chapter one. In this chapter, the immediate context is outlined, as are the impacts of government educational policy on school leaders, the context of leaders transforming leading and learning and a detailed description of the LTLL conceptual framework used as the professional development tool by the participants in the research. A brief outline of the research design, including the research questions and an overview of the participants is also provided.

The major voices in the literature are introduced in chapter two, which is divided into three sections. Each section contributes to the field of knowledge that assists in understanding the

complexity of leading and learning in the educational setting. The first two sections, learning and leading, give a detailed description of the meaning that shapes the moral imperative of educational leadership. Included in the section on leadership is literature on shared and distributed leadership. Finally, the third section discusses reflective practice as it is considered essential to bringing about change in leading and learning in the educational setting and is a key component of the LTLL project.

The methodology used to answer the research question is outlined in chapter three. This includes the case study approach and explores the generation of knowledge of leaders participating in the LTLL project on transforming learning and the data gathering strategies. Also addressed in this chapter is the use of *Mindgenius*, a mind-mapping program used to analyse and sort data.

Chapters four to seven describe the four schools involved in this research. The chapters examine the issues that affected the nature of the schools' LTLL initiatives used for the qualitative data analysis and give comprehensive descriptions of the phenomenon under study. These chapters also describe the schools' responses to the four research questions. At the beginning of chapter four the process used to identify the sources of data in chapters four to seven are identified and explained to the reader.

The findings and discussion of the findings from the previous four chapters are synthesised and presented in chapter eight through the participants' responses to the research questions. At the conclusion of chapter eight, the collective response to the central research question is included, which identifies how working collaboratively in a project with other leaders and teachers expanded the participants' understanding of leading and learning. In chapter nine the conclusion and recommendations are outlined. Suggestions for further research are also included.

CHAPTER TWO - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.0   Introduction

The purpose of this research is to capture the understandings of participants about leadership and learning in the context of a school improvement project. In this chapter a critical literature review is presented which synthesises particular scholarship on educational leadership and authentic learning. Literature on reflective practice is also presented, as it is pertinent to the nature of the LTLL project and the schools involved in this research.

2.1   Leadership and Learning

The research problem presents a need to critically understand how leaders transform learning and use moral purpose as a critical component of the decision making process. Interpreting the moral activity that is embedded in the action of leading is difficult to define and often dependent on the skill of the leader to articulate the ethical basis that underpins the decision-making process (Duignan, Burford, d'Arbon, Ikin and Walsh , 2003). The research has emancipatory intent in extending social consciousness of a more holistic view of ethical leadership, a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon, which cannot be separated from what leaders in schools value. This is important if educational leaders are to be honoured and supported for having the knowledge and capabilities required to transform learning and learners in their schools.

The research explores how a school improvement project that explicitly focuses on values and ethics guides educative leaders to make sense of the phenomena of leading and learning within their schools. In so doing, it aims to extrapolate and question the embedded values that underscore decisions and actions that transform leading and learning into unique and authentic experiences for students and teachers.

This chapter presents a critical synthesis of the scholarly literature underpinning the research problem. In representing this review, the LTLL project itself attempts to explore leading and learning from a holistic perspective that encompasses the 'what', 'how', 'when' and 'why' surrounding the many facets of leadership in the school setting. Any critical exploration of the complex phenomenon of leadership and the equally complex phenomenon of learning must respect and acknowledge the many dimensions which are part of, and which impact on, transforming learning in schools. The themes presented and the main issues that they address are evolutionary and portray a process, rather than a blueprint.

In presenting this review, it is recognized that conceptual ambiguities surrounding the phenomena of leading and learning exist and therefore this review identifies and conceptualizes what leading and learning may represent. The literature is considered in terms of clarifying and determining what this phenomenon suggests for transforming learning through leadership, both at an individual and community level. Literature associated with approaches to collaborative leadership such as shared and distributed leadership is also broadly reviewed to consider its meaning and relationship that the leader in the school plays in transforming learners and learning. Insights from the literature into understanding shared and distributed leadership are framed from many of the dimensions which encompass the values of working in a Catholic School, as espoused by Duignan (2002, 2007) and supported by Bryk, Lee and Holland's earlier research on Catholic school leadership and culture (1993).

The implication of considering an ethical paradigm as necessary for authentic learning to occur is also explored. Aspects of reflective practice are then discussed, as reflective practice is considered pertinent to the development of authentic leadership and to the development of 'self'.

The organizational sequence of the main themes presented in the review of literature is outlined in the three bodies of literature that are relevant to the proposed research. They are:

1. Learning

2. Leadership

3. Reflective Practice

The following table, Table 2.1 outlines the organisation for the review of the literature, illustrating how the appropriate literature will be presented in this chapter.

Organisation of the review of the Literature
2.1 Learning	2.1.1 Authentic Learning 2.1.2 Pedagogy 2.1.3 Teaching and Learning are Moral Activities 2.1.4 Transformation in Learning 2.1.5 Personalised Learning
2.2 Leadership	2.2.1 Changing Perception of School Leadership 2.2.2 Transformational Leadership 2.2.3 Authentic Leadership from the Organisational Management Perspective 2.2.4 Authentic Leadership from the Educational Perspective 2.2.5 Leadership and Moral Purpose 2.2.6 Leaders as Learners 2.2.7 Distributed Leadership 2.2.8 Teacher Leadership
2.3 Reflective Practice	2.3.1 Critical Theory 2.3.2 Self-awareness 2.3.3 Reflective Processes

Table 2.1   Organisation of the Review of the Literature

2.1 Learning

It is important to define the meaning of learning as it relates to this research as the purpose is to capture the understandings of participants about their experiences of leadership and learning within their school. The research explores how inferential discussions and critical reflection lead leaders to extrapolate and question the embedded values that underscore decisions and actions in their leadership practices in the context of a project designed to transform leading and learning. Research on learning and the transference of learning into other contexts has uncovered important principles for how teachers need to facilitate learning experiences. The National Research Council (2000) identified one of the "hallmarks of the new science of learning is its emphasis on learning with understanding" (p. 8). The new science of learning acknowledges the importance of knowledge based learning and the place of memorising facts but also identifies the importance of the processes of knowing (Piaget, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978). The contemporary view of learning is that people construct new knowledge and understanding based on what they already know and believe (Cobb, 1994; Piaget, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978). New understandings on learning are beginning to provide knowledge to improve peoples' abilities to become active learners who seek to understand complex subject matter and are better prepared to transfer what they have learned to new problems and settings. Enmore et al., (1996) believe making this happen in today's schools is a major challenge but that it is not impossible. This is important for this research as the school improvement project aims to deepen leaders' and teachers' understanding of the nature of learning in the context of their schools. In particular it aims to challenge leaders to facilitate processes of authentic learning for students to build their capacity as individuals.

2.1.1 Authentic Learning

Duignan (2007b) believes that authentic learning is "not only about *taking and processing* new knowledge and skills for oneself but is also about *giving* of one's unique humanity to others

and to the community" (p. 3). It involves making a difference in society and to the lives of all those with whom we come in contact.

In adapting ideas from Starratt (2004), Duignan explains that in elevating and enhancing students' life chances, teaching and learning processes engage students in deep and meaningful learning experiences, that are constantly constructed and reconstructed to respect the particular needs and circumstances of the learners. The key conditions necessary for authentic learning include the need for students to develop:

1. personal meaning through their learning (students must be able to connect their learning to the personal circumstances of their lives and give them hope for a better future);

2. greater awareness of relationships between the self and the subject/object of study (information and knowledge must be personalised to be useful and this process can generate greater self belief and confidence);

3. respect for the integrity of the subject/object of study (the subject matter is *sacred* in that it equips them with tools for living and for life);

4. more fully as human beings (be transformed into fully functioning human beings (Duignan, 2007b, p. 4).

In designing curriculum, pedagogical reform needs to ensure that learning is meaningful, significant and worthwhile where students, their needs and circumstances, are at the core of their efforts. Otherwise, according to Duignan (2007b), students will probably become disinterested and disengaged or, in Starratt's (2004) term, 'inauthentic' learning will continue to be presented to students. Newmann et al. (1996) would support Duignan's and Starratt's view on authentic learning stating that, authentic pedagogy must also have the three qualities of disciplined inquiry, the construction of knowledge and adding value to learning beyond schools; all three being linked to what is meaningful, significant and worthwhile learning.

2.1.2   Pedagogy

Pedagogy is often referred to as the art or science of being a teacher and is linked to the strategies or style of instruction used by the teacher. According to the Webster dictionary the term pedagogy refers to the science or theory of educating. Current research by Fullan, Hill and Crevola, 2006 illustrates that focussed teaching is one of three critical elements that improve learning and the fundamental principle is that "instruction is powerful only when it is sufficiently precise and focused to build on what students already know and to take them to the next level" in their learning (p. 33).

Additionally, the importance of pedagogy can be seen in the research of Hattie (2003), who for over thirty years has been researching what makes a difference to student achievement. Hattie states that the greater difference in learning in not seen across schools but across classrooms within schools and that what constitutes authentic learning is directly linked to the pedagogy of teachers. Teachers account for about thirty percent of the variance in students' outcomes and it is "what teachers know, do, and care about which is very powerful" in identifying what makes a difference in students' outcomes (p. 2). This supports the research of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2001) who state that: "students are at the centre of the educational process and need to be nurtured and encouraged" and that educators must "heavily focus on the knowledge of cultures and of diversity, with a special emphasis on learning how to listen, observe, and respond to others" (pp. 16-17). Hattie (2003) further suggests that this is where "excellent teachers come to the fore – as such excellence in teaching is the single most powerful influence on student achievement" (p. 4).

Discussions, small group work and hands on experiences are often assumed to provide more authentic experiences for students. However, Wehlage, Newmann and Secada (1996) found when examining standards for authentic achievement and pedagogy that these types of activities do not automatically maintain the construction of knowledge or disciplined inquiry,

nor do they have value to the students after completing school assignments (p. 32). Despite

Wehlage et al. documenting evidence about the effectiveness of authentic learning, there are

still some educators, parents and policy makers, who believe that this type of learning neglects

the teaching of basic skills and content that will disadvantage students when taking tests

required for further educational pursuits (Rowe, 2006). Finally, Wehlage et al. (1996) confirm

that some critics of authentic learning argue that it appears to involve a less prescribed

education, with "less emphasis on right answers, more tolerance of ambiguity, and the need for

students to take more independent responsibility for learning" (p. 44). In the context of this

research what we see as being authentic learning is described by Newmann, (1993); Newmann,

Marks and Gamoran, (1996); Newmann and Associates, (1996) as requiring authentic

pedagogy which constitutes the three features of disciplined inquiry, students' construction of

knowledge, and value beyond schools.

Authentic Pedagogy (Newmann et al., 1996) and Productive Pedagogies (Queensland School

Reform Longitudinal Study, 2001) as processes of understanding pedagogical practice in the

classroom provide educators with support material that identify dimensions of pedagogy that

have meaning in classrooms; have demonstrated positive effects on learning outcomes for all

students and can be sustained organisationally by schools. The research by Gore, Ladwig,

Lingard, Luke, Hayes, and Mills (1998-2000) on productive pedagogies is widely recognised

for its capacity to not only enhance levels of overall student achievement but also to reduce

equity gaps in learning outcomes. This research produced four key dimensions of "Productive

Pedagogy", namely Intellectual Quality, Relevance, Supportive Environment, and Recognition

of Difference.

Most schools aim to provide authentic learning experiences for their students. However, the

reality is that too frequently much of what students are presented with is generally superficial

and largely de-contextualised from their experiences, having limited links with the implications

of their learning outside the school. Hargreaves (1994) noted that "schools are still modelled on a curious mix of the factory, the asylum and the prison" and that "many of the hitherto taken for granted assumptions about schools must now be questioned" (p. 43). These questions are closely aligned to the moral purpose of schooling.

2.1.3   Teaching and Learning as Moral Activities

Teaching and learning are considered moral activities because "they engage both teachers and students in a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of their lives, and in determining how they can best contribute to the greater good of society" (Duignan, 2006, p. 129). Starratt (2007) asserts that the moral good of the learner is intrinsically tied to the moral good of learning. However, there is still very little research that explicitly investigates how this translates into practice. Fullan (2008), as a result of research with Hill and Crevola (2006), also argues that teachers need to be "diagnostic practitioners who have a solid core of beliefs and understandings and a deep moral purpose, and who can develop highly personalised classroom programs" (p. 81). This review investigates the essential moral nature of the core work of teaching: the explicit cultivation of learning.

The focus of Starratt's (2008) writing is that human beings have an intrinsic moral agenda that belongs solely to them as a learner. This agenda unfolds for the individual learner every day of their lives, as they learn to find their way in relationships, in neighbourhoods, in new challenges and in the unexpected. This is the moral agenda of their whole generation; the agenda of all the children in the classroom, the agenda not only of creating and fashioning 'me' but the agenda of creating 'us'. Starratt (2007) suggests that finding out how to belong creates its own specific moral challenges which help to define the 'me' as a member of a group, just as an individual is discovering how to be the person they can become. The school must "connect its learning agenda to the central moral agenda of the learners, if they want the moral character of the learning to be sustained" (p. 167).

The critical educational issues in Australia seem to relate to equity, social justice and what we think is meaningful learning (Burford, 2003). Authentic learning must make information meaningful to the students. For nearly thirty years there has been ongoing critique about the authenticity of our educational structures (Aitkin, 2003; deBono, 1999; Gardner, 1999) and what we should be responsible for as leaders. Burford (2004) expresses the current educational tensions when he asks: "How do we shift into a system that attempts to measure real learning from one that has taken a valid educational concept, such as outcomes, and turned it into an endless series of dubious assessment tasks and data gathering which tax the capacity of teachers to analyse, record and report on, and which students struggle to find time to complete and/or understand?" (p. 7). These frustrations are also seen in the writings of Beare (2002), Carneiro (2000), Ellyard (1998), Matheson & Matheson (2000) and Starratt (2004, 2008).

2.1.4 Transformation in Learning

Caldwell (2006) suggests the agenda for transformation in learning underpins much of the school reform effort around the world and that "transformation is change – especially under challenging circumstances –that is significant, systematic and sustained, resulting in high levels of achievement for all students in all settings" (p. 27). Caldwell believes that few schools are able to bring about this type of transformative change and that schools continue to remain as they have for decades. Fullan (2008) concurs, stating that, successful schools should be able to organise themselves to be "all over the practices that are known to make a difference" (p. 77).

Further, Caldwell (2006) suggests that transformation in learning cannot be achieved unless there is personalised learning and that "the student is the most important unit of organisation, not the classroom, not the school and not the system" (p. 16). He also posits that it is this intention more than any other that requires a shift from the old to the new enterprise logic. At the heart of the matter, according to Maxmin and Zuboff (2004) is the importance of personalising the learning experience, as "parents want their students to be recognised and

treated as individuals" (p. 152). Peters (2003) supports this, adding that "Teachers need enough time and flexibility to know kids as individuals. Teaching is about one and only one thing: Getting to know the child" (p. 284).

2.1.5   Personalised Learning

The teaching and learning practices that are known to make a difference referred to previously by Fullan (2008) must build continuous improvement into the culture of the organisation and be a priority for the development of the 'critical learning instructional path' for every learner (Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006). This includes monitoring where each learner is positioned at any point in time, so that teaching instruction can be adjusted and focussed on the learning needs of every child. The focus must be on improving classroom instruction "that will create more precise, validated, data driven, expert activity from the teacher that responds to the learning needs of individual students" (Fullan, 2008, p. 81).

Reinforcing the importance of contextualising the learning for learners, Starratt (2007) argues that teachers need to empower learners to use their knowledge to apply what they know to real people and real situations; to know how to honour the tools of generating knowledge and applying knowledge; how to report their findings with integrity; how to avoid going beyond the evidence and to announce speculation; how to apply their knowledge and imagination to explore ways to improve the situation under study. This kind of learning, according to Starratt (2007), appears to be basically absent from the current school reform agenda and because of this absence, it could be inferred that there is a corruption of the learning process; in fact, a shift to the acceptance of a form of learning that is, at least tacitly, immoral.

Research from Applebee (1996), Drummond (2001), Egan (1997), Reay and Williams (2001), Shultz and Cook-Sather (2001) corroborates the notion that it is the practice that learning look like the finished work of the academic scholar, that assures the learner that the school does not

take the work of authentic learning seriously. Starratt (2004) posits that the learner recognises that the school enforces inauthentic, make-believe learning. The school either endorses that authenticity or distorts and suppresses it through the routines of its curriculum and the hurried and oppressive assessment procedures in use. Rather than encouraging young people to be real, to own themselves, to make their way, to say their truth, to make a contribution, to be involved in matters of public importance, to be engaged in real work, they are expected to study for right answers in a curriculum that remains detached from their journey of self-definition and self-commitment. Starratt (2007) puts it this way, "This kind of learning is artificial, superficial, fake, phony, make believe, and therefore untruthful. In many, if not most schools, this form of fake learning is the unspoken norm that is both supported and rewarded" (p. 181). This is a real and urgent problem that the literature challenges researchers to investigate and leads to the first research question addressed in this research: **What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?**

The importance of this question is highlighted by Luke (1999) when discussing research on Productive Pedagogies highlighting the relationship between leadership and learning, stating that "the actual work on pedagogy ... has to occur at the grassroots level, in the classrooms and led by principals. All the school reform and improvement literature says that it's schools that change, move and shift – and it's in the schools, in staffrooms and classrooms that the results are made" (p. 9).

2.2   Leadership

With the complexities of defining what authentic learning looks like in the practice of classrooms, and for schools to expand and strengthen the way they promote learning as a moral endeavour, leaders are needed who themselves have the leadership mindset to understand the moral purpose of leading and learning.

2.2.1   Changing Conceptions of School Leadership

Finding a clear definition of educational leadership poses a significant challenge for organisations in both the general field of leadership and in particular the field of school leadership. According to Ingvarson, Anderson, Gronn and Jackson (2006) there are three main reasons for this challenge. In the first instance, leadership lacks a universally agreed upon and accepted definition, being a contested concept amongst scholars and practitioners. Secondly, leadership is connected to human behaviour and hence there is nothing natural about leaders' endeavours to complete organisational projects. Finally, the leadership knowledge base is diffuse and is open to a range of conflicting interpretations as to its meaning. In fact, as Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) claim, people have assumed for centuries that leadership is critical to the success of any institution or endeavour.

As an area of inquiry, leadership is diverse and multi-faceted. Theories of leadership abound, as evidenced in the general field of leadership where over 7000 studies were synthesised by Bass (1990). A component of this general field was *Educational Leadership*. At the same time as this general synthesis, there was a movement in the educational field for school re-structuring and reform and the notion of educational leadership was beginning to replace "educational administration" and "educational management" (Grace, 1995). The reason for this movement was the enhancement of student learning and the devising of effective school and classroom practices.

According to Heck and Hallinger (2005), the current dilemmas associated with leadership definition are a result of disputation over research priorities associated with theoretical and methodological differences. Despite the malaise in the tertiary sector, Ingvarson et al. (2006) claim that there are three main "vibrant foci" of interest in the school leadership literature: transformational leadership, distributed leadership and teacher leadership.

Despite the lack of succinct definition of school leadership and some scholars, such as Rost (1993), preferring not to define terms of leadership, there is agreement that leadership is associated with disproportionate patterns of influence in social interaction (Duignan & Marks, 2003; Ingvarson et al., 2005). Additionally, there is a movement from defining the static nature of leadership to understanding the processes, emergence and dynamics of relations, associated with leading (Ingvarson et al., 2005). The importance of process is reflected in the growing literature connected with distributed leadership.

2.2.2   Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) in distinguishing between two types of leaders: transactional and transforming, defined transformational leadership as being grounded in ethics and viewed leader-follower relations as akin to a morally elevating contract or covenant between both parties (p. 4). Bass (1985) added to Burns' thinking, shredding transforming leadership of its moral content and maintaining the transactional type to development leadership theory that was geared towards "the higher order of change" (cited in Ingvarson et al., 2005, p. 22). Initially, Bass (1985) determined that there were four characteristics to transformational leadership: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) describe these characteristics as "ideal practice". Leithwood (1992) determined that transformational leadership included the pursuit of common goals, empowerment, maintenance of collaborative culture, teacher development and problem solving, all of which led to increasing the organisation's capacity to improve and to respond to changes in its context.

In Leithwood and Jantzi's (2005) review of thirty-two empirical studies of transformational leadership in schools (1996-2005), and an earlier review (Leithwood, Tomlinson & Genge, 1996) of thirty-four studies, they added a series of organisational and management design dimensions. In a most recent review by Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), leadership was not only

confined to the role of the principal but included others engaged in leadership activities in the school community and they resist current overtones that transformational leadership implies only heroic and top-down leadership.

Ingvarson et al. (2005) claim that the dissatisfaction with the heroic overtones in transformational, visionary and charismatic approaches to leadership has resulted in a new search for "post-heroic" understandings of leadership. None the less, leadership is considered to be essential to the successful functioning of many aspects of a school. Although there is considerable research to suggest that school leadership has almost no direct relationship on student achievement (Witziers, Bosker, & Kruger, 2003), there is a growing body of research that provides strong guidance on specific leadership behaviours for school administrators that influence student achievement. Those behaviours have been well documented in reviews of over thirty-five years of research by Marzano, Waters & NcNulty (2005) and more recently by Robinson (2007).

Robinson's (2007) systematic search also produced 26 published studies that quantified the relationship between school leadership and a range of social and academic student outcomes. Robinson believes that whilst school leadership remains a largely indirect influence on student outcomes, there are clear implications for practice including the observation that, the closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning the more they are likely to make a difference to students. This research will explore this phenomenon.

Marzano et al. (2005) claim that there have been a number of calls for a new paradigm of research in educational leadership (Duignan, 2008, Heck & Hallinger, 1999; Hill & Guthrie, 1999), including the academic interest in, and research on, the likely impact of school leaders on "leadership effects" (Teddlie, 2005). Leadership that encourages a values-based leadership style is becoming important in generating a desire for teachers to be actively involved in school

reform. The research of Duignan and Bhindi (1997) would consider that authentic leadership is one form of leadership that fosters teamwork and cooperation and provides alternative patterns of leadership in the educational setting, a position at the core of this research exploration.

2.2.3   Leadership from the Organisational Management Perspective

Given the focus of this research on authenticity in leading and learning, the work of Luthans & Avolio (2003) is important as they define authentic leadership as a process "which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviours on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243). Recent research by Mazutis and Slawinski (2008) and supported by the research of Walumbwa et al. (2008), identified four authentic leadership capabilities that can be developed. These include self-awareness, balanced processing, self-regulation and relational transparency (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2005; Kernis, 2003).

2.2.1.1   Leadership capabilities

Mazutis and Slawinski (2008) describe the four authentic capabilities and also argue that these "authentic leadership capabilities translate into self-awareness, balanced, congruent and transparent dialogue" which assists learning throughout an organisation (p. 438). Self-awareness 'refers to one's awareness of, and trust in, one's own personal characteristics, values, motives, feelings, and cognitions' (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 377). Avolio and Gardner, (2005) describe self-awareness as an emerging process by which leaders come to understand their unique capabilities, knowledge and experience. Chan et al.(2005) and Gardner et al. (2005) believe that self-awareness is linked with self-reflection as a mechanism through which leaders achieve clarity of their core values and mental models.

Also related to the concept of self-awareness is balanced, or unbiased, processing. Kernis (2003) believes that, when engaging in the self-reflective process of gaining self-awareness,

either through internal introspection or external evaluations, authentic leaders do not distort, exaggerate or ignore information that has been collected but rather pay equal attention to both positive and negative interpretations about themselves and their leadership style (Gardner et al., 2005).

Ilies et al. (2005) describe balanced processing as central to one's personal integrity and character, which significantly influences a leader's decision-making and strategic actions. On the other hand, "self-regulation is the process through which authentic leaders align their values with their intentions and actions" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 325). They believe that this process includes making one's motives, goals and values completely transparent to followers. Novicevic et al. (2006) would expand on this process, explaining that authentic leaders, who are able to manage tensions and confronting conflicts between their personal values and organisational responsibilities, possess self-regulatory capabilities and will say what they mean and mean what they say. This compares with the research of Duignan (2006) who describes capabilities as more than possessing particular knowledge and skills or having the potential to do something. "It means demonstrating that one can actually do it".

According to Mazutis and Slawinski (2008), authentic leaders "act according to their own true selves and model norms of authenticity by remaining consistent in their actions" (p. 444). Finally, all of the earlier capabilities are included in open and truthful self-disclosure, known as relational transparency (Ilies et al., 2005). Hughes (2005) contends that as well as being self-aware, balanced and congruent in one's goals, motives, values, identities and emotions, authentic leaders are also transparent in revealing these expressions to their followers. Gardner et al. (2005) believe that disclosing one's true self to one's followers builds trust and intimacy, fostering teamwork and cooperation. Robinson (2007), from the educational field would agree, stating that "with increased trust comes more and better quality cooperation, more social

support and a stronger sense of mutual obligation, binding together the efforts of teachers, principals and parents" (p. 21).

2.2.4 Leadership from the Educational Perspective

Duignan (2008) argues that "authentic leadership is centrally concerned with ethics and morality and with deciding what is significant, what is right and what is worthwhile" (p. 2). Supporting the work of Robinson (2007), he also believes that authentic "educational leaders are educative and engage with key educational stakeholders in ways that infuse educational practice with higher purpose and meaning" (p. 2). In previous studies with McPherson, Duignan stated that authentic leaders are primarily educative in their intentions and outcomes, attending closely to the quality of teaching and students' learning and generating the conditions where teachers and students take responsibility for the quality of their own teaching and learning (1992).

In addition, authentic leadership, according to Begley (2003) implies a genuine kind of leadership: hopeful, open-ended, visionary and creatively responsive to social circumstances, as opposed to more short-sighted, precedent-focused and context-constrained practices, typical of management. Authentic leadership is a form of leadership which is shared and distributed and democratic whenever possible (Begley, 2003; Starratt, 2004). It is leadership that energizes and empowers all members of the school community to collaborate on whole school approaches to planning and implementing curriculum initiatives, thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and improving learning outcomes (ACU Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership, 2004). The research of Starratt (2004) and Stoll and Fink (1996) support the notion that the authentic educational leader cultivates and sustains an environment that promotes the work of authentic teaching and learning.

Begley (2003) argues further that authentic leaders strive to develop sensitivity to the values orientation of others, and that they give meaning to the actions of students, teachers, parents and community members with whom they interact. The "advantage of this authentic manner of leadership presents leaders with information regarding how they might best influence the practices of others toward the achievement of broadly justifiable social objectives" (p. 104).

Despite the generally accepted need for school leaders to demonstrate 'educational leadership', Marks (2002) contends that what many younger teachers are observing is the principal acting as the 'site manager' (2002). Like leaders before them, aspiring principals are not able to focus on the development of personal and professional leadership capabilities, as these have not been modelled to them by incumbent principals and they often lack the necessary skills to interpret a moral and ethical response to a given situation. This is particularly relevant for this research, as the purpose is to explore how inferential discussions and critical reflection lead leaders to extrapolate and question the embedded values that underscore decisions and actions in their leadership practices in the context of their school.

Beare's (2006) comments on schooling in the 21st century suggests that Australia requires educational leaders "of vision, who command public respect, who can articulate what education is becoming, and who can express national and international views in ways which transcend politics" (p. 4). Beare connects the moral dimensions of leadership and contends that leadership should be a moral endeavour that enhances the lives of those it touches. He is supported by Reeves (2008) who says Australia needs educational leaders "of vision" because leadership does matter with regard to absolute measurements of student achievement and for gains in student achievement. Avolio and Gardner (2005) contend that authentic leadership, as a construct, is multidimensional and multileveled. Current educational researchers (Beare 2006; Duignan, 2005; Fullan, 2003; Starratt, 2004) abdicate that leadership and moral purpose cannot be separated.

2.2.5   Leadership and Moral Purpose

Beare (2006a) suggests that the field of educational leadership requires "leaders of substance, leaders with a touch of nobility, vision, and transcendence about them, leaders with soul" (p. 5) to go beyond the technical skills required to manage and that leadership should be a moral endeavour that enhances the lives of those it touches. Duignan (2005) and Fullan (2003) also argue that vital components of leadership are moral purpose and social responsibility. Such purpose lies at the heart of "social cohesion and trust" (Hopkins & Jackson, 2002, p. 95). However, these relationships are often difficult to build between teachers and the principal in the current political climate, where the principalship as a position of power over people is being advocated by such groups as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA] (Odhiambo, 2007).

Recent research by Odhiambo (2007) explored school leadership and the concepts of influence and power, and considers that school leaders act as 'interactional principals' in decision-making, school reforms, and in shaping the school culture. The development of trust through moral professional purpose is seen as central to supporting the role of the principal in maintaining healthy relationships with the teachers, parents and pupils. The key issue for future school leaders is not about positional power and its use (abuse), but about capacity and healthy relationship building (Odhiambo, 2007). Robinson's (2007) research also suggests that relational trust develops from the "perception of consistency between what a leader says and does, and between the values that are inherent in the leaders' actions" (p. 19). She believes that this is also evidenced when leaders participate with teachers as learners, because they are then able to provide real support to teachers in making changes required to embed their learning in their daily practice. School leaders need to be actively involved with their teachers as the "leading learners" of their school (Robinson, 2007, p. 16). This is significant to this research, as a component of the LTLL project was leaders' participative practice in student learning.

2.2.6 Leaders as Learners

Duignan (2005) and Fullan (2003) remind us that leaders must balance accountability against responsibility (concern for people). This clearly supports the work of Odhiambo (2007) who strongly asserts that moral purpose can develop and harness the relationship between school leaders and teacher work-teams. Pertinent to the concept of moral leadership is Greenleaf's (1977) notion of "servant leadership", which encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment. Collaboration among teachers can be found in strong professional communities, where teachers use constructive dialogue, commit to, and take responsibility for, shared vision and rely on shared commitment to student learning (Hart & Smylie, 2000). This suggests that the more leadership is focussed on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater the impact. Robinson's research supports the work from Andrews and Soder (1987) who found that in higher-achieving schools, teachers reported their school leaders to be more active participants in the learning and development of teachers than in lower-achieving schools. Fullan (2008) agrees that principals have a difficult time focussing on instructional leadership practices, and that systems need to enhance the role of the principal as instructional leader in order to improve student outcomes.

In contrast, Sergiovanni (1992) is sceptical of the emphasis on the notion of instructional leadership, as this approach can create dependent relationships where the focus is on how things look, rather than on the behaviours of those in the organisation. Further, he believes that leadership requires expanding the value structure underlying the way in which leadership is understood and practiced, and advocates for moral authority in which leadership raises the consciousness for others to lead.

Caldwell (2006) also concurs with Robinson (2007) that educational leaders need to be concerned with pedagogy and curriculum, and be capable of nurturing a learning community.

With the wide range of learning needs in schools, this kind of leadership calls for helping teachers and those who support them gain state-of-the-art knowledge about what works for each and every student. He contends that at the heart of leadership, must remain the concept of personalised learning and the vision of transformation of the learning, which gives its explicit attention to high levels of learning for all students in all settings.

This literature review indicates that effective school leaders of the present and future will be those who can foster a professional and moral purpose of leadership within their school, and develop schools as professional learning communities. Most recent research reflects the premise that many of the challenges facing leaders present themselves as complex tensions involving values and /or ethical dilemmas (Duignan & Marks, 2003; Starratt, 2004). There appears to be a tension between the expectations of principals to reach benchmarks and deliver results and the belief that they need to participate in shared collaborative decision-making.

Literature supports the notion that moral leadership can reinvent the principalship. The LTLL project, outlined in chapter one, captures this notion and is targeted to support leaders in understanding and experiencing leadership that cultivates the ethical virtues that generate authentic approaches to leadership and learning. However, many aspiring leaders have not actually seen this type of leadership in action. This will be addressed by the second research question: **How do participants understand the concept of leadership?**

In addition, an authentic educative approach to leadership in schools requires the energy, commitment and contributions of all who work there. It is Duignan's (2007) perspective, which is also supported in the literature (Begley, 2003; Fullan, 2006; 2008; Starratt, 2004, 2008; Timperley, 2005), that "no single person should, or is capable of, providing the breadth and depth of leadership required to lead complex organisations, such as contemporary educational systems and schools" (p. 7). He would contend that it is sensible and practical to actively

engage with key stakeholders so as to "generate in them an increased sense of commitment, responsibility and ownership for the success of their organisations" (p. 3).

It is important to note that authentic leadership, the leadership promoted through the LTLL project, is also a form of leadership that is shared and distributed, and democratic wherever possible (Begley, 2003; Starratt, 2004). Additionally, Duignan (2007a) was a member of the Australian Catholic University *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* when the LTLL project was designed and, as such, it promotes an understanding of shared and distributed leadership from a Catholic perspective. All schools in this research are Catholic schools. At the same time, it is important to note that there is an inherent lack of consensus about what authentic leadership actually is because of its numerous dimensions of ethics, morals, shared decision making and democratic nature.

2.2.7   Shared and Distributed Leadership

According to Harris (2004) school wide capacity building requires a collective and co-ordinated effort and subsequently requires leadership of many, rather than the heroic nature evident in leadership of the principal only. Ingvarson et al. (2005) claim that the concept of distributed leadership originated in the 1950's and that, at the heart of distributed leadership, is the "interdependence of organisational colleagues", where the billions of acts that comprise the leadership process, as Burns (1978) states, require the "co-ordination of the efforts of numerous individuals in concert" (cited in Ingvarson et al., March 2005, p. 24).

Distributed leadership acknowledges that different individuals will emerge as sources of influence on different occasions in accordance with the types of tasks to be performed. It appears that research into distributed leadership has moved to "what school personnel do, more than who is doing it, and challenges the conventional belief that leadership is associated with particular positions" (Scribner, Sawyer, Watson & Myers, 2004, p. 4). Furthermore,

Leithwood, et al. (2004) believe that further conceptual work on the nature of distributed leadership needs to occur to clarify its practical application in schools. Duignan and Fraser (2005) agree with Leithwood, et al. (2005), stating that the term 'distributed leadership,' or 'shared leadership,' can mean different things to different people within a system or organisation. The dispersal or distribution of leadership represents what Day and Harris' (2002) claim is "a recognition by principals that they cannot do it all themselves" and this leads to the further conceptualisation of teachers as leaders. Woods (2004) also adds to the debate, saying that distributed leadership "decentres the leader, viewing social life as a continuous flow of mediated activity; a process of ever-moving relationships between technologies, nature, ideas, persons, and communities, in which the focus of action circulates to one person, then another according to the social and environmental context and the flow of action within this" (pp. 5-6).

Duignan (2007a) presents another perspective to the conceptualisation of distributed leadership and believes that, as leadership is an influencing process, it "does not lend itself to distribution, especially if this term is interpreted within a hierarchical and/or control paradigm" (p. 15). Further, he believes that if systems or schools are intending to increase leadership capacity and density, they need to develop, grow, and nurture leadership from the ground up where an 'allowed-to-be-a-leader culture' is promoted, especially with new and younger staff. Duignan advocates leaders who are able to "seek out and nurture *aptissimi* (the very best) and generate a 'dare to lead' ethos" (p.15) and who have the vision, courage and commitment to develop the gifts of those in the community through love-driven leadership. Duignan challenges the meaning of the word distribution, when it is used in relation to distributed leadership, stating that it is not really a matter of "distributing or distributed leadership, it is more a matter of developing capabilities in self and others and building capacities within groups, and organisations" (p. 15).

As recent research has exposed the limitations of individual leadership, the idea of shared leadership, the phenomenon of those "teachers who lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, p. 17), has become increasingly well established. As Duignan and Marks (2003) contend, sharing leadership with others requires rethinking leadership in a school and exploration is needed of how best to enable all school personnel, especially teachers, to feel a deep sense of commitment and belonging. Lambert (1998) emphasises that "a school must build its own teacher leaders if it is to stay afloat, assume internal responsibility for reform, and maintain a momentum for self-renewal" (p. 3). The responsibility of the principal is paramount in creating the infrastructure to support teacher leadership. This is pertinent to this research as it explores the collaborating practices of leaders transforming learning and learners in their schools.

2.2.8   Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership was placed within the framework of current theories of leadership by Crowther (1997). He described teacher-leaders as "individuals acclaimed not only for their pedagogical excellence, but also for their influence in stimulating change and creating improvement in the schools" (p. 6). Crowther's research on socio-economically disadvantaged communities' highlighted characteristics of leadership that were broadly transformational in nature (Bass, 1985).

Teacher leadership is also strongly linked to Day and Harris' (2002) notion of school improvement and, according to Mulford (2003), the sustainability of school improvement. School improvement literature consistently highlights that effective leaders indirectly exercise influence on the capacity of schools to improve upon the achievement of students, though this influence does not necessarily derive from senior managers, but can be attributed partly to the strengths of middle level leaders and teachers (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). While

the quality of teaching most strongly influences levels of pupil motivation and achievement, it has been demonstrated that the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom (Sergiovanni, 1999; Reeves, 2008). Data from Reeves' (2008) recent studies suggest that, where there is a high degree of teacher and leadership efficacy, the gains in student achievement are more than three times greater.

Recent research from a number of scholars (Day & Harris, 2002; Frost & Durrant, 2002, 2003; Muijs & Harris, 2003; Mulford, 2003) indicates that teacher leadership is leadership where teachers participate in leadership activities and decision making; have a shared sense of purpose; engage in collaborative work and accept joint responsibility for the outcomes of their work. There is an acknowledgement also that teachers need to experience deep engagement with the intrinsic satisfaction of their work, not only with the students, but with each other and colleagues in designated leadership positions. This focus on the learning relationship between colleagues and leaders is one of the most crucial concerns for educational leaders in schools (Beatty, 2007).

Classroom teaching has the greatest influence on pupil learning, and there is an identified relationship between leadership practices and classroom learning through the development of the school culture (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins 2007; Reeves, 2008). It is the manner in which leaders demonstrate responsiveness to the contexts in which they work that influence teacher motivation, commitment and working conditions. Fullan, Hill and Crevola (2006) state that leadership does not involve dividing up or delegating responsibilities but that it must connect individuals and groups to moral purpose, continuous best practice and education for all, and that, what they term distributed leadership, is what will make this type of instructional leadership work.

Youngs (2007) argues that distributed perspectives of school leadership have the potential to broaden and inform our understanding of day-to-day leadership practice. He concurs with Duignan (2006) that we continually need to have the presence and courage to view distributed school leadership beyond the simplistic and familiar, if the rhetoric surrounding it is going to be fully realised in our practice. Youngs contends that our ability to view school leadership beyond the norm is dependent on our willingness and ability to critically question the assumptions we have in relation to school leadership.

This is important to this research, as the LTLL project was designed on the premise of shared and distributed leadership, aiming to engage a team of school leaders in the responsibilities associated with nurturing an authentic leading and learning community. Duignan (2006) believes that it is "arguably an ethical responsibility of formal educational leaders to enable key stakeholders to share in the leadership responsibilities of their school community" (p. 4). Teachers also need to genuinely accept responsibility for the teaching and learning process, and be prepared to accept the requisite level of accountability that follows as part of the professionalism of teachers (Schwarzer, 1999) and that with this accountability, the ethic of professionalism needs to be an integral component of the leadership (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001).

Additionally, the literature strongly suggests that this can be achieved by teachers accepting that they work as part of a learning team, in collaboration with their colleagues. Teacher leadership is for all teachers (Wagner, 1999) but will require a strong level of support in terms of practical strategies implemented at the local level for teachers to develop the skills to work as part of a team. Other impulses that have driven the call for shared and distributed leadership have come from research, the constructivism movement, and calls for greater teacher accountability. The implementation of true, shared and distributed leadership will shift the role of the principal from the apex of a hierarchical model to that of a co-learner in a learning

community (Duignan, 2007). Lambert et al. (1996) describe the role shift as being a "redefinition of the role of the principal to one that is collaborative and inclusive" (p.29). Ackerman et al. (1995) define this role as one that, for the teachers, will "skilfully support them and encourage a culture that allows teacher leadership to exist" (p.12). Duignan et al. (2003) advocate the need for a shift in the meaning, perspective and scope (depth and breadth) of leadership in contemporary schools, in order to build an organizational culture that promotes, nurtures and supports leadership and leaders throughout the organisation. They refer to this change as "building a culture of leadership" in an organisation. Teacher leadership can only flourish where school culture supports teacher leadership, collaboration and partnership, and associated structures allow it to develop (Duignan, 2007a; Muijs & Harris, 2007). While much is written and spoken about the need for shared leadership in schools, the characteristics of, and the context for, the obstacles to its more complex implementation need to be explored and understood. Consequently, an important exploration within this research is: **How are leaders responding to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?**

The LTLL project engages processes of reflective practice to assist leaders understand the practices of leadership in their schools that support authentic leading and learning. A brief overview of reflective practice is therefore needed and is provided below.

2.3   Reflective Practice

Sergiovanni (1989) believes that reflective practice is the intellectual exercise through which managers and leaders focus upon events in order to ascertain how their beliefs and assumptions, background and experiences impact organizational functioning. Reflective practice inculcates the intellectual discipline needed to discern "what is" in practice as well as to engage in the self-growth necessary if one is to manage and lead others. This is what Argyris and Schön (1974) term the development of professional knowledge, and what Bolman and Deal (2003) believe enables leaders to best learn about their theories of practice.

Supporting the complexities of defining educational leadership, Sparks-Langer and Colton (1991) identified that experts in supervision, staff development and teacher education have recognised that teaching is a "complex, situation-specific and dilemma-ridden endeavour" (p. 37). This infers that professional knowledge must come from sources outside the education setting, as well as from leaders' and teachers' own interpretation of everyday experiences. In fact recent research supports the notion that the best type of professional learning in education comes from within the school context for leaders (Fullan, 2008; Reeves, 2009), teachers (Hattie, 2005; Timperley, 2005) and teachers as leaders (Durant, 2004, Frost & Durrant, 2002). However, it is important to note that much of this reflection could be aligned with only technical knowledge rather than including the critical theory of the ethical and moral purposes of education (Vann Manen, 1977).

2.3.1 Critical Theory

When teacher educators help teachers examine the issues of ethics, morals, and justice in education, they are opening up discourse about the role of schools in a democratic society. According to Smyth, (1989) and McLaren (1989) this is known as critical theory where teachers begin to clarify their own beliefs about the purpose of education and to crucially examine their teaching methods. Critical theorists see knowledge as socially constructed and that this knowledge is determined by the surrounding culture, context, customs and historical era (McLaren, 1989). This approach places emphasis on life values and justice, ideas about the purpose of the individual in a democracy, and the ethics related to the treatment of students.

According to Barnett, O'Mahony & Matthews (2004), reflective practice is "the ability to examine current or past practices, behaviours or thoughts, and to make conscious choices about our future choices" (p. 6). However, Duignan (2005) believes that many of the structures and processes in schools today often "preclude open inquiry, critique and the making of personal meaning so necessary for the challenging of traditionally accepted assumptions and taken-for-

granted attitudes, behaviours and practices" (p. 7). Further, Begley (2003) reinforces the notion that educational leaders in schools must be reflective practitioners, who engage in reflective practice from a values perspective and are then more likely to understand and achieve adjectives of authentic leadership.

2.3.2 Self-awareness

Reflection can assist leaders in developing the capability of self-awareness, which was named in the authentic leadership literature review as a leadership capability that could be developed. Avolio and Gardner, (2005) describe self-awareness as an emerging process by which leaders come to understand their unique capabilities, knowledge and experience through processes of self-awareness. It is linked with self-reflection as a means through which leaders attain lucidity about their core values and mental models (Chan et al., 2005; Gardner et al., 2005). Gardner et al. believe that authentic leaders who engage in the self-reflective process of gaining self-awareness, pay attention to both positive and negative interpretations about themselves and their leadership style. Additionally, Branson (2005) believes that values-led leadership requires additional reflection upon the "inner antecedents of personal values" rather than just self-knowledge of personal values and that, if the leader has "self-knowledge of his or her self concept, self-esteem, and motives, they would be in a better position to critique their Self, including personal values in order to bring about behavioural change" (p. 28).

This extends the research of Schön (1983) of reflection-in-action which involves looking to our experiences, connecting with our feelings, and attending to our theories-in-use. Schön believes this involves creating new understandings to inform our actions in the situation that is developing. The "practitioner allows himself [sic] to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He

carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation" (p. 68).

In contrast, reflection-on-action is when we re-examine previous events or situations in order to make sense of them. Begley (2001) would propose that authentic leadership is a metaphor for the professionally effective, ethically sound and consciously reflective practices required of school leaders committed to developing community in their schools. In describing leadership as an outcome of consciously motivated reflection, Begley (2003) states that authentic leadership is the function of three leadership qualities: the active pursuit of administrative sophistication by an individual as a life-long learner, the development of sensitivity to the value orientations and needs of oneself and others, and the synergy which results when the first two qualities are consciously cultivated and blended (p. 100). Duignan (2002) also argues that leaders must influence 'self' through the habit of reflective practice and the desire for self-improvement. A fundamental point here is that, for leaders to influence others, they have to be capable and credible as individuals and as professionals.

2.3.3 Reflective Processes

Webb (2003) concluded from her research that pedagogical leadership, as espoused by Sergiovanni (1998), was the most effective form of leadership for both ownership and improvement, and that this type of leadership "develops human capital as members of a community of practice" (p. 39). It gives emphasis to "social covenants maintained by loyalty, fidelity, kinship, sense of identity, obligation, duty, responsibility and reciprocity" (p. 44). Burford (2004) contends that, to create such communities, we need reflective practices that give meaning to what we do as educators to ensure that the learning we have children engage with has meaning.

Fullan (2001), when reporting on the Early Years Literacy Project (EYLP) in the Toronto District, noted that participants wanted to know about "reflective processes where teachers would reflect on their own personal practices and then relate to the broader picture of what others in the district were doing" (p. 103). Bolman and Deal (1994) support the idea of reflective practice, saying that "leadership is cultivated or nurtured primarily through experience" (p. 87) and that "reflection and dialogue with others help people to learn to lead" (p. 88). Bolman and Deal argue that "leadership can be taught - but not the way we currently do it" (p. 92). They argue that human and spiritual dimensions must play a greater part, and they stress the role of values, symbols, and symbolic exercises and how these can be shaped and encouraged to give meaning and purpose to collective endeavors" (p. 93).

This research explores the practices of reflection throughout the schools' participation in the LTLL project and, as such, leads to the fourth specific research question: **How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?**

2.4   Summary

This chapter has reviewed the current state of the literature on authentic leading, authentic learning, an approach for shared and distributive leadership and reflective practice. It has focussed on the authenticity of leadership and capabilities to assist leaders reflect on their own practice. The literature review gives insight into the challenges facing contemporary leaders in primary schools and into the research problem underlying this research.

Consequently, insights from the literature indicate the need to explore features of teacher leadership, shared and distributed practice, reflections and dialogue about leadership and learning in the school. Insights gained from the decision-making process of the leaders and

teachers in this research will add to the literature on understanding how beliefs, assumptions, principles and values influence leadership in schools.

Bezzina and Burford's (2007) conclusions from the LTLL plenary program support the stance that leaders need to reflect accurately their unique values. Their research suggests that leaders value opportunities to engage in explicit, collaborative conversations about the moral purpose of their schools and how the nature and importance of relationships impact on authentic leading and authentic learning is evidenced in all aspects of the review. Relationships in the school culture are reliant on the respect, dignity and humanness of all in the community, and foundational to this are the ethics of presence and authenticity.

Relationships are woven throughout authentic learning, where the intellectual activity and the knowledge need to be relational to the content of the curriculum and to the lives of the students. This process needs to be a moral activity shaped by the ethics of authenticity, presence and responsibility. Bateson, Dewey, Polanyi, Whitehead and many others (cited in Fullan, 2007) suggest that the individual human being is not isolated from nature or society, but is in a dynamic relationship of mutuality with all of nature, as well as with the social and cultural worlds. This research will provide insights into the social worlds of the participants as they work together in their schools and with the practice of reflection and dialogue across other schools from New South Wales.

The final feature influencing the transformation of leading and learning in schools is the capacity of the leader. The leader must be able to cultivate an environment that is conducive to both leading and learning. Beare (2006b), Duignan, (2007) Fullan (2006) and Starratt, (2008) all agree that there are dimensions of leadership that go well beyond the technical skills needed in order to manage, and that leadership should be a moral endeavour that enhances the lives of those it touches. Despite the importance of being able to articulate the assumptions,

principles, beliefs and values that underpin the values in a primary school, and the equally important notion that relationships built on trust, respect and dignity must drive the learning environment, many school leaders are still unable to create an environment where this is evident. Whilst they have a notion of what authentic leading and learning might look like, they are challenged in bringing it to fruition. This research will explore how leaders extrapolate and question the embedded values that underscore decisions and actions in their leadership practices through their involvement in the LTLL project and will provide valuable insights into the practices of authentic leadership and learning.

Leaders need both personal and professional support to meet the challenge of leadership in the 21st Century. The LTLL program was designed to provide such support and to act as a catalyst for the conversation required to understand moral purpose. School leadership is a collective, relational activity, enacted in a united and harmonious environment where groups are united in a common trusting culture to ensure that the leadership is not reduced to control and management, power politics and compromise (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000; Fullan, 2003). A conceptual framework was developed from the concepts discussed above to explain the dynamics involved in sustaining authentic leadership and authentic learning in a primary school, as a learning community underpinned by moral purpose.

2.5   The Conceptual Framework

This research project was primarily concerned with trying to ascertain the participants' understanding, knowledge and skills of authentic leading and learning through their lived experiences and engagement in a project to transform learning. A conceptual framework, that derived from the literature reviewed in this chapter, was developed to assist in answering the research questions. Additionally it includes elements of the values and ethics that underpin the *Leaders transforming learners and learning (*LTLL) conceptual framework as described in

chapter one and illustrated in Figure 1.1 (p. 13), as these will inform the analysis of data in chapter eight.

The conceptual framework is visually represented in the mind map in Figure 2.1 (p. 64). It is multi-dimensional in nature, and no one theme stands alone but is intertwined in the others. At the centre of the mind map is authenticity, as leaders, teachers and other members being true to themselves and to others is important to the concepts of leadership and learning and was continuously referred to in the literature. The domains of learning and leading both indicate the necessity of developing a culture of leading and learning in the educational setting through the processes of shared leadership and authentic pedagogies. Authenticity in reflective practice is linked to people's self-awareness and their ability to be honest and true to their values and to understand the mental models that guide their decision-making in both leading and learning. Self-awareness is a key capability that contributes to a leader's ability to process those events or situations that impact on whom they are as a person and leader. The capabilities of the authentic leader are linked to reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, as these capabilities provide the processes by which the leader can understand their authentic self. The domains all include the moral purpose of leading and learning and are linked through the values of common good and expressed in relationships. Reflection in various formats is discussed in each section of the literature review and underpins the decision-making processes throughout the LTLL conceptual framework on which this research is based and leads to the central research question.
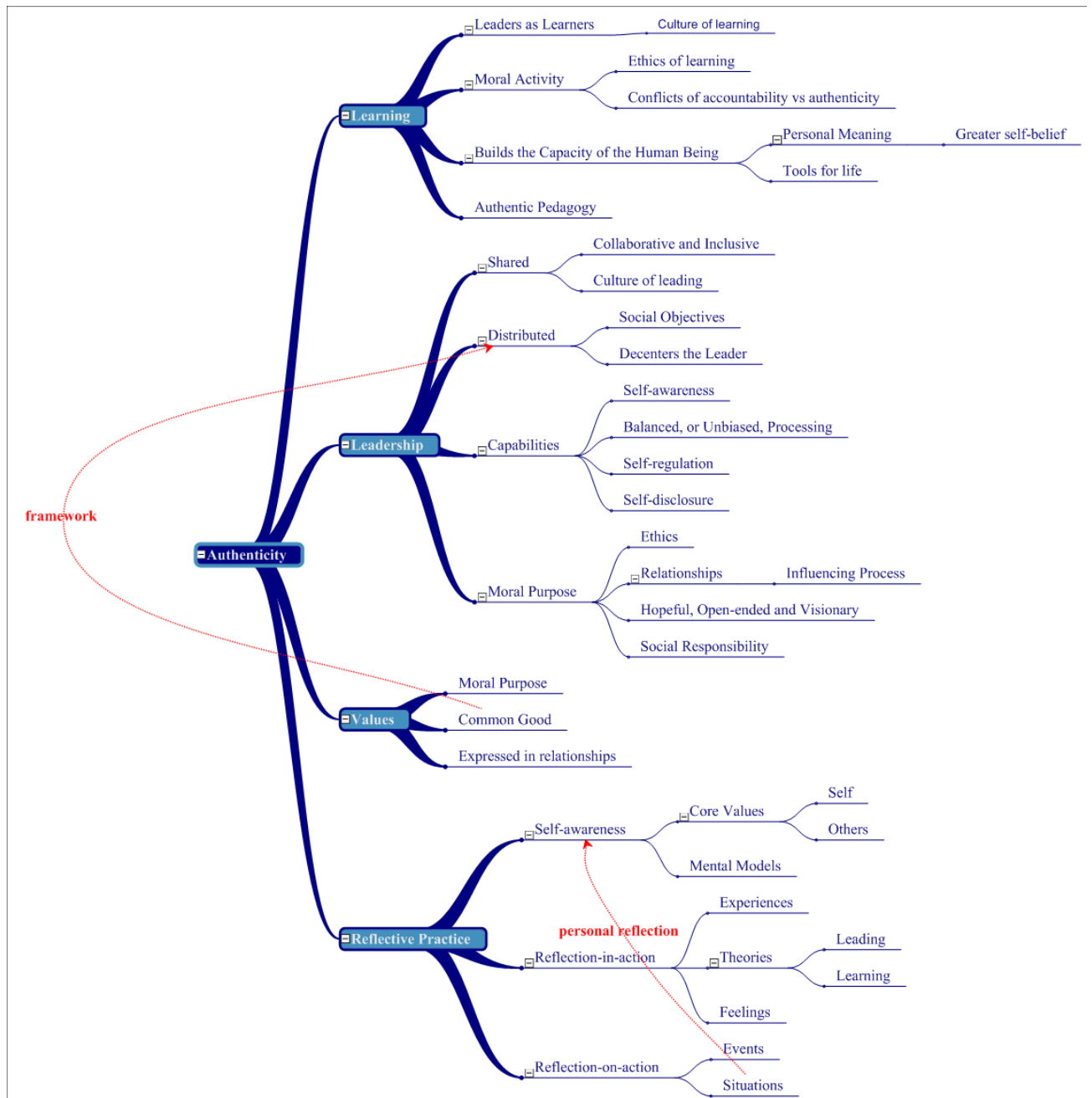
Figure 2.1   Conceptual Framework

All dimensions of the conceptual framework have been utilized to answer the central research question: **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

The research highlights the complexities of leadership and the difficulties in maintaining authentic learning. Furthermore, it suggests an alternative view is required on the nature of

distributive leadership in schools. Whilst various strategies are implemented at school and system level to develop practices of leadership and authentic learning, they are often misunderstood or implemented with mixed results. The problem is that leaders are often challenged to define the ethical framework they use to make crucial decisions; they often have a limited frame of reference to interpret a moral and ethical response to these challenges.

The following chapter outlines the research methodology and methods. It provides an explanation and justification for the research design adopted in the conduct of this research.

CHAPTER THREE - RESEARCH DESIGN

EPISTEMOLOGY METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.0   Introduction

Chapter one identified and described the research problem and purpose of the research. The research context was also identified and described in some detail. Chapter two presented the search of the literature relating to the four key themes of authentic leading, authentic learning, distributed leadership, and reflective practice, as currently understood in leading and learning in the context of education.

The research questions evolved from the exploration of the literature. The central research question was:

> **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement**
>
> **project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

The central research question was grounded in aspects that contribute to authentic leadership: ethical leadership, shared leadership, professional learning, partnership, evidenced-based practice, collaboration and community, all of which contribute to shared responsibility for student learning within this conceptual framework. The central question was used to generate the following questions:

1. How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

2. What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?

3. How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

4. How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

A qualitative data analysis approach was chosen as the most appropriate method, given that the focus of the research was on the meaning the participants gave to their experiences of leading and learning. The first step of this qualitative analysis was to develop thorough and

comprehensive descriptions of the four LTLL project teams, described in chapters four to seven, in the context of their schools. This is known as "thick" description (Denzin, 1978; Geerz, 1973). This research method has been used successfully in previous studies and appears to be the most appropriate, given the resources available and the scope of the research (Branson, 2007; Leithwood, 2005; Mangin 2007). This chapter also discusses the epistemology, theoretical perspectives, methodology and methods used in the research.

3.1 Research Design

A theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, which guides research and determines what things will be measured, and what relationships will be explored. The overall purpose of this research was to capture the conversations, procedures and practices in primary schools, where the leaders had accepted the challenge to participate in a project to transform leading and learning within their schools. To capture these conversations, procedures and practices, information was gathered from four primary schools across three Catholic Education Offices within New South Wales (NSW). This chapter outlines how the research was designed and carried out, and the techniques employed in collecting the relevant data.

3.1.1 Theoretical Framework

After careful consideration of the purpose, the researcher positioned the project within the theoretical perspective of Symbolic Interactionism and recognised the epistemology of Constructivism embedded in this theoretical perspective. Consistent with this philosophical stance, the project adopted a Case Study methodology and employed focus groups, observation, semi-structured interviews and personal documents as methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

By connecting the learners' search for meaning and purpose in their lives to a variety of personal experiences in the academic curriculum, educators enable learners to continuously

transform their understanding of themselves, and to place themselves within the challenges and possibilities of their lives and their future. In this research, in order to understand the nature of leading and learning and how educational leaders cultivate an environment of authentic learning that is humanly fulfilling and socially responsible, the epistemological framework of constructivism was adopted as the most appropriate. From this viewpoint, leaders help others create meaning and make sense of what they do (Lum, 1997). Located within an educational setting, this educational research "is critical enquiry aimed at informing educational judgments and decisions in order to improve educational outcomes" (Bassey, 1999, p. 39). Starratt (2004) points out that many principals want to do the right thing in their leadership endeavours, but many of them have not had the opportunity to learn the analytical perspectives, that is the ethics of moral leadership that would enable them to embrace the authentic dimension of leadership for which they are searching (p. 134).

Therefore, in this case study, the interpretive researcher's purpose was to advance the knowledge of leadership by describing and interpreting the occurrence of the moral responsibilities of leaders, and to explore the insights gained by the processes and practices in schools that support and sustain authentic learning. Table 3.1 (p. 69) illustrates the research framework of the theoretical underpinnings of the research and the choice of methodology and data gathering methods.

EPISTEMOLOGY	Constructivism
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE	Interpretive Symbolic interaction
METHODOLOGY	Case study
METHODS	Focus groups Semi-structured interviews Observation Personal Documents, including project notes, personal journal of LTLL participants and the school self-portrait.

Table 3.1   Research Framework

3.2   Epistemology

3.2.1   A Qualitative Approach

Dictionaries define research as a careful and diligent search. In describing the nature of

qualitative research, Merrian (1998) believes that "research focussed on discovery, insight, and

understanding offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge

base and practice of education" (p. 1). This is the approach that the researcher has chosen in an

attempt to understand how the participants in the research, working in a project with other

principals and teachers, discover and gain insights into understanding authentic leading and

learning in the context of their schools. Insights gained from the participants in this research

will contribute to the body of knowledge on distributed leadership, teachers and leaders and the

nature of authentic learning.

Qualitative inquiry requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to the perspectives of

those involved in the research as it inquires into meaning in context. Through this approach,

data are gathered and interpreted rather than collected and analysed. The researcher aims to

carefully consider the reality as constructed by the participants as they develop shared

understandings about their role in leading and learning in the context of the school. Careful

selection of the appropriate epistemology is essential. The constructivist approach has been considered the most appropriate by the researcher, and aligns with Wolcott's (1973) constructivist application to school leadership, where a rich description of the context in which the principal worked was gained.

3.2.2 Constructivism

Epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge and presents the philosophical basis for how knowledge is applied. As the researcher is interested in how leaders and teachers find meaning in their daily lives, constructivism is an appropriate epistemology. According to Crotty (1998) the basis of constructivism is that "all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (p. 42). The participants in this case study relied on the interactions of their conversations and the practices explored through their involvement in the LTLL project to help recreate meaning for themselves about transforming learners and learning within the context of their schools and during each of the plenary sessions. Hallinger & Heck (1999) claim the strength of a constructivist orientation "is in illuminating that which is little known or hidden from view" (p. 147). It was the aim of the researcher, through questioning and probing for deeper meaning, to draw forth the participants' understanding of learning and learners. Constructivists believe that meaning is "not discovered but constructed", as human beings engage and make sense of the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 1998, p. 43).

Furthermore, constructivism asserts that knowledge and truths are constructed and sustained through language, linguistic resources and social processes (Neuman, 2000; Papert, 1980). Construction and maintenance of knowledge is carried out through negotiation with one another, rather than only by an examination of the world. In addition, (Bruffee (1995) contends that it seems to "change locally and historically, time after time, while building in stages" (p.

9). Therefore, if knowledge and multiple truths are locally and historically constructed and reconstructed, this would suggest that leaders (including teachers) would be influenced in their thinking by their values, beliefs and the perceptions that they have as part of their daily lives. Consequently, each of the participants may have a different construct of knowledge due to their personal understanding of authentic leading and learning and their school's socio-economic circumstances. This difference in the construction of knowledge and truth by the participants will assist in illuminating 'that which is little known', as they try to grow in understanding of their role as leaders of learning in their schools.

3.3   Theoretical Perspectives

A theoretical perspective is the way in which an understanding of the world is constructed. The purpose of this research is to capture the understandings of participants about their experiences of leadership and learning within their school in the context of a project designed to transform leading and learning and hence validates the theoretical perspective of Crotty (1998) and accepted by the researcher. The theoretical perspective also guides the structure of the research design and the methods used to generate and analyse the data.

Carr and Kemmis (1986) delineate three research paradigms: positivist, interpretive and critical. In positivist forms of research, education is considered the object to be studied, where reality is stable, observable and measurable. In interpretive research, education is considered a process and school a lived experience, where multiple realities are constructed socially by individuals. Critical research considers education to be a social institution designed for social and cultural reproduction and transformation (Merriam, 1998). For this research an interpretive lens appears largely suitable.

3.3.1 Interpretivism

An interpretive approach to the research is considered most suitable to elucidate the moral activities of leaders, as it reflects a concern for what Bogdan & Taylor (1998) call the "meanings people attach to things in their lives" (p. 7), and is a holistic way of understanding how people's perceptions, values and beliefs influence their behaviour (Charon, 1998). The interpretive approach to this research gave an opportunity to formally interpret the leadership practices of each principal and teacher, as they developed an understanding of the moral challenges associated with school life. Glesne (1999), views the object of interpretive research as to understand how individuals in a social setting construct the world around them, what meaning is important to them, and how they experience daily life. According to Neuman (2000), interpretive research is specifically interested in how meaning is acquired by people who share a meaning system and how they maintain social reality by interacting with others in ongoing processes of communication and negotiation. As the purpose of this research is to interpret the social reality through the interactions of the LTLL participants in the context of their schools, qualitative data are needed. As such, the researcher can gain a deeper knowledge of the meaning system used by leaders as they interact and communicate in a project to transform learning and learners in the school. Symbolic interactionism has been chosen as the particular theoretical perspective informing the research.

3.3.2 Symbolic Interactionism

The particular interpretive theoretical perspective informing this research is symbolic interactionism, which works from the belief that humans become social beings through their interaction and communication with others (Hollingsworth, 1999). At the heart of symbolic interactionism lie three principles identified by Blumer (1962). The first of these principles is that humans act towards things on the basis of the meanings that those things have for them. In the second principle, people learn how to see the world from the perspective of others.

Dimmock and O'Donoghue, (1997) add to this perspective by suggesting that meaning is acquired from one's experience of the world, and because one is in constant engagement with the world, that meaning is constantly being modified or completely changed. The third principle recognised by Blumer (1969), is that "meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (p. 72).

Hence, the question arises: how do leaders deal with the challenges associated with the pressures of external decision-making processes and the alignment of the underlying moral and ethical values that appear when responding to those challenges. Charon (1998) claims that, in symbolic interactionism, reality is always seen through perspectives which filter how everything is perceived and interpreted. The whole reality cannot be revealed, as individuals are limited by their own perspective. However, perspectives are socially constructed and can change as humans interact with others throughout their lifespan (Charon, 1998). The participants in this research project confronted various perspectives on educational issues, as they investigated pathways to transform their schools and make links between leading and authentic learning.

Symbolic interactionism is appropriate for this research because leadership is an interactive process. Each participant in the research brought a unique perspective, and through their shared reflections provided in the interactive process of the LTLL plenary program, the researcher gained conceptual clarity about the moral landscape that underpinned each of the participant's leadership qualities. In a manner that resembled the studies of the late 1970's when educational research began to "fully open up the question of how teachers saw their work and their lives" (Goodson, 1992, p. 3), there was a need for this research to generate a richness of data about leaders in schools, and how they struggle with the ethical and moral aspects of their leadership. Consequently, it was appropriate for this research to utilize symbolic interactionism in order to

understand the responses that these particular educators made in meeting the challenges of attempting to transform learning in their schools.

3.3.3 Theoretical Perspective on Leadership

Politicians, system leaders, and the public generally, believe that the quality of school leaders makes a difference to student progress. There are qualitative research case studies to support this premise, where newly appointed principals take dysfunctional schools and transform them into schools where there is a love of learning and where student outcomes meet or exceed benchmarks (Edmonds, 1979; Maden, 2001; Scheurich, 1998). Additionally, a meta-analysis of 69 studies conducted since 1970 undertaken by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) indicates that principals can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in schools. The researchers identified specific behaviours associated with 21 leadership responsibilities that guide the leaders' practices in the day-to-day management of the schools and during the stressful times that accompany major change initiatives. Additionally, the recent research of Reeves (2006, 2008), which included more than 2000 school plans impacting on 1.5million students, noted that leadership actions were essential for the measurement of, and gains in, student achievement. In his research, scores gain reflected the impact of leadership decisions, regardless of whether the student began with high or low student achievement scores.

Hallinger and Heck (1999) identified blind spots in practices of leadership where areas of existing views of knowledge impede us from seeing other facets of the phenomenon under investigation (Wagner, 1993). For example, Hallinger & Heck in describing the preoccupation with documenting whether principals make a difference state that this "has subtly reinforced the assumption that school leadership is synonymous with the principal and ignored other sources of leadership within schools" (p. 141). Lambert (2003) believes that how we define leadership 'engages and pulls others into the work of leadership' and that leadership "defined as a form of learning, situates that work within the context of teaching and learning" (p. 425).

Heifetz (1994) maintains that "the way we talk about leadership betrays confusion" (p. 13). He believes that "rather than define leadership either as a position of authority in a social structure or as a personal set of characteristics, we may find it a great deal more useful to define leadership as an activity" (p. 20). Robinson (2007) would agree, stating that questions about leadership should focus on 'what leaders do' to make a difference to student achievement in schools. Robinson's research on *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why,* identifies the dimensions of leadership which make the biggest difference to students and explains why they work. The leadership dimensions explained by Robinson were identified through a meta-analysis of 26 published studies that quantified the relationship between types of school leadership and a range of social and academic student outcomes. Robinson's findings challenge current understandings of educational leadership and how leadership impacts on student outcomes.

The design of this research aims to probe the underlying moral and ethical issues that ground the work of the educational leaders studied. It evolves from recent questions about the moral imperative of educational leadership and the purpose of involving teachers in promoting quality learning for all children. The questions come as a result of the increasing politicisation of education as outlined in chapter 1 and the corresponding moral challenges leaders face in making decisions that impact on student learning.

As school leadership is a profoundly moral, ethical and emotional activity (Stoll et al., 2003), the constructivist research orientation is considered appropriate in assisting leaders make sense of their context. Qualitative research is characterized by a "subjectivist" (Hunt, 1991, p. 45) approach to leadership, in that reality is seen as a social construction and a projection of the imagination. By making sense of organisational events from symbolic actions and the leader's individual consciousness, the researcher tries to make sense of the social influence that leadership brings to the environment under study. A central theme of leadership explores

changes in perceptions, attributions, beliefs, and motivations (Bryman, 1992; Yukl, 1994) of

leaders and teachers, and the data addresses these phenomena. Within the interpretivist

framework, the case study approach was adopted as it provided an opportunity to view several

cases of similar contexts within the one study.

3.4   Research Methodology

3.4.1   Case Study

Case study appears the most appropriate methodology for this research as it allows for thick

description to be developed, and enables the reader to be part of the context (Creswell, 1998;

Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 2000). This research includes four separate case studies, each

situated in a particular school context with a particular group of teachers and leaders bound

together as a professional learning community within the context of the specific LTLL project.

The data gathered and analysed forms the research of the major case study. A case may be

described as a bounded system characterized by wholeness or integrity and the integration of

its parts (Stake, 1995; Sturman, 1994), or as investigations of an individual, group or

phenomenon as an integrated system (Sturman, 1994).

Merriam (1998) describes case study as an "intensive, holistic description and analysis of a

single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (p. 210). In this inquiry, the bounded system was

the LTLL project team in each of the primary schools participating in the research. The

instance in action was the generation of knowledge through engagement in collegial

discussions of authentic leadership and the transference to authentic learning within the context

of each school engaged in the project. A case study approach enables the researcher to look

into and detail the complex, lively and multifaceted interactions of the day-to-day events of the

educational environment.

Bassey (1999) views educational case studies as being able to illuminate educational policy and enhance educational practice (p. 3). The purpose of case study is to illuminate a particular phenomenon or to provide insight into the lives of those being studied (Merriam, 1998). This case study was concerned with uncovering the thinking behind the discourse of educational leaders, through the systematic and reflective documentation of the experiences of the individuals involved in a project of transforming learning in their schools. The researcher attempted to capture the topic of the enquiry as it evolved throughout the life of the project.

The case study focused on a group of four LTLL project teams, each of which included the principal. The case was bounded by this particular group –four primary school LTLL project teams from three Catholic Education Offices in New South Wales, all of whom agreed to participate in investigating Starratt's (2004) framework of understanding the complexities of moral leadership and learning. Another primary school, representing the fourth Catholic Education Office involved in the LTLL project did not participate in this research because of the complexities of their project initiative and the geographical location. This research is unique in its exploration of the topic, and required an in-depth study to illuminate how those leaders explored the concept of authentic learning and its relationship with leadership. Case studies attempt to go beyond illustrative examples of general phenomena to the particularities and idiosyncrasies of the instance and ,in this case, the evolution of educational theories in respect to learning and leading were explored (Walker, 1983).

3.5   Methods

This chapter has positioned this research in a suitable epistemological constructivism. It has also recognized that an interpretive theoretical perspective would lead to greater insight through using a case study methodology. In this concluding section, details of the methods used are given.

3.5.1   Description of the Participants and of the LTLL Program

The cohort for this research was a team of four or six participants from each of four primary schools from three of the Catholic Education Offices participating in the LTLL project. One of the participants from each school was the school principal and at least two others were full-time classroom teachers. These groups were known as the school LTLL project team. The series of events that were part of the project are outlined in Appendix C. The LTLL project incorporated a series of plenary sessions, a general discussion webpage, professional development activities in schools, school meetings, diocesan meetings and inter-school visits. The format of the plenary sessions is outlined in Appendix D. The participants' involvement in these experiences provided the source of data for the research. Each plenary session involved nine LTLL project-based school teams from both primary and secondary schools across four Catholic Education Offices in New South Wales sharing understandings of leadership responsibility.

Populations for investigation by case study are identified by the boundaries of the phenomena, which distinguish between people to be studied, and those to be excluded (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). In this research, the population was naturally bounded by their status as primary school LTLL project teams within the Catholic Education system in New South Wales.

The LTLL program ran for eighteen months. A commitment was made by all LTLL project team members from each of the nine schools to fully participate in all elements of the LTLL program. These included seven plenary sessions with intensive input, reflection, analysis and discussion, intervening activities and follow-up reflection tasks. At the end of each plenary session, a plan of action for the intervening months was decided on by the participants of each school project group. This action plan applied the ideas generated from the LTLL plenary session to the school initiative. During the intervening time, the group used e-mail and

teleconference with those involved in the project, to facilitate sharing of progress reports and diaries containing insights and difficulties. The research questions were used to gather data about the engagement and learning from the project of the primary school LTLL project teams.

3.6 Data Gathering Strategies

The data collection techniques in this research included observation, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and the review of any personal or project documents that were relevant to the participants in the research such as project reports, notes, and journals. At each school, the initial stages of the research incorporated focus group questions relevant to the development of a school self portrait (Appendix E). As well as the self portrait, descriptive data were gathered about each school, including its location, history and the social background of its pupils. The purpose of generating such data were to assist in portraying the context within which each leadership team worked, and to build a rich description of the contexts under study.

3.6.1 Focus Groups

There are several definitions of focus groups and they are sometimes referred to as a focus group interview. Wilson (1997) says that common elements of focus groups include the exploration of participants' perceptions, attitudes, feelings and ideas on a selected topic, in a non-threatening environment, and that they also encourage and utilise group interactions. This is what distinguishes the focus group from the group interview, where the researcher is able to draw on aspects of the participant's affective domain to assist in illuminating the nature of leadership and learning within the context of each school. The researcher conducted focus groups with each LTLL school project team in a semi-structured way.

In this research the participants of the focus groups had the opportunity to disclose what was important to them. At the same time, Anderson (1990) points out that, focus groups provide a situation where the synergy of the group adds depth and insight to the processes being

explored. There were two main focus group sessions held at the end of the LTLL project. One focus group session was conducted by the researcher prior to the final LTLL report session conducted in November 2006. The second focus group session, also conducted at the completion of the LTLL project, was conducted by independent researchers organised through Australian Catholic University, and the data made available for this research.

The main purpose of focus group research is to draw upon participants' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions to a particular experience. It was not feasible to use other methods such as one-to-one interviewing or questionnaires. These attitudes, feelings and beliefs are more likely to be revealed during social interaction with work colleagues as evidenced during focus group interviews, rather than during one-to-one interviews or in questionnaires. It is the sharing during focus group interviews that illuminates the socially constructed experiences for interpretation described by Denzin (1989) as "interpretive interactionism". The purpose of the focus group was to promote a comfortable atmosphere of disclosure in which people could share their ideas, experiences, and attitudes about the topic under study.

3.6.1.1   Limitations of Focus Group Interviews

According to Morgan (1988) focus group research has many advantages however, as with all research methods, there are limitations. Some can be overcome by careful planning and moderating, but others are unavoidable and peculiar to this approach. The researcher has less control over the data produced than in, for example, one-to-one interviewing. By its nature, focus group research is open-ended and cannot be entirely predetermined. Therefore, the researcher faced these limitations in the current research. So it was important for the researcher to consider the voice of each participant in the focus group. Some researchers such as Wilson (1997) differentiate between 'public' and 'private' voices.

Sometimes inconsistencies can appear in the data collected, especially when harvesting information by group data methods, individual interviews or postal questionnaires, and in particular, in trying to use that data to make connections (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). This can affect the authenticity of the data as participants in individual interviews are able to share their private thoughts and behaviour. In contrast, the focus group could be construed as being 'public', so that responses may be guarded, respondents judicious and voices less authentic. Another limitation of focus groups noted by Albrecht, Johnson, and Walther (1993), is that participants may identify with a group member who is admired or in a superior relationship with others or the researcher. In this research there could have been superior relationships between the principal of the school, or other participants in a leadership position, and those participants classified as classroom teachers. The researcher, as interviewer, was required to be mindful of any hidden agenda between the participants, and to keep the focus group discussion focussed on understanding how the participants understood the concepts being explored and the learnings gained through their participation in the LTLL project. The key challenge for the researcher was to facilitate the focus group discussion so that each participant had an equal voice.

Morgan, (1988) and Punch (1998) both suggest that, despite some weaknesses, focus groups are an efficient and effective method in gaining insights into the social process and are further enhanced when used in conjunction with other data-gathering techniques. In this research, focus groups were linked to the questioning techniques as described by Krueger (1994), who believes that quality answers are the result of quality questions, and that questions are at the heart of the focus group interview (p. 53). Questions that are asked during an individual interview could possibly be answered in a few minutes. However, if the same questions are asked in a group environment, the discussion could last for hours because the responses spark new ideas or tangential connections from other participants. Answers provide mental cues that

reveal the observations of other participants – 'cues that are necessary in order to explore the range of perceptions' (Krueger, 1994, p. 54).

3.6.2   Personal Document Analysis

Biklen & Bogdan (1992) suggest personal documents refer to any first person narrative that describes an individual's actions, experiences and beliefs in their own words or writing. In this research Australian Catholic University *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* organised, with the Parramatta Diocesan Education Office, an on-line reflective journal that participants were invited to use for contributing insights, questions or reflections. The LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool (Appendix A) was also provided by the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* to assist participants throughout their involvement in the LTLL project. This was also provided to the researcher for data analysis.

Other personal documents of participants included diary notes and notes written on school intranet journal pages created through diocesan networking systems. These personal reflections can bring richness to an existing study because they reveal perspectives without the interference of research. Cresswell (1994) believes personal documents familiarise the researcher with the language and words of participants and can be accessed conveniently; thus saving time and expense (p. 150). They can also provide further information, verify emerging themes and provide objective sources of data for triangulation purposes (Merriam, 1998).

The researcher requested that participants allow access to any primary sources of data, such as project notes, reports and email, that had relevance to leading and learning in the project under study. These documents were analysed and compared to the data collected through interviews, focus groups and observation to ensure accuracy and deepen the richness of the final narrative. The participants were asked to check the interview data and case notes to verify the perceptions of the researcher.

3.6.3 Reflective Journal

Individual reflection occurs when we write in journals and complete assessment instruments; group reflection is stimulated during interviews, informal discussions with colleagues and mentors and feedback sessions (Daudelin, 1996). Each principal was expected to keep a reflective journal. Reflection can assist educators in dealing with uncertainty and making rational, informed choices (Schön, 1983, 1987). The reflective process can assist principals with new insights and knowledge, and help them better understand the context influencing their decisions. Participants in the focus group could encourage collective action when sharing with their colleagues (Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1993). The reflective journal supported the leadership teams in recording their experiences and then sharing their ideas, frustrations and successes with their peers. As noted by Bolman and Deal (1994) "leadership is cultivated or nurtured primarily through experience" (p. 87) and "reflection and dialogue with others help people to learn to lead" (p. 88).

Begley (1999), a noted scholar of values in school leadership, argues that developing habits of reflection will allow school leaders to discover the values, beliefs and assumptions driving their actions. This is central to uncovering the processes of sustainable moral leadership. Personal reflection allows us to integrate prior and new learning, so that we can consciously repeat previous successes, avoid past errors and self-monitor our actions (Densten & Gray, 2001). The reflective journal recorded out-of-interview encounters, and informal meetings that often generated rich and useful data.

3.6.4 Semi-structured Interviews

The research interview can be defined as 'a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information' (Cannell & Kahn, 1968). According to Merriam (1998) interviewing is one of the most common forms of data collection tools in qualitative studies in education (p. 70). Patton (1990) believes

interviewing "is about obtaining a special kind of information by entering into the other person's perspective" (p. 196), which Dexter (1970) describes as a "conversation with a purpose" (p. 136).

Interviewing encompasses more than listening, asking questions and being socially responsive. It is important to judge the significance of what is being said by non-verbal cues such as gestures, how people dress, how they look, how they sit or what can be inferred from what they are not saying. However, it is equally important for non-verbal cues to be perceived in relation to all the data obtained. The strategies "pausing, paraphrasing and prompting" as described by Costa and Kallick, (2000) were used to elicit information that reflected the participants' understanding of the moral and ethical issues associated with leading and learning from the participants' perspective. Skilful researchers monitor their own use of certain non-judgmental response behaviours to create a feeling of trust and rapport in the interviewing situation. Using these strategies when interviewing assists the process of "conversation with care" (Ruben & Ruben, 1995), in recognising that the interviewer can be conversational without trying to influence the respondents by imposing a view on them.

Semi-structured interviews based on the LTLL conceptual framework and the main research question, were conducted with the participants of each school LTLL leadership team. These interviews took place at each participant's school, in private, and at a predetermined time at the beginning of the 2006 school year. The interviews allowed for greater flexibility and depth of enquiry, and also began the process of developing trust with the researcher (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). General principles of asking interview questions were followed, including using an interview guide, asking all respondents questions in the same order and recording the interviews with the consent of the participants (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed to ensure an accurate gathering and checking of information, increasing the validity and credibility of the interview as a method of research (Brenner, 1985).

In constructing the semi-structured interviews, it was necessary for the researcher to provide the interviewee with enough flexibility to shape the flow of the conversation, and to think carefully about the responses being made. It was also imperative for the researcher to be respectful of the impact of asking participants questions that directly relate to their work environment. A subtle level of sensitivity was required throughout the interview process. This was particularly important in two schools where half of the participants were not able to fully participate in the LTLL plenary sessions. Effectively, this meant that three out of the six people interviewed in two schools were known to the researcher through the university participation. Initially the other participants knew the researcher only through the semi-structured interview process. The situation called for the researcher to be empathetic to all participants, requiring clarity in posing questions and ensuring equity in time allocation.

The interviews were constructed in two sections. In the first instance, the nature of the research and the participant's role in it was explained and then the participants signed the Research Participant Consent Form (Appendix F) approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Australian Catholic University and by each of the three Catholic systems. Then, the participants were asked to respond to the interview questions. These were asked individually of the participants and approximately one hour was allocated for each interview. The interviews took place in the participants' individual schools.

Participants were asked to respond to the interview questions (Appendix G) in an open-ended manner and were given an opportunity to ask for clarification or to have the questions rephrased. The researcher used a tape recorder to record the interview and then transcribed the data. It was important at this stage of the data process to code the transcript according to the participant's school and to assign a number to the transcript. For example in School A the principal was the first person interviewed so he or she was assigned the code A1. To keep information aligned when analysing the data it was important for the researcher to differentiate

between the principal in each school and the other participants. This was essential because of the additional information regarding school processes, organisational structures and insights from the leadership position that principals brought to the LTLL project. For this reason the principal is always recorded as the first participant in the school, for example in School C, the principal is coded as (C1) and in School D (D1). Having assigned this coding prior to the follow-up focus group interview sessions, made it manageable for the researcher to keep track of the information recoded on the tapes.

3.6.5   Observation

According to Merriam (1998) observation is a primary source of data in qualitative research and has been described by Werner and Schoepfle (1987) as relevant to all field work in case study research. Angrosini and Mays de Perez (2004) believe that even interviews employ "... observational techniques ... that lend meaning to words of the person being interviewed" (p. 763).

Observations took place by the researcher during the LTLL plenary sessions, where participants worked in school groups and interacted with colleagues from across the four Catholic Education Offices. In this research, observation was used to record ongoing perceptions and discourse of the primary school participants as they interacted during the plenary sessions. The focus of these sessions was the LTLL conceptual framework, and the linkages between leading and learning in relation to the LTLL project schools' initiative. Observation was also used for the purpose of checking the validity of the interview data and for the researcher to gain deeper insights into the perceptions of the participants. It assisted in clarifying the researcher's understanding of what participants said, and gave the researcher an opportunity to focus on particular concepts as understood by the participants.

The purpose of the initial observation period during the first LTLL plenary session in mid-June 2005, was to build a relationship with the participants and to get to know them by sight and name. This period allowed the researcher to develop a relationship so that interviews could take place in the participants' schools. Prior association with the researcher meant the researcher's presence did not upset the status quo of future observations during LTLL plenary sessions. The researcher acted as a close observer but maintained a relationship with participants. Van Manen (1990) suggests this enables conversations to be interpreted whilst retaining the ability to constantly step back and reflect on the meaning of the situation. The researcher's teaching background supported this process, as a teacher is always expected to adopt close relationships with students and colleagues but keep a distance to allow reflection.

Early in the LTLL project's implementation phase, the researcher visited each of the four participating primary schools to continue to develop a relationship with the participants. Observations carried out during these visits provided useful data for the research. For example, it was possible to observe the interactions between the LTLL project participants in each of their schools, an important element in building an environment of trust. Throughout 2006, observations occurred at each of the LTLL plenary sessions. A final period of observation occurred at the individual schools towards the end of the project, prior to the focus group session with the LTLL project school teams. Table 3.2 (p. 88) is a summary of the data collection process. It includes the instruments used to collect the data, when the data were collected and by whom.

Instruments of data Collection	Timing of data collection	Participants in data collection
Semi-structured interviews	(March 2006) Carried out in each of the four schools.	Individuals from each LTLL project team
Observation	Began in June 2005 with the first LTLL plenary session and continued through each subsequent plenary session. Concluded at the November 2006 LTLL report session.	LTLL project team
Documentation	(June 2005) Analysis of 'self portrait' by the participating Schools' LTLL Project Teams	Flagship for the project team
	(August 2006) On-line general discussion webpage	Individuals from participating LTLL project teams
	(August 2005) Ongoing project documentation	LTLL project team in each school
	(November 2006) The leadership component of the LTLL conceptual framework	
	(November 2006) The Learning component of the LTLL conceptual framework	
	(December 2006) Final Project reports from each of the four participating schools.	
	(December 2006) Transcribed notes from the ACU independent researchers.	Independent researchers
Focus Group	(November 2006) The conclusion of the project. Each of the School LTLL project teams. The teams gave their insights into their role as leaders and the impact of the project on their decision-making processes in the schools.	LTLL project team in each school
Reflective Journal	(November 2006) Written by the Principal from School A.	Principal School A

Table 3.2   Summary of Data Collection

3.7   Analysis of Data

Analysing qualitative data, according to Bassey (1999) requires the researcher to make meaning of enormous amounts of raw data, in order to produce meaningful and trustworthy conclusions which are supported by a concise account of how the conclusion was reached. Making sense of all the data collected during observations of the plenary sessions, from the individual interviews and focus groups could have been overwhelming. Bassey (1999) also warns against collecting too much data as it can cause the researcher to become over-burdened with descriptive notes, codes and categories. Therefore it was important for the researcher to only collect data that could be analysed in the time frame and to analyse it as soon as possible after the data were collected, in an effort to keep the volume of data manageable.

Qualitative research requires the researcher to explore and interpret multitudes of, at times, complex data. The researcher used *MindGenius Education* (Gael, 2001), a computer software package, as a tool in order to manage the multitude of data and to assist in bringing order and structure to the data. *MindGenius Education* sorts the data into visual maps, known as mind maps that contain information about a particular subject or theme. Raw data such as that collected through individual interviews and focus groups were manually entered into the Mind map by the researcher and then coded. The coding process was determined from the data themes that emerged from the mind map root branch at the centre of the map.

The data display in this research begins with the branch at the centre of the mind map (the title branch), and contains the title of the map from where branches are populated. Mapping allows the researcher to see the big picture and the detail; and both at the same time (Appendix H). Here, an example is illustrated by School B being placed in the centre of the map, the title branch. The branches extend from the title where the root branches displaying the main themes are populated. The following main themes were populated through the initial mind map sorting process. From these root branches, smaller branches emerged depending on the data collected.

As the data were interpreted and synthesised, the researcher categorised it into themes and these formed the root branches of the mind map. Initially the data were categorized into four themes that aligned with the LTLL conceptual framework: Values, Ethics, Leadership and Learning. This gave the researcher a basis for reducing the data through linked concepts, and eventually led the researcher to elicit nine generic themes that were pertinent to each of the schools in the case study. The researcher identified the following major themes in this research:

1. Values (espoused by the school)

2. Shared leadership (from within the school)

3. Ethics (associated with moral purpose)

4. Issues (linked to the school's initiative)

5. Professional discourse (experiences within the LTLL project)

6. Relationships (experiences with the LTLL project)

7. Learning

8. LTLL conceptual framework

9. Leadership capabilities.

In the example of a MindGenius map (Appendix H) seven of the nine themes are represented as the root branches. The two that were omitted did not represent any data from the transcribed notes from School B. The maps are illustrated in this format to assist the reader in appreciating the many themes which emerged as a result of the sorting and coding process.

The root branches are the same for each school involved in the case study and provided the researcher with base line themes to sort and code the data for further analysis. There is an individual map for each school in the research. Each of the root branches can then be separated from the individual school map and used for comparison across the four schools. For example, the root branch titled *Issues* extracted from each school mind map was recreated into a new map (Figure 3.1, p. 91) to show the links between like themes. The similarities and differences

can be easily identified allowing for further analysis. Each branch also has smaller branches extending from it, narrowing the data to specific detail within the mind map.
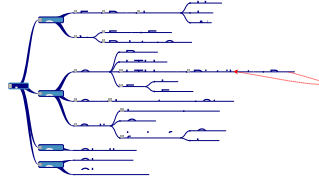
Figure 3.1   Mind map collated *Issues* from all schools

Reflecting on the interactive nature of data collection and analysis, Merriam (1988) describes how "emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to refinement or reformulating of one's questions" (p. 119). Using what Merriam describes as the constant comparative method, the data analysis occurred concurrently and interactively with the collection of the data, and was an ongoing process as the data were interpreted and the report writing began to take shape (Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1984). Due to the type of the data collection, mainly recorded notes from focus groups and interviews, it was important to be systematic when recording the data, noting the date, time and place and those present, using coding given at the first interview session. Collating data into manageable files raised the importance of ensuring that backup files were created.

New branches were formed when a new insight or response emerged from the data. For example in Figure 3.2 the title branch is **School B Issues**. From the theme **Issues,** smaller branches emerge, one of which in School B is called C*ommunication*. This root branch led to a smaller branch titled *feedback* which had two smaller stems, *in the school* and *from the system*. A red line is drawn to link themes when the transcripts explicitly name this link, as shown between the root branch ***Communication*** and the smaller branch *barriers build*.
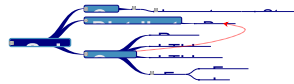
Figure 3.2   Mind map: An example

The coding system used allowed for flexibility, ensuring that individual participant's stories were accurately recorded to give rich descriptions of the events faced in the school. This was essential when the researcher was differentiating between the data from the school principal and that of the teacher leaders. Figure 3.3 (p. 93) provides an overview of the data analysis process used (McLaughlin, 2003). Tesch (1990) sees data analysis as an eclectic process. It occurs simultaneously and iteratively with data collection, and interpretation and report writing, and is illustrated at the top of the visual overview of the data analysis process (Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1984) as outlined in Figure 3.3 (p. 93). This process is described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a constant comparative method of data analysis and is based on the data reduction and interpretation, decontextualisation and recontextualisation process as suggested by Marshall and Rossman, (1989) and Tesch, (1990).

INTERACTIVE PROCESS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data collection

Data display

Reflection on Data

ITERATIVE   *SIMULTANEOUS*

Data Coding

Data distillation (reduction)

Generation of Themes

Story interpretation

Research conclusions
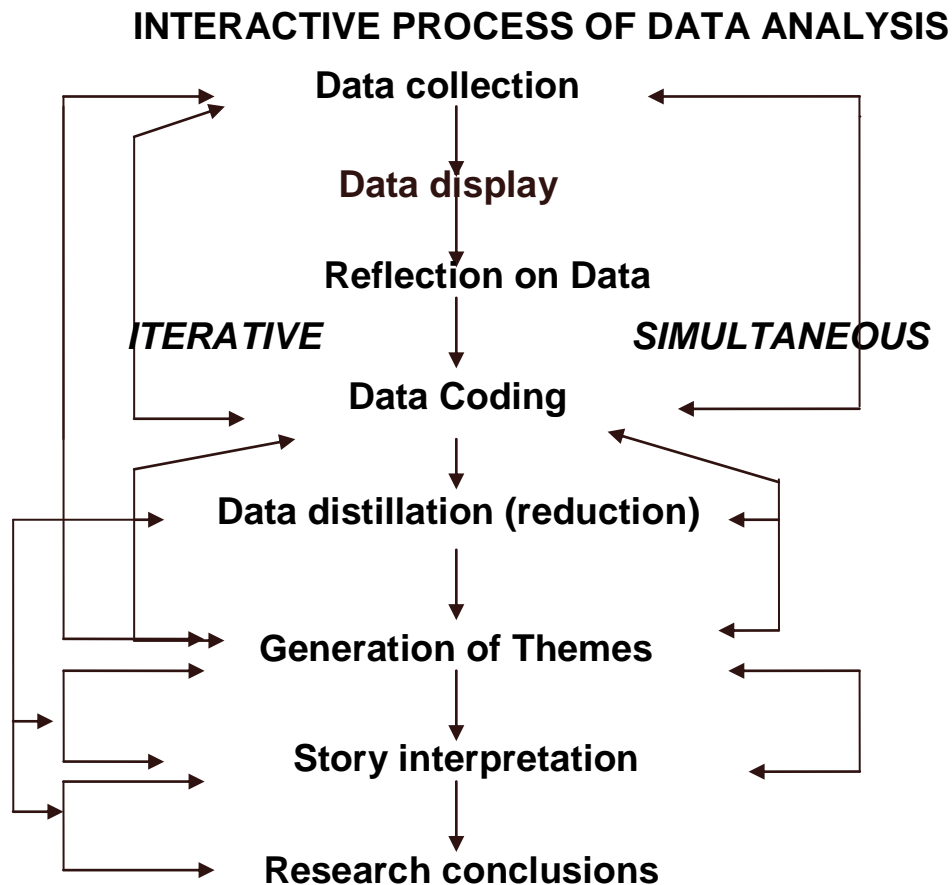
Figure 3.3   The Data Analysis Process (McLaughlin, 2003)

The data were collected and prepared for analysis by applying the coding process

recommended by Miles & Huberman (1984) by organising it into categories. The analysis of

the data began with attaching codes to themes of data called "chunks" (p.56). These are of

varying sizes – words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs, related to or independent of a

specific setting. These "chunks" of coded data formed the root branches in the mind map.

These codes were initially developed from the themes from each of the domains of the LTLL

conceptual framework, and expanded as the data evolved from the semi-structured interviews

in March 2006.

During the collection of data, these "chunks" occurred naturally as data were placed onto the

mind mapping branches. From the interview transcripts, during the first phase of collecting

data, open coding was employed to locate the themes and to assign initial codes. As the data

were coded, the coding scheme was refined as recommended by Bogdan and Taylor (1998) by adding and, collapsing overlapping categories and redefining categories until a group of major themes emerged. As the data were reflected upon, the themes were refined, reflected upon again, weighing both new and already analysed data. Then the cycle continued until a thorough and comprehensive picture emerged. This process became particularly important during the final stages of data analysis, as many different perspectives emerged from each of the case study schools.

Whilst this research was not about the different leadership styles of school principals, their leadership style and role did give the participants the filters through which they saw reality. As Charon (1998) explains, our biases come from our perspectives, and in turn our perspectives come from the social worlds within which we move. Examining the school profiles shows four very different and distinctive social worlds. For example, while both School A and School B consisted of low to middle socio economic income families, School B was three times the size of School A, and an inner city school compared to a rural regional school. The principals' leadership style in School A and School B appeared very different. With contrasting leadership styles and different school sizes, the lenses through which these two participants viewed the LTLL project were vastly different.

As researcher, it was important to do what Wolcott (1994) recommended and return and reflect on the original transcripts of the interviews and focus groups once they had been transcribed and had become coherent individual narratives. The aim of analysis was not just to describe the data, but to describe the objects or events to which the data referred. As Dey (1993) states, data needs to be interpreted, explained and understood within context. This also assisted the researcher in remaining true to the context of the original discussions and in contextualising the data so that it could be accurately portrayed to others.

By studying and reflecting on the original categories, new classifications emerged to assist in refining the data to make meaningful comparisons and hence further analysis. As suggested by Dey (1993), once the data had been categorised on the branches of the mind maps, connections were inferred between the concepts by examining regularities, differences and singularities in the data. By studying the relationships between different categories, a picture was built up which was both clearer and more complex than the initial impressions determined. The software package *MindGenius* was used to assist the researcher in elucidating emerging themes.

Whilst the researcher acknowledges other software packages such as *Nudist* and *NViro* were initially available and trialled for data analysis, familiarity with *MindGeniu*s enabled the researcher to feel more secure in the analysis of the data. Additionally the data represent a relatively small number of participants; that being twenty across the four schools in the research. The researcher's familiarity with mind mapping enabled the data to be transcribed, sorted and coded quickly. The major themes elicited through the mind maps give shape to chapters four, five, six and seven. A synthesis of these themes is then presented in chapter eight.

The integrity and value of research findings are usually measured by tests of validity, reliability, and generalisability. These terms, however, are derived from the quantitative research paradigm and require careful consideration in relation to this research.

3.8   Validity, Reliability and Generalisability

Researchers such as Janesick (200), Lincoln and Guba (1995, 2000) and Wolcott (1994) believe that there is much controversy round the application of validity, reliability and generalisability in qualitative research. As Janesick recognised:

> Qualitative researchers have been patiently responding to questions usually formulated from a psychometric perspective ...revolving around the trinity of validity, reliability and generalisability as if there were no other linguistic representations for questions (2000, p. 393).

Drawing from, both traditional and emerging understandings of how validity, reliability and generalisability are considered, the ensuing discussion explores how these terms relate to qualitative case study and to this research.

3.9   Validity

As qualitative research becomes more prevalent, researchers such as Merriam (1996) and Janesick (2000) are redefining the concept of validity, moving away from the conceptualisations borrowed from the quantitative domain to understandings more congruent with the qualitative paradigm as it applies to the work that they do. As Lincoln and Guba (2000) stated "Nowhere can the conversation about paradigm differences be more fertile than the extended controversy about validity" (p. 178). For Wolcott (1994), even a discussion of validity "... signals a retreat to that pre-existing vocabulary originally designed to lend precision to one arena of dialogue and too casually assumed adequate to another" (p. 168). Lincoln and Guba (2000) extend the conversation by acknowledging that validity may well be an irritating construct in qualitative research but it will not be easily dismissed.

In redefining the concept of validity, Guba and Lincoln (1994) described alternative descriptors that emerged as being more appropriate to the qualitative domain, such as credibility and authenticity. Authenticity criteria are those believed to be "the hallmark of authentic, trustworthy, rigorous or 'valid' ...inquiry" (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p.180). Discussion of the validity of this research draws both from authenticity principle and from data gathering approaches usually considered to enhance internal validity (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Merriam, 1996).

Authenticity criteria of 'fairness' and 'balance' were considered when gathering the perspectives and views of the participants in this research. Every effort was made by the researcher to apply methods that supported the participants in sharing their perspectives and to ensure that they were heard in order to achieve balance. Principals were significant contributors in this case study as were teachers. The perceived hierarchical nature of leadership positions in schools meant that the researcher needed to ensure that teachers were also given time and felt comfortable about contributing and participating in this research. This allowed for a fairer representation of the reality of the implementation of the school initiative and involvement in the LTLL project to emerge.

The use of multiple data sources, and multiple methods, usually referred to as triangulation (of sources and methods) is common in case study research and is considered to enhance validity (Stake, 2000; Yin, 1996). While common themes may emerge from different sources, triangulation of sources is not considered a technical solution for ensuring validity. Bloor, (1997) believes that triangulation throws a new light on the research by using different perspectives and is "a spur for richer and deeper analysis" (p. 49). Additionally, different methods do not ensure validity in case study. Since research findings, according to Bloor, "are shaped by the circumstances of their production and will differ in their form and specificity" (1997, p. 49) direct comparisons across methods can be problematic. Data from documents have not been accorded equal weight or directly compared to the data from focus groups or individual interviews as each is shaped by the data gathering process. Triangulation techniques, therefore, are not technical tests of validity, rather they enhance validity by revealing common themes and allowing the researcher new insights and deeper analysis of the data. Mathison (1988) suggests that triangulation gives a "holistic understanding" of a situation to construct "plausible explanations about the phenomena being studied" (p. 17). This was supported by Burns (1994), who believes that triangular techniques for data collection attempt to map out, or

explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint. Triangulation techniques are opportunities to bring the researcher closer to reality.

Qualitative researchers such Goetz and LeCompte (1984) and Merriam (1998) believe that reality can never be totally captured in social research, and therefore the reliability or repeatability of a qualitative research project is confounded by the complexity of the changing nature of the social world and the unique design of the research.

3.10   Reliability

Reliability in traditional research design is based on the belief that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results. In qualitative research such as this, the researcher seeks to explain the world as those in the world experience it and, therefore, there is no benchmark by which to take repeated measures and establish reliability in the traditional sense (Merriam, 1998). Since the term reliability in the traditional sense does not seem to apply to the nature of qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested thinking about the "dependability" or "consistency" of the results obtained by the data rather than repeatability or reliability (p. 288). This implies that the research data collected makes sense, and are consistent and dependable.

Reliability implies dependability or trustworthiness. Researchers want their research to be trustworthy for their own credibility as well as to maintain trustworthy relations with peers and colleagues. When colleagues believe that you are trustworthy they are able to use your work to confirm, expand, and inform their own work and hence contribute to the collective nature of your knowledge (Glense & Peshkin, 1992). This is a form of *external validity* where the generalisability of the findings is able to be related to other comparable settings.

Research findings dealing with leaders transforming learners and learning in their school are only dependable for this particular case. Merriam (1998) considers that the case researcher chooses the particular in order to gain a deeper understanding of the case, rather than to find out what is generally true. According to Stake (2000) the search for particularity competes with the search for "generalisability" (p 149).

3.11   Generalisability

Merriam (1998) and Yin (1994) would support the notion that you cannot generalise from one particular case and that, from a general experimental perspective, the lack of generalisability is a limitation to case study. However as Bassey (1999) explains, if the term generalisability is reframed to suit the assumptions underlying qualitative research, then it is possible. He recognises that, while generalisation of the empirical kind, such as in science, represents absolute truth based on facts, in the social sciences generalizations may be fuzzy or statistical in nature. The fuzzy generalization, as in this research, arises from studies of singularities and typically claims that *it is possible, or likely, or unlikely that what* was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere: it is a qualitative measure (italics in original, p. 12).

The findings in this research will extend readers' memories of similar experiences and events, in their own contexts in relation to transforming learners and learning in schools. In this way, the findings may be generalized by others within their own context and situation. This research was conducted in four primary schools across Catholic Education Offices in New South Wales, Australia. It drew heavily on the perceptions of small project teams from each of the schools participating in the LTLL project. The LTLL project had a particular professional development design and a conceptual framework of leadership and learning that underpinned the project. The specific findings of this research were therefore restricted to the participants' understandings of the conceptual framework, in relation to leadership and learning in their

schools. However, it is possible that other schools, in both the private and public sector, in Australia or elsewhere, could have similar understandings and experiences of leading and learning, and these findings may have some relevance for these schools.

While the preceding discussion of validity, reliability and generalisability has suggested ways that knowledge is authentically constructed and safeguarded in the research process, the researcher cannot entirely predict the interpretation of the findings by the readers. One criterion of the authenticity (or validity) of this research has been balance through the inclusion of multiple perspectives, and this, after all, is an ethical requirement.

3.12   The Role of the Researcher

At the time of the research, the researcher was in her first principalship from one of the Catholic Education systems involved in this research after being involved in Catholic education for over twenty years. Extensive experience in various leadership roles across two of the systems involved in the LTLL project provided a familiarity with the structures and processes in leadership from each of the system's perspective. Additionally, through leadership studies at Australian Catholic University, the researcher was known to members of the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* and was able to access the professional learning sessions provided to the participants involved in the LTLL project.

3.13   Ethical Issues

Ethical research requires balancing the value of advancing knowledge against protecting the individuals concerned. Issues such as privacy, confidentiality, and protection from harm, informed consent, ownership of data, and how findings were expected to be reported and/or published received careful consideration. When the researcher encourages people to talk in an open and frank manner, serious ethical obligations are incurred (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Ethical considerations also included general ethical issues in research as well as those that were specific to the Catholic Education systems and the participants involved (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Ethical dilemmas were likely to emerge with regard to the collection of data and in the dissemination of the findings and, as such, the researcher was sensitive to the ethical principles of confidentiality, accountability and communication.

Prior to the commencement of the LTLL project, every effort was made to indicate clearly to the participants what was being asked of them in terms of time, effort and the possible stress that could be placed upon them. Once ethical clearance was granted, a meeting with the participants was organised to discuss the research proposal and to clarify concerns. This was followed by the semi-structured interview process. Formal approval was sought from the professional bodies involved with this research, Australian Catholic University for Ethics approval, the participating Catholic Education systems, and the individual principals and participating staff. Prior to the research beginning, each participant was given an information sheet clearly describing the proposed research (Appendix I). A consent form was also attached to the information sheet allowing participants within the project to indicate their willingness or otherwise of being involved in the research (Appendix F).

3.14   Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations to the research have been discussed throughout the proposal, and attention has been drawn to such aspects as the possible weaknesses of case study, focus groups, reliability of the data collection and researcher bias. In addition, it is acknowledged that the case study was set in a specific context, namely four schools from different Catholic Education systems across New South Wales. However, the methodology was designed to centre the importance of context and difference between participating primary school leadership teams. It is believed that the soundness of the research design enabled the generation of rich and authentic information that has shed light on the important phenomena of authentic leading and learning

in education. Another limiting factor was that the principal participants had been selected because of their prior knowledge and understanding of authentic learning. Thus, the conclusions may not be fully transferable to other contexts.

3.15   Conclusion

The methodology for this research is logically consistent with the inquiry, in that it views both knowledge and reality as social constructions. The research was based on a case study methodological approach, and was designed to centre the importance of educational leaders' understanding of the possible linkages between leading and authentic learning within the context of their primary school. Qualitative research measures for gathering and analysing data have also been reviewed and included observation, focus groups, semi structured interviews, documentation, and reflective journaling. This research was based in an interpretive paradigm and gave an opportunity to formally interpret the leadership practices of the participants as they developed their understanding of the moral challenges of school life.

The following four chapters present an overview of the individual schools involved in this research and explain the nature of the school initiative in the context of their environment. The data presented have been analysed and used to answer the research questions at the conclusion of each of these chapters to give the reader an insight into the uniqueness of each school. Chapter eight then presents a synthesis of these four chapters and answers the research questions as findings.

CHAPTER FOUR - DATA ANALYSIS

4.0   Introduction

The purpose of this chapter and chapters five, six and seven is to analyse the data from each of the schools. This introduction outlines the sequence of data presented in these chapters as it relates to each school in the research.

Previous chapters examined the context of leadership and the current literature relevant to nurturing an authentic learning environment. Arising from the literature review there emerged four major research questions, which focussed the conduct of the research. These are referred to later in this introduction and the data analysed in response to these questions forms the data for the central research question:

> **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement**
>
> **project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

Schools involved in this research were involved in a joint project across four Catholic Education Offices in New South Wales, and with Australian Catholic University, through the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership Project*. This project was titled *Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners* (LTLL) and provided the structure for each of the four schools to reflect on their practices of leading and learning in the context of their own school environment. The LTLL conceptual framework that underpinned the LTLL project is described extensively in chapter one.

Chapter four to seven corresponds to the experiences of the four schools involved in this research, and gives the reader an understanding of the nature and uniqueness of each school's LTLL initiative and their involvement in the LTLL project. Table 4.1 (p. 104) outlines the sequence of each School's data analysis followed throughout chapters four to seven.

Identifier	Heading
4.1 (5.1, 6.1, 7.1)	Situational Analysis
4.2 (5.2, 6.2, 7.2)	The Nature of the School Initiative
4.3 (5.3, 6.3, 7.3)	Issues Relating to the School Initiative
4.4 (5.4, 6.4, 7.4)	Impact of Issues on the School Initiative
4.5 (5.5, 6.5, 7.15)	Responses to the Research Questions: Research Question One
4.6 (5.6, 7.6, 7.6)	The LTLL Conception Framework Reflection Tool
4.7 (5.7, 6.7, 7.7)	Responses to Research Question Two
4.8 (5.8, 6.8, 7.8)	Responses to Research Question Three
4.9 (5.9, 6.9, 7.9)	Responses to Research Question Four

Table 4.1 Schools' data analysis chapters four to seven

Each school has been assigned a corresponding system of data numbering and lettering for identifying the sources of data used and for the participants involved in the research. For example, this chapter represents the data analysis from School A, Chapter five represents the data analysis from School B, Chapter six the data analysis from School C and Chapter seven, the data analysis from School D. The maximum number of participants in this research, from any one school, was six and, as such, the number system will not go beyond this point. Therefore the sixth participant from the second school in this research would be represented by the code B6.

With the exception of chapter four each of the following three chapters begins with the situational analysis (sections 5.1, 6.1, 7.1) describing the school. In chapter four the situational analysis (section 4.1) comes after this general introduction. The school's initiative from the LTLL project is then detailed (sections 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2), followed by a description of any issues or concerns that arose during the implementation of the initiative (sections 4.3, 5.3, 6.3,

7.3). The impact of these issues is then described; "illuminating that which is little known or hidden from view" (Hallinger & Heck, 1999, p. 147), therefore providing insight into the lives of the participants being studied in this research and assisting the reader to conceptualise a picture of the individual characteristics and nuances of each school (sections 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4).

Following the discussion of the nature of the initiative, the participants' responses to Research Question One are then analysed (sections 4.5, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5). After the Responses to Research Question One a description of how the participants responded to the *LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool* (Appendix A) on *Leadership* is provided (sections 4.6, 5.6, 6.6, 7.6). This gives insights into how the LTLL team in each school understood the nature of the evidence required for completing the *LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool*, and associations can then be drawn with how the participants demonstrated leadership. The final three questions are then discussed, providing the data that contribute to the findings in chapter eight.

Sources of data are identified by a numbering and lettering system. In this chapter the School is represented by the letter A and each participant in School A is assigned a number. The numbering system begins with the school principal, identified as 'A1'. All *interviews* are identified by the letter 'I', *focus group* responses by the letter 'F' and *observations* by the letter 'O'. A personal document such as the *principal's* reflective *journal* is illustrated by 'PJ' and the use of the LTLL *web-based journal* is depicted as 'WBJ'. Where more than one participant contributed to answering a component of a research question, they are represented collectively by the source, the school and then the participant numbers. For example, in interviews at School A, all participants spoke of understanding the ethics of teaching and this is indicated by the symbols 'IA1-4'. The same system of identification is used in chapters five (School B), six (School C) and seven (School D).

School A was the only school in this research that submitted a principal's journal for data analysis and one of two schools whose participants contributed to the web-based journal. Other documentation used in the data analysis was the LTLL *project proposal* (PP) documented by schools in June 2005, and the final LTLL report supplied by all schools during the conference at the completion of the LTLL project in October 2006; these are differentiated in the data analysis by PP denoting, *project proposal* (PP) and, as FR representing the *final report* (FR). Data were also provided in the completed *LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool* (Appendix A) identified by the letters 'RT'. Throughout chapters four to seven the identifying school letter, (A, B, C or D) is then added to the data source.

The MindGenius (Gael, 2001) program was used to generate themes from the data methods of interviews, observations, personal documents and focus groups. The data were collated into themes, which formed the root branches in the mind maps. The formation of root branches and smaller branches that extend from them is described in chapter three in the methodology section. The root branches of the mind maps *are Values, Shared leadership, Ethics, Issues, Professional discourse, Relationships, Learning, LTLL conceptual Framework* and *Leadership capabilities*, illustrating the main themes created through the data analysis. In each school the participants' responses to the questions formed the data in the mind map and these are represented visually in the appendices. For example the School C mind map is located in Appendix J. Each school's data are represented using these nine themes, although a particular school may have responded in depth to one theme more than another. For example, when exploring the discussions and reflections from School A, the participants continuously referred to the theme *Relationships* in making sense of their leadership practices but rarely mentioned the *LTLL Conceptual Framework.* Hence the root branch *Relationships* from the School A mind map displays extensive data that link to other root branches in the mind map, where as the LTLL conceptual framework has no data directly linked to this theme from the School A

participants (Appendix K). The data analysis from School A is discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

DATA ANALYSIS SCHOOL A

The purpose of this chapter is to capture the understandings of participants from School A about their experiences of leadership and learning in the context of a project designed to transform leading and learning in their school.

4.1   SCHOOL A: Situational Analysis

School A is a small school with a little over one hundred students, situated in a semi-rural suburban setting in the State of New South Wales. The families are primarily from a low to middle socio-economic income stratum. The project proposal revealed a high percentage of students identified with special needs in this school. The project proposal also stated that meeting the needs of all the students on a physical, emotional, spiritual and social level and ensuring access to the curriculum for academic purposes underpinned the purpose of this school's involvement in the LTLL project (PPA).

The School A LTLL project team consisted of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Co-ordinator and a classroom teacher. In outlining the school initiative, the project proposal indicated that all teachers in this school participated in the initiative from the LTLL project's commencement and the LTLL project team agreed to the title: "*It takes a village to raise a child*", as they believed that this reflected the staff view that every person was responsible for the learning of all children in the school community. "*It takes a village to raise a child*" is an African proverb that expresses the necessity of all members of a village uniting to care for the children of the village. Participant A2, substantiated the school's vision for the project initiative and provided an example of documentation:

> This proverb is at the heart of our vision for student development and learning, where we utilise the expertise of all members of our "village" and therefore give our students the best possible chance of realizing their potential. (WBJA2)

Participant A1's journal indicated that, in addition to the ten percent of the students identified with special needs in the school, there were also high levels of unemployment in the region and many single parents struggling to meet the financial obligations required to attend to the medical needs of their children. Participant A1 also indicated that many parents were not able to articulate the medical conditions of their children or understand how this could impact on the child's learning (PJA1).

Further, the project proposal indicated that, early in 2005, the *Wrap Around Kids* (WAK) program was introduced in an effort to integrate important individual medical information with the learning needs of the student to assist the school staff and families address the personal needs of individual students in a positive and supportive environment (PPA). *Wrap Around Kids* (WAK) is a multidisciplinary management program that supports students and their families through regular *Wrap Around Meetings* at school (Fostering Partnerships Pty Ltd, 2003).

According to the project proposal and substantiated on the web-based journal, School A also introduced the *You Can Do It* (YCDI) program (Bernard, 2004). The aim of this program was for staff to maximise the social-emotional-behavioural well-being of students, by explicitly teaching aspects of social emotional education: confidence (work, social), persistence, organisation, getting along and, emotional resilience. Bernard (2006) believes that when children have limited opportunities for seeing these traits being modelled in their normal environment they will not learn them unless they are explicitly taught.

The web-based journal stated that, after participating in the orientation session of the LTLL program and completing the evidence section of the first draft of the LTLL Conceptual Framework, the School A LTLL project team members were required to think deeply about the Basic Skills Test results as a motivator for their school initiative (WBJA2). Interviews then suggested that this resulted in the School A participants examining the nature of students as learners and what the test results were truly reflecting (IA1-4). An example from one participant substantiates this process,

> We already had an idea about where we needed to go regarding improving basic skills results. We looked at the model (LTLL conceptual framework) and realized that we just needed to get these kids to get to school to try and work out what was happening in their lives so that they could participate in each day at school. The basic skills thing became secondary to the needs of the child. We had to look after the child first, and address all other things in that child's life that were not whole first before we could address the things that were academic. (IA4)

Participant A1's journal also inferred this change in project focus, stating that the discussions by the participants exploring the nature of students as learners, their access to the curriculum and the diversity of their needs, led them to re-examine the nature of the school's initiative, with the focus on the moral imperative of education rather than on Basic Skills Testing results (PJA1).

4.2   The Nature of School A's Initiative

School A submitted a proposal to their system to participate in the LTLL project because they believed their involvement could assist them as leaders to implement ethical change processes in the school where authentic teaching and learning programs were the result of caring professional learning (PPA). The data collated from interviews also indicated that the nature of the School A LTLL initiative evolved through different phases during their involvement in the LTLL project.

Interviews indicated that, prior to the schools involvement in the LTLL project, the staff had

analysed the New South Wales Board of Studies Basic Skills Test (NSW BST) assessment data

from 2004 to determine that the students' greatest academic area of need was in literacy (IA1-

4). Participant A1's journal outlined the consensus from staff that improving the literacy levels

of students would produce higher results in the NSW BST resulting in an improved image of

the school in the community and to system leaders (PJA1).

The introductory session of the LTLL project provided School A participants with professional

development on the nature of the student as a learner and the ethics associated with the

teaching profession. All School A participants (IA1-4) indicated that this professional learning

led them to question the purpose of their LTLL initiative, moving from producing higher

literacy results to asking: "How do we understand the nature of the learners in the school and

how inclusive is the curriculum?" Participant A2, substantiated this change as it aligned with

the LTLL project goals and the moral imperative of education and highlighted how the School

LTLL initiative had shifted to a focus on teacher learning. He stated,

> The project began to take shape with the emphasis not on student learning but on
> teacher learning; and specifically, teachers learning from one another, through
> observation and professional dialogue. (IA2)

A substantial quantity of the interview data now reflected the importance of teacher learning as

a major focus of the School A initiative. This was also supported through the documentation in

the principal's journal and the web-based journal.

The second draft of the School A project proposal highlighted an important dimension of the

school culture and values. It discussed the change in focus from the Basic Skills Test results to

the student as learner. It stated that an essential criterion of being a Catholic school was staff

considering how they could nurture and transform the learning and teaching environment

within the context of the Kingdom of God. School A LTLL project goals emerged from within

this context and were stated in the Draft Project Proposal (June 2005) as supporting staff to work intentionally and consciously towards the formation of the fully alive human, and to have the opportunity to share their findings as professional learners with each other and to identify the ways in which they had transformed learning (PPA).

The project proposal, and participant A1's journal supported this position that, School A participants believed that a key component of being involved in the LTLL project was the aspect of belonging to a contemporary Catholic school. The documentation concluded that they saw this as being part of an active community, where respect for persons was obvious and where, as a collective, they had a strong social ethic of responsibility (PPA). The web-based journal confirmed that, through their everyday interactions, they held the view that personal dignity and human respect are highly developed in small communities where dialogue and collegiality flourish (WBJA). An example, in the documentation is,

> Leadership in our school is already exercised primarily from a position of care and service. It is always personal and practical. (PPA)

The emphasis of the School A LTLL initiative was the formation of the fully alive human, including teachers. Teacher learning was continuously referred to throughout all aspects of data collection and became an important aspect of the School A LTLL initiative. Through conversations with the principal and through an analysis of the data in the School A mind map (Appendix K), the focus on teacher learner was clearly evident (IA1, FA).

4.2.1   Teacher Learning

The research of Stoll et al. (2003) emphasises that teachers are the centre of school improvement and, in addressing the challenges facing teachers educating young people of the twenty first century, it is imperative that teachers continue to learn along with their students. Figure 4.1 (p. 113) provides a flowchart of the processes, identified in the data, used to engage teachers in learning in School A (WBJA, FA, PPA, FRA). All participants also discussed this

process of teacher learning during interviews (IA1-4) and the researcher formed the visual representation outlined in Figure 4.1 (p. 113). The first section refers to the classroom teacher and the role they had in sharing their classroom practice. Small group observation ensued, with the sharing of practice relating specifically to an agreed objective to student learning. After professional dialogue and critical reflection from the observations gained during the sharing, decisions were made regarding recommendations for the particular student's learning. From this point, the whole staff was engaged in professional dialogue regarding the recommendations; adjustments were made and collectively, the whole staff were then responsible for the student's personalised learning program (IA, PJA1, WBJA, PPA, FRA). School A participants concurred with Marizus, and Slawinski (2008), who suggest that the inclusion of professional dialogue encourages participants to be reflective and self-aware, to be open, honest and balanced in their accounts, to continually monitor their expressions, so that they are congruent with their values and beliefs and to communicate these values transparently (IA1-4).

The teacher learning evolved through teacher observations of specific students' classroom and/or playground behaviour. These observations were followed by staff discussion conducted during a whole-staff professional learning session. Each term, two or three students were identified for observation. Recommendations were then devised by the whole school staff to empower the classroom teacher to develop a personalised learning program to assist the observed student in reaching his/her full learning capacity (PJA1, WBJA, FRA).

```
┌─────────────────────┐
│  Classroom Teacher  │
└─────────────────────┘
          ┌──────────────────────────┐
          │   Small Group Observation │
          └──────────────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────┐
│   Shared Practice   │
└─────────────────────┘

          ┌──────────────────────────┐
          │   Small Group Reflection  │
          └──────────────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────┐
│ Shared Decision-making │
└─────────────────────┘

          ┌──────────────────────────┐
          │   Whole Staff Discussion  │
          └──────────────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Collective Responsibility │
└─────────────────────────┘

          ┌──────────────────────────┐
          │   Student Personalised    │
          │    Learning Program       │
          └──────────────────────────┘
```
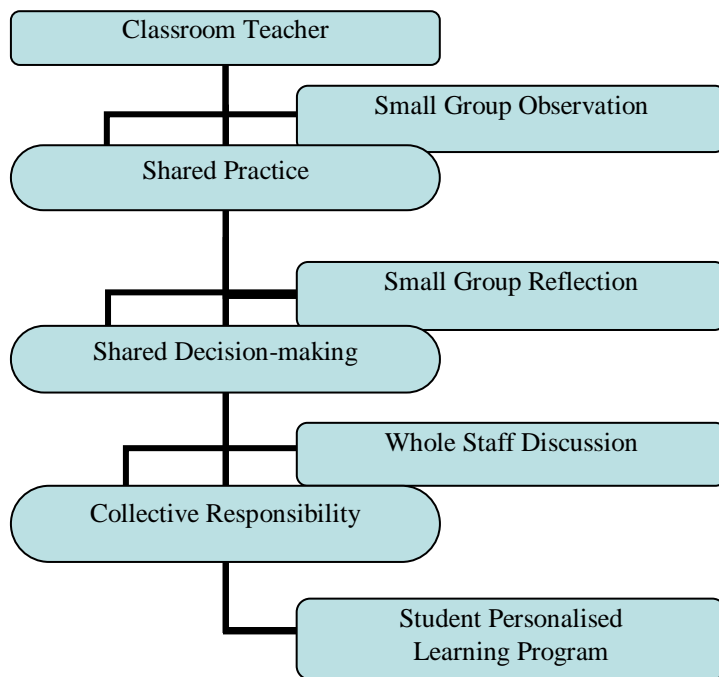
Figure 4.1   School A Teacher Learning Process

The class observation visits targeted individual students with the specific purpose of catering

for the diverse needs of the student. Observations ranged from focussing on on-task behaviour

to collecting and analysing types of communication used by a student. All participants

involved in the observation process clearly understood the purpose of each visit prior to the

collection of data which were collated through observational participant note taking (IA, PPA,

FRA). This was validated by participant A1's journal and the other participants on the web-

based journal (PJA1, WBJA).

In the project proposal, the focus of class visits appeared to have had two main objectives

which explicitly informed the School A LTLL initiative. The first objective was for the

observational team to make recommendations to the rest of the staff about the learning of the

targeted student. The second objective was for staff to discuss the recommendations and to

collaboratively develop teaching strategies to be incorporated into a personalised learning

program for the targeted student (PPA).

During the first LTLL plenary session the participants spoke about their initiative, stating that

the observation of the targeted student often focussed on identifying the distinct social-

emotional capabilities associated with the student's wellbeing and motivation (OA1-4). Also

through the shared understandings expressed through the professional dialogue, the staff was

able to learn from each other in an environment built on trust and respect. They shared the

belief that the nature of the initiative meant that the staff was required to change from a

restricted view of teaching in the classroom to being inclusive and invitational (WBJA1-2,

PJA1, FA). The expressed expectation by the LTLL participants for staff to be included in the

decision-making that impacted on student learning also meant they were required to be

inclusive of others in the school community. Participant A1 noted that leadership and

management of this expectation impacted on the nature of the initiative (OA, PJA1, IA1).

One of the nine root branches (Figure 4.2) has been extracted from the School A mind map

(Appendix K) and is titled School A *Issues.* The data contributing to this theme identifies

concerns relating to the implementation of the School A LTLL initiative.

Figure 4.2 School A mind map *Issues*

4.3   Issues Relating to the Nature of the Project in School A

The root branch *Issues* (Figure 4.2) illustrates the data analysed from the mind map from the

School A sources, and identifies two themes that were continuously discussed by participants;

ethics and *school size* (IA, FA, PJA, WBJA). School A participants spoke extensively of the

ethical decision-making process associated with identifying the purpose of the LTLL initiative.

The school size was also an issue identified by all participants in School A as requiring

purposeful management by the School A LTLL participants in order to maximise the school staffs' involvement in the LTLL school initiative (IA1-4).

4.3.1   Ethics and decision-making

The first issue identified in the data were concerned with the participants' decision-making on the purpose of the School A initiative. It was participant A1's belief that the school values, relating to the Catholic faith and the values of common good needed to be reflected in the teaching and learning practices in the school (PJA1). The project proposal also indicated that catering for the high percentage of students with special education needs and ensuring that all students could access the curriculum were issues that also needed to be addressed by the whole school community (PPA).

Participant A1 indentified that, it was important to ensure that the whole staff shared common understandings about the purpose and content of the LTLL project, its goals and the implementation and impact of the school initiative on the community (IA1). Participant A1's attitude and commitment to the project, substantiated throughout the principal's journal, meant that, from a whole school perspective, the participants began the LTLL project with a deep commitment to collective action to improve teaching and learning (PJA1). It was the School A participants' belief that knowing the student, their health concerns, their personal interests and abilities was an important element of the ethics of the profession (IA1-4, FA1-4). The ethics described by Starratt (2004), which also formed the foundation of the ethical domain of the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13), provided School A participants with a framework to discuss the moral purpose of their initiative in relation to their school initiative (IA1-4).

4.3.2 The size of the school

The second issue identified in the data related to the size of the school. During interviews participant A1 identified her belief that the size of the school and the nature of the specific learning needs of the students necessitated a whole school approach to understanding the purpose of the LTLL project and the subsequent LTLL initiative (IA1). Participant A1further stated that, because of the small size of the school, everyone was required to share in and be committed to, the changes that would take place in the organisational structures and the professional learning resulting from the School A LTLL project goals. Four of the School A staff attended the LTLL plenary sessions organised through Australian Catholic University *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership*. With School A being a small school, the four LTLL project participants represented half of the school's teaching staff. Therefore half the teaching staff was able to share and participate in the professional learning experience at the university level. As the LTLL project progressed, the ethics identified in the School A root branch *Issues* became a focus of professional discourse and was repeatedly mentioned in data sources (IA, FA, PJA, WBJA).

4.4 The Impact of Issues on the School A Initiative

The two issues acknowledged by participant A1, impacting on the School A LTLL initiative dealt with the small number of full time teaching staff and the decision-making associated with catering for the high level of students identified with special needs in the school (IA1). It was participant A1's belief that, in designing a whole school initiative, every member of staff understood the initiative in relation to the LTLL project goals and agreed to actively engage in the professional dialogue that was central to the initiative's implementation and effectiveness. It appeared that participant A1 understood the importance of leadership that modelled shared practice which involved inclusive decision-making practices in the school. Participant A1 was also fully involved in the school's LTLL initiative's implementation, including participating in

student observations, following and formulating recommendations and participating in consequent whole-staff conversations (PJA1, WBJA1).

During observations it became evident that the participants' understanding of the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) highlighted the need for changes to be implemented in practices of both leading and learning in the school (OA1-4). This was authenticated in participant A1's journal when she discussed the teacher learning component of the initiative (PJA1). Participant A1 reported that opening the classroom door to colleagues required a change in the manner in which staff understood the characteristics of a learning community and in their collective responsibility in developing the school into a community of learners. She also noted that the LTLL conceptual framework and the corresponding conversations amongst staff challenged their understandings of what was suitable curriculum for the students and how to appropriately and successfully meet the diversity of learning needs (PJA1).

Expressed numerous times in participant A1's journal was participant A1's belief that the development of respectful, trusting relationships was a key component of being able to transform the learning community, where teachers learnt from each other and the diverse learning needs of all students were addressed (PJA1). This was also validated during individual interviews where participant A1 stated that, as principal, she was committed to developing a climate in the school where these values and the moral challenges associated with them could be explored through whole staff discussion and where both teachers and children are free to learn what is meaningful and transforming (IA1).

The data sources provided examples of how the School A participants understood leadership and these are discussed in the Responses to the Research Questions below.

Responses to the Research Questions

This section illustrates the main themes identified in the School A data sources as being essential to developing the participants' understanding of leadership and learning in the context of the LTLL project. Of the *nine* themes *Values, Shared leadership, Ethics, Issues, Professional discourse, Relationships, Learning, LTLL conceptual framework* and *Leadership capabilities,* identified in chapter three, the methodology chapter, School A did not explicitly name the *LTLL conceptual framework* in their responses. However, they did consistently name components of the framework which have been explored as themes within the data analysis; ethics, values, leadership and learning. It is important to note that the themes do not stand alone but are immersed in each other throughout the data analysis. The researcher made a decision, based on the context of the data, to assign a certain heading or theme.

4.5   Research Question One

How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

The themes emanating from the School A data analysis for the first research question "How did participants understand the concept of leadership?" are presented in the following table (Table 4.2, p. 119) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses, identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership. The smaller branches emerging from each of the main themes are shown in the right hand column in Table 4.2. The root branches from School A mind map (Appendix K) are included throughout the responses to the research questions to visually represent the data.

Research Question One: How did participants understand the concept of leadership?	
4.5.1 Relationships	4.5.1.1 Trust 4.5.1.2 Respect 4.5.1.3 Valuing others 4.5.1.4 Ethics
4.5.2 Professional discourse	4.5.2.1 Staff meetings 4.5.2.2 Professional conversations: Values driven 4.5.2.3 Community Members
4.5.3 Values	4.5.3.1 Catholicity 4.5.3.2 Common good 4.5.3.3 Excellence 4.5.3.4 Justice
4.5.4 Leadership Capabilities	4.5.4.1 Sharing vision 4.5.4.2 Articulation of beliefs on learning 4.5.4.3 Linking theory of practice 4.5.4.4 Ability to challenge 4.5.4.5 Organisational aptitude 4.5.4.6 Risk taking

Table 4.2   School A Responses to Research Question One

The data collated from the theme *leadership capabilities* from School A participants are discussed in section 4.5.4 after the participants' responses to the main themes, relationships, professional discourse and values. Data from these three themes were analysed from the School A mind map and cannot be separated from the participants' understanding of leadership. They also need to be viewed as essential to the leadership practices of the participants in School A (AI, PPA, FRA, RTA).

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the LTLL initiative in School A and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of data analysed in the root branch of the mind map *relationships* as a central theme connected to the participants

understanding of leadership. Four smaller branches of data emerged from *relationships,* trust, respect, valuing others and ethical issues as being important to the participants' understanding of leadership. Each of these elements of *relationships* (Figure 4.3) will now be analysed.

Figure 4.3   School A mind map *Relationships*

4.5.1   Relationships

The importance of *relationships* was named by the participants from School A as being essential to their leadership in cultivating a learning environment that supported the moral imperative of learning (IA1-4). The data in Figure 4.3 illustrates the importance placed on respect and trust and the foundational ethics of authenticity, responsibility and presence as described by Starratt (2004) and are identified in the smaller branches; valuing others and ethics (FA, IA, FRA, WBJ. PJA1).

4.5.1.1   Trust

The first component identified was *trust*. School A project proposal established the importance of trust in *relationships* in the school and to the other members of the LTLL project. It was stated that,

A community such as this is characterised by trust, an articulated common purpose, a belief in its ability to make a difference, a tenacity to survive in the face of increasing demands and an ability to recreate ways to learn on a daily basis. In truth this community would need to exist in deep relationship, one that transcends contractual requirements. (PPA)

The importance of building relationships amongst school community members identified the value of trust as being essential to nurturing relationships.

4.5.1.2 Respect

The second component identified was *respect* and is closely linked in the analysis of data with *trust*. Revealed by participant A2 on the web-based journal, was the importance of *relationships* in implementing the School A LTLL initiative of teacher learning, where trust and respect amongst staff was central to building positive relationships and the capacity of teachers. For example,

Personal trust is a prerequisite for professional trust, and to invite a colleague into one's classroom to observe the classroom dynamics requires a good deal of professional trust. (WBJA2)

This level of explicitly discussing and focussing on nurturing *relationships* amongst the School A community members was evidenced throughout the data analysis (IA1-4, FA, OA). Characteristics of relational trust and respect were described continuously by participants in interviews, as a means of acknowledging the value placed on other members in the school community and enacting the ethics of authenticity, responsibility and presence (Starratt, 2004), and the ethic of care (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2001), especially during times of *professional discourse* (IA1-4).

4.5.1.3 Valuing others

The next component identified was *valuing others* and was noted by participants (IA1-4) in the ethics of presence and authenticity (Starratt, 2004) and the ethic of care (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001), as well as the alignment of organisational practices that supported the school

community members (RTA, FRA). The *relationships* that extended throughout the School A

initiative were also reported in interviews as seen to develop a new level of authenticity

amongst the staff (FA2) as the members of the community discussed their underlying beliefs,

assumptions, principles and values about learning. Respect for colleagues, trusting

relationships and an understanding of leading and learning were linked to participants'

understanding of leadership and authenticity in relationships (FA).

4.5.1.4 Ethics

The final component identified was *ethics* and concerned *a* whole school approach to

understanding the ethics of presence, responsibility and authenticity as espoused by Starratt

(2004). This was identified in the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) and

provided the School A participants with a framework to discuss the moral purpose of

education. School A participants shared the belief that LTLL project provided them with

opportunities to share their understanding of ethics, giving them the confidence to articulate

concerns for students, provide care for families and to break down barriers amongst staff and

within the community (FA, IA1-4). This theme continued to the completion of the LTLL

project when it was noted,

> The staff at School A holds strongly to the belief that change happens in the
> context of the relationships within a learning community. (FRA)

Opportunities to discuss the LTLL conceptual framework and in particular the ethics espoused

by Starratt (2004), provided the professional discourse to develop shared understandings to

leadership amongst the School A participants. *Professional discourse* is the second theme

explored in developing the participants' understanding of leadership and is visually represented

in Figure 4.4 (p. 123) as a root branch in the School A mind map. Three components identified

through the data as contributing to School A participants' understanding of leadership and

captured in the theme *professional discourse* were staff meetings, professional conversation

that is values driven and community members (FA, IA1-4, PJA1). Each of these components of

professional discourse developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 4.4) will now be analysed.
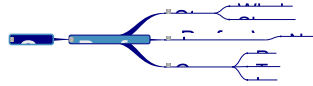
Figure 4.4   School A mind map *Professional discourse*

4.5.2   Professional Discourse

The practice of professional dialogue was seen as an essential component of leadership for the School A participants (PJA1, FA, FRA). *Professional discourse* was identified as an important component of staff meetings where staff could be engaged to develop a shared understanding of the LTLL project and where opportunities could be provided to deepen school members understanding of the importance of belonging to a Catholic faith community.

4.5.2.1   Staff meetings

The first component identified was staff meetings. Participant A1's journal revealed that the *professional discourse* during staff meetings about teaching and learning, driven from the School A LTLL initiative, was an opportunity for the School A staff to further develop and acknowledge the *relationships* amongst staff members. Interview data indicated the staff meetings provided opportunities for staff to display the acceptance of colleagues' opinions (IA1-2). An example substantiating this is:

> I was pleased with teacher X's reflection because she had identified some of her anxiety. Teacher X's self-esteem is extremely fragile, and I view her responses as critical (a hunch) in terms of determining the success of the depth of collegial trust and the potential of teacher learning. (PJA1)

Inferred during focus groups was that *relationships* were linked to *professional discourse* in the manner participants endorsed the ethic of presence and displayed trust during reflections on students' learning (FA). Respect and trusting relationships have been discussed previously and these contributed to the notion that *professional discourse* in School A needed to be values driven (PJA1).

4.5.2.2 Professional conversation - Values driven

The second component identified was professional conversations that were *values driven*. One participant indicated that the participants used professional conversations to increase and deepen their knowledge of teaching and learning and they believed that the conversations were "values driven", ensuring that every person's voice was equally heard, valued and acknowledged (FA2). In the School A final LTLL report, it was indicated that the school climate was such that they could share their wisdom with each other in a collegial manner that acknowledged "that we were competent teachers underutilizing the wisdom, expertise and experience of colleagues in addressing complex learning issues" (FRA).

Observations indicated that the School A participants appeared to be cohesive in their approach to the LTLL initiative, with each participant contributing significantly to its conception and development. They also exposed the nature of p*rofessional discourse* as often rigorous and inclusive of all participants (OA). When the School A LTLL team reported to the plenary group of all LTLL schools they did so as a team, each taking responsibility for various components of the presentation. The language they used presented a shared understanding of leading and learning and was clearly linked to both the school LTLL initiative and the LTLL conceptual framework (OA). The practices displayed during the LTLL plenary session of involving all participants equally were also identified as an important component of aligning the values held in the school community and being inclusive of parents, teachers and leaders in the school.

4.5.2.3   Community members

The third component identified was extended to include *community members*. The leadership

practices in School A supported all community members actively engaging in *professional*

discourse provided by the leaders in the school (FRA, PPA). This included parents

participating in the *You Can Do It* (YCDI) program (Bernard, 2004) and community members

in the *Wrap Around Kids* (WAK) program (Fostering Partnerships Pty Ltd, 2003).

The intent for participants to support staff to work intentionally and consciously towards the

formation of the fully alive human, and to have the opportunity to share as professional

learners with each other in an environment that reflected the values upheld in a Catholic school

was written in the project proposal (PPA). Participants consistently expressed that this notion

aligns with the values of the school and thus *Values* formed the third main theme emanating

from the data from the School A mind map (Appendix K) on understanding leadership in

School A and is illustrated in the root branch values in Figure 4.5.
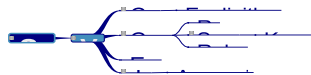
Figure 4.5   School A mind map *Values*

4.5.3   Values

There were four components of values identified from the mind map that linked to the School

A participants' understanding of leadership. These were Catholicity, common good, excellence

and justice. Each of these elements of values developed from the data through the use of the

mind maps (Figure 4.5) will now be analysed.

4.5.3.1 The value of Catholicity

The first component identified was the value of catholicity. The focus groups exposed the School A participants' belief that when recommendations about student learning came from a shared values base, then they were more likely to result in positive change (FRA). Aspects of values discussed in participant A1's journal, highlighted the importance of being a Catholic school that was distinctively different from the school 'down the road'; in this case because of the ethic of care that was espoused and reflected in the relationships amongst the community (PJA1).

4.5.3.2 The value of common good

The value of common good was the second component identified and was an important value that was often linked to the value of justice in the school (IA1-4). The participants expressed their belief that there was a real urgency around ensuring that all students could access the curriculum and this was evident for the students with special needs and also for those students affected by some students' behaviour which continually disrupted the learning of the group. As participant A1 said, "It had really become a matter of urgency, there was always this justice issue around how do you divvy up your time and how do you manage kids and still enable the others to be able to learn" (FA1). During focus groups the data highlighted the links of common good to social wellbeing, rules and regulations and knowing the student (FA3).

In recognising the common good of the individual and addressing the elements of values in the LTLL conceptual framework, the relationship between a Catholic school and the ethics of authenticity and presence were also discussed during interviews. The School A LTLL final report also outlined the challenges that they had in attending to the poor in their school community, those students on the fringe academically, socially and emotionally. The final report stated that, "in a society that is characterised by competition, elitism, individualism, independence and accumulation of wealth, the Catholic school must strive to serve its poor"

(FRA). During focus group discussion it was noted that this notion challenged the staff of School A "personally and professionally and really tested levels of trust" (FRA). It was also revealed that in addressing the 'preferential option for the poor', a key component of being a Catholic school, the school staff agreed that they had a better chance of serving its poor when they worked in close collaboration by utilising the gifts of all available personnel (FRA). This aligned with the shared vision of the staff and the stated moral imperative that demanded the staff make every child's learning meaningful and relevant (FRA).

4.5.3.3   The value of excellence

The third component identified was the *value* of excellence. Participant A1's reference to excellence articulated the commitment to the values espoused by the School A participants. During the final plenary session participant A1 said, "In seeking justice we were at our most Catholic, in doing so we enabled excellence to ignite and consequently began serving the common good (OA1)". The value of excellence is discussed further in the responses to research question two in section 4.11.1.

4.5.3.4   The value of justice

The final component identified was the value of justice. Justice was seen by participants and discussed during interviews as being an important value that underpinned the reasoning behind the project initiative (FA, IA1-4). Justice was expressed in interviews as every student's right to have access to a curriculum that is relevant and meaningful to their lives and that assists them to build their capacity as an important member of society (IA1-2, FA). This was validated in participant A's journal in her belief that the value of common good, where the rights of the individual student, the concern for the group in the classroom and the maintenance and stability of this group were essential to the effectiveness of learning in the school (PJA1). The value of common good is an element of the LTLL framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) in the Values domain and emerged in the data as an important component of the School A initiative.

Participant A1 indicated in interviews that the values and relationships in the school and the nature of professional dialogue supported the whole staff in the implementation of the School A LTLL initiative. Additionally these three themes added to and further exposed the participants' understanding of leadership discussed in the next section 4.5.4 (IA1).

Figure 4.6 visually represents the mind map root branch *Leadership capabilities* and the six areas identified, through the data, by the participants in School A as contributing to their understanding of leadership. These six capabilities were sharing vision, articulation of beliefs on learning, linking theory to practice, ability to challenge, organisational practices and risk taking and are discussed below after Figure 4.6.
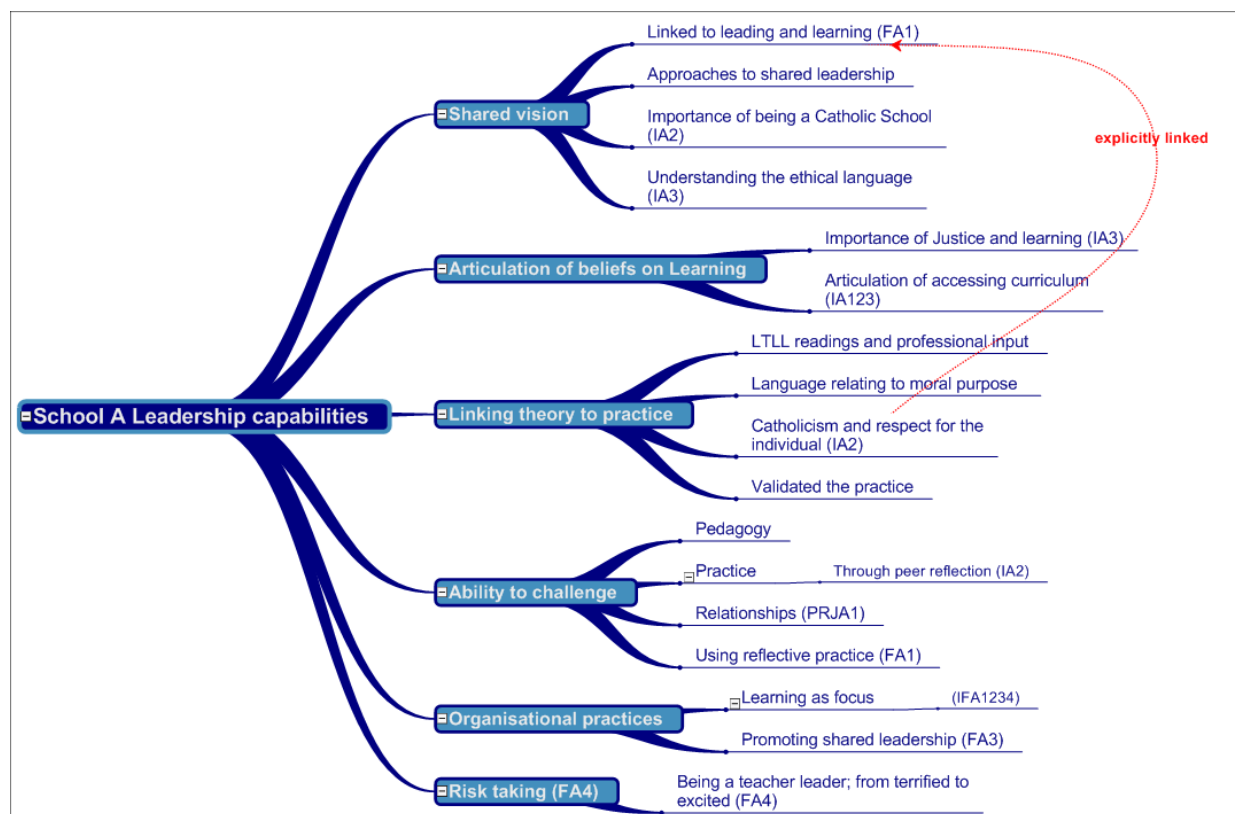
Figure 4.6   School A mind map *Leadership capabilities*

4.5.4   Leadership capabilities

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the school's initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of six capabilities of leadership being

named as significant leadership practices in School A. Each of these capabilities of leadership developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 4.6, p. 128) will now be analysed.

4.5.4.1 Visioning

The first capability identified was visioning. This was expressed by the participants during interviews as the shared and inclusive approach to professional discourse that led to a shared vision to leading and learning (IA1), through being a Catholic school (IA2), and through understanding the ethical language of the LTLL conceptual framework (IA3). The data exposed that the School A participants approached the sharing and understanding of the ethical language of the LTLL conceptual framework, by including staff in discussions and providing professional readings, using similar processes to those experienced during the LTLL plenary sessions (IA1-4). It was the principal's belief, expressed in the journal, that this assisted the whole school in being able to participate in professional discourses that led to shared beliefs on learning (PJA1).

4.5.4.2 Articulation of beliefs on learning

The second capability identified was the articulation of beliefs on learning. The LTLL final report highlighted the necessity for the School A LTLL participants to carefully and strategically plan professional learning experiences where an atmosphere of trust was developed through conversations that elicited the nature of learning in the school. The importance of relationships was again the link with how beliefs about learning were articulated. School A participants named the development of trust as being essential in immersing staff in the issues within the classroom (FRA).

Participant A1's journal indicated the planning that resulted from the initial meeting in School A, where staff gained an understanding of the LTLL conceptual framework using the reflection

tool (Appendix A) on learning, enabled the School A LTLL initiative to be implemented with a shared sense of commitment and responsibility. It also stated that a further meeting focussed on the implementation of the project initiative and a discussion of the strengths and areas for development identified in the previous meeting. This action resulted in staff feeling appreciated in participating, sharing their experiences and being included in the decision-making processes to further develop the project initiative (PJA1).

Multi sources of data also revealed that the School A participants worked through the dilemma of addressing the external pressures from the system, state government and parents regarding Basic Skills Test (BST) results through their discussions of the ethics from the LTLL conceptual framework (PJA1, WBJA, IA1-2, OA). Participant A1's journal also stated that she hoped the change in focus during staff meetings, from analysing BST results to challenging assumptions, beliefs and practices relating to learning would:

> gently erode fear (associated with BST results), tackle genuine issues and provide opportunities for genuine professional discourse and learning. These opportunities, I believe, develop a foundation for open discussion which is ethical and centred firmly upon improving learning for all students. (PJA1)

This process was not without continuous challenge, including from within the School A LTLL team. Participant A1's journal noted that one LTLL team member challenged participant A1, "asking if I was taking the 'soft option' not addressing the 'Basic Skills' issue (PJA1).

In showing understanding of her role as a leader and of the importance of staying centred on the goals of the project, participant A1 went on to note that:

> I do believe that the discussion A2 wishes to hold is part of our journey ... It is my hope that in attending to each footstep on the journey that learning increases are sustained and authentic. (PJA1)

Insights gained from participant A1's journal suggest that the sustained focus on learning, the trust shown through professional discourse, the acknowledgment of this person's opinion and

the respect shown from this leader resulted in a change for this participant in understanding the purpose of the project. As colleagues they then went on to discuss:

> The learnings around students and what prevented them from learning, the deepening of staff reflections, the identification of a child in the school who has expressed a genuine belief that they had no achievements and learning (PJA1).

The above dialogue was typical of participant A1's reflective journey where she described the relationships between herself as principal and as a member of a team being challenged to clearly articulate values, to share understandings about the purpose of learning and at the same time allow for professional discourse that challenged and respected the views of each team member.

The provision of professional readings was also a component of the School A LTLL initiative written into the project proposal and reflected in the interviews. According to the participants this provided opportunities to develop common understandings amongst staff and to provide links between theory and practice. This is discussed further in the following section linking theory to practice.

4.5.4.3 Linking theory to practice

Linking theory to practice of professional learning was the third capability identified that contributed to the development of a shared vision and understanding of leadership in School A. Any document, reading or presentation discussed during the LTLL plenary sessions was shared and discussed by the School A LTLL participants on their return to school. The important leadership capability of linking theory to practice was illustrated in interviews as: the language relating to understanding ethics (IA3), the readings and professional input from LTLL plenary sessions about the nature of Catholicism and respect for the individual (IA2), and in the validation of shared teacher practice (FA4). The LTLL project enabled School A to identify

what the essence of a Catholic school is and to distinguish how they are different from other schools in the area.

> The core of what we do here is to deal with people in a way that reflects our belief that we are all made in the likeness and image of God and every time we deal with a child, regardless how difficult the child is or what sort of problems they may have or the parents for that matter that we are really meeting Jesus in that child and the project for me has made that real. (IA2)

The provision of professional readings also meant that the staff were all exposed to the same professional learning. Participant A1 indicated during interviews that this was important in being able to challenge practice in a professional manner and is discussed in the next section, Ability to Challenge (IA1).

4.5.4.4   Ability to challenge

The next capability identified was the ability to challenge assumptions of learning and leading and were linked with the participants' understanding of the relationships that underpinned the leadership in the school (PJA1, FA). The ability to seriously engage with others in a supportive and collegial manner was a challenge that underpinned the school's initiative of teacher learning and expressed by all participants during interviews. This was also validated in A1's journal where she discussed the relationships amongst the staff as needing to be nurtured and supported to develop a climate of trust and inclusiveness where, through teacher learning, they could support each other in developing the school as a learning community. Challenges were made to the pedagogical practices within the school, in the way relationships were supported or not supported, in expectations of teacher leadership and in the way the espoused School A vision was brought to reality (PJA1).

The ability of the leaders in the school to have the courage to challenge teaching practices during class teacher visits was equalled by their vulnerability as leaders to have staff also challenge their own teaching methods (IA2). This was evidenced in discussions and reflections on the professional discourse on pedagogy and the practices associated with ensuring that

students had access to the curriculum (FA3). During interviews and focus groups the participants identified themselves as leaders and learners who were required to move beyond their comfort zone and respond in a manner that challenged the beliefs, assumptions and practices of leading and learning in the school environment (IA1-4, FA). This could be accomplished if the organisational environment also supported such practices and that the participants shared a common understanding of the values associated with collectively leading the school community. Participant A1 indicated in interviews that this was an important focus of her leadership practices (IA1).

4.5.4.5 Organisational practices

Another capability identified as contributing to the participants' understanding of leadership was the ability to implement organisational practices that supported the leading and learning culture in the school. The analysis of the data disclosed the links between empowering staff in the decision-making practices of the school with how leaders supported any concerns identified during these decision-making processes (FA). An example was provided during focus groups, identifying how the staff of School A felt empowered to raise concerns about the organisational structures within the school if there was a perception that the practices did not support student learning. In developing a culture where concerns could be raised, there was an expectation from the School A leadership team that suggestions for change would also accompany concerns. This resulted in collective responsibility to changes in the school timetable to support teachers as co-learners in classrooms, to support the focus on learning with additional support staff, in the times of daily meal breaks and in supporting practices of shared leadership across the school (FA3). The staff was empowered to make suggestions about the organisational nature of school events through practices of professional discourse as well as to contribute to make recommendations for students' learning (IA1).

4.5.4.6 Risk taking

The final capability identified was risk taking. The data alluded to the changes in the culture of the school, from being tentatively relational and hierarchical, to being strongly relational and inclusive, with shared leadership and shared decision-making processes strongly in place (IA1-4, FA, WBJA1-3, PJA1). The focus groups confirmed this view as participants discussed the changes that evolved through their risk-taking to transform the nature of leadership in the school (FA). The discussion included: risk-taking, extending beyond School A participants, to be an inclusive component of the educational change practices within the school (FA1-4). Additionally, it was identified that to expect teachers to open their classroom doors to colleagues, to be expected to share in decision-making processes, to challenge organisation practices in the school and to openly discuss teaching and learning with colleagues, required changes to the normal practices within the school environment. Initially, this created personal tensions for the School A participants as they moved beyond their comfort zones (FRA).

Participant A1's journal also explored the notion of risk-taking when it discussed the initiative's impact on teachers. Teachers also experienced tension when opening their classroom to have colleagues critique the learning of students. During feedback sessions when staff made recommendations about a student's learning, care was exercised by the facilitators of these sessions to handle the diverse personalities of staff to ensure that the language used was positive and constructive and focussed on the learning or the obstacles to the learning and not on the classroom teacher (PJA1). The LTLL project team collaborated to ensure that these concerns were addressed and the change in teacher attitude was illustrated by participant A1:

> Teachers are extremely anxious about anyone visiting their classroom to observe. Teacher's individual perceptions of themselves as competent practitioners of their craft can be fragile. (PJA1)

And then towards the middle of the project,

> This week we implemented the first half of our process class visitations. This was eagerly sought by staff. So much has been shared by the teachers sharing

their wisdom, implementing whole school initiatives, valuing their professional insights and then seeing results. There was virtually no anxiety displayed around the process. (PJA1)

In summary, the data analysis has identified six *leadership* capabilities, shared vision, articulation of beliefs, linking theory to practice, ability to challenge, organisational practices and risk taking directly linked to building trusting relationships amongst the school community members. Opportunities for professional discourse supported the notion of collective responsibility and added to the deepening understanding of the importance of nurturing relationships. In School A the values associated with being a Catholic school and understandings of justice and common good impacted on the implementation of the school initiative. At the beginning of the LTLL project, the School A participants were asked to complete the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A). This process also provided evidence of their collective understanding of leadership in the school.

4.6   The LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool

The data collated from School A's written responses on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) explores eight domains relating to leadership. These are indicated on the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) and include aspects of distributed responsibility, evidenced-based practice, professional learning, sustainability, culture and community, change management, external networking and capabilities.

School A participants described examples of leadership in the responses on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* (Appendix A) through examples of distributed responsibility for learning, shared understandings of learning from teachers and leaders and through the use of language that showed 'support' for learning across the school. The practices that supported a shared understanding of leadership from using the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* were: time given to collaborate and to discuss, the clarification of key

concepts named as leadership and the sharing of evidence to support professional dialogue (RTA).

When completing the reflection tool, the School A participants did so as a group. Aligned with the School A LTLL initiative, the process was also inclusive of the whole school and evolved through collaboration, and by challenging beliefs, assumptions and practices about leading and learning. Participant A1's journal indicated that the School A participants revisited the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* (Appendix A) as they refined the processes of decision-making associated with class teacher visitations and the concluding conversations regarding student welfare. The journal noted that, at the early stage of the School A project, parents were not involved in the processes of learning in the school. However, after revisiting the LTLL conceptual framework, the staff acknowledged that they needed to address this area of partnership. This was supported by participant A1's journal data which noted:

> We have begun to believe that the involvement of parents is essential to transforming learning outcomes, so as a result of the launch of *Wrap Around Kids* we will seek parents' views on how fostering partnerships around how children learn can change the lives of their children. (PJA1)

The focus on learning was continuously evolving and now actively involved parents and others from the community.

The completed *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) indicated that parents, community members, and staff were encouraged, as leaders in the school, to engage and share in decision-making as they collectively nurtured the development of authentic learning experiences in the school community. This leads to understanding the leadership practices of participants that developed authentic learning in School A and these are discussed in the responses to the second research question below and outlined in Table 4.3 (p. 137).

4.7   Research Question Two

What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?

The themes emanating from the School A data analysis for the second research question "What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?" are presented in the following table (Table 4.3) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership and its relationship to learning. There were five main themes indentified in the data that explored leadership practices that supported the development of learning in School A. These practices were underpinned by the shared visioning of learning in the School A community. These were ethics, excellence, building capacity, community, and organisation practices related to learning and are visually represented below in Figure 4.7 (p. 138) which represents the root branch *Learning* from the School A mind map (Appendix K).

Research Question Two: What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?	
4.7.1 Learning	4.7.1.1 Ethics
	4.7.1.2 The value of excellence
	4.7.1.3 Building capacity
	4.7.1.4 Community
	4.7.1.5 Organisation practices related to learning

Table 4.3   School A Responses to Research Question Two

The data from the School A mind map are analysed in the main theme *learning* and are linked to the themes relationships and values, discussed in section 4.5.1 and section 4.5.3 respectively in the responses to research question one. The smaller branches emerging from the learning theme include ethics and the value of excellence and are shown in the right hand column in Table 4.3 and are discussed in this section in relation to learning.
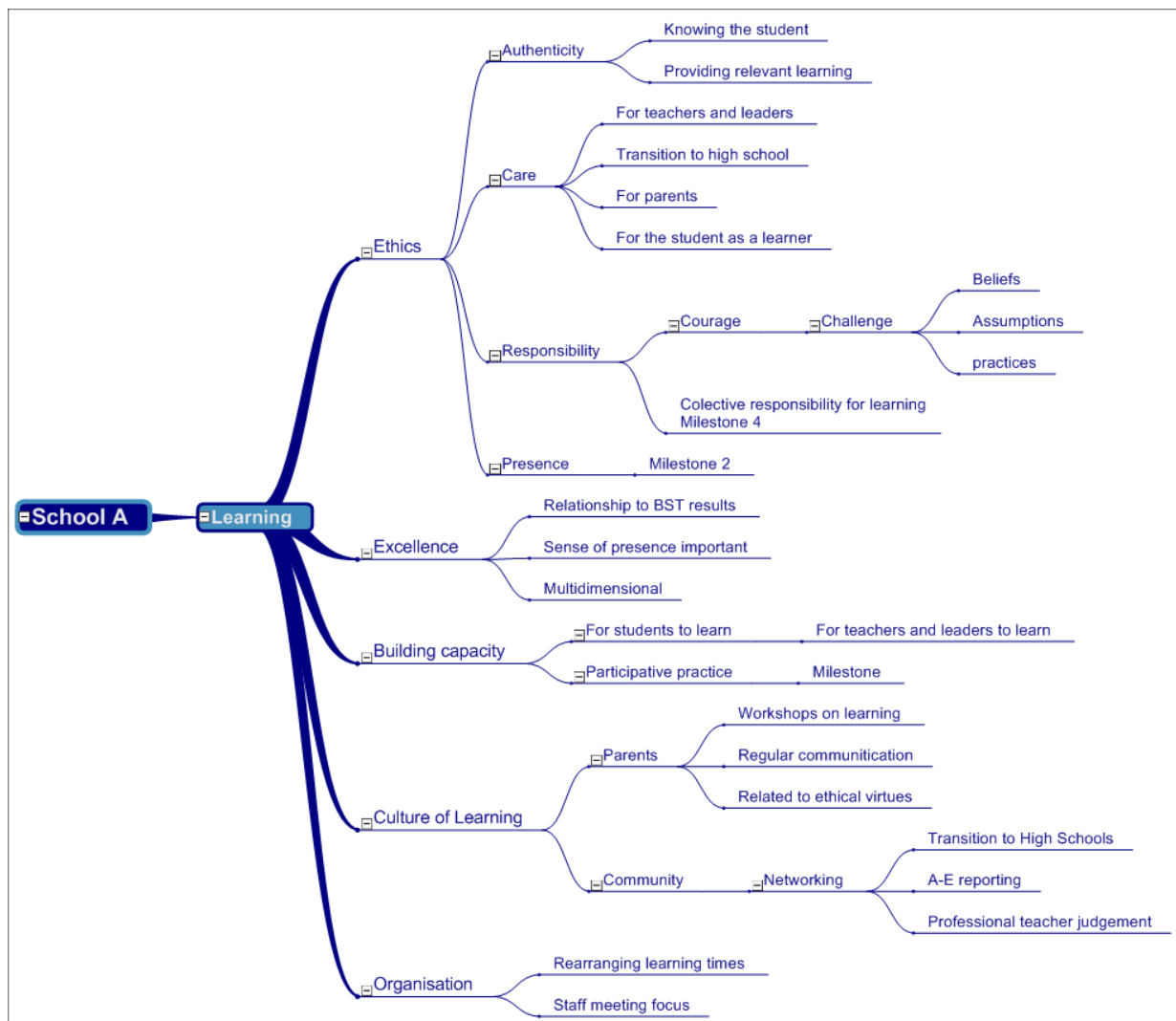
Figure 4.7   **School A mind map** *Learning*

4.7.1   Learning

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the school's LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of five dimensions of *learning* being named as significant leadership practices in School A. Each of these components of *learning* developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 4.7) will now be analysed.

These components were not separate but intrinsically linked and, as expressed in interviews, deepened the shared understanding of learning across the school community (IA1-4). The data is in accord with the consistency of these leadership practices across the school community, relying on the collective responsibility of staff to understand the ethics of presence, authenticity

and responsibility (Starratt, 2004) and the ethic of care (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2001) with the links to the values espoused by the school. Acknowledging the research from Starratt (2004) and making links with the values of common good and Catholicity, participant A1 wrote, "Authentic learning is not just about taking new knowledge and skills for oneself but more about giving of one's unique humanity to others and to the community" (PJA1).

4.7.1.1 Ethics

The first component of the learning theme identified in the mind mapping of the data was *ethics*. These were expressed by the participants during interviews as the ethics of presence, authenticity, responsibility and care (IA1-4). The ethics of presence, authenticity and responsibility (Starratt, 2004) are explained extensively in chapter one, section 1.5.2 and also relate to the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13).

4.7.1.1.1 Ethic of authenticity

The ethic of authenticity was repeatedly discussed by all participants in relation to teachers knowing the students in their care (IA1-4, FA). Participant A1 discussed the ethic of authenticity as being important to understanding the beliefs, values and principles that underpinned her daily work as principal. The focus group data also strongly supported the participants' desire to understand the nature of authenticity in relation to their leadership and how this impacted on the practices of learning in the school (FA). School A LTLL participants discussed (OA) passionately, the notion of aligning their values, beliefs and principles of leading and learning with the organisational practices in the school, the relationships within the school community and with each other after participating in an LTLL plenary session delivered by Duignan (2006).

4.7.1.1.2   Ethic of presence

The final report concluded that the ethics of presence was considered by participants to be a significant dimension of behaviour evidenced by staff in the changes to learning across the community and this was further illustrated during focus group discussions (FRA, FA). For example, when the school initiative was modified from observing teachers to observing students, "it took on definite traits of the ethic of presence, where staff became more fully present to the students' needs" (FRA). The School A participants believed that the observations of the students would assist them in planning more authentic opportunities for the students to develop and grow into more capable human beings. As one participant said,

> ... you can build on and increase the learning environment for the whole school by being present to the children. Our project has been built around 'presence' and because of this we believed that authenticity and responsibility would come from this. (IA3)

Leadership practices that supported the ethics of presence were discussed during focus groups as coming from teachers reflecting on the meaning of presence and were evidenced in many ways in the school community (FA). In particular, the data noted the ethic of presence when leaders: acknowledged teachers' anxieties during class visits, listened to parents' concerns, explored ways to develop pedagogies to better serve classroom effectiveness, listened and participated during professional conversations, and modified school organisational practices (FA1). The ethic of presence appeared to be closely aligned with the ethic of responsibility which was spoken about consistently during interviews and in the journals (IA1-4, WBJA, PJA).

4.7.1.1.3   Ethic of responsibility

Participant A1's journal notes indicated throughout the LTLL project that the ethic of responsibility was seen when teachers were collectively responsible for all students throughout the school, rather than the traditional focus of being only responsible for those students in their class. Participants stated that this was particularly powerful when staff observed a student in

one classroom, then discussed the learning as a staff, resulting in every teacher sharing the responsibility to develop the learning program for the student (IA1-4). The positive outcome of teacher learning through classroom visits was also noted during transition from year-to-year, when students with special needs had already developed a relationship with the teaching staff and the staff had a shared understanding of the student. These students settled quickly into the new school year, with the learning program already in place and the teacher already knowing the student as a learner. The impact of the teacher learning was noted:

> The momentum of learning in classrooms is now being maintained because staff are present to how children learn from day-to-day and from year-to-year. Prevention of crisis has ensured that the entire fabric of the learning which takes place in the school is protected. (FRA)

Recognising the importance of being responsible leaders for the students, one participant stated, "This project has heightened our awareness that our students are not only learners; that we are also responsible to them as human beings and as citizens" (WBJA2).

The focus groups supported the notion that *learning* was viewed as a collaborative venture across the school community. If those students with special needs had relevant and meaningful access to the curriculum, this resulted in other class members having access to the curriculum because their *learning* was not continuously disrupted by inappropriate behaviour (FA). The data continuously referred to the ethics of authenticity, presence and responsibility and the ethic of care (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001) as forming the foundation of the culture of learning within the school (FA, WBJA, PJA1, IA1-4).

4.7.1.1.4   Ethic of care

The relationship between the ethic of care (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001) and the ethic of presence (Starratt, 2004) was expressed in the final report as contributing to "transformational leadership that increased the capacity of the school to continuously improve" and was seen by staff as a collective responsibility (FRA).

Parents were also significant receivers of the care shown by the staff in the school. By the completion of the project, the web-based journal highlighted aspects of parental involvement in student learning, stating that all staff liaised with parents at length about the learning of their children and how they could assist the parents in overcoming health difficulties that impacted on learning (WBJA). The ethic of care extended to having health officials visit the school to assist parents who were unable to provide this service for their children and was one of the reasons that the school leaders introduced the *Wrap Around Kids* (WAK) program. This was also validated in participant A1's journal.

The ethic of care was a characteristic demonstrated to all staff and students in the school and was named during focus group discussions as a particular ethic that was significant to members of this community (FA). Additionally, as noted in the web-based journal, the ethic of care,

> is present in the growth of the community as a united and relational unit; it is evident in how classrooms are managed, even in simple changes of seating arrangements, it has meant valuing contributions equally, respecting anxieties, supporting initiatives, being flexible, it has meant allowing staff to be leaders (WBJA1).

The collective nature of the ethic of care was also aligned with practices that demonstrated the ethic of responsibility, as discussed by Starratt (2004).

The data contributing to the element of *ethics* from the School A mind map (Appendix K) linked closely to the theme of values. The value of justice was discussed in the previous section (4.8) and outlined the participants' understanding of enabling every student to access the curriculum. The value of justice is closely linked to value of excellence, discussed below.

4.7.1.2   The value of excellence

The second component of the *learning* theme identified in the mind mapping of the data was the value of excellence. During interviews it was revealed that at the beginning of the LTLL project, the staff discussed the BST results and through an ensuing rigorous debate that they

collectively came to the conclusion that "literacy and numeracy scores, whilst extremely important, were not at the core of where we touched these people's lives" (IA1). However, it was also determined through these conversations that School A needed a whole school approach to Numeracy and Literacy (IA1-2, FA). The initial teacher learning sessions of class visitations were designed under this premise.

Participant A1 noted that, as the school initiative began to be implemented, the importance of excellence was not evaluated in terms of the BST Test results but in the ways students could access the curriculum (PJA1). The teacher learning focus was to "assist the child to access education and to make sure that what was happening in the classroom was effective" (IA1). In this way School A participants were attempting to provide opportunities through the school initiative of teacher learning for genuine professional discourse in the School "which is ethical and centred firmly on improving learning for all students" (PJA1).

Emerging from the data was the focus of the moral purpose of learning rather than the explicit nature of excellence shown in the results of test scores. This required a mind shift for some teachers in School A from focusing on results to focussing on the development of the whole child (PJA1). It was participant A1's belief that teachers and leaders in School A were challenged to respond differently to the learning needs of the students, and to build their own capacity as learners in the school community (PJA1).

4.7.1.3 The capacity of staff

The third component identified was linked to *the capacity of staff.* The final report revealed relationships between the leaders of School A and the teachers required them to demonstrate credibility through appropriate modelling, and explicitly communicating and participating in learning beyond the classroom. School A participants believed that this type of participatory practice in leadership impacted on how learning was viewed in the classroom and how they

organised the school and its resources (FRA). The introduction of whole school approaches to pedagogy required many teachers to move outside their comfort zone to try new strategies and also to take risks with their own learning. In School A, learning was continuously discussed as a regular component of meetings. These events led to an increased understanding of learning and "significant developments in the staff's understanding of and attitude towards leadership" (FRA) and contributed to developing staff capacity. Increasing the capacity of staff to participate in leading and learning meant that at "School A leadership had become a shared enterprise, a distributed responsibility which is inclusive and empowering of all" (FRA).

4.7.1.4   The culture of learning

The culture of learning is the fourth component identified and is divided into two sections. Firstly, by developing the culture of learning with parents and then secondly, developing a culture of learning in the context of the broader community.

4.7.1.4.1   Parents

This first section discusses the role of parents in developing a culture of learning in School A. Participant A1 indicated during discussions that parents were involved in all new programs introduced in the school and were invited to contribute to discussions on the LTLL project. The LTLL final report indicated that the School A staff organised workshops on learning for the parents which included understanding the elements of the *You Can Do It* (YCDI) program. Behaviours relating to the social-emotional-well-being of students were identified in participant A1's journal as behaviours that many parents would also benefit from understanding. Therefore, parents were invited to participate in workshops directly relating to this program. The data also reported that the *Wrap Around Kids* (WAK) program also directly involved parents in the decision-making processes related to the learning of their children. This program was introduced in consultation with health professionals in the community to assist parents in understanding the importance of identifying health issues that impact on how

children learn and in working with the school staff to overcome many of the obstacles associated with these issues.

4.7.1.4.2   The community

Linked to the fourth component of the *learning* theme was *the culture of learning* and the links to community. The use of journaling by the participants provided considerable data that supported learning in the community. Leadership practices that supported authentic learning also extended into the broader community and often related to the ethics of responsibility and care (WBJA2). When a number of parents were unable to follow up on medical referrals because of insufficient financial means, participant A1 approached local service organisations to make monetary donations to fund these appointments. School A have a number of students who fail to attend school because of the "lack of organisation at home, lack of importance placed on the value of education by parents, and dysfunctional domestic situations, including violence and drugs (WBJA2). Elderly parishioners volunteered their services as drivers to assist with driving the parish bus to collect students for school. Education in this community was seen by these parishioners as an important dimension of moving beyond the poverty cycle that was reflected in many areas of the community (PJA1).

Additionally, participant A1's journal also explained the decision-making processes related to the Federal Government's compliance agenda of *Plain English Reporting.* School A participants approached this dilemma using a similar framework to their response to the *BST* results. They revisited the staff's understanding of moral purpose using the LTLL conceptual framework as a tool, and addressed the issues of A-E reporting with student learning as the focus. The staff took the whole school approach of developing consistent assessment tasks from within the school and networked with other schools in the region to develop assessment tasks based on consistent teacher judgement. They involved parents and teachers in the conversations and acknowledged the relationship between reporting, curriculum and

assessment through the professional conversations with staff across the region. The journal also indicated that a whole school collaborative approach resulted in School A taking a significant step in supporting surrounding schools by initiating and giving leadership to the newly formed *Lakes Assessment and Reporting Initiative.* Leadership practices that influenced colleagues to make a difference to the learning environment and to the students were seen in a multitude of different ways in the school and beyond the school community. The emerging themes also contribute to leaders understanding the importance of providing supporting organisational structures to learning in the school community.

4.7.1.5 Organisational practices associated with learning

The final component identified was the *organisational practices* associated with learning. Organisational structures that supported teachers in knowing more about the student as a learner and understanding the obstacles that were preventing the student from learning were valued by those in the school and discussed during interviews (IA1-4). An example was expressed as the inclusion of programs supporting student wellbeing, as these were considered important in assisting teachers to know the student as a learner. Further, the web-based journal indicated that the *Wrap Around Kids* program involved health professionals, teachers and parents coming together for round table discussions and the *You Can Do It* program required training for staff and parents. The class visits required teachers being replaced by other trained professionals and the morning breakfast program required rostering staff with additional duties. All these events required reorganising the practices within the school to ensure that they were successfully and efficiently implemented and that teachers had time to deepen their understanding of the programs' relationship to learning (WBJA3).

Notes on the web-based journal continued to discuss the implementation of these programs and the impact on the normal organisational structures of the school day. However the School A participants decided that "being more proactive as a leader, to find, assist and support solutions

to problems meant better outcomes for students, involved everyone in genuine decision-making and has meant allowing staff to be leaders" (WBJA1). A significant insight, indicated on participant A1's journal, was the prominence of the ethics shown through the relationships nurtured between and beyond the members of the school community, and of acknowledging the close links between leading and learning in the School A community (PJA1). This led to the School A participants' consensus that "authentic leadership was also not an easy option" (PJA1) and that they had a responsibility to utilise the talents and expertise of the community to develop the learning for everyone and to ensure that the organisational practices of the school supported the dimensions of learning being explored.

In summary, leadership practices that emerged through the data synthesis and formed the smaller branches in the mind map that appeared to nurture authentic learning in School A were, the commitment to support learning through modifications to the organisational practices within the school, the practices in the school that allowed for building teacher capacity through teacher learning, collaboration, and an appreciation and encouragement of teacher voice that contributed to shared understandings of learning, reflection on practice and the inclusion of the wider community in contributing to the learning culture. Additionally, the following relational characteristics were determined by the participants through the data analysis of the School A mind map (Appendix K), as being significant in the leader's actions in nurturing authentic learning. The development of a trusting environment, particularly displayed through the ethic of presence by the leaders, a high level of honesty, personal integrity and a genuine sense of care for the all those in the community and in particular to the students and their parents, and the collective responsibility of staff to students' learning in the school were all identified as being significant components of developing principles of authentic learning (FA, FRA, WBJA, TRA). Further, a milestone noted in the LTLL final report from School A was that the project had led to deep learning about how shared leadership has the potential to improve learning

outcomes for students and leads to exploring the participants' responses to research question three.

4.8   Research Question Three

How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

The themes emanating from the School A data analysis of the mind map for the third research question "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership" are presented in the following table (Table 4.4) and are closely linked to the themes identified in responding to research question one, referring to the participants' understanding of leading and to research question two referring to learning. The themes are presented in Table 4.4 to illustrate the participants' understanding of shared and distributed leadership.

Research Question Three:	
How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?	
4.8.1 Shared Leadership	4.8.1.1 Collaboration
	4.8.1.2 Relationships
	4.8.1.3 Learning

Table 4.4   School A Responses to Research Question Three

The data collated from the theme *shared leadership* from School A participants are discussed below and include the components of collaboration, relationships and learning. These components, developed through the use of the mind map (Figure 4.8, p. 149), will now be analysed.
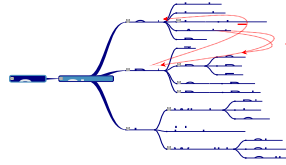
Figure 4.8   School A mind map *Shared Leadership*

The data supported the notion of School A leaders responding to shared and distributed

leadership through collaboration about students and their *learning*. The value placed on

nurturing r*elationships* and the ethics expressed in developing the culture of learning were seen

as an important component of the practices of shared leadership in School A and has

previously been alluded to in answering the first research question on understanding the nature

of leadership in School A.

4.8.1   Shared Leadership

The School A final LTLL report described the changes in the staff's understanding and

attitudes towards leadership as a milestone. *Leadership* was described as a shared enterprise, a

distributed responsibility which is inclusive and empowering of all (FRA). The data suggests

that the leaders in School A responded to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership

collegially. The School A LTLL final report indicated that the success of their project centred

on the collaborative behaviour of the leaders in the school and in the commitment to the whole

school approach to pedagogy. An example of a teacher growing as a leader, as a result of the

inclusive nature of shared leadership in the school, was written in participant A1's journal;

Participant A4 had grown significantly in her ability to be involved in shared leadership, where she felt empowered, going from being adamant that she would not speak, to being affirmed and needing to share the transformation of one of the children since the project beginning. (PJA1)

The first component of the *shared leadership* theme identified in the mind mapping of the data was collaboration.

4.8.1.1 Collaboration

Collaboration was evidenced in the professional dialogue which fostered teachers engaging more frequently and more spontaneously in general conversation around the core business: quality teaching and authentic learning (WBJA1) and the courage to have and use initiative, the sharing of ideas and expertise, and all people on staff seeing themselves as leaders in the school (FA1). One participant wrote that School A's project recognised that teachers working collaboratively are best placed to make decisions about quality teaching and learning (WBJA3).

The project proposal noted that the School A LTLL initiative was designed on the premise of teachers collaborating and was evidenced in the practice of teachers opening their doors, sharing their practice and the reflections and discussions of whole school staff meetings (PPA). Staff members shared the responsibility to honestly engage, challenge and support each other as learners. It also meant that they were required to report the data objectively and to lead the various discussions and recommendations that resulted from the class visits in which they collectively participated (FA3).

Participant A1 noted in the journal that, since the implementation of the LTLL initiative, the School A participants were more collaborative in their decision-making which resulted in a "multi-ethic" approach to dilemmas. Prior to the LTLL project teachers would be dealing with issues largely on their own. During the LTLL project, participant A1 believed that they had

"finally made the dramatic shift from "I" to "we", so the educator is now often the whole staff, and, at times, the family. Decision-making, is often done in advance of a problem and recommendations are the result of collective responsibility. (PJA1)

4.8.1.2   Relationships

The second component identified was *relationships*. The web-based journal indicated that the discussion on shared and distributed leadership centred on the importance of nurturing *relationships* from two levels of understanding from the leaders in School A, that is professionally and personally (WBJA2). Professionally leaders showed respect and trust in members of the school community to engage in professional discourse about student learning: in the participatory practice of teacher learning, in sharing a common understanding of the purpose of the school initiative, in the collective responsibility for the care and learning for all students, in contributing to decision-making processes, in shaping policy, and through reflecting on their mission as educators in the Catholic school.

Further, the web-based journal noted that, at the personal level, the participants from School A were challenged to nurture the relationships with members of the community through actions of empathy, sensitivity, challenge, inclusivity and the ethics of presence, responsibility and care (WBJA2). These personal attributes were evidenced in the collaborative culture of School A which also fostered the nurturing of *relationships* within the community. The nurturing of *relationsh*ips was explicitly linked to the ethics of responsibility and presence (Starratt, 2004), during interviews and in journals, as already discussed in section 4.11.

The synthesis of the data supported the importance of the ethic of responsibility as evidenced in the relationships formed with teachers, students, family and the community health organisations. The School A LTLL final report revealed that, at the school level, the responsibility for students accessing the curriculum meant that staff needed to fully understand

how the students' health difficulties impacted on their learning and the consequences that evolved from these difficulties (FRA). It was participant A1's belief, that in effect this resulted in parents being responsible for supporting the school staff by asking questions from health providers about the diagnosis of their child's condition and asking for their assistance in helping the school staff to enable their child to access learning (PJA1). Participant A1's journal continuously refers to the ethic of presence to the families, students and the teaching staff by the leaders in the school as resulting in an increased level of communication and collaboration, which developed relationships and had a positive effect on the learning outcomes for the student (PJA1).

Participant A1 also suggested that the teachers and leaders in School A would pursue referrals from health providers to support students in the transition process from class-to-class each year and from the primary school to the high school (PJA1). There was a change in the pastoral care and discipline policy that reflected the proactive approach to care rather than the previous reactive approach: prevention of harm (WBJA). A recurring theme from the data was the shared responsibility of school members placed on *relationships* that assisted student *learning* (IA1-4, FA, WBJA).

4.8.1.3 Learning

The third component identified was *learning*. Focus groups also described a whole school shift in responsibility towards ownership of student welfare and its effects on *learning*. The collaborative approach to *learning* was explored through the shared vision, understanding and purpose of a common pedagogy within the school, collective wisdom was valued where staff shared their ideas and expertise; staff were viewed as leaders and learners and supported in the actions that shared the leadership responsibility across the school community (PJA1). It was no longer only a class teacher's responsibility to attend to a student's needs but a whole school responsibility. For example participants A1 and A4 noted:

... with this project it's become very much a sense that when the whole staff makes a recommendation, the whole staff follows through on the recommendation (FA1),

... the same sort of philosophy here that student Z is not just my responsibility, she's everyone's responsibility. (FA4)

In summary, observations and data analysis concluded that, from a relational perspective, School A appeared to symbolise characteristics of *shared leadership* through respect, dialogue and collegiality, trust and the ethics of care, responsibility and presence AO, IA1-4, FA). From an action perspective, the data established evidence for processes of *shared leadership* in discussions and presentations during professional learning, through involvement with community members and during classroom visits. The principal's journal authenticated many practices of shared leadership during staff meetings that focused on student observations being co-ordinated from a distributed responsibility approach, with key people involved in the observation leading the reflection and discussion. The responsibility for the student then moved beyond the conversation of the meeting to filter into the classroom, the playground, to parents and to health providers (PJA1, WBJA). The preceding discussion has alluded to the practices of reflection and has spoken extensively about the participants' understanding of professional discourse in relation to the School A LTLL initiative and leads to the fourth research question (FA, IA1-4, PJA1, WBJA).

4.9   Research Question Four

How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

The themes emanating from the School A data analysis for the fourth research question, "How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?" are presented in the following table (Table 4.5, p. 154) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants'

understanding of authentic leading and learning. The data collated from the mind map is analysed in five components of *reflection and dialogue.* These are professional discourse, shared leadership, decision-making, learning and practices and are represented on the smaller branches of the mind map (Figure 4.9). The mind map for *reflection and dialogue* (Figure 4.9) is interdependent of the School A mind map (Appendix K) representing the nine themes outlined in chapter three, the methodology chapter.

Research Question Four:
How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

4.9.1 **Reflection and Dialogue**	4.9.1.1 Professional discourse 4.9.1.2 Shared leadership 4.9.1.3 Decision-making 4.9.1.4 Learning 4.9.1.5 Practices

Table 4.5   School A Responses to Research Question Four

The data collated in the mind map *reflection and dialogue* (Figure 4.9) from the School A participants are discussed in the next section. The data were extracted from the sources that contributed to the nine themes in answering the previous research questions and were synthesised as the participants referred to the practice of *reflection and dialogue* in contextualising their understanding of leadership and learning (AI, PPA, FRA, RTA).
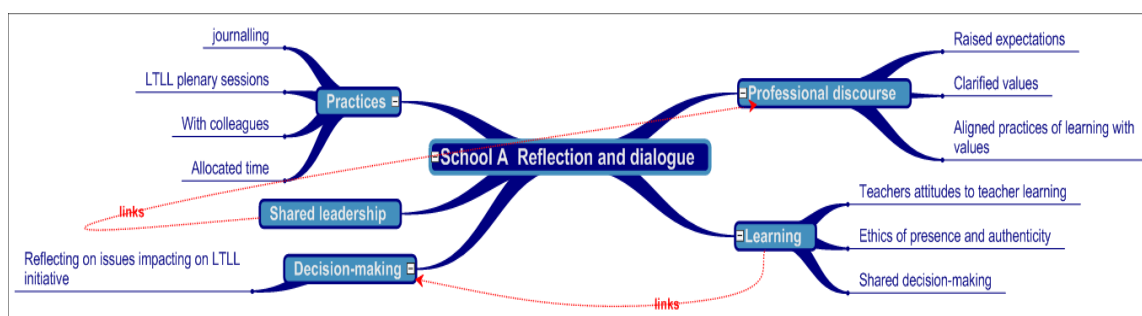
Figure 4.9   School A Mind map *Reflection and Dialogue*

4.9.1 Reflection and Dialogue

Responses from the School A participants regarding the nature of the LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project lead to the identification of five dimensions of reflection and dialogue being named as significant reflective practices in School A. These are professional discourse, shared leadership, leading, learning and practices and each component developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 4.9, p. 154) will now be analysed.

4.9.1.1 Professional discourse

The first component identified was *professional discourse* and related specifically to dialogue about teaching and learning and student welfare. The importance of *professional discourse* was named by the School A participants as being essential to cultivating a learning environment where the decision-making evolved from an ethical basis and was also reflected in community decision-making (IA1). *Professional discourse* was referred to during staff meetings, with colleagues from the LTLL project, with colleagues from other schools in the region and with community members in relation to the special programs organised in the school with a focus on the ethical responsibilities that were required for catering for the diversity of the students (FA, FRA, WBJ, PJA1). The importance of professional dialogue was noted in the language used to understanding the moral purpose of education and, specifically, the ethics of responsibility, presence and authenticity (Starratt, 2004). The language used to discuss the LTLL conceptual framework provided opportunities for School A participants to deepen their understanding of aligning the practices of primary education with the school values and principles (PJA1, IA4).

4.9.1.2 Shared Leadership

The second component identified was *shared leadership*. The nature of responding to shared and distributed leadership was explored through *reflection and dialogue* with other leaders during the LTLL project plenary sessions and during School A leadership team meetings. This impacted on the participants' understanding of authentic leading and learning by deepening

their understanding of leadership and the importance of sharing the leadership across the school (IA1-4, PJA1).

An example was provided by participant A4 who was initially challenged by participating in practices of *shared leadership*. Through reflection, dialogue and participation in leadership practices in the school and during the LTLL plenary sessions, she noted the changes that had taken place in her attitude to leading and teaching:

> I suppose for me personally I was terrified of doing this. I am an infant's teacher and haven't done a lot of study. I sort of went into this feeling that I wasn't academic and that I would be out of my league. I guess it has given me a lot more confidence. It has been really good for me personally and professionally. I have really grown as a person. (IA4)

This teacher completed the LTLL project and then moved to another school in a leadership position, something she would not have considered prior to the project. In recognising the commitment of the staff to participate in the School A LTLL initiative, participant A1 also noted that "School A was continually blessed by the generosity of all staff in giving their time, their preparedness to engage in professional dialogue even though it challenged them" (PJA1).

4.9.1.3 Decision-making

The third component identified was *decision-making* and related to the leadership given to the issues that impacted on the School A LTLL initiative. The issue of focussing on increasing student academic performance measured by the Basic Skills Tests was reflected on continuously during the early phases of the School A initiative and the associated *professional discourse* was often rigorous (IA1-4) in discerning if designing an initiative that focussed on increasing Basic Skills Test scores was appropriate for the students in School A. An outcome of *reflection and dialogue* on the moral purpose of teaching amongst the School A participants resulted in a change in focus in the LTLL project proposal from developing the students' skills in answering test questions to focussing on developing the students as learners (WBJA). The

decision-making skills required of the participants engaged them in developing a shared

understanding of moral purpose with a collective responsibility to learning (PJA1, FA).

4.9.1.4 Learning

The fourth component identified was *learning.* At the school level the impact of *reflection and*

dialogue with colleagues could be seen in the transformation of the teachers' attitudes to class

visits and in the level of professional discourse generated through the commitment to focus on

improving outcomes for students. This was evidenced by participant A1,

> data collected were perceptive and detailed, resulting in deep discussion around
> possible solutions and recommendations. New understandings of the students
> became evident, resulting in greater levels of empathy and presence to their
> needs. (PJA1)

4.9.1.5 Practices

The final component identified was the explicit *practices* of *reflection and dialogue*

implemented in the school community. The extensive use of journaling by the School A

participants provided valuable evidence that reflected their understanding of leadership and the

links to learning in the school community (WBJ, PJA1). Journal notes were revisited by the

LTLL participants and further discussed in deepening participants' understanding of leadership

and learning (FA, PJA1). *Reflection and dialogue* fostered in professional learning

opportunities also recognised and valued the knowledge, expertise and values that every

member of the School A project team brought to the meetings (WBJA2). Participant A1 noted

that the sharing time with colleagues from across New South Wales involved in the project was

"really productive and interesting" (PJA1). The professional dialogue with colleagues from

other school systems during the LTLL plenary sessions highlighted for the School A

participants the unique nature of their small school, the challenges associated with school size

and, in particular, their leadership ability to develop a school culture of learning.

During the final LTLL celebratory session, participant A1 spoke about the experiences of

reflection and dialogue resulting in creating an atmosphere in the school where collaboration,

inclusiveness, trust and respect were valued characteristics of the learning community. The opportunity to engage in professional dialogue about learning with colleagues raised expectations about learning, clarified values, challenged assumptions and developed feelings of collegiality, while at the same time provided opportunities for shared decision-making about learning (OA1).

In summary, School A was involved in a project that appeared to change the focus of *learning* within the school community. The data suggest that the success of their LTLL initiative to engage teachers in *professional dialogue* about *learning* through class visits relied on a commitment to develop and sustain healthy *relationships* and to build the capacity of all members of the school community. The continuous dialogue focussing on student wellbeing and *learning*, and the understandings gained through knowing the child as a learner, impacted on the provision of authentic *learning* experiences for the students. The staff showed that they were empowered to share in the decision-making related to student learning and that collegiality was fostered through a whole school pedagogical approach to *learning*.

A synthesis of the data also divulged that the nature of the School A LTLL initiative and the *issue* of being a small school resulted in the School A participants developing a deeper understanding of the importance of the moral purpose of education. The professional learning provided through the LTLL project supported the School A participants in understanding the nature and importance of the *ethics* of responsibility, presence and care, thereby impacting upon their understanding of the ethic of authenticity. It was participant A1's belief, confirmed in the journal, that knowing themselves as leaders and learners, helped them develop an awareness of how they lead others in the school community and the impact they had on developing and nurturing positive and healthy *relationships* amongst the community members (PJA1).

CHAPTER FIVE - DATA ANALYSIS SCHOOL B

5.0   Introduction

The previous chapter outlined how the sources of data are identified in answering the research

questions. This chapter represents the nature of the School B initiative and the participants'

involvement in the LTLL project. The format is illustrated in Table 4.1.

5.1   SCHOOL B: Situational Analysis

School B is situated in the western suburbs of Sydney in the state of New South Wales. It is a

primary school of approximately 375 students from low to middle socio-economic income

families. The school annual report revealed that there is a high percentage of students who

come from homes where English is their second language. During interviews, participant B1

stated that early in 2005 they had begun developing a new Vision statement to produce a

shared approach to pedagogy explicitly addressing the learning needs of students who had

English as their second language. Participant B1 stated that, the research of Hayes (2004) in

communities experiencing high levels of educational disadvantage and student disengagement;

where English is the students' second language, found that the development of a whole school

approach to pedagogy with learning as the central activity produced more equitable effects

(IB1). This formed the basis of the school LTLL project titled: "School wide local pedagogy

for cohesive learning opportunities".

Participant B1 reported that the previous five years had seen the school embrace curriculum

changes focussed on the Key Learning Areas of Religion, English and Mathematics (IB1). This

was reflected in the implementation of several data-driven projects including *REaL Maths*,

Focus on Learning and *Basic Skills Test Data analysis*. Additionally, to continue the

momentum of the curriculum changes, the leadership of the school initiated small project

committees, where staff took on roles of committee management (FRB). This was evidenced

by the Budget committee, Learning Matrix Team, Sport committee, Liturgy committees, KLA committees, OH & S committee and the Kindergarten Transition Project committee, known as the Focus on Learning committee. Participant B1 saw the committees as the beginning of implementing processes of distributed leadership (IB1) as espoused by Elmore (2000). This was also substantiated in the School B LTLL final report.

The School B LTLL final report stated that there were six LTLL project participants from School B, three of whom attended the LTLL project plenary sessions. The LTLL project team consisted of executive members and general teachers (1 infants and 1 primary). The Special Education teacher was also recruited specifically to ensure a special needs focus for the project (FRB). Five of the six teachers involved in the LTLL project were also involved in a similar project being implemented by the school known as the *Explorer Schools'* project *(IB1)*. Participant B1 was a member of both project teams (OB). The title of this project was also *"School Wide Local Pedagogy for Cohesive Learning Opportunities"*.

5.2   The Nature of School B's Initiative

The draft project proposal reported that, School B aimed to create consistency of pedagogical practice between and across classrooms by implementing structures for staff to develop a shared understanding of pedagogy, in an effort to maximise student learning (PPB). The final report also indicated that all staff members K-6, full and part time, were involved in the *Explorer Schools'* project which immersed them in extensive professional development of the New South Wales Quality Teacher Framework (QTF). This project formed part of the LTLL project initiative in School B (FRB).

The model of pedagogy presented by the QTF has three dimensions that represent classroom practices linked to improved student outcomes (State of NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003). The first of these dimensions is centred on pedagogy that promotes high levels

of intellectual quality. This pedagogy requires active construction of substantive concepts that include student engagement in higher order thinking through the teaching and learning strategies. The second dimension of the QTF is pedagogy that establishes a high quality learning environment where students and teachers work productively in an environment clearly focused on learning. The third and final dimension is pedagogy that generates significance, by connecting students with learning that is meaningful and important to their lives. Each of these three dimensions is further defined and supported by six elements.

Participant B1 reported during interviews that, in January 2006, the staff attended the *Pedagogy in Practice* Conference in Newcastle, New South Wales and that the infusion of productive pedagogies from the Quality Teacher Framework (QTF) was to be a significant component of the school's overall direction for teaching and learning (IB1). It was participant B1's belief that the model is based on empirical and theoretical research, showing how teaching and school improvement can promote improved student academic learning outcomes (IB1). Fred Newmann and his colleagues (1996) synthesised many of the elements in the intellectual quality dimension of the framework, into a unified construct, known as "Authentic Pedagogy". Further referencing of the QTF can be found in *An Annotated Bibliography* from the NSW Department of Education and Training (2003).

Participant B1 reported that, School B used two tools to collect relevant data in an effort to determine the extent to which learning was occurring throughout the school (IB1). The first tool utilized was the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* on *Learning* (Appendix A), and this was to provide evidence for how learning was being transformed across the school. Another component reviewed on *Learning* was the element of pedagogy and was described in the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* as the process by which individuals acquire new skills and understandings by organising information according to conceptual frameworks and by recognising patterns and relationships (RTB).

Participant B1 further explained that the second tool used to determine the extent that learning occurred in the school was taken from the QTF, and included a collection of lesson samples from across the teaching staff. Eight samples of work were collected for coding, using the QTF coding scale (IB1). The work samples were used for purposes of analysis to provide base line data on the three dimensions and the eighteen elements of the quality teacher framework. The data were analysed in Newcastle and the results made available to the LTLL project team. Participant B1 noted that there were many similarities in the analysis of the QTF lesson samples and the LTLL conceptual framework review on Learning (IB1, RFB).

The School B final LTLL report stated that the participants' involvement in the LTLL plenary program had provided another dimension of pedagogical understanding. Starratt's (2004) challenge to infuse academic learning with a personal dimension, and thereby enrich the whole learning process, was identified in the final report as an important component of moving the school forward to improve student outcomes (FRB). Additionally, during interviews participant B1 expressed the belief, that this challenge was the foundation of the LTLL program and described ethical, authentic learning (IB1). The School B's project proposal also confirmed that the LTLL initiative was centred on improving student outcomes in all areas of the curriculum, through student engagement in consistently high quality learning tasks (PPB). Participant B1 expressed the notion that the LTLL project team had decided to merge the goals of the *Explorer Schools'* project with the goals of the LTLL project as they were interrelated (IB1).

During the initial interview participant B1 explained that the school leadership team had decided to introduce peer mentoring into the school initiative, so that partnerships could be established across the school for reflection on current practice and to support the alignment of pedagogical practices (IB1). Lipton and Wellman with Humbard (2001) describe mentors as powerful models for novice teachers, as they describe their own learning goals and help

protégés craft meaningful challenges of their own. Participant B1 noted that mentoring utilised the expertise of teachers who considered themselves peers or colleagues. It appeared that teachers in School B were using mentoring to offer both partners a new pair of eyes (Stoll et al., 2003, p. 95) on classroom practice (IB1). Participant B1 also outlined the process of how mentors were allocated to staff, stating that early in the project the teachers selected their own 'mentor' but that this changed as the project evolved (IB1, FB). In describing reflective friends, Stoll et al., states "a reflective friend is someone who you feel safe with, you can describe things to, and hopefully they're going to give you some sort of support or criticism which is going to allow you to develop" (p. 96).

Interview data confirmed that the self-selection of peer-mentoring partnerships continued until term 2 2006, when the partners were randomly re-assigned within the school (IB2). As one participant indicated, the establishment of mentoring partners was a significant component of School B's attempt to realign the leading and learning practices within the school:

> I found what was good at the beginning of the mentoring was that we got to choose someone we were comfortable with and as we also chose an area we wanted to look at, there was that real affirming process. Twelve months into it we changed mentors. They were drawn at random, and I think as we gained confidence in the modelling we were also able to pick an area where we needed development and to have a go at being critiqued in that area as well. (IB2)

As indicated by participant B1, in the interviews referred to earlier, and through an analysis of the data in the School B mind map (Appendix H), peer mentoring became a component of the School B initiative and it was participant B1's belief, a key element in the practice of teacher learning (IB1, FB).

5.2.1   Teacher Learning

Figure 5.1 (p. 164) provides a flowchart of the processes identified in the data that School B used to engage teachers in learning (IB1, IB3, FB). The process began with the classroom

teacher liaising with a peer mentor and discussing a specific aspect of classroom practice identified by the classroom teacher as requiring exploration. The classroom teacher designed and delivered a lesson pertinent to the area of exploration, hence sharing her practice with the mentor. The aims and criteria for the lesson observation were established previously in the mentoring process and these were the focus of the reflection session between the class teacher and the peer mentor. Through this professional dialogue, decisions were collaboratively made regarding the future directions of the classroom practice, resulting in the teacher modifying their program and/or practice. Shared decision-making was thus reflected in the personalised learning program for the classroom teacher and the cycle repeats.
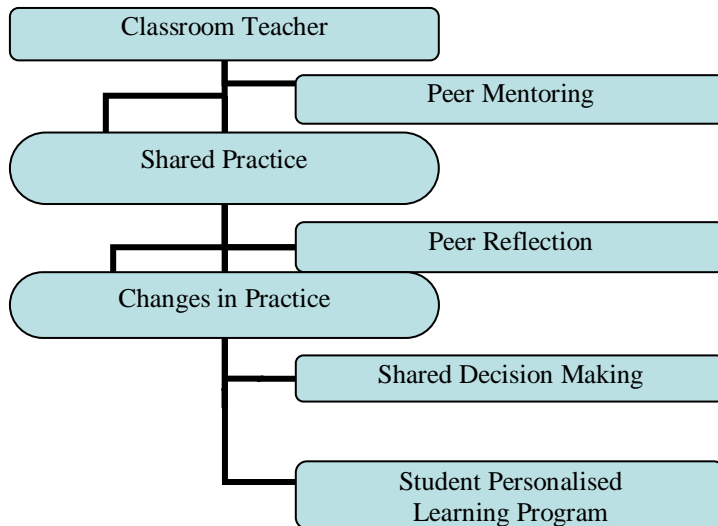
Figure 5.1   School B Teacher Learning Process

Participant B1 expressed her belief that peer mentoring provided an opportunity for the School B leadership team to implement professional development practices that supported teachers engaging in learning about their craft in their school environment (IB1). This was also substantiated by other School B data sources (IB2, IB5, FA, FRB). The research of Elmore (2004), Fullan, Hill and Crevola (2006) and Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) also supports this practice. They highlight the importance of teacher professional learning and

development being embedded into daily practice, and being the greatest single lever for achieving positive outcomes for students.

One of the seven root branches (Figure 5.2) has been extracted from the School B mind map (Appendix H) and is titled *Issues*. The data contributing to this theme identifies concerns or issues relating to School B's LTLL initiative and its implementation in the school.
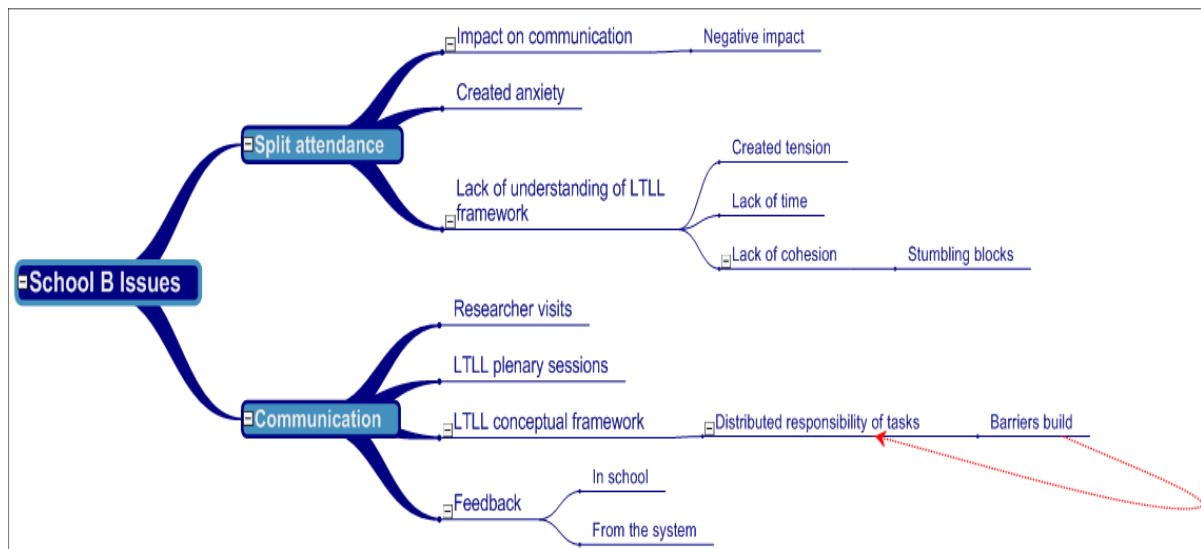
Figure 5.2   School B mind map *Issues*

5.3   Issues Relating to the Nature of the Project in School B

The root branch *Issues* illustrates the data analysed from the mind map from School B sources, and identifies two themes that were continuously referred to by School B participants; communication and split attendance (IB1-6, FB). School B participants spoke readily about the difficulties associated with having only three members of their LTLL project team being able to represent the school at the LTLL plenary sessions (IB1). Communication practices were also identified as an issue that impacted on the nature of the school initiative (IB3, IB5). The issues relating to the nature of the LTLL project are discussed below.

5.3.1 Split attendance

Participant B1 explained that School B entered the project following selection from the Catholic Education Office in which the school was located and relative to the size of the school, their school team could consist of up to six participants, including the school principal. However, School B's educational system chose to include two primary schools in the LTLL project, and as a consequence each of these schools was able to send only three participants to the professional learning experiences provided through the LTLL project. School B was selected by its Catholic Education Office as it was already involved in another project also focussing on improving outcomes for students, known as the *Explorer Schools'* project.

Participant B1 concluded that sharing the knowledge from the LTLL plenary program relied on the three participants who attended the professional learning sessions organised by *Australian Catholic University Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership (IB1).* The first of these plenary sessions focussed on understanding the nature of the LTLL project and the LTLL conceptual framework (Table 1.1, p. 13). The School B LTLL project proposal noted its aim was to support educational leaders to transform the learning and learners in the school through the use of an ethical framework that sustains shared leadership. However, processes associated with School B's involvement in the LTLL project resulted in the leadership of the School B initiative being shared in the first instance by three, rather than the six participants named as participating in the LTLL projects implementation (IB1). This then impacted on how the LTLL project was communicated to participants and other school members (IB5).

5.3.2 Communication

During the early stages of data analysis from interviews and observations, the researcher noted that School B's challenges appeared to be associated with the leaders of the school managing a project team where only half the participants were able to attend the LTLL plenary sessions. This became an issue linked with communication practices in the school and consequently

impacted on how the participants in School B understood the LTLL project aims and the LTLL conceptual framework.

5.4   The Impact of Issues on the School B Initiative

The issue identified in the data (Figure 5.2, p. 165) and supported by participant B1 regarding who attended the LTLL plenary program had numerous implications for the implementation of School B's initiative (IB1). During interviews, one participant explained that the management of who attended the LTLL plenary sessions impacted on the relationships and on the communication practices among the LTLL team members, the staff at school and the relationships between school members and members of the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership Project* (IB5). Participant B5 further professed that, the leadership practices also impacted on incorporating a shared vision of the LTLL conceptual framework and the coherence of the project. Through observation and participant responses, the researcher also noted that relationships between members of the original School B project team appeared fractured which caused difficulties for the researcher when trying to establish consistency with data synthesis (0B, IB3-6).

Focus group data indicated that those teachers attending the LTLL plenary sessions were developing an understanding, through the ethical lens provided in the LTLL conceptual framework, of the nature of transforming the learning and learners in the school (FB). Participant B1 revealed that, with only half the LTLL project team members attending the LTLL plenary program, practices needed to be established in the school to inform other team members of the philosophical understandings within the LTLL conceptual framework (IB1).

Participant B1 discussed her aim to transform the teaching and learning within the school and, it was her belief, that the sharing of common knowledge created cohesion in a project (IB1). However, other participants indicated that the leadership given to the implementation of the

LTLL project and the school initiative impacted on the cohesion of other projects within the school (IB4, IB5, IB6). However, participant B1 believed that she understood the processes of organisational change in reculturing schools, as espoused by Starratt (2006), and was striving for coherence and building knowledge amongst the teaching staff (IB1). It was also her belief that the LTLL project had raised her self-awareness of attending to the affective domain in the leadership of others which was being addressed through the School B initiative (IB1).

The issue that impacted on the nature of the school's initiative also impacted on the amount of data collected from the participants. Three of the participants were limited in their ability to respond to the research questions because of the lack of communication between the participants who attended the LTLL plenary sessions and those that did not attend (IB3, IB4, IB6). Hence the following data mainly represent the data analysed from interviews with participant B1 and two other team members attending the LTLL plenary sessions. The focus group contained a seventh member of the LTLL project team who joined the School B team after the withdrawal of one participant. The variance in information of the LTLL project in School B is supported by the data sources which provide examples of how the participants understood leadership. These are discussed in the Responses to the Research Questions below.

Responses to the Research Questions

This section illustrates the main themes identified in the School B data sources as being essential to developing the participants' understanding of leadership and learning in the context of the LTLL project. Of the nine themes *Values, Shared leadership, Ethics, Issues, Professional discourse, Relationships, Learning, LTLL conceptual framework* and *Leadership capabilities,* identified in chapter three, the methodology chapter, only seven are discussed in this section. School B data sources did not collectively contribute to the theme *relationships* or *values*. However, both themes were mentioned by one participant in relation to participant B1's leadership style (IB5). This data are captured in the other themes, discussed throughout this

chapter. The root branches representing the themes from School B mind map (Appendix H) are included throughout the responses to the research questions to visually represent the data.

The themes emanating from the School B data analysis for the first research question "How did participants understand the concept of leadership?" are presented in the following table (Table 5.1). The data collated from the root branches (Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.2) of the mind map (Appendix H) are analysed in the two main themes, *leadership capabilities* and *issues* to answer the first research question.

Research Question One: How did participants understand the concept of leadership?	
5.5.1 Leadership capabilities	5.5.1.1 Management and organisational aptitude 5.5.1.2 Task distribution 5.5.1.3 Visioning
5.5.2 Issues	5.5.2.1 Communication 5.5.2.2 Split attendance

Table 5.1   School B Responses to Research Question One

The data collated for the main theme *leadership capabilities* generally represent the opinion of participant B1. When the other participants' responses were analysed, the data were primarily assigned to the smaller branch *management and organisation* (IB3, IB4, IB5) or to the root branch of *issues* and identified in the data as communication (Figure 5.2, p. 165).
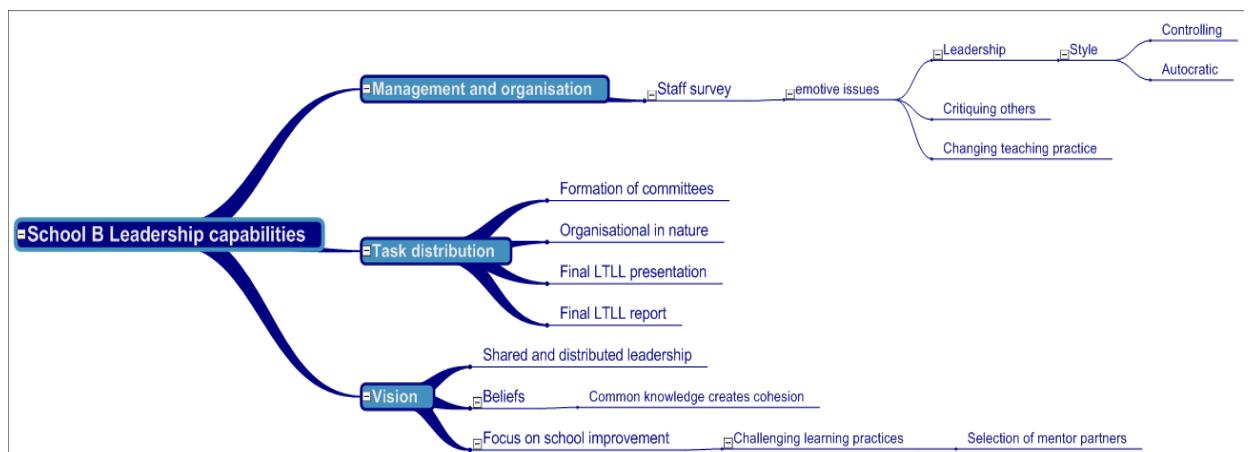
Figure 5.3   School B mind map *Leadership capabilities*

5.5   Research Question One

How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the school's initiative and their

participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of the 'principal' as influencing the

other participants' understanding of the concept of leadership in School B. Three smaller

branches of data from the root branch *leadership capabilities* were identified as relating

directly to the understanding of leadership in School B. These are management and

organisation, task distribution and vision. Each of these capabilities of leadership developed

from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 5.3, p. 169) will now be analysed.

5.5.1   Leadership capabilities

The principal was named in the data sources by participants as influencing their understanding

of *leadership* (IB2-6, OB). These influences were identified and linked to the leadership

capabilities associated with management and organisation, task distribution and visioning (IB1-

6).

5.5.1.1   Management and organisational aptitude

The first capability identified was related to the management and organisational aptitude of the

leaders (IB1-6, FB). The following is an example that illustrates participant B1's response to

the recognition of the increased pressures placed on teachers to implement the QTF. This was

specifically related to the expectation of staff to be journaling their experiences and reflections

of mentoring and the coding of lessons. Initially, time was not allocated to support staff with

journaling, but after the survey, acknowledging the limited number of staff participating in this

practice, participant B1introduced staff reflection time, as a regular component of staff

meetings (IB1). This was participant B1's response to managing the concern of the small

number of staff engaging in reflective practice processes in the school. Allocating staff meeting

time to journaling reinforced participant B1's expectation that staff engage in this type of reflective practice (FB).

Time was also allocated to teachers, during school hours for professional learning to implement the QTF, to write units of work, to organise mentoring and to collect and collate data for analysis of student learning (FRB). Changes to organisational practices were often a result of the anxieties displayed by staff in implementing the QTF (FB1). Participant B1 noted during interviews that as a leadership team they "weren't doing any inventories of people's emotional state and in talking about that, we needed to ask people about how they are feeling, not just what they are doing" (IB1).

One participant described the management and organisational practices of participant B1 as autocratic and controlling (IB5). Other participants described the nature of leadership practices as attending to the emotive issues of critiquing others and challenging teaching practices as requiring sensitivity and careful management (IB2). The researcher observed that there were various opinions being expressed and inconsistencies in behaviours regarding the participants' perceptions and understanding of leadership (OB).

5.5.1.2 Task distribution

The second capability identified referred to how tasks were distributed by the principal to various staff members, including the LTLL participants (IB2). The analysis of data revealed that leadership capability in School B was directly linked to the distribution of tasks determined by the principal and associated with the organisation of projects within the school. In this school, parallels were drawn by staff members between authority and the number of tasks leadership team members were assigned (IB1, IB2). This was evidenced by participant B1's responsibilities associated with the management and organisation of the LTLL project, including writing the project proposal and the final report, as well as presenting the data to the

other schools involved in the LTLL project at the final conference. Additionally participant B2 explained her leadership as, "taking on a few extra chips on board meant that the additional tasks associated with establishing units of work, working with cohorts, linking outcomes and taking on extra work needed to be done with QTF projects, looking at foundational statements, the new reporting process and leading a staff development day" (IB2). Participants B1 and B2 indicated during interviews that, the experiences gained managing tasks were considered "good" leadership experiences. However, other participants believed that that they were additional 'things to do' that kept them from the real purpose of their position in the school, that is, teaching and learning (IB4, IB5).

5.5.1.3 Visioning

The final capability identified was linked to the principal's vision for leading and learning in the school. The data analysis of interviews and the School B project proposal disclosed participant B1's vision for school improvement and for the direction of pedagogy (PPB, IB1). At the beginning of 2005, the school staff, under the direction of participant B1, developed a new vision for learning across the school. Participant B1 revealed her belief that common knowledge creates cohesion. This was evidenced in the additional smaller projects and committees set up to involve school personnel and outlined in the situational analysis section of this chapter and in the financial support provided for staff members to attend the *Pedagogy in Practice* conference in Newcastle, New South Wales during the school holidays (IB1).

The nature of the leadership capabilities discussed above were also linked to leadership practices associated with the effectiveness of communication in School B and to the nature of the split LTLL team. Communication and the split LTLL team were identified as the two *issues* that impacted on the participants' understanding of leadership and formed the data on the mind map root branch of *Issues*. This was visually represented in Figure 5.2 (p. 165) and discussed briefly in section 5.3 *Issues Relating to the Nature of the Project in School B*.

5.5.2 Issues

The main issue named during interviews as impacting on the implementation of the LTLL project in School B was concerned with only half the participants attending the LTLL plenary sessions. As a consequence, the ability of the leaders in School B to manage communication processes and the split attendance to the LTLL plenary sessions was named as impacting on the School B participants' understanding of the LTLL project aims and the purpose of the LTLL conceptual framework.

5.5.2.1 Communication

The first element identified was communication. Communication concerns were raised by three participants during interviews as impacting on the credibility of their leadership within the school (IB5, IB6, IB3). One participant summarised her frustrations of not really understanding the nature of the LTLL project:

> I think that because we have the two different groups it is hard to link it together. Half know about it and half semi-know about it. It has been really hard because we have the two different groups. (IB5).

This participant attended the first couple of LTLL plenary sessions but the frustration she experienced with the level and methods of communication with the rest of the school staff resulted in her withdrawal from the LTLL project. This participant stated, "Because I don't really know what is going on, it was all rushed. The people who went to the LTLL days didn't feedback and so now ... I have shut down. I think there needed to be a bigger exposure" (IB5). It was this participant's belief that a lack of understanding of the LTLL project aims, the LTLL conceptual framework and the management of the *Explorer Schools'* project explained earlier in this chapter was a direct outcome to the manner in which the principal managed the project's implementation (IB5).

This level of frustration was also evident in the responses from three other participants who indicated that they did not know or understand the LTLL project aims or the LTLL conceptual framework (IB3, IB4, IB6). Gross (1998) describes these frustrations as being associated with the stress of slight to moderate levels of turbulence, where issues impact on individuals and are also known across the school community. The conversations between LTLL participants and School B teachers regarding the implementation of the *Explorer Schools'* project and the LTLL project initially showed subtle signs of stress (IB5) but soon caused moderate disturbances to the school climate (IB3-6). After a few minutes with one participant, it became obvious to the researcher that she was unable to answer any questions regarding the LTLL project or to draw any conclusions about its influence on leadership or learning practices in the school (IB4). The nature of the participant's responses did not reflect the cohesion spoken of by participant B1 during her interviews.

As indicated through the data analysed of the interviews, the leadership practices and communication concerns impacted on the cohesion of the school initiative and the ability of the School B participants to formulate an agreed understanding of the LTLL initiative (IB1-6). An example was provided by one participant when responding to a question exploring the nature of the LTLL conceptual framework in relation to their school initiative, who said, "I'm not familiar with the LTLL framework so I really don't know. It would probably be good for us to be given that conceptual model so that we could see how it fits in" (IB4). This was a typical response from the three School B participants who did not attend the LTLL plenary sessions and was further evidence of the complexities associated with communication within the leadership practices in School B (IB3, IB4, IB6).

5.5.2.2   Split attendance

The second element identified was related to the split attendance to the LTLL plenary sessions. The interviews for School B took place in March 2006, nine months after the LTLL project's

beginnings. The interview data analysis indicated mixed perceptions amongst the School B participants regarding the LTLL project, the LTLL conceptual framework and the second project known as the *Explorers School's project*. Some participants described the lack of management of the split team as impacting negatively on the understandings of the LTLL project and it was their belief that it was participant B1's responsibility (IB3, IB4, IB5). At this stage of the LTLL project, the professional learning provided during the LTLL plenary sessions was linked to the domains of the LTLL conceptual framework *Values* and *Ethics* with the *leadership* practices that transform the nature of *learning* and learners in the school community (Appendix D). During interviews participant B1 discussed with the researcher, the nature of the *Explorers School's project* as directly transforming learning in School B. The link between the *LTLL conceptual framework* (Figure 1.1, p. 13) and the *Explorer Schools'* project was explained as:

> The method of implementing of what we feel is an ethical and moral imperative in terms of quality education for children is the QTF and so we have processed that ethical imperative and if this is what it looks like on the ground we are striving to develop a way of thinking about what we do that maximizes our opportunities for the learning of children. (IB1)

This view represents participant B1's perspective of the relationship between the two projects. The *NSW Quality Teacher Framework* (QTF) formed the foundations of the *Explorer Schools'* project and, with the addition of mentoring, now described the School B LTLL project initiative.

5.6   The LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool

School B participants described examples of leadership in the responses on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* (Appendix A). This reflection tool aligns with the LTLL conceptual framework described in chapter one (Figure 1.1, p. 13). When completing the reflection tool, the issue concerning communication within the management of the LTLL project and the school initiative became obvious, with three participants unaware of the LTLL

conceptual framework or the associated reflection tool (IB4-6). An example was illustrated by

participant B6 who said during interviews, "I don't know about that!" (IB6).

In developing an awareness of the School B participants' understanding of leadership, the

researcher analysed the area of shared leadership and the processes that lead to sustained

improvement on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A). School B

participants acknowledged,

> Target areas are the responsibility of specific skilled leaders and they are
> allocated time to manage the areas, i.e. staff newsletters/updates, organising
> staff meeting and SDD input, monitoring classroom programming, supporting
> teachers with in class personal development, managing the analysis of data
> and feedback to teachers (RT).

These notations reflected lists of activities or areas of management practices or meetings that

the school was organising. Additionally, in the area of *Leadership: Culture and Community*

where schools are asked to provide evidence of clear, shared language that fostered a

commitment to core purposes, School B responses included: school assemblies, celebratory

gatherings, local newspapers, staff meetings and parent newsletters, and Parent & Friends

meetings. These lists of information, as the sharing of practice, did not refer to the type of

shared language or the understanding of many of the terms used in pedagogy or learning across

the school community (RTB). This reflected the nature of leadership linked to the management

and organisation of tasks, as described in the previous section (IB2, IB5).

The completed *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) noted the many

different projects that the school was involved in to create cohesion and to transform pedagogy

(RTB). The data support the premise that the School B participants were struggling with the

notion of accountability and the organisation of school based projects directed at transforming

pedagogy, with the challenge of connecting teachers, through communication and relationships

about the moral purpose of education (IB3-6). Fullan, Hill and Crevola (2006) have captured

this dilemma in the statement that leadership does not involve dividing up or delegating

responsibilities but that it must connect individuals and groups to moral purpose. The levels of connectedness between participants were further evidenced in the moderate level of turbulence noted in the school climate and in the leader's ability to manage the projects in the school. Gross (1998) explained and evidenced in understanding the nature of leadership in School B that moderate levels of turbulence can be seen in communication issues, tension-filled conditions, seen in the nature of the split LTLL team and the loss of important support, illustrated in the participants' inability to implement the LTLL project. This leads to exploring how the leadership practices developed authentic learning in School B and this is discussed in the responses to the second research question below and outlined in Table 5.2.

5.7   Research Question Two

What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?

The themes emanating from the School B data analysis for the second research question "What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?" are presented in the following table (Table 5.2) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership and its relationship to learning. There were four main themes indentified in the data that explored leadership practices that supported the development of *learning* in School B. These were mentoring, whole school approach to pedagogy, data gathering of learning and the transformed learner and they are also visually represented in Figure 5.4 (p. 178) which represents the root branch *Learning* from the School B mind map (Appendix H).

Research Question Two:	
What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?	
5. 7.1 Learning	5.7.1.1 Mentoring
	5.7.1.2 Whole school approach to pedagogy
	5.7.1.3 Data gathering of learning
	5.7.1.4 The transformed learner

Table 5.2   **School B Responses to Research Question Two**

The data from the School B mind map are analysed in the main theme *learning* and are discussed below.

5.7.1   Learning

Two of the four components of learning, mentoring and the transformed learner relate specifically to the School B LTLL initiative, while the other two components, the whole school approach to pedagogy and data gathering of learning, initially came from the first project School B was implementing, *the Explorer Schools'* projec*t* (IB1, IB5)*.* As the participants' understanding of the LTLL conceptual framework developed, the two projects were immersed as one (IB1).
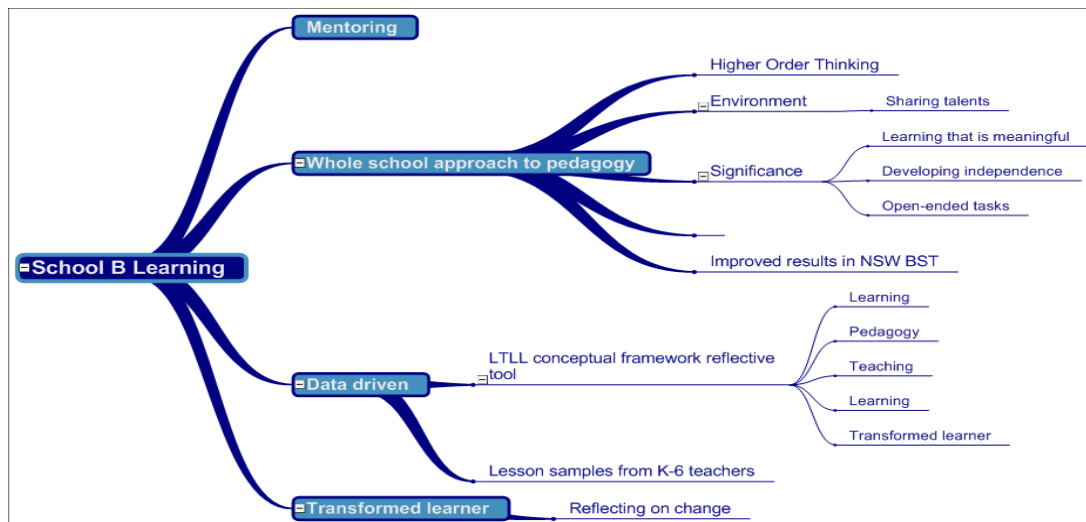
Figure 5.4   School B mind map *Learning*

5.7.1.1   Mentoring

The first component identified was mentoring and was expressed by participants during interviews as being a new practice in School B that significantly impacted on student and teacher *learning* (IB1, IB2, FA). Mentoring was a component of the school LTLL initiative and required teachers across all class groups to support each other through classroom visits (IB1-2, IB5, FB). The aim of classroom visits was to analyse collected data associated with the

implementation of the QTF (IB1). This was explained in section 5.2.1 (p. 163) which referred to teacher learning and the process is illustrated in the flowchart in Figure 5.1 (p. 164).

Leadership was expressed as supporting people "as they are learning and there is a multiplicity of levels of it shown in their ability to function as individual professionals and as a professional team" (FB1). It was participant B1's belief that, the mentoring partnerships developed the concept of teachers as leaders and this was also supported by another participant who believed that mentoring "gave teachers an opportunity to lead, having to take on some initiative, to make some changes and to explore the concepts of it" (FB4).

Throughout the implementation of mentoring in School B, the teachers grew in their confidence in the processes of shared practice and in critiquing lessons in a manner that supported the learning in the classroom (FB2). The concept of mentoring was also mentioned in the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) on *leadership* in several places: evidenced-based practice, focussing on teaching and feedback to the partner; sustainability, and processes of sharing leadership across the school; professional learning and change management, where both areas focussed on the mentoring partnerships (RTB).

5.7.1.2   Whole school approach to pedagogy

The second component identified was the whole school approach to pedagogy. The School B leadership team identified ongoing, whole school professional learning directed towards pedagogy as being an important component of teacher development (PPB, IB1). This was evidenced in the multitude of whole school projects being co-ordinated within the school, written in the School B final LTLL report and discussed by participant B1 during interviews (IB1, FRB).

Participant B1, during focus groups, inferred that the school needed to create consistency in the pedagogy employed by staff and thus reduce the variance in teaching practice of teachers across classes, in order to maximise student learning (FGB1). This strategy for improving student outcomes would be support by Hattie (2003) whose meta-analysis on identifying what makes a difference to improving student outcomes noted that what teachers do, contributed to a thirty percent difference on student outcomes and these differences were evidenced in and across classrooms within a school, rather than across schools themselves. All staff members K-6, full and part-time, had been involved in the *Explorers Schools'* project, immersing them in extensive professional development through the QTF and a school based approach to transforming learning through the LTLL project initiative and developing mentoring practices (IB1, FGB).

The QTF required teachers to focus on gathering data in their classrooms for the coding of lessons. These were then used to align teaching practices across the school (IB1).

5.7.1.3 Data gathering of learning

The third component identified was the data gathering methods of students' learning used by teachers in the classroom. Staff from School B were familiar with evidenced-based research as this had formed the framework for change in the school since 2001 (PPB). Data gathering processes as initiated through the QTF, were identified as being significant to bring about a change in teaching practice and to increase student outcomes (IB1). Observation and reflection on lessons, programs and assessments in relation to the QTF, were used as a filter for analysing outcomes of students' learning (PPB). Throughout the LTLL initiative, data was collected using video, journaling, work samples and assessment tasks for school based data analysis. Organisational practices also supported strategies for data gathering through the financing and organising of teacher release time to provide teachers with time for planning, small group peer

sessions of teacher learning and to work with a member of the school leadership team (PPB, FRB, IB1).

Before completing many of the data gathering exercises for the QTF, and those required for the mentoring process, the School B participants used the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) to determine the extent that learning was occurring consistently throughout the school (OB, FB). They determined that evidence of the transformed learner at the school was "so scant" that this became the focus of the LTLL project initiative (RTB).

5.7.1.4   Transformed learner

The final component identified was the transformed learner. *The LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) on *learning* has a component where school teams can identify evidence of students' learning that develops them as, fuller, richer, deeper human beings through their learning experiences (RTB). Learning that can be transferred to new situations reflecting real life experiences; where, for example, there are opportunities for intellectual curiosity, creative thinking; where students can demonstrate a capacity for autonomy, and responsibility for self and others.

The School B LTLL final report indicated a change in learning outcomes for students through the identification of increases in intellectual quality of assessment tasks and, in teacher programming, increases in the movement of learning from inside to outside the classroom through the use of real world issues. Teachers also noted an increase in 'intellectual curiosity' as evidenced by students continuing to work after the bell had rung, for breaks or for going home (FRB1). School B participants believed that the LTLL project initiative had contributed to transforming learning in the school (FRB). The LTLL final report from School B also noted that the project had led to the transformation of learning and that the process of shared

leadership through the mentoring practice had the potential to improve learning outcomes for students and this leads to exploring the participants' responses to research question three.

5.8   Research Question Three

How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

The themes emanating from the School B data analysis of the mind map for the third research question "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership" are presented in the following table (Table 5.3). The root branch *shared leadership* from the School B mind map (Appendix H) is also included to visually represent the data.

Research Question Three: How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?	
5.8.1 Shared Leadership	5.8.1.1 Committee management 5.8.1.2 Collective responsibility

Table 5.3   School B Responses to Research Question Three

The data collated from the theme *shared leadership* from School B participants includes the components of committee management and collective responsibility. Each of these components of *shared leadership* developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 5.5) will now be analysed.
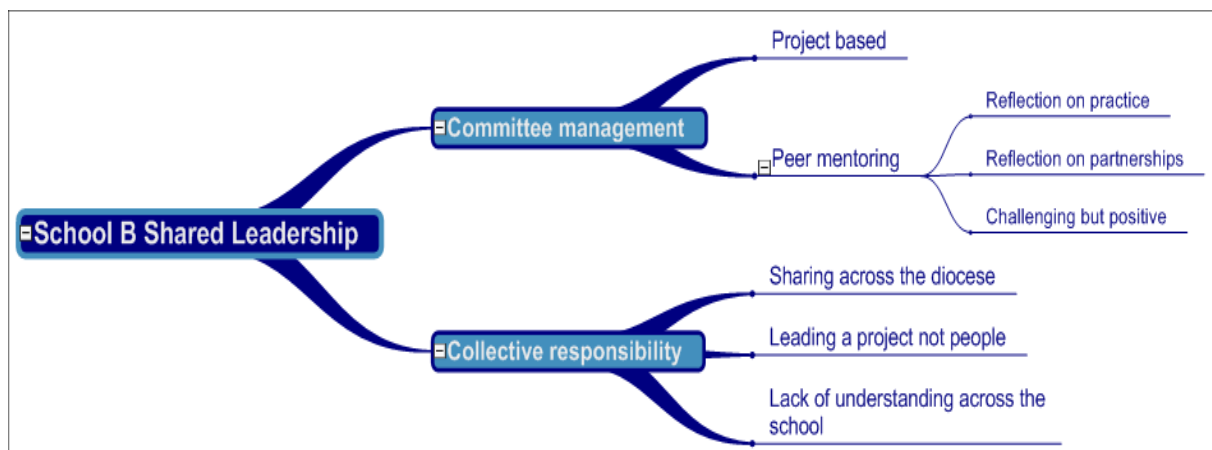
Figure 5.5   School B mind map *Shared Leadership*

5.8.1 Shared Leadership

The analysis of data reflected in the project plan, final LTLL report and the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) indicated that leaders in School B responded to the challenges of shared leadership by structuring professional learning teams/partnerships in which colleagues could assist each other to improve student outcomes and teacher performance (FRB1). However, this view was not consistent with some of the practices in the school discussed during interviews or in observations made by the researcher (OB, IB4-6).

One School B participant stated that *shared leadership* was affected by the leadership style of some leaders in the school and that this impacted on people's motivation to participate in leadership activities (IB5). This was also inferred by two other School B participants when exploring questions relating to the School B LTLL initiative's implementation, "We have been in the teleconference but I just sat there because I didn't know what they were talking about" (IB4) and "I can't answer that one, I'm not familiar with that" (IB6).

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the school's initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of two dimensions of shared leadership being named as leadership practices in School B. Each of the dimensions of *shared leadership* developed from the data through the use of mind maps (Figure 5.5, p. 182) will now be analysed.

5.8.1.1 Committee management

The first dimension identified was committee management and this related specifically to managing the multitude of projects in School B and to the practice of peer mentoring. In the documents presented for data analysis, shared leadership was evidenced in the multitude of committees and project management by members of the School B leadership team (PPB, FRB, RTB). The distribution of these tasks was seen as developing teachers and leaders and giving

them responsibilities outside the classroom. One of these responsibilities was related to coordinating the school mentoring process (IB1-2).

The mentoring process provided teachers with opportunities to develop as teacher leaders through the practices of working with a colleague, critical reflection on classroom strategies and were seen as a challenging but positive component of teacher learning. This is illustrated by participant B1,

> We've always believed in sharing knowledge, and that the broader the group that shares any input, the better the implementation will be because you've got more people going out impacting on more people. (IB1)

Whilst mentoring did provide evidence of shared leadership in school B, some participants questioned the leadership style of the principal in implementing the mentoring practices, stating that it was controlling and hierarchical (IB5).

5.8.1.2 Collective responsibility

The second dimension identified was collective responsibility and this was linked to the leadership practices of mentoring and peer learning (FB). However it was not without some noted frustrations. For example, participant B1 aimed to develop the collective responsibility of staff to fully participate in the projects that contributed to developing a whole school approach to pedagogy (IB1). The notion of shared leadership is taken from the personal pronoun 'we' in the following question aimed to encourage staff to be responsible for the vision of learning in the school. Participant B1 asks, during interviews, "What support can we give people to support them?" There is a genuine sense of supporting teachers to develop as teacher leaders and as leaders of learning in School B. However, she concludes with the statement that "there will always be those who will reject a direction", inferring that, as principal she has to create the organisational structures to support the ultimate goal of the LTLL project as "improving learning for children" (IB1).

In an effort to support teachers develop their collective responsibility to learning, participant B1surveyed the staff about the leadership and teaching practices in the school. The School B LTLL final report acknowledged the results of the survey which indicated that staff considered critiquing their own and other's teaching or leadership practices, and changing teaching practice as highly emotive issues (FRB). The report also noted that, during the implementation of the School B initiative, participants continued to survey the staff to gauge their emotional connectedness to the implementation of the QTF. Participant B1 revealed that this provided valuable data for identifying areas required for support (IB1). The survey also identified that staff needed more time to plan and asked for input from other professionals to assist them in identifying necessary changes to pedagogy (FRB).

Participant B1 reported that the school leadership team addressed this need and employed a professional adviser from outside the school to work with teachers. Gross (1998) would agree that this was an appropriate strategy to address some of the levels of turbulence impacting on the school climate. It was participant B1's belief that, after a short period of time, teachers had developed enough confidence and skill to plan without the support from the external consultant. The inference made by participant B1 during interviews was that the collective responsibility of all teachers was shown by ensuring that the LTLL initiative remained on track and that improving student outcomes remained the focus of classroom practice. Participant B1 also noted that the survey also provided evidence of how the mentoring process was developing teachers as leaders, through these independent planning sessions and this supported her notion of mentoring contributing to aspects of shared leadership in the school (IB1).

The School B final LTLL report revealed that the staff appreciated the time to meet with their mentor, as participating in the mentoring process had assisted them professionally to focus on one element of their teaching practice and the *professional discourse* was meaningful and

directly related to teaching and learning. Mentoring was considered a practice that was affirming and challenging, as staff were also learning new ways of teaching (FRB).

The *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) on *learning* was used again to ascertain if evidence could be found to support the changes in pedagogical practice across the school. The second process of reflection provided information to participant B1for how the School B's involvement in the LTLL project has shifted peoples understanding of leading and learning (RTB, FRB). This process of reflection leads to the responses identified by School B participants in answering the fourth research question.

5.9   Research Question Four

How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

The data collated in the mind map *reflection and dialogue* (Figure 5.6, p. 187) from the School B participants are discussed in the next section and outlined in Table 5.4. The data were extracted from the sources that contributed to the nine themes in answering the previous research questions and were synthesised as the participants referred to the practice of *reflection and dialogue* as it contributed to their understanding of leadership and learning (BI, PPB, FRB, RTB, FB).

Research Question Four:	
How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?	
5.8 Reflection and Dialogue	5.8.1 Mentoring
	5.8.2 Alignment of projects
	5.8.3 LTLL reflection tool
	5.8.4 LTLL project

Table 5.4   School B Responses to Research Question Four

The data identified four components of *reflection and dialogue* in School B as impacting on the participants' understanding of leading and learning and these are visually represented in Figure 5.6 below.
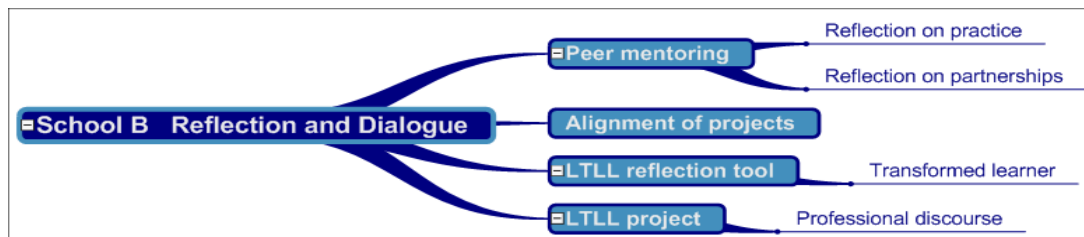
Figure 5.6   School B Mind map Reflection and Dialogue

5.9.1   Reflection and dialogue

Responses from the School B participants regarding the nature of the school's initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of four smaller branches of data within the mind map, *reflection and dialogue.* These four areas are peer mentoring, alignment of projects, LTLL reflection tool and the LTLL project. Each of these elements were developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 5.6) and they will now be analysed.

5.9.1.1   Reflection and dialogue in peer mentoring

The first component identified was peer mentoring and includes aspects of peer reflection. Peer mentoring in School B refers to the teacher learning discussed in section 5.2.1 (p. 163). This practice provided teachers with the opportunity to reflect on the nature of their teaching and to discuss agreed practices to further develop their teaching skills. There was an expectation the staff would reflect on the processes of peer mentoring through journaling as previously discussed in section 5.7.1.1 (p. 178).

5.9.1.2   The alignment of projects

The second component identified was the alignment of projects. Conversation with participant B1 revealed her belief that participation in the LTLL project provided an opportunity to reflect

on aligning the multitude of projects in the school (IB1). This was discussed during interviews and changes were noted in the agreed nature of the two projects, *LTLL project* and the *Explorers Schools' project* (FRB), where the QTF was used to "develop transformed members of society" (FRB1, IB1). The School B LTLL final report indicated that the integration of the QTF as the School B LTLL initiative provided opportunities for staff to reflect on their own teaching and to address specific elements of practice to improve student outcomes.

The report also noted that in the three areas of literacy, numeracy and writing, School B achieved what participant B1 termed significant improvements in the system ranking for growth in student outcomes. The final LTLL report indicated that School B had improved its system BST ranking in Literacy from forty-fifth to sixteenth and in Numeracy from fortieth to thirty-sixth out of fifty-two schools (FRB). However, alignment of other projects in School B was not mentioned in any of the data sources (FB, IB, FRB).

5.9.1.3 Reflection and dialogue and the LTLL reflection tool

The third component identified was the implementation of the LTLL reflection tool. Participant B1 reported that, through reflection on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) teachers explored the meaning of the transformed learner and the types of learning opportunities that would support students in transferring their knowledge, skills and attitudes to situations outside the classroom (IB1). LTLL participants and teachers were able to align these with practices within the QTF (FRB).

5.9.1.4 Reflection and dialogue and the LTLL project

The final component identified was the participation of the LTLL project. Participant B1 commented during focus group discussion, that she appreciated the sharing with colleagues from across other Catholic Education systems but would have also been interested in hearing the reflective comments from the systems' personnel regarding their experiences of being

involved in the LTL project and with working with Australian Catholic University *Flagship for*

Creative and Authentic Leadership and how the diocese was using the LTLL conceptual

framework (FB1).

Participant B1 continued to profess that the involvement of School B participants with the

LTLL project organisers had:

> been a direct benefit to the system as it clearly identifies key aspects of
> leadership. That again is something we don't often do. It provided great
> readings so that we were able to actually get some concept around the depth
> of the area that was being spoken about. (FB1)

The reflective processes associated with the LTLL plenary sessions were spoken about

positively by two participants during interviews (IB1-2).

In summary, this chapter has outlined the processes of leadership evidenced in the School B

school community. The data exposed anomalies between participant B1's perception of

leadership and that of other members of the School B LTLL project team, especially relating to

the cohesion of the LTLL project initiative and processes of collaboration in the school.

Despite these differences, the LTLL final report revealed that the School B initiative changed

pedagogical practices in the school, with the students recording significant growth in BST

results. Additionally, by the completion of the LTLL project, the LTLL participants had

collectively developed an understanding of the transformed learner and the importance of

values and the ethic of responsibility (FRB1).

The interviews, focus groups and observations indicated that attitudes to leadership and to the

collective responsibility of having a shared understanding and commitment to mentoring across

the school changed classroom practice. Also that, some participants recognised participant

B1's clear vision of leading the school in improving student outcomes as being significant to

bringing about pedagogical change. Other participants struggled with the leadership style of

participant B1 but were encouraged by the commitment of staff to mentoring and to the processes of reflection.

CHAPTER SIX - DATA ANALYSIS SCHOOL C

6.0   Introduction

Chapter four outlined how the sources of data were identified in answering the research

questions. This chapter represents the nature of the School C initiative and the participants'

involvement in the LTLL project.

6.1   SCHOOL C: Situational Analysis

The School C final LTLL project report outlined the following information which provided

background data regarding the school. School C is a co-educational Kindergarten to Year 6

Catholic school in the lower Blue Mountains of New South Wales. In 2006, there were 19 class

groups with over 500 students enrolled. The children are drawn from families of medium to

high socio-economic backgrounds. Students have regular access to technology in classrooms,

as well as in the modern and well-resourced library which is central to the learning and

teaching programs. School C has a staff of very experienced teachers with minimal turnover

and this contributes to the overall stability of the school and to the sustainability of many

programs and initiatives (FRC).

The School C project team named their project '*Bringing it all together: Transforming student*

learning in mathematics'. The LTLL project team consisted of five staff members, including

the school principal. Three LTLL project team members attended the LTLL plenary program at

the university level. The other two teachers were involved in the implementation of the LTLL

project initiative at school level. During interviews, participant C1, explained that this school

was also involved in another project known as the *Explorer Schools'* project*,* also referred to in

the previous chapter in relation to School B. Participant C1 revealed that *The Explorer*

Schools' project and the *LTLL* project were combined for ease of implementation, and the

project names used interchangeably. This is illustrated in the School C final LTLL report,

where the term *Explorer Schools'* project is often interchanged with the *LTLL* project (FRC).

Participant C1 also discussed the importance of effective communication strategies being

designed between the school leadership team and the school LTLL project team to ensure the

successful implementation of the LTLL initiative (IC1).

During the interview, participant C1 explained that the sustainability of the LTLL project

initiative was underpinned by the paradigm of layered leadership. According to participant C1,

School C leaders used the concept of 'Layered Leadership' to build leadership capacity in the

school, and it was participant C1's belief that layered leadership was similar to shared and

distributed leadership (IC1). Participant C1 clarified layered leadership as,

> Different teams of staff members being responsible for the development of specific projects within the school. Distributed leadership was the division of tasks and responsibilities according to the strengths and abilities of the team members. Shared leadership was a common philosophical team approach to effective leadership and the sharing of responsibilities, setting direction, identifying and using strengths, as well as developing people and the organisation in a collaborative way. 'Power' is devolved from the centre rather than from the top. (FC1)

It was participant C1's belief that the School C leaders worked towards spreading the

leadership of the school through engaging teachers in sharing responsibility in a curriculum

portfolio. He explained that, the portfolio teams were managed with ease, as the relationships

built by the teaching staff over many years of service in the school meant staff were attuned to

each other (IC1).

6.2   The Nature of School C's Initiative

The School C LTLL final report described the school's initiative as a whole school initiative

that would explore, design, implement and evaluate an accessible, measurable way of teaching

mathematics, to improve student learning outcomes. It aimed to transform authentically the

ways in which teachers teach and students learn, by using quality data, critical analysis and

reflective practice (FRC). It was participant C1's belief that professional development was the key to promoting the collective responsibility of staff for improved student learning outcomes and to develop shared principles for numeracy teaching (IC1).

The project proposal described the School C initiative as having its beginnings mid-year 2005 when the school leadership team formulated three major desired outcomes. These were described as enriching staff capacity, by providing teachers with time and opportunity to develop a deep knowledge of the outcomes in the Mathematics Syllabus and to understand the full implication and application of each outcome for their teaching. They developed strategies in the hope that teachers would become more confident, extremely capable, highly competent, creative, proactive and able to engage in action research to improve student learning outcomes. The second aim was described as transforming students' mathematical learning through explicit teaching that recognised and responded to the individual needs, talents, skills, attitudes and interests of all students through rigorous analysis and tracking of student data. The final component of the LTLL initiative was to use the data to inform, include and educate parents about student performance in mathematics (PPC). Summarizing these outcomes, School C's LTLL project report stated that:

> The purpose of the project is to transform the way in which teachers teach and students learn in Mathematics, by using quality data as the basis for decision-making; building staff capacity through layered leadership and professional learning; and organising at a school level to focus on key activities which will contribute to enhanced student learning outcomes. (FRC)

School C's LTLL final report described the school processes of strategic planning and the links to the LTLL initiative. It reported that School C included several staff teams who were responsible for whole school professional learning that was directly linked to the school strategic plan (FRC). In this case, the school curriculum portfolio team had targeted the Key Learning Area of Mathematics as being in need of 'thoughtful development' (FRC). In 2002,

this was validated during the *Whole School Review*. The NSW Basic Skills Test (BST) results over the previous few years had also shown a need to improve student outcomes in one particular strand of the mathematics syllabus. Noted in the School C final LTLL report was the school leadership team's belief that, with the release of the Mathematics Syllabus (2002) there was a need to develop a new model for the teaching and learning of Mathematics across the school (FRC).

The School C LTLL participants undertook to collect data which would yield useful information to guide their project. They determined that they would need a variety of sources for this, and that they would need to look at both quantitative and qualitative data. The project report described how they would use the results to inform teaching, analyse school-wide trends, track the progress of individual students, provide professional learning and guide school organisation for teaching and learning. Appendix J illustrates the data collated during the project that was outlined in the School C's final LTLL report (2006).

During interviews, participant C1 described the provision of resources as being a major impediment to changing teacher practice in the early stages of the project. He stated that the teachers had identified the need for having relevant, easily accessible resources in sufficient quantity as being a major factor in being able to teach mathematics effectively (IC1). School C participants further explained that, the budget resource allocation and educational resource allotment must be focussed on providing teachers with the appropriate mathematical resources to enable the specific teaching of the subject area (IC1-3).

Participant C1 explained that the School C LTLL participants and the school leadership team organised for the purchase and equitable distribution of hands-on mathematical resources for classroom use (IC1). In addition, the use of technology became embedded in the teaching of mathematics (IC2). The School C LTLL final report describes the professional learning for

teacher in-servicing as being facilitated by the Mathematics Co-ordinator who was an LTLL project team member. The school also purchased 14 laptops to support the introduction of an online Mathematics program *Mathletics*; a K-10 Mathematics program tailored to the needs of individual students in the area of Number (FRC, IC1).

Three School C LTLL participants mentioned their belief that, in developing a community of learners, they would need to devise ways of collecting quality data that would inform the provision of professional learning for the whole staff (IC1, IC3-4). They discussed the early data collection of surveys, confirming the idea that there was a specific need in the school in the area of mathematics. The LTLL participants expressed the belief that teachers would need to share actual classroom practice if their pedagogy of teaching was to be transformed (FC). The focus groups revealed that teacher learning; through the sharing of classroom practice was to be an important component of their initiative (FC). This was validated in the School C LTLL final report (FRC).

6.2.1 Teacher Learning

The following figure (Figure 6.1, p. 196) illustrates the processes identified in the data (FRC, PPC, FC, IC104) that School C used in providing for teacher learning. The first section refers to methods of whole school targeted professional learning (IC1). This created opportunities for professional dialogue amongst teachers and the development of a shared understanding in the teaching of mathematics (IC4). Existing, small project teams, usually consisting of grade groups, reflected on their learning and developed common teaching strategies and assessment tasks to implement in the classroom (IC3). Teachers would individually return to their classrooms and implement the new strategies, reflecting on the processes used and on student engagement. Further professional conversations ensued with the small teams discussing focused teaching strategies relating to mathematics. These teams then presented renewed strategies to the whole school staff (IC3). Teachers across the school were then expected to

trial these processes in their classrooms. The process employed for teacher learning in School C is illustrated in the flowchart in Figure 6.1.

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        ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
        │  Whole School Targeted Professional│
        │            Learning               │
        └──────────────────────────────────┘
                      │      ┌──────────────────────────┐
                      │      │   Professional Dialogue    │
              ┌───────┴──────┴──────────────┐
              │        Shared Practice        │
              └───────────────────────────────┘
                      │      ┌──────────────────────────┐
                      │      │   Small Team Reflection    │
              ┌───────┴──────┴──────────────┐
              │     Shared Decision-making    │
              └───────────────────────────────┘
                      │      ┌──────────────────────────┐
                      │      │  Teacher Trial of new Practice│
              ┌───────┴──────┴──────────────┐
              │     Professional Dialogue     │
              └───────────────────────────────┘
                      │      ┌──────────────────────────┐
                      │      │  Whole School Targeted      │
                      │      │  Professional Learning      │
                      │      └──────────────────────────┐
                      │      │  Teacher Change in Practice │
                      └──────┴──────────────────────────┘
```
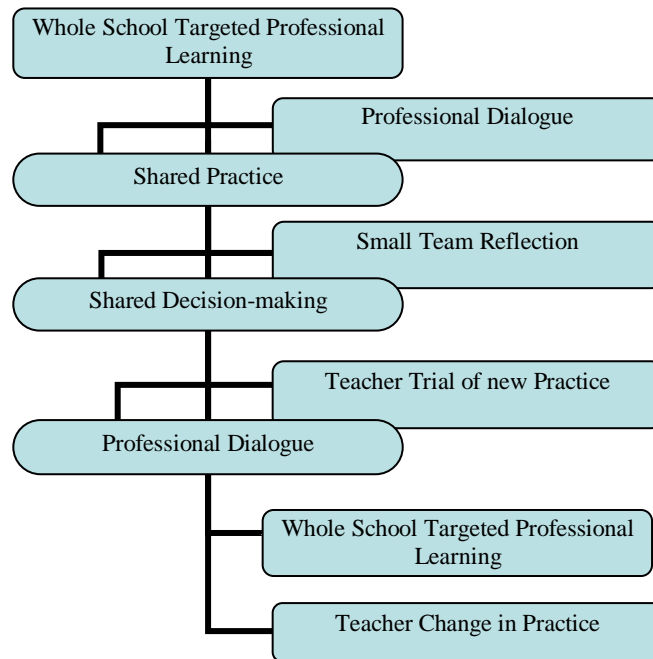
Figure 6.1   School C Teacher Learning Process

From the interview data (IC1-4), it was noted that the teachers were asked to identify areas in mathematics where they felt they needed further professional learning. Participant C1 divulged that, from these conversations, the staff identified the need to have a greater understanding of the 2002 Mathematics syllabus. He confirmed that as a result, the project team devised a plan for devoting time and professional development directly relating to mathematics to assist staff in understanding the syllabus (IC1).

The School C final LTLL report stated that the leadership team, in conjunction with the mathematics team, facilitated the provision of other targeted professional learning, using experts from outside the school (FRC). The focus group discussion inferred that the learning that flowed from these sessions stimulated *professional dialogue*, and provided an impetus to continue with the exploration of quality teaching and learning in mathematics (FC).

The project proposal named the provision of release time for teachers as a major component of the school initiative. The provision of release time was to support teachers in acquiring a deeper understanding of the outcomes of the Mathematics syllabus; collaboratively plan for explicit teaching, learning and assessment; and develop common, rich assessment tasks, based on the mathematics syllabus (PPC). The School C final LTLL report stated that, in conjunction with these strategies, a pilot program using *InterWrite,* an interactive device which remotely controls a computer from anywhere in the classroom, was introduced in Kindergarten (FRC). Additionally, it allowed teachers to set up interactive lessons, capture and preserve students notes, drawings and calculations. After some initial training for a small group of teachers, the pilot program investigated further possible applications of the tool for mathematics. The small group of teachers involved in the pilot then delivered training to other staff members (FRC).

This is a further illustration of teacher learning as outlined in the flowchart in Figure 6.1 (p.196) in School C. The School C LTLL final report describes a 'safety net' system was established in the school to track the progress of individual students in mathematics and to provide early intervention for specific students as necessary (*The ACER PAT-Maths database*). The LTLL final report also indicated that the LTLL project team instigated the *2006 Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians* to provide an opportunity for teachers and students to learn how to apply higher-order mathematical thinking and skills (FRC). Furthermore, the teachers collected and analysed data in an effort to directly tailor teaching strategies to the specific learning needs of individual students. The aim was to maximise teachers' understanding of the mathematics outcomes, and to provide personalized learning for students. The LTLL project team stated that this was especially important for those students who were unable to fully understand some mathematical concepts (FC1). The School C participants also surveyed staff and learned that teachers wanted to be given more guidance and structure in the teaching of Mathematics (FRC).

6.3   Issues Relating to the Nature of the Project in School C

One of the seven root branches (Figure 6.2) has been extracted from the School C mind map

(Appendix J) and is titled *Issues*. The data contributing to this theme identifies concerns

relating to School C's LTLL initiative and its implementation in the school.

Figure 6.2   **School C mind map *Issues***

The root branch *Issues* illustrates the data analysed from the mind map from School C sources,

and identifies two themes that were occasionally referred to by the School C participants and,

in particular, by participant C1. These themes were managing the LTLL project team and

challenging the status quo in the school. School C participants spoke readily about the

difficulties associated with having only three members of their LTLL project team being able

to represent the school at the LTLL plenary sessions (IC1-5). However, they were committed

to collectively being responsible for sharing the professional learning with all members of the

LTLL project.

6.3.1   Challenging the status quo

Participant C1 explained that the first issue concerned the long term stability of many of the

teaching staff in the school (IC1). Whilst participant C1 acknowledged the friendships and

sense of collegiality amongst staff, it was his belief that, in establishing school improvement

processes, he was required to challenge the status quo of how some things were organised and

managed in the school. The nature of the well-established school, where teachers traditionally

spent the duration of their careers, meant he also needed to challenge the traditional nature of

the teaching strategies employed by many of the staff (IC1).

Participant C1 indicated during interviews, that the role of teacher professional development in transforming learning was addressed through the School C LTLL initiative and provided the LTLL project team with an opportunity to explore how all teachers perceived the learning needs of students. At the same time, participant C1 indicated that the School C initiative enabled the leaders of the school to challenge gently staff beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of teaching and learning through their involvement in the LTLL project (IC1).

6.3.2   Managing the LTLL project

The second issue identified in the interviews as being important to the organisational management of the LTLL initiative was the careful management of communication associated with the number of participants attending the LTLL plenary sessions (IC1-4). School C was the second school from one system invited to participate in the LTLL project and, consequently, were able to send only three participants to the LTLL plenary sessions.

6.4   The Impact of Issues on the School C Initiative

It was participant C1's belief, that the issue associated with who attended the LTLL plenary program had several effects on the nature of School C's initiative (IC1). The main effect was concerned with the way the five LTLL participants worked together to create a shared vision of the LTLL conceptual framework to achieve coherence of the LTLL project initiative. Participant C1 stated that this required careful planning to ensure that the learning from the LTLL plenary program was fully shared with the two team members not attending the university sessions. He concluded that it also provided opportunities to examine and reflect on current practices of layered leadership in the school, and how those involved in the LTLL project could provide new forms of leadership (IC1).

Participant C1, in his first principalship, discussed how he was trying to challenge the status quo and encourage all staff to participate in professional development that required changes in

current practice, in order to increase learning outcomes for students (IC1). It appeared to the researcher that he understood the need to address the desires of the long serving staff and also keep them up to date with the challenges associated with contemporary learning. It was his belief that this required the LTLL project team examining practices of school leadership and thinking creatively about how they could engage staff in school-based professional development, directly relating to mathematics. He stated that they needed to carefully consider any innovations in teacher leadership and teaching practice, and how these would be perceived by the range of teachers in the school (IC1). The data sources also provided examples of how the School C participants understood leadership and these are discussed in the Responses to the Research Questions below.

Responses to the Research Questions

This section illustrates the main themes identified in the School C data sources as being essential to developing the participants' understanding of leadership and learning in the context of the LTLL project. Of the nine themes *Values, Shared leadership, Ethics, Issues, Professional discourse, Relationships, Learning, LTLL conceptual framework* and *Leadership capabilities,* identified in chapter three, the methodology chapter, School C did not explicitly name the theme *relationships* in their responses. It is important to note that the themes do not stand alone but are immersed in each other throughout the data analysis. The researcher made a decision, based on the context of the data, to assign a certain heading or theme.

The themes emanating from the School C data analysis for the first research question "How did participants understand the concept of leadership?" are presented in the following table (Table 6.1, p. 201) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership. The data collated from the mind map are analysed in the three main themes, leadership, values and shared leadership. The smaller branches emerging from each of these themes are shown in the right hand column in Table 6.1. The root

branches from School C mind map (Appendix J) are included throughout the responses to the research questions to visually represent the data.

Research Question One: How did participants understand the concept of leadership?	
6.5.1 Leadership capabilities	6.5.1.1 Sharing practice 6.5.1.2 Building staff capacity 6.5.1.3 Linking leading to authentic learning
6.5.2 Values	6.5.2.1 Values guide leadership 6.5.2.2 Values contribute to common understanding 6.5.2.3 The value of transformation
6.5.3 Shared leadership	6.5.3.1 Parallel leadership and collaborative decision making

Table 6.1   School C Responses to Research Question One

The data collated from the theme *leadership capabilities* from School C participants is discussed in section 6. 5.1 and is followed by the participants' responses to the main themes of values and shared leadership. Data from these three themes were analysed from the School C mind map (Appendix J) and cannot be separated from the participants' understanding of leadership, and need to be viewed as essential to the leadership practices of the participants in School C (CI, PPC, FRC, RTC).

6.5   Research Question One

How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the School C LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of leadership practices that illustrated their understanding of leadership. Three smaller branches from the root branch *leadership capabilities* were identified as being significant components of leadership in School C. These are sharing practice, building staff capacity and linking leading to authentic learning. Each of

the components of the *leadership capabilities* developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 6.3, p. 202) will now be analysed.
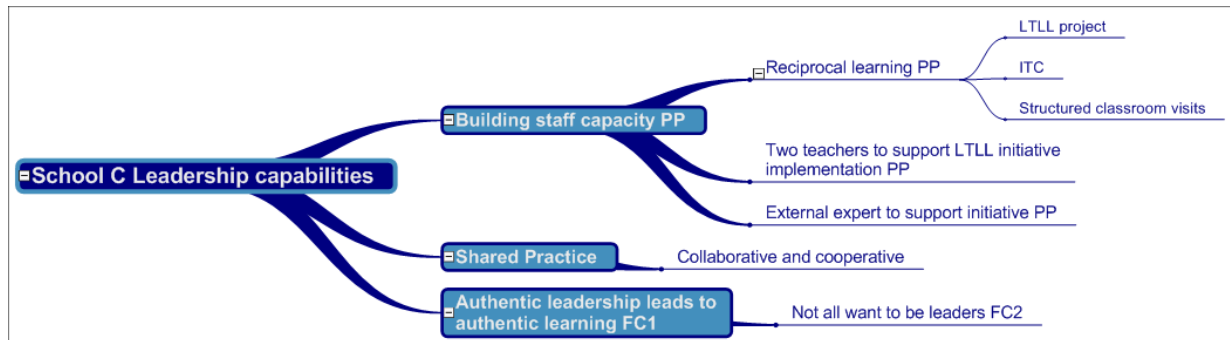
Figure 6.3   School C mind map *Leadership capabilities*

The nature of leadership in the school is explored in responding to question one but is also substantiated in the participants' responses to question three, "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?"

6.5.1   Leadership capabilities

Participant C1 described School C leadership as the collective responsibility of all, the sharing of ideas, knowledge and values was linked to the authenticity of leadership, expressed in the way people were treated and in the organisational structures that supported learning (IC1).

6.5.1.1   Sharing practice

The first capability identified was the capability of the leaders to *share practice*. In this school, sharing the practice of leadership required staff to cooperate and to be collaborative in their relationships with others (IC1, FC). Sharing leadership practices also meant the sharing of teaching practices which included the LTLL participants and the school leadership team being actively involved in the LTLL initiative across all aspects of the school (IC1-4). School C participants equally shared in all aspects of teacher learning described in section 6.3.1, further supporting the culture of learning in the school (IC1-4, FC).

6.5.1.2 Building staff capacity

The second capability identified was leadership actions that contributed to *building staff capacity*. There were several strategies utilised by the School C participants that focussed on developing the capacity of staff to improve students' outcomes. The project proposal outlined aspects of reciprocal learning between teachers and across grades that related to the teaching of mathematics and in the implementation of technology as a tool to support mathematics learning. Teacher learning was a key component of teachers sharing practice to build their capacity and proficiency in teaching mathematics and utilising technology tools. The processes of teacher learning were outlined in section 6.3.1.

Another aspect of building staff capacity, identified in the project proposal, was the deliberate tactic by the LTLL participants to support the LTLL project initiative by assigning two teachers to plan, outline practices and procedures relating to implementing the professional learning associated with mathematics and to liaise with groups of teachers across the school to implement the strategies (PPC). They were supported with release time and professional learning from an external expert to ensure that the vision of the LTLL initiative remained the focus of the strategies (IC1, PPC).

6.5.1.3 Linking leading with authentic learning

The final capability identified *was how leadership was linked with promoting authentic learning*. It was participant C1's belief that if the organisational structures were in place in the school to support communication between team members and for teams to plan, to evaluate and implement strategies relating to their portfolio then staff would be cohesive in their approach to teaching and learning and that the leadership density of the school would also be deepened (IC1).This would support Stoll and Fink's (1996) belief that, the authentic educational leader cultivates and sustains an environment that promotes the work of authentic teaching and learning.

Through conversations with participant C1, it became apparent that he valued the leadership of others in the school community and allocated time and resources to support staff in their leadership roles. This leads to exploring the participants' understanding of the theme *values* and how it linked to their understanding of leadership. *Values* are the second theme explored in developing an understanding of the participants' understanding of leadership and is visually represented in Figure 6.4 as a root branch in the School C mind map (Appendix J). Three elements of the *values* theme identified through the data by the participants in School C as contributing to their understanding of leadership were that, values guide leadership; values contribute to common understanding and the value of transformation (PPC, FC, IC1-4). Each of these elements of *values* developed from the data through the use of mind maps (Figure 6.4) will now be analysed.
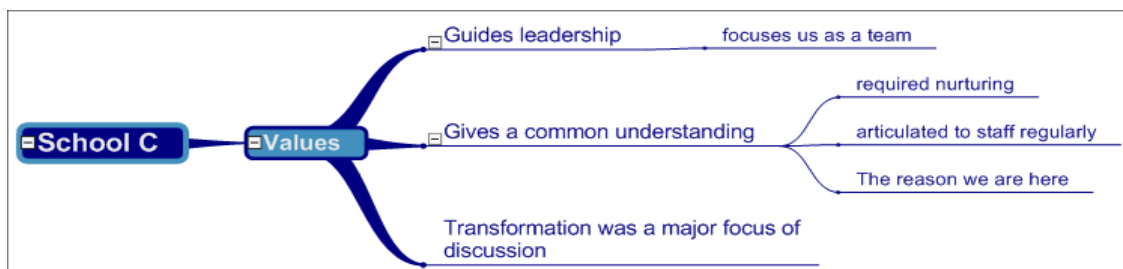
Figure 6.4   School C mind map *Values*

6.5.2   Values

Values were clearly linked to *leadership* and this was stated, in focus groups as being an important connection to guiding the leadership within the school (FC). The values of Catholicity, respect, justice, excellence and transformation were regular words used during focus groups and gave the School C staff a common vision and understanding of the expectations of working in the school (FC).

6.5.2.1   Values guide leadership

During interviews, comments were made regarding the importance of explicitly naming values in the school and that *values* focussed the team. Participant C1 believed that leaders' actions needed to represent their values (IC1). This would align with the research on transformational leadership from Barnett, McCormick & Connors (2000), where such leaders seek to influence followers by appealing to ideals and moral values.

6.5.2.2   Values contribute to common understanding

Discussions amongst staff both informally and formally regarding the nature of Catholicity in the school and the associated values of respect, care and the practices of the Catholic faith contributed to a deeply held belief in the dignity of the human person in School C (IC1). Participant C1 acknowledged that the parish priest had commended the school staff on their open and honest relationships and the commitment to the Catholic faith (IC1). School newsletters and the annual school report also provided evidence of the shared philosophy of the Catholic faith amongst the school community.

Participant C1 reported that the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) also provided a catalyst for the School C participants to engage the rest of the school staff in professional discourse on values, ethics, leadership and learning and this led to discussions on the meaning and practices of transformation.

6.5.2.3   The value of transformation

The third dimension identified was the value of transformation. According to the School C final report the value of transformation was the foundational value of the LTLL conceptual framework that was specifically relevant to the School C initiative (FRC). School C participants deemed that, in order for transformation to occur in mathematics, they would have to investigate a different model of teaching the subject.

The School C participants decided that they would need to use quality data as the basis for decision-making and the key to improving student learning outcomes was to transform teaching using meaningful and on-going professional development (FRC). Linking the *value* of transformation to the values of the school, it was the LTLL participants' belief that they had a responsibility through collegial, positive leadership to ensure that staff felt valued, supported and inspired by their vocation (FRC).

The School C final LTLL report indicated an outcome of School C's initiative was that teachers were able to deepen their understanding of pedagogy in the teaching of mathematics (FRC). One participant described the process of engaging teachers in the professional conversations about learning as leading to the "transformation of the teachers as learners and leaders" (IC3). The nature of leadership capabilities evidenced in School C was also evidenced in the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* (Appendix A) where School C participants influenced the whole staff to review the practices of leading and learning in their classrooms (FC). These insights provide support for Odhiambo's (2007) recent work that school leaders of tomorrow will have to be transformational, where they "use influence rather than authority and create effective school teams based on mutual trust, respect and support for teachers" (p. 35).

6.5.3   Shared leadership

The analysis of data (IC, FC, FRC) disclosed an underlying philosophy of the nature of leadership in School C as shaped by parallel leadership and collaborative decision making. Whilst practices of leadership and shared leadership mean different things, in School C they appeared tightly aligned and the data were often enmeshed. For this reason the root branch shared leadership from the School C mind map (Appendix J) was analysed in the participants' responses to research question three, "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?"

In summary, the data analysis has identified the three main themes that contributed to the participants' understanding of leadership, including the intricate nature of shared leadership. The values associated with the *LTLL conceptual framework* (Figure 1.1, p. 13) and explicitly of being a Catholic school community underpinned many dimensions of leadership in School C and contributed to the cohesive nature of the school climate (OC). At the beginning of the LTLL project participants were asked to complete the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A). This process also provided evidence of the School C participants' understanding of leadership.

6.6   LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflective Tool

The eight domains of leadership on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflective tool* (Appendix A*)*; distributed responsibility, evidenced-based practice, professional learning, sustainability, culture and community, change management, external networking and capabilities , explored by the School C staff, indicated strong evidence of school based practices for leadership in the school. This supports the shared practices of leadership discussed in the section 6.5.1 of this chapter as being regular and authentic practices of leadership within the school.

An area identified by the staff, when examining the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) as requiring attention was also identified by the LTLL participants in the project proposal (PPC). Teachers named professional learning as a driver for change and development in building staff capacity. When completing the reflection tool, the School C participants did so as a staff (IC1). Participant C1 identified that, the collaborative nature of including all staff in this process was indicative of sharing leadership in School C to assist in building the capacity of staff and to support the learning outcomes of students (IC1). This leads to understanding the leadership practices that developed authentic learning in School C and are discussed in the second research question below and outlined in Table 6.2 (p. 208).

6.7 Research Question Two

What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?

The themes emanating from the School C data analysis for the second research question "What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?" are presented in the following table (Table 6.2) and were identified in the responses as illustrating School C participants' understanding of leadership and its relationship to learning. There were four elements of the theme *learning* identified in the data that explored leadership practices identified as supporting the vision and development of learning in School C (PPC, FRC, IC1-4). These were the provision of resources, embedding technology into the learning, analysis of data and networking beyond the school.

Research Question Two:	
What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?	
6.7.1 Learning	6.7.1.1 Provision of resources
	6.7 1.2 Embedding technology into learning
	6.7.1.3 Analysis of data
	6.7.1.4 Networking beyond the school
6.7.2 Professional Discourse	6.7.2.1 Impact on student learning
	6.7.2.2 Stimulus for sharing
	6.7.2.3 Networking

Table 6.2   School C Responses to Research Question Two

Professional Discourse was another major theme associated with *learning* in School C and is included in the discussion in this section. School C participants indicated during interviews and focus group discussion that when leaders attended to these things, the learning culture in the school was being developed, supported and nurtured (IC1-4, FC).

6.7.1 Learning

The data from the School C mind map is analysed in the main theme *learning* and is linked to the theme of *professional discourse*. The smaller branches from the *learning* theme include the provision of resources, embedding technology into learning, analysis of data and networking beyond the school and are extended from the root branch of *learning* in Figure 6.5 below and are discussed in this section in relation to learning.
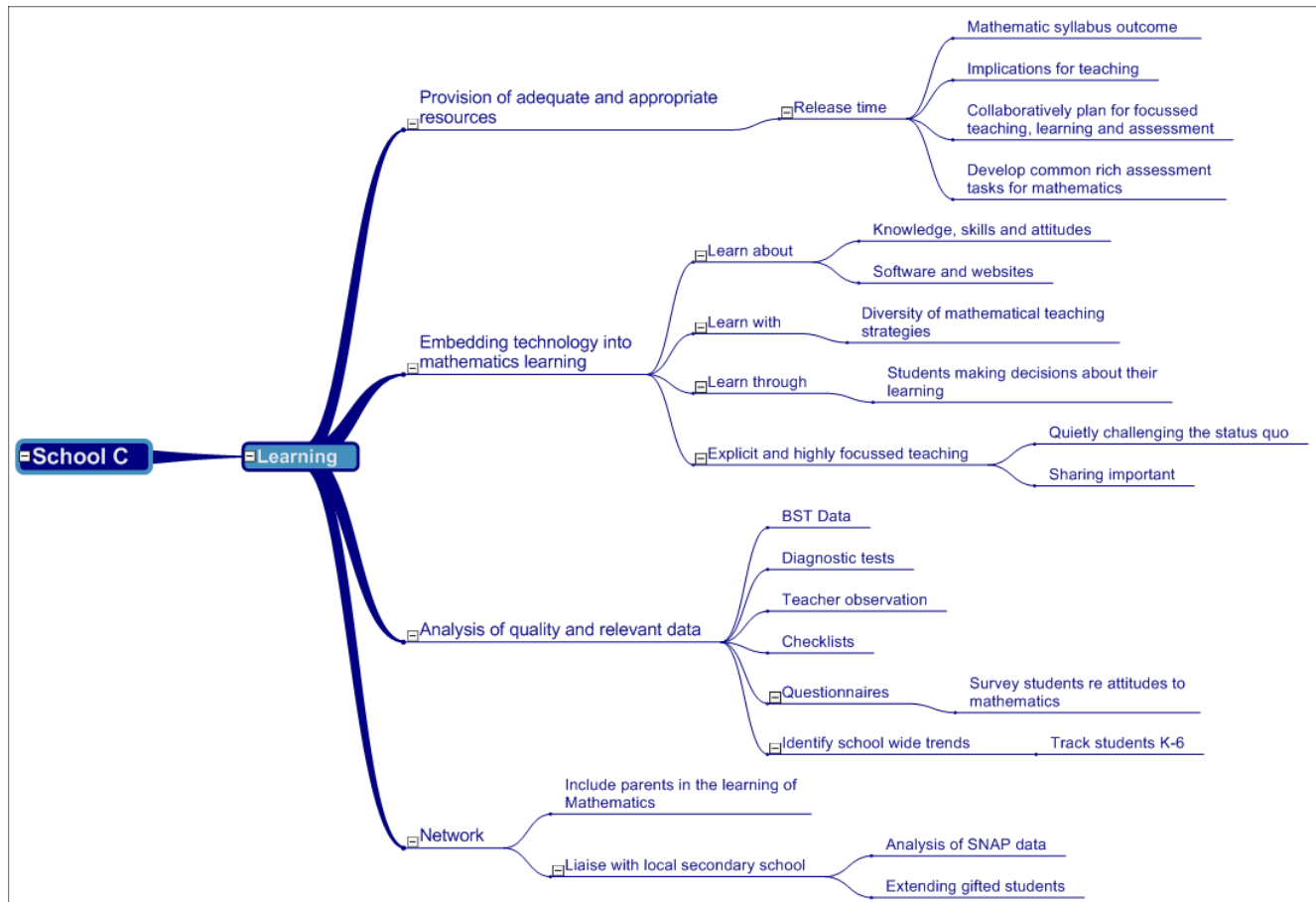
Figure 6.5   School C mind map *Learning*

Each of these components of *learning* developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 6.5) will now be analysed.

6.7.1.1   The provision of resources

The first component identified was the provision of resources. Explicit leadership support for the provision of adequate and appropriate resources were identified by the School C

participants as being essential to sustaining the change of practice required in the teaching and learning of mathematics. One School C participant indicated that they,

> tried to thoroughly scrutinise the professional learning that we organised, the resources that we purchased, and the data which we collected to ensure that all would be real, relevant and appropriate and that most importantly, all would contribute to genuine and significant transformation of learners and learning.(FC1)

The project proposal indicated that the provision of adequate release time for teachers allowed for professional learning to be implemented to assist teachers' understand the current mathematics syllabus and the implications for teaching. It provided teachers with time to collaboratively plan for focussed teaching, learning and assessment and to develop common rich assessment tasks for mathematics (PPC). Further, the allocation of release time enabled teachers to assist each other with new technologies in the classroom and to develop their leadership skills.

6.7.1.2   Embedding technology into the learning

The second component identified was embedding technology into the learning. The School C final LTLL report noted that, embedding technology into the learning of mathematics covered three areas: learning about, learning with and learning through technology. The report indicated that the LTLL participants believed that the nature of the learners in their school was such that technology was a part of their real world (FRC). However, in the planning stages of the LTLL project initiative technology in the school was provided in classrooms but was not a natural component of the teaching and learning practices (PPC).

The School C LTLL final report also concluded that teachers, through the experience in the LTLL project initiative learnt about how to use technology and its application in the syllabus, as well as about new software and different websites that would assist and motivate students in mathematics learning. Further, the report indicated, School C participants and members of the

Mathematics team utilized the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* to initiate processes assisting teachers with a diversity of teaching strategies using technology. Many teachers learnt how to use technology from their students, who were actively engaged in using new hardware and software, provided through the resourcing budget (FRC).

6.7.1.3   Analysis of data in School LTLL project initiative

The next component identified was the analysis of data in the mathematics curriculum. The project proposal described the emphasis placed by School C participants on the analysis of data during the LTLL initiative (PPC). It stated that the School C participants undertook to collect qualitative and quantitative data that would yield useful information to guide the mathematics initiative. The results would be used to inform tracking, analysing school wide trends, tracking progress of individual students, providing professional learning and guiding school organisation for teaching and learning in mathematics.

6.7.1.4   Networking beyond the school

The final component identified was networking beyond the school. Participant C1 discussed the results of surveying parents about their understanding of mathematics learning in the school (IC1). The survey also indicated the need for parents to understand the processes of students moving to Secondary school and how students were graded. The School C participants then provided professional development in the form of workshops for parents to assist them understand the transition process from primary to secondary school. They also liaised with the local Secondary school and analysed the *Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program* (SNAP) data relevant to their students (FRC). This informed the Mathematics teaching practices in the upper classes of School C (IC4).

The focus group discussion revealed that professional discourse provided a stimulus for teachers to understand how students learn and to support teachers design appropriate teaching

strategies to engage students in the subject matter. This had a positive impact on teachers and deepened their understanding of the content required in the syllabus and in students' learning (FC). Figure 6.6 visually represents the mind map root branch professional discourse and the three areas identified through the data by the participants in School C, as contributing to their understanding of leadership, are impact on student learning, stimulus for sharing and networking and are discussed below after Figure 6.6.
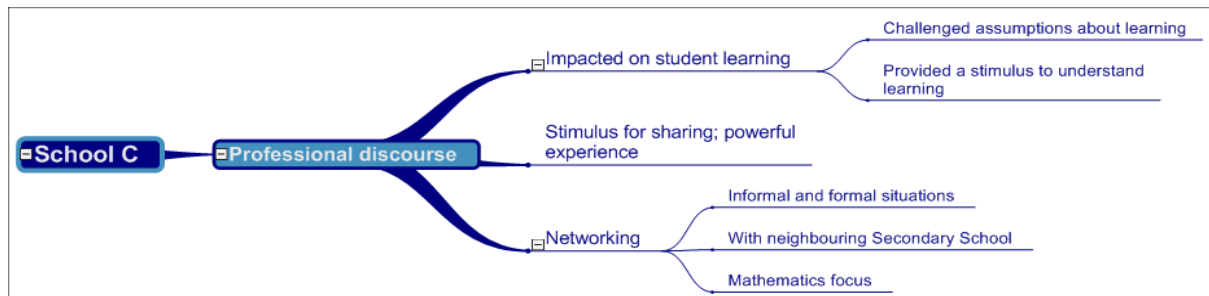
Figure 6.6   **School C mind map** *Professional Discourse*

6.7.2   Professional Discourse

The root branch collecting the data for *professional discourse* in School C identified the opportunity for colleagues to discuss teaching and learning as an important component of changing pedagogical practice.

6.7.2.1   Impact on student learning

The first element identified was the impact that professional discourse had on learning. Allocating time for professional discourse was mentioned during interviews as being important to allow teachers time to reflect on and challenge assumptions about learning using the *LTLL conceptual framework* domain of learning (Figure 1.1, p. 13) as a tool (IC1-4).

Additionally, teachers were expected to trial new teaching strategies and to provide professional learning to colleagues during whole staff meetings. The importance of this practice was explained by one participant:

This is all about authentic learning. It made them (teachers) think about their teaching, why they had to teach it (the outcome) and then evaluate it. Some of the results were outstanding (IC1).

The gentle pressure from the School C LTLL participants incorporated into the strategies to engage teachers in teacher learning also provided them with opportunities to discuss the teaching of mathematics with colleagues and challenged the status of the traditional teaching methods used in classrooms. This increased the teachers' expectations of professional learning and provided a stimulus for professional conversation.

6.7.2.2 Stimulus for sharing

The second component identified was the stimulus for sharing. Participant C1 explained that the professional discourse relating to the LTLL initiative enabled School C participants to provide stimulus for the sharing of innovative teaching practices and, at the same time, challenge assumptions and the status quo of some teachers, who were still using traditional teaching methods and not participating in team learning.

6.7.2.3 Networking

The final component identified was the networking practices established informally and formally, across and beyond the school and was also discussed in the previous section in the theme *learning*. Participant C4 expressed the professional discourse resulting from whole-staff sharing as being a "powerful experience" (FC4). It was her belief that this practice also extended the leadership capacity of some teachers and created enthusiasm amongst the staff in the teaching and sharing of mathematical strategies.

In summary, leadership practices that emerged through the data synthesis and formed the smaller branches in the mind maps that appeared to nurture authentic learning in School C were the commitment to support learning through a shared values base which also supported practices of shared leadership. Professional discourse that focussed on students as learners and

the focus of the LTLL initiative of mathematics provided the stimulus for networking in and beyond the school. The allocation of appropriate resources to the LTLL initiative ensured that the learning tools were contemporary and supported the students in the use of technology, provided time for professional discourse and ensured that the moral purpose of learning was the focus of school professional development. School C participants had a shared commitment to shared leadership and how shared leadership supported and developed practices of authentic learning in the school. This leads to exploring the participants' responses to research question three.

6.8 Research Question Three

How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

The themes emanating from the School C data analysis of the mind map for the third research question, "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership" are presented in the following table (Table 6.3) and are closely linked to the themes identified in responding to research question one referring to the participants' understanding of leading and to research question two referring to learning. The themes are presented in Table 6.3 and the root branch *shared leadership* from the School C mind map (Appendix J) is also included to visually represent the data (Figure 6.7, p. 215).

Research Question Three:	
How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?	
6.8.1 Shared Leadership	6.8.1.1 Parallel leadership
	6.8.1.2 Whole school pedagogical plan

Table 6.3   School C Responses to Research Question Three

6.8.1 Shared Leadership

The analysis of data reflected in the project plan, final LTLL report and the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) indicated that leaders in School C responded to the challenges of shared leadership through shared decision-making practices associated with parallel leadership and in developing a whole school pedagogical plan.

The data collated from the theme *shared leadership* from School C participants are discussed below in section 6.8.1 and include the components of parallel leadership and whole school pedagogical plans.
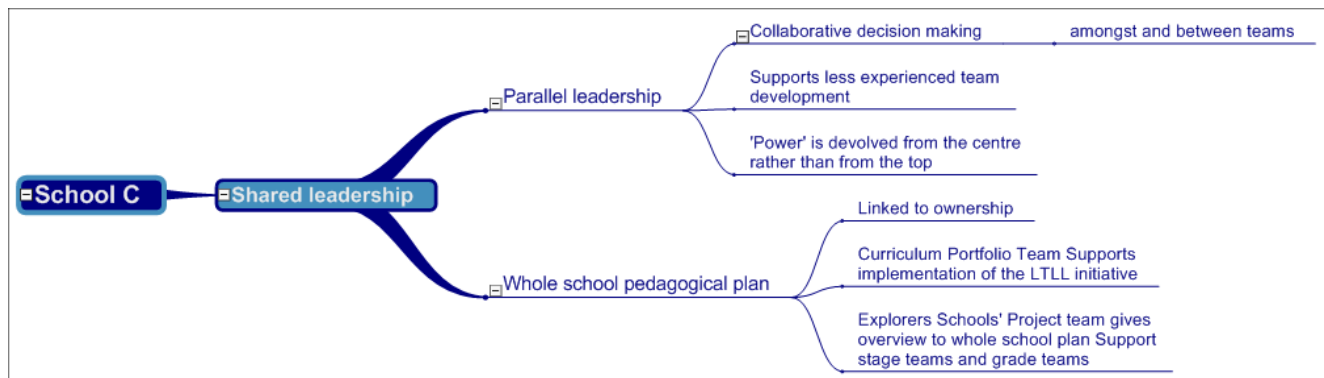
Figure 6.7   School C mind map *Shared Leadership*

6.8.1.1   Parallel leadership

The first dimension identified was parallel leadership, which included shared decision making amongst and between teams associated with the various curriculum portfolios in the school. It was participant C1's belief that parallel leadership meant that power was devolved from the centre rather than from the top of the leadership structures in the school (PPC, FRC).

Participant C3 explained that over a "number of years we have had an ethos here of shared leadership and tried to have the decision-making processes also shared" (IC3). Practices of shared leadership were evidenced in the collaborative nature of the teams operating throughout

School C, in the team planning, team decision-making, evaluating and forming

recommendations to the leadership team (PPC, FRC).

6.8.1.2   Whole school pedagogical plan

The second dimension identified was a whole school pedagogical plan. Such as plan was

evidenced in the coordinated approach of both the *Explorers Schools' Project* and the *LTLL*

Project, as well as the multitude of portfolio teams operating in the school. The alignment of a

whole school pedagogical plan meant that all school staff were exposed to and contributed to a

shared vision of pedagogy (PPC, FRC). Additionally, collaborative decision-making was a

practice used by team members. In the words of participant C1,

> Shared leadership suggests a common philosophical team approach to
> effective leadership and a sharing of responsibilities, setting direction,
> identifying and using strengths as well as developing people and the
> organisation in a collaborative way. Distributed leadership suggests the
> division of tasks and responsibilities according to the strengths and abilities
> of the team members. The two concepts are similar and can be
> complementary. At School C we use the concept of 'Layered Leadership'.
> (IC1)

The organisational structures described during interviews, strongly supported the notion of

shared and distributed leadership. However, participant C1's primary concern came from how

to engage actively, capable teachers in the sharing of and ensuring conversations using their

skills (IC1). This would support the findings from Duignan, (2007) Harris, (2005) and Hatcher

(2005) as a favoured strategy to achieve the commitment of teachers and also to foster the

development of leadership in others.

6.9   Research Question Four

How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on

understanding leading and learning?

The themes emanating from the School C data analysis for the fourth research question, "How

did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding

leading and learning?" are represented in the following table (Table 6.4). The data collated

from the mind map are analysed in the four components of *reflection and dialogue*. These are

practices, leading, learning and shared leadership, and are represented in the smaller branches

of the mind map (Figure 6.8). The mind map for *reflection and dialogue* is interdependent of

the School C mind map (Appendix J) representing the nine themes outlined in chapter three,

the methodology chapter.

Research Question Four:	
How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?	
6.9.1 Reflection and Dialogue	6.9.1.1 Practices
	6.9.1.2 Leading
	6.9.1.3 Learning
	6.9.1 4 Shared leadership

Table 6.4   School C Responses to Research Question Four

The data collated in the mind map *reflection and dialogue* (Figure 6.8) from the School C

participants is discussed in the next section. The data were extracted from the sources that

contributed to the nine themes in answering the previous research questions and were

synthesised as the participants referred to the practice of *reflection and dialogue* as it

contributed to the participants' understanding of leadership and learning (CI, PPC, FRC).
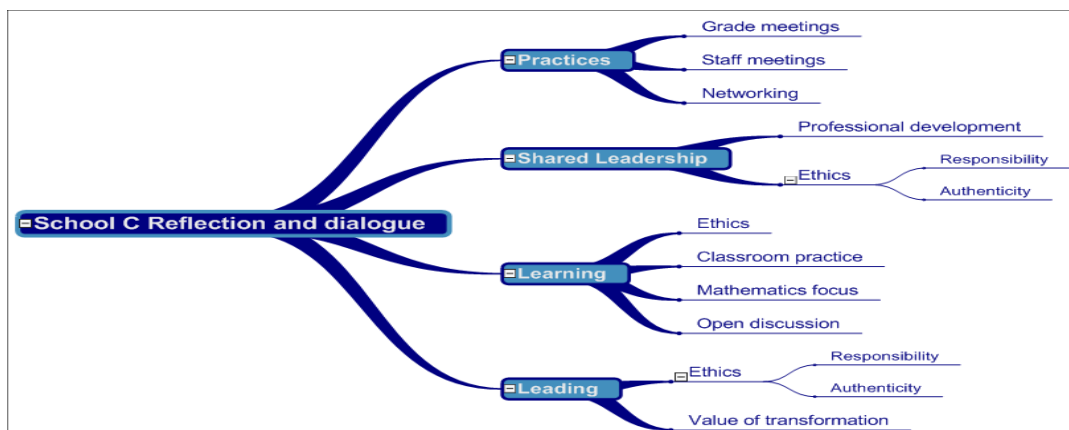
Figure 6.8   School C Mind map *Reflection and Dialogue*

6.9.1   Reflection and dialogue

Responses from the School C participants regarding the nature of the LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project lead to the identification of four dimensions of *reflection and dialogue* being named as important reflective practices in School C. These are practices of reflection and dialogue, shared leadership, learning and leading and each component developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 6.8) will now be analysed.

6.9.1.1   Practices

The first component identified was the practices associated with reflection and dialogue. The School C final LTLL project report indicated that, throughout the year structures were put into place to enable reflection and dialogue relating to the sharing of mathematical teaching practices to be a formalised component of staff professional development.

6.9.1.2   Leading

The second component identified was leading. Practices of leading were linked to the ethics of responsibility and authenticity as espoused by Starratt (2004) throughout the LTLL program. The value of transformation was also regarded as an important component of leaders reflecting on their leadership to establish criteria for transformation of both leading and learning in students and teachers in the school (IC1). Reflections on the practices of leading were a regular component of leadership team meetings.

6.9.1.3   Learning

The next component identified was learning. Teachers were regarded as learners as they shared their practice with other teachers in grade teams and during whole staff meetings. Teachers were expected to share their learning about new resources and new teaching strategies. An example was provided by one participant who commented on the importance of reflecting on and sharing classroom practice:

> One thing that teachers identified as being extremely important in their professional learning was the opportunity to reflect on, and share their actual teaching with their colleagues. (IC3)

Reflection and dialogue were a regular component of teacher learning.

6.9.1.4 Shared leadership

The final component identified was shared leadership. Focus groups revealed that the LTLL project team reflected on the importance of the differences within the leadership team and the LTLL team and how to capitalise on those differences for the common good of the school community: "our differences have allowed us to present a very holistic and comprehensive view of our project ... and to make informed decisions" (FC1). Through their involvement in the LTLL project the participants of School C noted that, "with the ethic of responsibility comes the subsequent ethic of authenticity" and this required the leaders in School C to ensure that they all contributed to "genuine and significant transformation of learners and learning (FRC).

In summary, School C's involvement in the LTLL project resulted in a new experience of professional learning with colleagues across other Catholic Education systems in New South Wales. This was a valued component of the LTLL project and one appreciated by the participants in School C. The following example was given during interviews by one of the participants and captures the gratitude of sharing in the knowledge from international scholars:

> The great advantage is meeting other Catholic Education Office personnel and talking to the people from ACU. The opportunity to meet Steven Gross and meeting the team was exceptional. I think their understanding of what we were trying to do, the fact that we could have a professional conversation. The fact, that Steve came with his international experience. You don't always have an opportunity to tap into other people. We all appreciated that. (IC3)

This was reiterated during focus groups and concluded with acknowledging the importance of the school visit from LTLL project managers and international speakers as being a highlight of the LTLL project (FC).

CHAPTER SEVEN - DATA ANALYSIS SCHOOL D

7.0   Introduction

The previous three chapters outlined how the sources of data were identified in answering the research questions in each school involved in this research. This chapter represents the nature of the School D initiative and the participants' involvement in the LTLL project. This chapter follows the same format as the previous three chapters.

7.1   SCHOOL D: Situational Analysis

The final LTLL project report for School D stated that it was a large K-6 co-educational School located in the north-west of Sydney in the State of New South Wales. There are over 540 students in this three stream school; with approximately one fifth of the school population with English as a second language. The main ethnic group is Lebanese and includes second and third generation families. The school has a tradition of community and a strong commitment to Catholic values. The Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners (LTLL) project team consisted of the Principal and four other staff members. Participant D1 identified a consultant specialising in Primary Mathematics, who was external to the school, and the Catholic Education Office, as supporting the project's initiative (FRD).

The final report acknowledged that each school involved in Australian Catholic University *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership Project* named their initiative according to the focus they were taking as a school LTLL project team. The final report stated that School D aimed to introduce and build sustainability around a more reflective and authentic approach to the teaching of mathematics. They anticipated a positive shift in the attitude of both teachers and students. The school project team agreed to the title: "*Transforming Mathematics Learning and Learners*" (PPD).

7.2   The Nature of School D's Initiative

Participant D1 reported that the Year 3 Mathematics, New South Wales Basic Skills Test (NSW BST) results in 2004, showed 23% of students scoring in the bottom two bands. The school results for both years 3 and 5 showed lowered scores for some specific areas of Mathematics. It became apparent to the principal at this time that there were gaps in the tracking processes from kindergarten to year 2, requiring a new direction for targeting problem areas in the curriculum (ID1). In consultation with the school leadership team, participant D1 explained that, with the introduction of the new Mathematics syllabus, professional development opportunities were required to increase teachers' awareness of how students learn mathematics. During interviews it was explained that the school leadership team had used the 2005 school strategic goals as the basis for writing the proposal for the project, which centred on learning in the early years as documented in the NSW Mathematics' syllabus (ID1-4).

In the School D final LTLL Report (November 2006), the purpose of their project was stated as an opportunity to develop school-wide excellence in teaching practice in Mathematics in line with the new syllabus. This would entail developing appropriate methods of assessing students and tracking their progress from school entry at Kindergarten until students reached the final year of primary education in year 6 (FRD).

Participant D2 revealed that, School D aimed to have school-wide teaching and assessment practices in Numeracy similar to those practices already occurring for Literacy [e.g., running records to assess reading, consistent ways to assess writing, tracking folder for each student] (ID2). The participants expressed the desire to embed the new mathematical teaching practices consistently across the school (PPD). Participant D2 disclosed that the aim was to utilise the expertise of a Mathematics Consultant (from outside the Catholic Education Office) to work as teacher coach to assist teachers in increasing their knowledge and practice of teaching mathematics. She discussed the main emphasis of the LTLL initiative as improving curriculum

standards and targets; pedagogy, teaching and learning; intervention programs; school and classroom organisation and monitoring assessment of students (ID2). Through conversations with the participants, through the analysis of the data and mind mapping, teacher learning emerged as an important component of the School D initiative (PPD, FRD, ID1-4).

7.2.1   Teacher Learning

Figure 7.1 (p. 223) illustrates the processes identified in the data that were used in providing for teacher learning in School D. The first element identified in interviews, by participant D2, refers to targeted professional learning of the kindergarten to year 2 teachers. A key component of the teacher learning in School D that emerged through the data was the engagement of teachers in professional dialogue, which included teachers liaising with a teacher coach, reading professional literature and sharing ideas. The School D LTLL final report stated that teachers across grades formed teams of three, to trial teaching strategies and to redesign their classrooms (FRD). This is illustrated in the flowchart as shared practice and followed by small team reflection. Participant D2 explained that professional dialogue and reflections-on-practice continued as teachers shared the decision-making about classroom practice, trialled new strategies; came together to discuss the practice and modified the strategy. When they were confident they shared the strategy with a colleague in another classroom, they peer taught the strategy and together evaluated the process. Teachers then worked with each other across classrooms. This teacher change in practice was then shared with the whole staff (ID2).
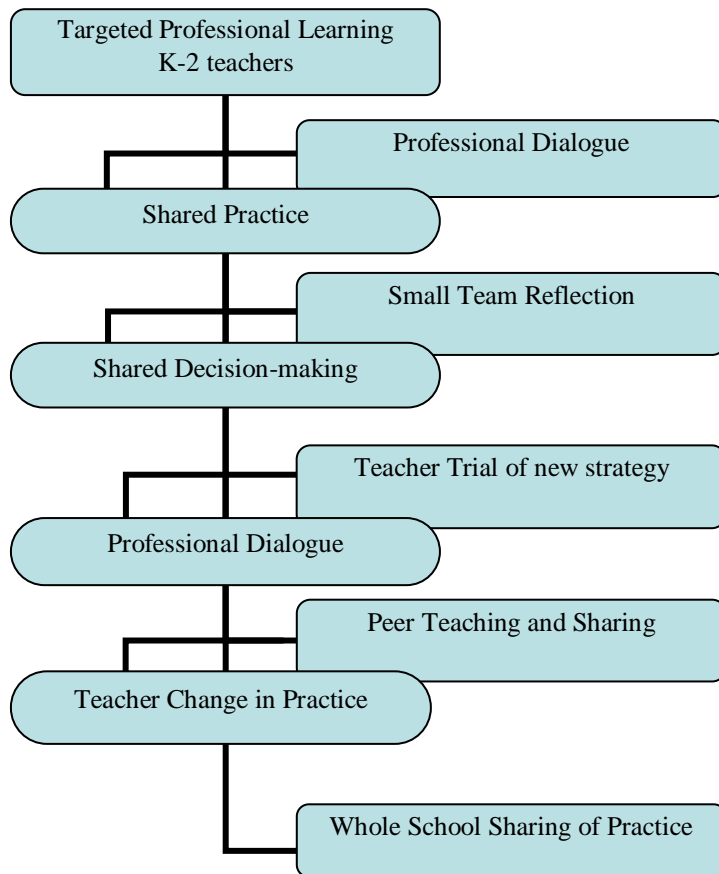
Figure 7.1   School D Teacher Learning Process

Participant D2 discussed changes in the focus of staff meetings from improved results in

mandatory tests, such as the New South Wales Basic Skills Test, through changes in classroom

practice in the teaching of mathematics. The teacher learning process described above was a

result of the intervention made during the LTLL project, to assist teachers learn about

mathematics.

Additionally during focus groups the participants discussed the change in focus of the initiative

across the K-2 grades instead of being a whole school initiative. It was their belief that this

enabled the LTLL project team to liaise with a smaller group of teachers, making the task more

manageable and, enabling the participants to concentrate on the ethical components of the

project (FD).

The School D LTLL final report explained the role of an external Mathematics consultant being employed to liaise with grade teams on programming and to assist with the development of yearly plans in mathematics. The consultant's skills were also required to initiate and to guide discussion about good classroom practice and mathematical task development, focusing on empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning (FRD).

Participant D1 indicated that planning days were provided for staff to work with the specialist consultant. As previously indicated, one purpose of the project was the implementation of tracking procedures for Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 (ID1). Participant D3 professed that, in the first phase of the initiative, teachers in kindergarten and year 2 were given additional planning time to implement new formal assessment practices. She explained that Kindergarten teachers were required to assess each student's entry point to mathematical learning, and year 2 teachers' trialled the use of clinical interviews with all students in year 2. Additionally, the clinical interview information was also used to assist teachers to pass on information about a student's learning to the teacher in the immediate higher grade of teaching (ID3).

The School D LTLL final report noted that, in December 2005, the Mathematics consultant worked with teachers to devise a tracking template, listing the key ideas in each topic in Mathematics. She also guided the teachers in understanding key mathematical concepts and the importance of appropriate and relevant assessment practices. The report also indicated that School D teachers reviewed the assessment data from the NSW BST 2005, and students' written responses to open ended tasks, in an attempt to implement individual learning plans for those students perceived to be at risk, as well as those students requiring enrichment. Furthermore, the report noted that teachers working in grade teams reviewed students' work samples to explore more responsive approaches to understanding the difficulties several students were experiencing with certain concepts. Grade teams were also asked to reflect on,

and explore the technique of using questioning with students as a means of probing mathematical learning (FRD).

It was the LTLL participants' belief that it was imperative to develop a whole school approach to mathematics programming and evaluation (FD). The School D LTLL final report, also noted that, as a requirement of the deliberate organisation of time for grade teams to plan together, there was an expectation that a yearly outline of strands and sub-strands be developed for each stage. This was to ensure equality of teaching in all strands (FRD).

Participant D3 explained the explicit focus on managing resources in the school to support the LTLL initiative. Mathematical resources were reviewed as part of examining how to successfully implement the changes required for a personalised learning program in mathematics. A stocktake was conducted of mathematical resources currently available in classrooms. The Mathematics syllabus was also examined in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1, to determine the resources that were required and to ensure adequate availability of resources for teachers to teach each strand of the syllabus effectively. She reported that the Mathematics consultant addressed the staff during staff meetings to develop their professional understanding of the importance of using resources effectively and professional readings were also supplied for staff to reinforce the messages from the consultant (ID3).

Participant D3 also explained that each teacher, from kindergarten to year 2, reorganised their room to have a designated display area for mathematics and an accessible shelf space for resources and manipulative materials. Additionally, teachers were expected to visit colleagues' classrooms and to share their expertise with each other. The leadership team developed organisational structures to enable teachers to visit each other's classroom. The focus of the visits centred on changes in the teaching of mathematics as a result of insights gained through the professional learning experiences and reinforced the focus on teacher learning (ID3).

Participant D2 explained that the language of mathematics was of particular concern to the students, as they often lacked the basic understanding of pertinent concepts. It was her belief that many students were not able to access mathematical concepts because they did not have a conceptual understanding of the mathematical terms being used (ID2). The School D final LTLL report indicated that as a result of this insight, each class was required to develop word walls, posters of language from each sub-strand of mathematics, and numeracy 'word towers' on desks. This assisted all children, and particularly those children with learning difficulties and those with a language background other than English (LBOTE). Also reported in the School D LTLL final report, was that "the language and spelling concepts of many mathematical terms were often new to everyone in the class" (FRD).

Conversations with participant D2 revealed that as teachers wrote their programs they were required to include language as part of the lesson format and every mathematics lesson commenced with a class warm-up activity that included the language associated with the mathematical concepts being taught. At the end of each lesson, students were given an opportunity to discuss their learning from the lesson with all class members. This gave the students practice in the language used during the lesson and confidence in sharing their different learning styles. It also provided opportunities for those children who enjoyed the challenges of mathematics to express the extensions of their learning. Participant D3 wrote about the importance of allowing children to discuss their cognition:

> As time drew the lesson to a close, each group's speaker explained what they had learned. Other members had input too. Our students who struggle with communication in the written mode are given an opportunity to shine if allowed to share orally. (WBJD3)

Participants concurred that teaching programs were written for each sub-strand of mathematics and they included outcomes, language to be developed, carefully chosen tasks, questions to

facilitate children's learning and how these would be differentiated to either extend children or cater for students working at a lower stage outcome (WBJD, FRD).

One of the seven root branches (Figure 7.2) has been extracted from the School D mind map (Appendix M) and is titled *Issues*. The data contributing to this theme identifies concerns relating to School D's LTLL initiative and its implementation in the school.
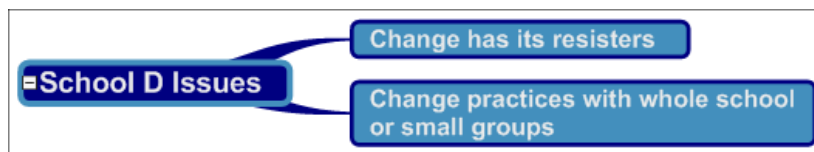
Figure 7.2   School D mind map *Issues*

7.1   Issues Relating to the Nature of the Project in School D

The root branch *Issues* illustrates the data analysed from the mind map from the School D sources, and identifies one main theme that was continuously discussed by participants; *processes of change* (ID, FD, WBJD). In addressing concerns about the change process, the school size was also identified by all School D participants as requiring purposeful management as a component of the change process (ID1-4). This issue, relating to the nature of the LTLL project is discussed below.

7.3.1   Change processes

There was one main contextual issue identified by the principal, during interviews, as relating to School D's initiative (ID1). The staff of School D consisted of teachers who had been in the school for over twenty five years, some as long as thirty-five years. Participant D1 acknowledged that the longevity of some staff's employment in School D meant that many of the structures and processes in place were established and vigorously maintained by some of these staff members (ID1). It was participant D1's belief that they had been significant people in developing the culture of this school; they knew the families well, many of whom they had

previously taught and many still lived in the local community. They had established very strong friendship groups on staff and were vocal about changing practices in the school environment that they believed affected them personally (ID1).

Marzano et al.'s (2005) research would support the School D participants in managing this issue carefully, as the culture of a school is a naturally by-product of people working in close proximity, and can have positive or negative influence on a school's effectiveness. Participant D1 continued to explain that, at the other end of the spectrum, was at least a third of the staff in the initial stages of their teaching career. These young graduates had been employed by the previous principal as long serving teachers had retired. There were few teachers in the middle years of their careers.

Participant D1 explained that, at the beginning of the 2006 school year, the previous principal moved to another diocesan school and that as the newly appointed principal, she was required to join the LTLL project team. The LTLL project had been established for less than six months. This fact added to the necessity to manage the change process carefully, as it was participant D1's belief that the ability of a new leader to implement and support an already established LTLL project initiative could impact on the nature of that initiative's implementation (ID1).

7.4   The Impact of Issues on the School D Initiative

Participant D1 indicated that upon appointment to School D, she was required to establish effective school leadership processes in the new school environment; deal with the complexities of staffing and implement the LTLL project initiative with the School D participants, as well as deal with the many other agendas that understanding a new environment entails. It was her belief that as a principal new to the school, the management of

the School D initiative would reflect on her leadership credibility in the eyes of these long standing staff members of School D.

Participant D1 divulged that she had become principal of School D at a time when the school's numeracy and literacy scores were one of the lowest in the local cluster of schools. Conversant with the writing of Fullan (2001), she discussed the positive development of new relationships in the school as being crucial for creating greater teacher capacity in order to improve student outcomes. Participant D1 also discussed implications of challenging the status quo and upsetting the school's equilibrium and spoke briefly about managing the turbulence as described by Professor Steven Gross during one of the LTLL plenary sessions (ID1).

Responses to the Research Questions

This section illustrates the main themes identified in the School D data sources as being essential to developing the participants' understanding of leadership and learning in the context of the LTLL project. There are nine themes *Values, Shared leadership, Ethics, Issues, Professional discourse, Relationships, Learning, LTLL conceptual framework* and *Leadership capabilities,* identified in chapter three, the methodology chapter and discussed through the responses to the research questions.

The themes emanating from the School D data analysis for the first research question "How did participants understand the concept of leadership?" are presented in the following table (Table 7.1, p. 230) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership. The data collated from the mind map is analysed in the three main themes, leadership capabilities, values and ethics. The smaller branches emerging from each of these themes are shown in the right hand column in Table 7.1. The root branches from School D mind map (Appendix M) are included throughout the responses to the research questions to visually represent the data.

Research Question One: How did participants understand the concept of leadership?	
7.5.1 **Leadership** **capabilities**	7.5.1.1 Building teacher capacity 7.5.1.2 Resourcing 7.5.1.3 Linking values and ethics
7.5.2 **Values**	7.5.2.1 Values and the purpose of schooling 7.5.2.2 Value of transformation
7.5.3 **Ethics**	7.5.3.1 Presence 7.5.3.2 Responsibility 7.5.3.3 Authenticity

Table 7.1   **School D Responses to Research Question One**

The data collated from the theme *leadership* from School D participants is discussed in section 7.6.1, before the data on values and ethics. Data from these three themes were analysed from the School D mind map (Appendix M) and cannot be separated from the participants' understanding of leadership and need to be viewed as essential to the leadership practices of the participants in School D (DI, PPD, FRD, RTD).

7.5   Research Question One

How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

In the *leadership capabilities* theme two smaller branches of data, building teacher capacity and resources were also identified as being significant to understanding leadership in School D. A third branch *links to values and ethics* is closely tied to *leadership capabilities* and is also represented in this section. The themes *values* and *ethics* are also discussed as separate themes later in this section. Each of these elements of *leadership* capabilities developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 7.3, p. 231) will now be analysed.
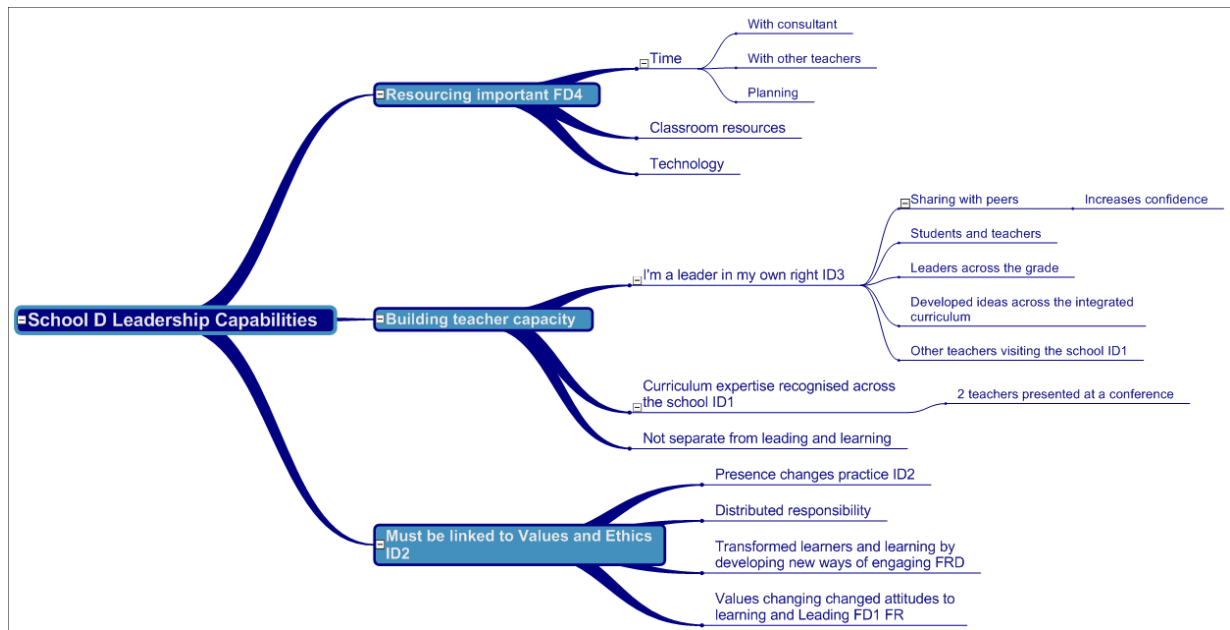
Figure 7.3   **School D mind map** *Leadership capabilities*

7.5.1   Leadership capabilities

Leadership capabilities were named by participants from School D as an important and

essential component implementing the LTLL initiative (ID1-4, WBJD). The data in Figure 7.3

illustrate the importance placed on leaders building teacher capacity in the school,

appropriately resourcing changes in pedagogy and the necessity of being mindful of the shared

values in the school and the ethics required to maintain focus on a shared understanding of the

values. These elements were identified in the smaller branches of the mind map and are

described below.

7.5.1.1   Building teacher capacity

The first capability identified was *building teacher capacity*. Participant D1 revealed her belief

that the participants valued the practices of teachers sharing with peers across classrooms,

organising and facilitating staff meetings and presenting at conferences. The School D

participants believed that these practices changed teacher's perceptions of what it meant to be a

leader in School D (FD). These experiences, although daunting during the first phase of the

project, helped establish teachers as Mathematics experts in the school and across the system in their region (ID1).

Participation in the project had enabled teachers to develop pedagogical practices that could be transferred to other areas of the curriculum and across grades (ID3). Participant D3 believed that building teacher capacity could not be separated from learning and was a process that supported teacher's involvement in leadership activities in the school. It was her belief, that the more confident a teacher became in modifying the teaching and learning to really engage students, the more excited the student became about sharing their knowledge with others. She concluded by surmising that the commitment to the project and the motivation of those involved in the initiative motivated and encouraged other teachers to try new teaching methods and develop ideas across the integrated curriculum (ID3).

7.5.1.2   Resourcing

The second capability identified was how leaders resourced the LTLL initiative. The resourcing of classrooms, with appropriate and accessible mathematics equipment was considered essential to the success of the School D initiative (FD4). All the participants believed that the most important component of resourcing was their commitment as leaders to provide time for teachers to plan and learn together. Thus, time was provided for teachers across grades to work with the Mathematics consultant to understand how students learn, and to challenge their own beliefs and assumptions about learning, to design open-ended learning tasks, to visit and explore the learning in different classrooms and to plan professional learning experiences for staff meetings. Changing beliefs and values about learning was considered imperative to changing classroom practice by all five School D participants (FD, FRD).

7.5.1.3   Links to values and ethics

The final capability identified was the leaders' ability to link to values and ethics to leadership

and learning. Participant D2 believed that the ethics of presence and responsibility as espoused

by Starratt (2004) and underpinning the LTLL project changed teachers' practice and their

attitude to their practice (ID2). Further, that the *value of transformation,* when discussed by

participants, lead to a change in teachers' values about learning and leading and that this then

lead to a change in their practice (FD, FRD, ID1). These are discussed below as the two other

main themes from the School D mind map (Appendix M).

Values, is the second theme explored and is visually represented in Figure 7.4 as the root

branch in the School D mind map (Appendix M). Two elements identified through the data by

the participants in School D as contributing to their understanding of leadership and captured

in the theme *values* were associated with the values that underpin the purpose of schooling and

the value of transformation.
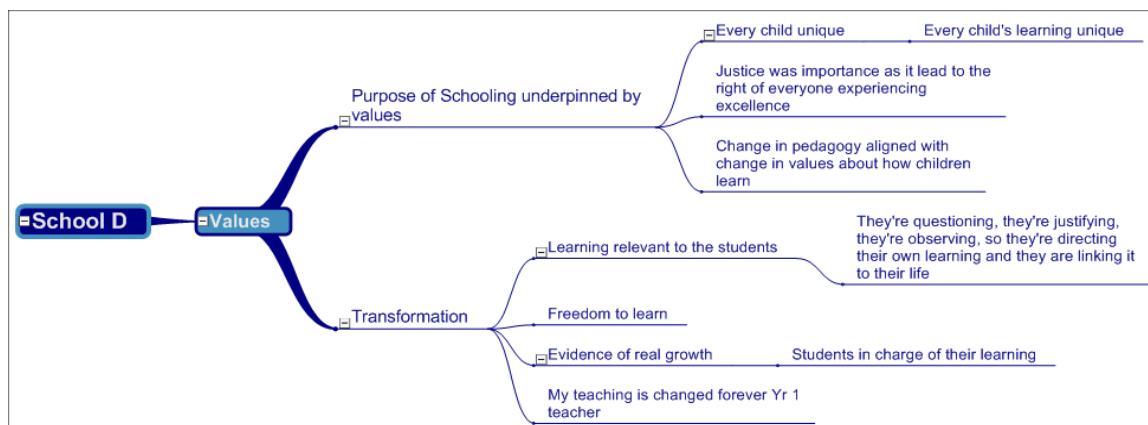
Figure 7.4   School D mind map *Values*

7.5.2   Values

There were two elements of the *values* theme identified from the mind map that linked to the

School D participants' understanding of leadership. Each of these elements of values

developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 7.4) will now be analysed.

7.5.2.1   Values and the purpose of schooling

The first element identified was the link to the school's espoused values and the purpose of schooling. Acknowledging the uniqueness of each student also meant acknowledging that every child's learning is unique (ID1). It was the belief of participant D4 that when teachers explored the values of excellence and justice in the learning environment, they concluded that accessing appropriate and relevant learning experiences for all students lead in many ways to all students experiencing excellence in their learning (FD4). This would substantiate Starratt's (2007) claims that the purpose of educational leaders leading a community and an institution is the commitment to authentic learning, that is, real learning.

7.5.2.2   The value of transformation

The second element identified was the value of transformation. For participant D3, this was transformation in learning for both students and teachers (ID3). Students were questioning, justifying, observing, and directing their own learning and were linking it to their life experiences (FD2). One participant acknowledged that there was evidence of real growth in students and teachers learning and that 'my teaching is changed forever" (ID3). Changes in pedagogy aligned with attitudinal changes in beliefs and values about how children learn (FD2). Teachers carefully chose mathematical tasks to meet the learning needs of students and to facilitate best the learning of a new concept. This responsive approach to planning promoted the ethic of "authenticity in genuine reciprocal relationships" (FRD). This leads to the third theme of *ethics* discussed as contributing to the participants' understanding of leadership that emanated from the School D mind map (Appendix M) and is illustrated in root branch Figure 7.5, (p. 235).
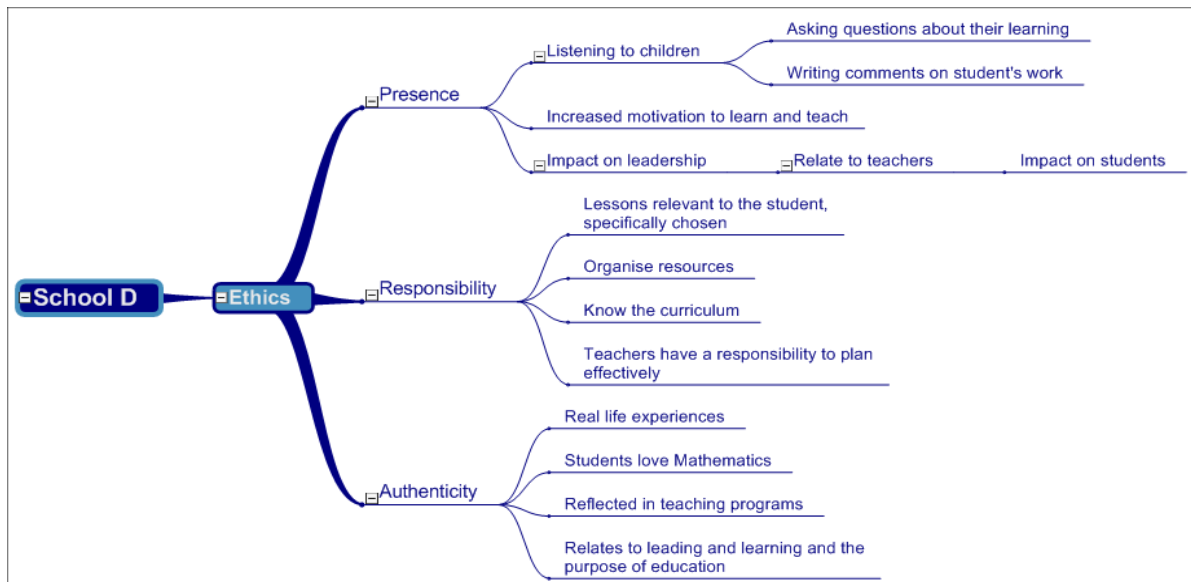
Figure 7.5 **School D mind map** *Ethics*

7.5.3 Ethics

There were three elements of the ethics identified from the mind map that linked to the School D participants' understanding of leadership. These were the ethic of presence, the ethic of responsibility and the ethic of authenticity. An understanding of these three ethics was a major component of the LTLL project, underpinned the LTLL conceptual framework and attributed essentially to the research of Starratt (2004).

7.5.3.1 Ethic of presence

The first element identified was the ethic of presence (Starratt, 2004). Professed in the School D LTLL final report was that the ethic of presence was a cornerstone of this LTLL project initiative (FRD). This was evidenced in the relationships that the School D participants developed with the teachers involved in the initiative and, in turn, these teachers were present to the students in their classrooms (ID2). This was made apparent to the school participants in the way that teachers listened to students, asked questions about their learning, and responded with meaning and relevant comments in their exercise books. The School D participants also commented on the value of presence being represented in teachers' attitudes to teacher

leadership and the change in the culture of teachers openly sharing their knowledge and skills with others. Starratt (2004) called this affirming presence, as it communicates the message that others have the right to be who they are and are invited to express their authentic individuality, thus enabling them to bring their talents to the life of the school. It was participant D1's belief that affirming presence, modelled to teachers and parents by the LTLL participants, would generate an affirming presence in the staff and students (ID2).

7.5.3.2 Ethic of responsibility

The second element identified was the ethic of responsibility (Starratt, 2004). Participant D1 noted that throughout the implementation of the School D initiative new ideas and directions were discussed and debated amongst teachers. By considering all viewpoints, as contributions from professional equals, new ideas, which in the past might have been discarded, were considered as possibilities (FRD). The School D LTLL final report claimed that the ongoing development of new ideas was accepted by staff and embedded in practice, because each change was an adjunct to much discussion, as evidenced in the school wide approach to tracking student progress in each substrand of mathematics (FRD).

The School D LTLL participants believed that they were responsible for providing a caring and productive learning environment for the students and teachers as learners (FRD). School D participants also believed that the ethic of responsibility was linked to relationships, and how they managed the change process relied on their understanding of the diversity of teaching skills amongst the teachers. This was recorded in multiple sources of data (FRD, FD4, ID).

7.5.3.3 Ethic of authenticity

The third element identified was the ethic of authenticity (Starratt, 2004). The School D LTLL final report concluded that teachers used a similar model of responding to students as the external expert had used when assisting them in following up students' concerns regarding

their understanding of mathematics; they listened and developed tasks that were relevant and purposeful (FRD). These changes to the learning were also reflected in teaching programs (FD). Participant D3 expressed her gratitude that students' confidence also appeared to grow in their ability to ask questions and to explore more difficult concepts as teachers were present to their learning needs (ID3). The focus group interview indicated that teachers facilitated the learning, providing rich real life experiences for the students, so they could transfer the skills used to other situations. Students began to become really engaged in the mathematics lessons (FD4). According to Starratt (2004), "presence mediates the dialogue between authenticity and responsibility" (p. 98) and, being in mutual relationship with others, enabled teachers and leaders in School D to develop the authenticity of whom they are as human beings (FD).

In summary, the ethics of authenticity within the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13), was used by teachers to discuss authentic learning in the classroom and was relevant to all areas of the curriculum (ID2). It was aligned with the values of being a Catholic school and provided the impetus to understand the value of transformation in both leading and learning in School D, as well as enabling teachers to examine their practices in light of their espoused values (FD1). The School D participants also supported changes in practices in leading and learning in the school through the responsible allocation of resources.

At the beginning of the LTLL project the School D participants were also asked to complete the LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool (Appendix A). This process provided evidence of their collective understanding of leadership in the school (RTD) and is discussed below.

7.6   LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflective Tool

The methods named as being used during interviews, by the School D participants to complete the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) on *Leadership* also indicated the importance placed on managing the change process in the school. The completed reflection

tool highlighted the change of practice happening in classrooms and referred to the ethics or

values associated with the students or teachers concerned in the process (RTD). An example

was in the final section of the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* on *leadership* which

referred to external networking. The LTLL participants wrote:

> Careful processes of transfer of information about students – maintaining
> dignity of child and confidentiality of information. Files handed over and
> discussed. Whole staff responsible for all children on playground – not just
> the class teacher. (RTD)

This was a typical response on the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A)

which made the link to the importance of the ethics of responsibility and presence. Also,

substantiated in the School D final LTLL report, was that student files were not just handed to

the next grade teacher but "handed over and discussed". This action substantiated the

importance teachers placed on knowing the student and being ethically responsible to pass this

information from one teacher to the next (FRD).

Participant D2 indicated that *the LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) was

used by the School D participants to stimulate conversations with staff about teaching,

learning, ethics and values. It provided the LTLL participants with a common language to

speak to the whole school staff about the LTLL project and the school-based initiative (ID2).

The School D participants believed that the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* gave

them a framework to drive change in the school and created the platform for discussions on

ethics and, in particular, the ethic of presence as being a component of the culture of

professional discourse and essential to developing the learning culture in the school (ID2,

FD1). This leads to understanding the leadership practices that developed authentic learning in

School D and these are discussed in the responses to the second research question below and

outlined in Table 7.2 (p. 239).

7.7   Research Question Two

What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?

The themes emanating from the School D data analysis for the second research question "What

leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?" are presented in the

following table (Table 7.2) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as

illustrating the participants' understanding of leadership and its relationship to learning. There

were three elements indentified in the data that explored leadership practices that supported the

vision and development of *learning* in School D and these are visually represented below in

Figure 7.6 (p. 240) which represents the root branch *Learning* from the School D mind map

(Appendix M).

Research Question Two:	
What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?	
7.7.1 Learning	7.7.1.1 Feedback
	7.7.1.2 Explicit teaching
	7.7.1.3 Leaders as learners

Table 7.2   School D Responses to Research Question Two

The data from the School D mind map were analysed in the main theme *learning* and were

linked to the themes *values* and *ethics* discussed in the responses to research question one in

section 7.6.2 and section 7.6.3. The smaller branches emerging from the *learning* theme

include feedback, explicit teaching and leaders as learners and are shown in the right hand

column in Table 7.2 and are discussed in this section in relation to *learning*.
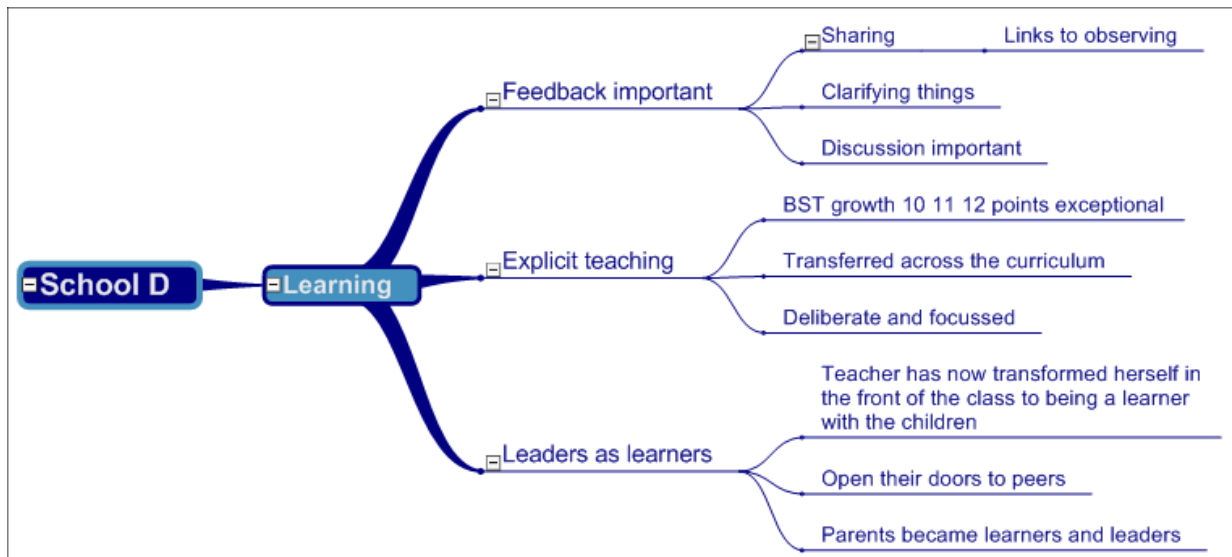
Figure 7.6 **School D mind map** *Learning*

7.7.1 Learning

Responses from the participants regarding the nature of the school's LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project led to the identification of three dimensions of *learning* being named as being supported by the leadership practices in School D. Each of these components of *learning* developed from the data through the use of the mind maps (Figure 7.6) will now be analysed (FD, PPD, FRD, WBJD).

7.7.1.1 Feedback

The first element identified was feedback. The School D participants all expressed the notion that a change in practice in the school meant that there was an expectation that feedback was explicitly matched to students' learning and linked to the outcomes being taught. The exploratory nature of teaching mathematics in School D, through open-ended problem solving tasks, enabled the students to respond directly to a concept using their conceptual understandings (WBJ3).

The School D LTLL final report indicated that teachers responded to student questions, articulations and writings through the direct use of relevant language relating to the task. For

example, a kindergarten student, learning about length wrote a few words and drew about the length of objects in the room. The teacher challenged students to "compare" the objects being measured to further develop their understanding of length. The student then fed back these understandings during whole class sharing times, assisting other students to understand the concept and forming generalisations about informal measurement. Participant D2 further stated that, feedback on students' work was no longer represented by the lone red tick but provided explicit feedback about students' learning (ID2).

Written and verbal responses to student learning were expected to challenge the student in the processes and concepts being taught (FD, FG4, FRD). School D participants believed that the nature of feedback in the school was linked to the ethics of presence. Being present to the students learning needs focussed the teacher on teaching explicitly what was relevant to the individual student (ID1-3).

7.7.1.2 Explicit teaching

The next element identified was explicit teaching. The expectation of explicit teaching was highlighted in the School D LTLL final report indicating that what was relevant and meaningful to students was transferred to other areas of the curriculum and meant that deliberate and focussed teaching was happening more often in School D (FRD, FD4). It was participant D3's belief that the professional dialogue relating to explicit teaching was associated with the ethics of responsibility (ID3). The School D participants were also identified as being able to gently challenge teachers through conversations about ethical behaviours that related to the explicit teaching of mathematics. The outcome of this focus, at the completion of the School D's participation in the LTLL project, was improved Basic Skills Test results with growth rates of between ten to twelve points. This was exceptional (ID1-3).

7.7.1.3 Leaders as learners

The final element identified was the nature of leaders as learners. Opportunities to discuss mathematics learning provided teachers in School D with time to express their beliefs and values about learning and to align their classroom practices with these beliefs. This led to an increase in personal confidence enabling many teachers to be leaders in the area of mathematics. Teaching practice had also transformed from being facilitated from behind the teacher's desk to teachers being physically and emotionally involved with students in their learning (FD1, ID3). Participant D2 acknowledged that this was a change in practice for many teachers who previously had taught using worksheets, with whole class instruction focussing on the whiteboard (ID2).

Expressed by all participants was their belief that teachers had become confident leaders in the teaching of mathematics, demonstrated in them sharing their practice with other teachers in the school and with schools in their system. Teachers liaised with peers to learn new methods of teaching, and participated in the teaching in other classrooms. This increased their confidence in the language and teaching of mathematics. Participant D1 noted that, by the end of 2006, many of the teachers involved in the School D initiative were considered experts in the field (ID1).

The School D LTLL final report also indicated that parents were recognised as active learners in School D, supported with professional learning experiences related to the changes taking place in the teaching of mathematics (FRD). It was participant D1's belief that many parents also became leaders of learning in their own right, and shared their expertise and experiences in the classrooms, learning alongside their children. Further, she concluded that teachers and parents, as learners, also began to build the density of leaders within the school (ID1). Furthermore, these conclusions from participant D1 are reflected in the responses to research question three in the next section.

7.8   Research Question Three

How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

The themes emanating from the School D data analysis of the mind map for the third research

question "How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership" are

presented in the following table (Table 7.3) and are closely linked to the themes identified in

responding to research question one.. The themes are presented in Table 7.3 as a means of

guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants'

understanding of shared and distributed leadership. The smaller branches emerging from the

theme *shared leadership* also include data that refer to relationships and learning and are

shown in the right hand column in Table 7.3. The root branch *shared leadership* from the

School D mind map (Appendix M) is also included to visually represent the data (Figure 7.7, p.

244).

Research Question Three:	
How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?	
7.8.1 Shared Leadership	7.8.1.1 Challenging pedagogical practice
	7.8.1.2 Ethic of responsibility

Table 7.3   School D Responses to Research Question Three

The data collated from the theme *shared leadership* from School D participants is discussed

below in section 7.8.1 and includes the components of challenging pedagogical practice and

the ethic of responsibility. Each of these components of *shared leadership* developed from the

data through the use of the mind map (Figure 7.7, p. 244) will now be analysed.
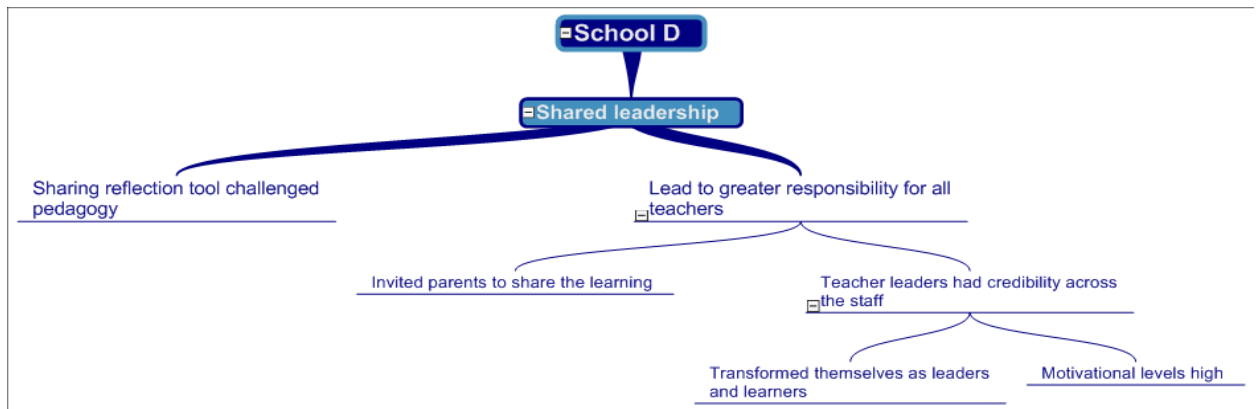
Figure 7.7 **School D mind map** *Shared Leadership*

The data supported the notion of School D leaders responding to shared and distributed leadership through the collective responsibility of LTLL participants to challenge pedagogical practices in the school (WBJD, FRD, FD).

7.8.1 Shared leadership

The School D final LTLL report noted that the learning gained from the project included the development of teachers as leaders and leaders as learners. Participant D1 concluded that this was achieved through the use of the LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool and the ethics of authenticity, presence and responsibility (Starratt, 2004), which increased teachers' awareness of sharing leadership practices in the school. Each of these elements of *shared leadership* developed from the data through the use of mind maps (Figure 7.7) will now be analysed.

7.8.1.1 Challenging pedagogical practice

The first element identified was challenging pedagogy. Participant D4 was the most outspoken participant in expressing the leader's challenges in developing teachers as leaders and sharing the leadership across School D. Her motivation for speaking so passionately on this topic was inferred by the researcher as a result of the shift in attitude of many of the teachers engaging in leadership (FD4). At the beginning of the LTLL project leadership practices in this large

school were often left to the school leadership team with other teachers commenting that "I don't get paid to do any extras" (ID2). Through the participation of the kindergarten to year 2 teachers in the School D initiative, many of the teachers showed leadership in mathematics and consequently learning across the school.

7.8.1.2 Ethic of responsibility

The second element identified was the ethic of responsibility which has also been discussed in section 7.6.3 in the area of understanding leadership. The participants believed that the practice of sharing leadership was identified in the level of motivation displayed by teachers to share their expertise with parents, teachers and other school communities. Participant D1 acknowledged that an important outcome of developing practices of *shared leadership* was evidenced in the change in school culture, where teachers believed that they were genuinely part of a professional learning community, collaborating for the good of the learning in the school (ID1). Duignan et al., (2003) would call this building a culture of leadership in the school.

In summary, School D participants identified their understanding of leadership through the focus placed on aligning the school values with the teaching and learning practices in the school and the challenges made to ensure authentic learning in the kindergarten to year 2 classrooms. Reflecting on their understanding of the *ethics* of leadership motivated and supported their endeavours to develop transformational learning practices in the school. The School D LTLL final report and focus group discussion indicated that building teacher capacity through professional learning experiences with a Mathematics consultant contributed to the development of teacher leaders within School D (FD, FRD). This supports the philosophy of Fullan (2006) which acknowledges and values the shared nature of teaching being anchored in their daily work, and focusing on building capacity for continuous improvement. Resources were also named during focus groups as a priority to support changes in pedagogy in

mathematics, as was assisting teachers become confident in their leadership. The preceding discussion has alluded to the practices of reflection and illustrated participants' understanding of the nature of professional discourse in relation to the School D LTLL initiative. This leads to the fourth research question (FD, PPD, FRD, WBJD).

7.9   Research Question Four

How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

The themes emanating from the School D data analysis for the fourth research question, "How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?" are presented in the following table (Table 7.4) as a means of guiding the reader through the responses identified as illustrating the participants' understanding of authentic leading and learning. The data collated from the mind map are analysed in two components of *reflection and dialogue.* These are leading and learning and are represented on the smaller branches of the mind map (Figure 7.8, p. 247).

Research Question Four:	
How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?	
7.9.1 Reflection and Dialogue	7.9.1.1 Leading 7.9.1.2 Learning

Table 7.4   School D Responses to Research Question Four

The data collated in the mind map *reflection and dialogue* (Figure 7.8, p. 247) from the School D participants is discussed in the next section. The data were extracted from the sources that contributed to the nine themes in answering the previous research questions and were synthesised as the participants referred to the practice of *reflection and dialogue* as it

contributed to the participants' understanding of leadership and learning (AI, PPA, FRA, RTA).
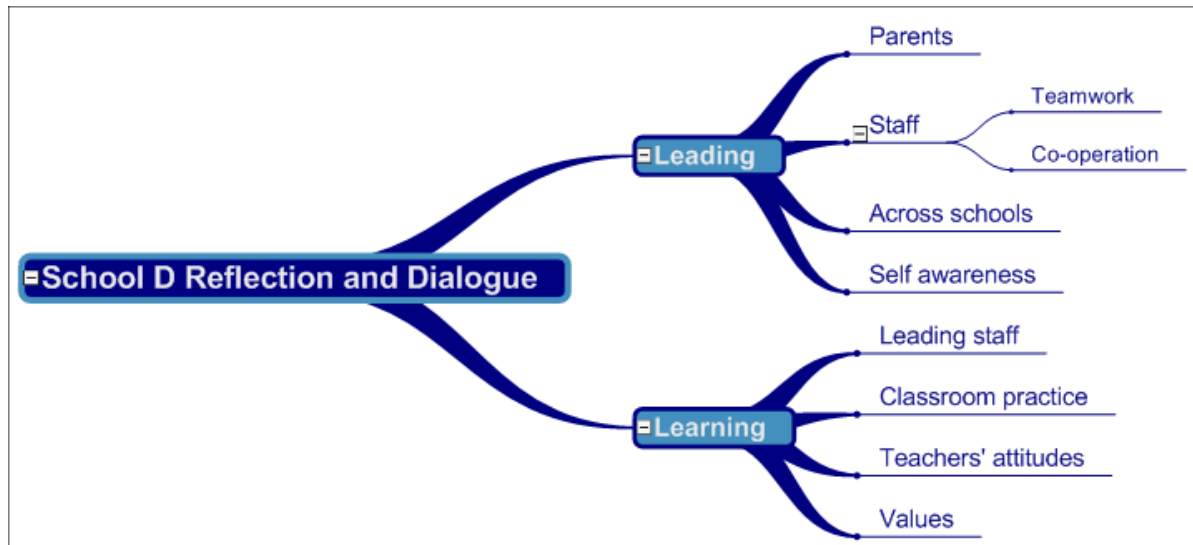
Figure 7.7   School D Mind map *Reflection and Dialogue*

7.9.1   Reflection and Dialogue

Responses from the School D participants regarding the nature of the LTLL initiative and their participation in the LTLL project lead to the identification of two dimensions of reflection and dialogue being named as significant reflective practices in School D. These are leading and learning and each component developed from the data through the use of the mind map (Figure 7.8) will now be analysed.

7.9.1.1   Leading

The first component identified was *leading*. Participant D3 discussed her point of view regarding reflection and dialogue and surmised that they were important for developing teachers' self-awareness, especially in their responsibilities to support the practices in both leadership and learning. She revealed that teachers who initially complained about the nature of leadership in the school were now leaders in the school, themselves (ID3). Participant D4 believed that this shift eventuated through teachers being challenged to align their personal values with their intentions and actions, and being supported with time and professional

learning opportunities to discuss their vision for learning (ID4). All participants revealed that reflection and dialogue assisted in developing relational transparency in the school with teachers having to discuss their values and beliefs of learning. When discussing leadership in the school, participant D2 noted that teachers initially shared their fears and apprehensions of sharing in leadership, and were now building trust in others through teamwork and cooperation (ID2).

7.9.1.2 Learning

The second component identified was *learning*. All participants from School D agreed that the processes utilised in School D by the participants to engage teachers in reflection and dialogue about mathematics and student learning were seen to have a powerful impact on changing teachers' attitudes to learning and in creating a vision for learning in the school community. This was supported in the data analysis by the multitude of references made to reflective practice and dialogue and outlined in the section 7.3.1 teacher learning (ID1-3 FD). All participants believed that this process, especially in the use of the *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A), helped teachers articulate their beliefs and values about how students learn and to challenge assumptions about learning practices in the school. This change in teacher attitude provided the impetus for changing pedagogical practice in School D.

7.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher explored the School D participant responses to the research questions through their involvement in the LTLL project. The next chapter explores and discusses the findings from the last four chapters and answers the research questions using a synthesis of the findings from across the four schools in this research. Chapter eight also examines how the professional development experience provided in the LTLL project expanded the participants' understanding of leadership and learning.

CHAPTER EIGHT - DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS IN THE CASE STUDY

8.0   Introduction

The purpose of this research is to capture the understandings of participants about leadership and learning in the context of a school improvement project. Previous chapters explored the context and implementation of each school's LTLL project initiative of the schools involved in the *Leaders Transforming Leaders and Learners* project with the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* and in this research. Chapters four to seven also presented the individual school responses to the research questions. Literature on leadership and the current literature relevant to authentic learning and shared leadership, as well as reflective practice, were addressed in the literature review. The central research question in this research explores leaders' experiences in understanding leading and learning and was used to generate the following research questions. It is acknowledged that the questions are closely related to the LTLL conceptual framework as this formed the professional learning experience utilised by the four schools in this research. The research questions are:

1. How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

2. What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?

3. How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

4. How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

The findings are synthesised in this chapter and the presentation is outlined for the four research questions in Table 8.1 (p. 250). This chapter also answers the central research question: **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

Sequence of Findings and Discussion of Findings	
8.1 Findings and Discussion for Research Question One *How did participants understand the concept of leadership?*	8.1.1 Personal capabilities 8.1.2 Relational capabilities 8.1.3 Professional capabilities 8.1.4 Organisational capabilities
8.2 Findings and discussion for Research Question Two *What leadership practices nurture the development of authentic learning?*	8.2.1 Shared vision and purpose for learning 8.2.2 Professional learning communities 8.2.3 Goal setting 8.2.4 Data gathering 8.2.5 Professional development focused on learning 8.2.6 Values 8.2.7 Ethics associated with learning
8.3 Findings and Discussion for Research Question Three *How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?*	8.3.1 Alignment of Values, Ethics, Leading and learning 8.3.2 Collaboration 8.3.3 Shared Decision-making 8.3.4 Collective Responsibility
8.4 Findings and Discussion for Research Question Four *How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?*	8.4.1 Reflection 8.4.2 Professional Discourse

Table 8.1   Sequence of Findings and Discussion of Findings

8.1   Findings and Discussion for Research Question One

The first research question asked: **How did participants understand the concept of leadership?** Leadership capabilities continuously emerged from the data that illustrated the participants' understanding of the concept of leadership. These leadership capabilities include aspects of the four capabilities identified by Duignan (2006), personal, relational, professional and organisational. These findings are discussed below.

8.1.1 Personal capabilities

Participants' personal values, beliefs, principles and assumptions about engagement with others shaped the manner in which they collaborated with community members in the leading and learning in the school community and during the LTLL project. Participants' ability to engage in processes that enabled them to self-reflect on the values that underpinned their personal leadership capabilities and to regulate their leadership accordingly, provided a deeper understanding of how their leadership impacted on members of the school community.

The participants' ability to perceive, or not to perceive how others viewed their leadership style also impacted on their engagement with others. The research of Avolio and Gardner (2005), Chan et al. (2005), Hughes (2005), Illies. et al. (2005), Kernis (2003), Luthans and Avolio (2003) and Mazutis and Slawinski (2008) support the importance of leaders being able to know themselves as leaders and to understand the impact that their leadership has on other members of the community. Duignan (2006) describes this personal capability as the leader displaying a sense of self-efficiency and personal identity.

Further, participants in School A and D were visibly sensitive to the *values orientation of others* and appeared to align their *own values* with the *values of others* in the school community. This was also evident in School C when the LTLL participants made decisions regarding how to challenge the status quo amongst many of the teaching staff. The values associated with the first domain of the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13), common good, justice, excellence, transformation, and Catholicity were evidenced in the ethical behaviours shown in developing teachers as learners and in the relationships noted with members of the community. These findings support Begley's (2003) belief that authentic leaders need to strive to develop sensitivity to the values orientation of others to give meaning to the actions of those with whom they interact.

Utilising practices of reflection assisted participants to deepen their understanding of their personal values in relation to their behaviours and consequent actions. This was particularly evident when leaders did not engage in practices of self-reflection and the corresponding dissonance between the school community members. Those participants in this research that appeared to demonstrate ethically responsible behaviours appeared strongly supported by others in the school community and were able to engage them in decision-making.

8.1.2 Relational capabilities

Relational capabilities were closely associated to personal capabilities and it appeared that leaders who were in tune with their personal leadership capabilities held strong relationships in the community. There was a climate of trust amongst community members and the ethics of presence was visible. The evidence of the participants' relational capabilities was seen in their ability to engage others in collaborative practices in the school and in the manner they communicated with influence (Duignan, 2006).

Mazutis and Slawinski (2008) would agree that, "authentic leadership capabilities translate into self-awareness, balanced, congruent and transparent dialogue" which assists learning throughout an organisation (p. 438). However, when a style of leadership, as evidenced in this research, focuses on task management and organisational processes rather than on developing the personal and relational capabilities of community members, the relationships, collaboration between community members and the levels of trust and respect were notably less collegial (School B). Further, the research of Duignan and Ingvarson et al. (2005) would concur with the findings in this research, that leadership is associated with disproportionate patterns of influence in social interaction and in School B this was closely aligned to the principal acting as 'site manager'(Marks, 2003). Additionally, the top-down nature of the leadership style evidenced in School B was not symbolic of the leadership practices evidenced in the other

schools, where leadership was seen as a shared responsibility of those in the community and thus supporting the notion of transformational leadership as described by Ingvarson, et al. (2005) and Leithwood and Jantzi (2005). Further, the relational capabilities, espoused by Duignan (2006), were strongly evident in three of the schools where nurturing the leadership of others and cultivating a collaborative working environment were noticeably absent in the fourth school (School B).

8.1.3 Professional capabilities

Participants who showed capabilities specifically relating to the profession (Duignan, 2006) were able to conceptualise and articulate the purpose of education and link this to cultivating an engaging professional learning community.

The practical aspects of developing procedures, processes and strategies for building teacher capacity, was of consistent importance and evidenced in all schools in this case study, in particular as participants engaged in programs for developing teachers as learners (sections 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2). Whilst the importance of teachers learning from each other in small groups is well documented (Hord, 2004; Louis, & Kruse, 1995; Stoll et al., 2003; Timperley, 2005), the participants agreed that ensuring that the respect and dignity of individuals was maintained when collaborating in small groups, often presented more of a challenge for the participants than organising the practice of teachers learning from each other. Participants' ability to display a trusting disposition was essential in building an inclusive community where teachers could learn from each other.

The LTLL conceptual framework provided a tool for leadership teams to evaluate their leadership practices and to engage in professional discourse to achieve clarity of their core values, beliefs, principles and assumptions. School A, C and D leaders continuously used the LTLL conceptual framework as a reflective tool, deepening their understanding of their own

personal and the collective leadership values, principles and practices, as evidenced in their school communities. Participating in small group reflective practices challenged the participants to align their values, behaviours and actions and to challenge assumptions about leading and learning. The collegial conversation that evolved from examining the LTLL conceptual framework as a reflective tool supported participants in engaging others in leadership activities.

Further, an awareness of the values associated with common good, justice and transformation provided participants with the dialogue and theory to reshape the decision-making processes in two of the schools (School A, D). In these schools, this led to a shared vision for leading and learning and to a collective ethical response in deciding what was worthwhile supporting and resourcing. These also aligned with the LTLL initiative and with the explicit values shared in the school. This would support Duignan's (2008) belief that the decision-making process of deciding "what is significant, what is right and what is worthwhile" contributes to authentic leadership where decisions are made with moral purpose (p. 2). Further, this is an example of the professional capabilities described by Duignan (2006) required to deal with the tensions associated with contemporary schools.

Fullan (2003), Hopkins and Jackson, (2002), Odhiambo (2007 Reeves (2008) and Robinson (2007) all support the premise that leadership practices for the 21st century must take into account the moral purpose of leading, where leadership responsibility is values driven and actively supports the development of positive relationships in the community.

Exploring the language of the ethical domain of the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13), during the LTLL project, provided the participants with a shared understanding of the importance of articulating and acting out, ethics associated with leading and learning and

developing their professional capability. Three of the schools' participants believed that this assisted them in deepening their understanding of the moral purpose of leading and learning. Additionally, having the time and collaborative support to verbalise the purpose of the school LTLL initiative, engaged community members in professional discourse about leading, learning and teachers about pedagogy as described in the LTLL project. Begley (2003) would support the importance of aligning the daily practices of leading with the moral literacy associated with the ethical domain of the LTLL conceptual framework, claiming that this gives relevance to leadership. However, when the style of leadership did not support the environment necessary for collegial discussion (School B) there were slight to moderate levels of turbulence, as described by Gross (1998), amongst the school project members. This became a justice issue for three School B participants because it was their belief that their professional input was not valued by the principal and they were unhappy about being part of a team in name only. Eventually the issue regarding attendance and the lack of shared responsibility in the LTLL project became common knowledge across the school community, causing further turbulence with other members of the school community.

This was not the same in School C which also shared the experience of having a split team attend the LTLL sessions because the leaders collectively shared the responsibility of keeping everyone informed of the LTLL project and expectations. This would further support the research of Caldwell (2006), Hart and Smylie (2000) and Robinson (2007) that it is essential for leaders to nurture the development of their school as a professional learning community, where there is shared commitment to, and a shared understanding of, student learning. Many of the differences between the management of the issue of the split team appeared linked to the leadership capabilities of the participants and the organisational structures evident in the schools.

8.1.4   Organisational capabilities

Organisational capabilities of leadership were evidenced in how leaders engaged in strategic thinking to support the change process required in implementing the school initiative through the LTLL project. When the ethics of leading, as espoused by Starratt (2004), were aligned with the change processes in the school, it appeared that the participants understood their staff needs and demonstrated how to challenge them appropriately, how to engage them in a positive manner and how to be reflective on their own pedagogy.

This research would support the notion that when leaders aligned management practices and tasks with the moral purpose of learning in the school community, then the tasks were more likely supported and shared by community members and to remain focussed on the core purpose of schooling. When members of the community believed that their contributions were valued and that they personally contributed in a positive and intellectual manner to the learning community they were more motivated to continue supporting school improvement processes. In discussing these findings, the management practices were directly linked to personal, relational and professional capabilities.

8.1.4   Summary of Responses to Research Question One

The four capabilities; personal, relational, professional and organisational demonstrated the participants' understanding of leadership. In Schools A and D the leaders displayed a strong sense of their leadership styles and skills and how these impacted on others in the school community. In these schools, the ethics of presence and care were critical in developing the relationships in the school community that then supported community partnerships in decision-making, pedagogical practice, and collegiality between colleagues. Leaders (participants) knew their staff, just as teachers know and understand their students. The ability of leaders to challenge others as well as themselves, and to take appropriate risks, share their beliefs about

learning and then engage in the learning, further developed their understanding of leadership
and learning in the school context.

Further, the data analyse provided the researcher with examples of the participants'
understanding and capabilities of leadership. The relationship between what leaders' value, the
principles in place to demonstrate the values in the school community and the practices to
support those values were strong indicators of the participants' capabilities of leadership.

Question two explored the leadership practices that supported the development of authentic
learning in the schools. There were: seven common areas identified in the data where
leadership practices contributed to authentic learning. Highlighted in Table 8.1 (p. 250) these
were; shared vision and purpose for learning, professional learning communities, goal setting,
data gathering, professional development, values and ethics associated with learning.

8.2 Findings and Discussion for Research Question Two
What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?

Research question two seeks to understand the development of an authentic learning
environment through the leadership practices in the school.

8.2.1 Shared Vision and Purpose for Learning

The first component of leadership, identified as nurturing the development of authentic
learning, was the espoused shared vision and purpose for learning in developing a culture of
learning in the school. This practice is described as the leader having a very clear vision for
learning and the capacity to engage others in creating and sharing that vision. Of significance is
Sergiovanni's (2000) claim that: "Schools with character have unique cultures. They know
who they are and have developed a common understanding of their purposes" (p. viii). Three
of the four principals in this research were able to engage the LTLL project team members in

dialogue and action about the school's vision for learning (section 4.7, 6.7, 7.7), whilst the fourth principal shared her vision with school members and provided organisational structures to ensure that this vision was supported in the school (section 5.7.1.1, p. 178).

The vision for learning was further evidenced through the behaviours of the principal as learner and teachers as learners.

8.2.1.1   The principal as learner

In this research the school leaders were also learners, developing an understanding of what was being learnt in the context of their lives, in both an intellectual and moral manner, through engagement with the LTLL project. Whilst the concepts associated with *Values, Leadership* and *Learning* were familiar to the participants through the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13), they all divulged that they had little, if any, knowledge of the concept of moral purpose or ethics, or the ethical literacy to discuss these, prior to their involvement in the LTLL project. Through engagement in the LTLL project participants were able to deepen their understanding of authentic learning and then confidently discuss the purpose, its principles and practices, as part of the normal discourse of social interactions in the school community and during LTLL plenary sessions at the university. The data also suggested that while the participants subconsciously had their own thoughts about authentic learning, they generally had not verbalised their beliefs and values to others in the school or engaged in professional dialogue regarding the ethics of learning within these school communities, prior to the LTLL experience (section 4.9.2, 6.10, 7.10.3). The research of Begley (2003) and Shapiro and Gross (2007) would support the importance of educational leaders engaging in problem solving from an informed ethical basis that was aligned with practices that also maintain the social justice orientation of belonging to a Catholic school community.

In the LTLL project schools, the principals' engagement in the learning process was pivotal in creating a culture of learning in the school. Three of the four principals from the LTLL project schools participated in classroom observations, released teachers by taking their classes, engaged in dialogue about students' learning, learnt how to use new technologies and supported parents in understanding the learning culture of the school (School A, C and D). The principal from School B followed up the implementation of mentoring practices, facilitated the processes of coding lessons and ensured that appropriate student data were collated for the LTLL project evaluation.

8.2.1.2 Teacher as learners

All schools in this research established practices of teachers learning with their peers, specifically on their pedagogical practice. This was evidenced as co-learning, peer mentoring or observations and was based on mutual sharing and assistance, with the aim of changing classroom practice through the support of colleagues. Teachers learning with colleagues has been found to be one of the most powerful forms of professional development (Fullan, et al., 2007; Stoll, et al., 2003; Wragg, 1999). The specific purpose of establishing a learning environment in the school, where teachers were supported as learners, added another dimension to the learning culture and was identified as being important by all four principals. The practice of teachers learning from each other was also highly valued by teachers in the schools. This supports the research of Caldwell (2006) and Robinson (2007) that educational leaders need to be concerned with curriculum and pedagogy and this research found that the allocation of time to discuss pedagogical concerns and issues was essential teacher development. All schools extended the practices of teacher learning to include personalised learning for teachers, through an increased understanding of their learning needs in collaboration with supportive colleagues or with an external consultant.

8.2.2 Professional Learning Community

The second component identified was the engagement and support of professional learning communities in and beyond the school. Louis and Kruse (1995) believe that schools that view themselves as a professional learning community acknowledge and value the shared nature of the profession. They also identified the supportive leadership of principals as one of the necessary human resources for school based professional learning communities. This research would extend the notion of the importance of principals engaging and supporting professional learning communities, by including all teacher leaders in the school sharing the leadership responsibilities and being present to others who are venturing into the field of leadership through their engagement in school based professional learning communities. In three of the schools in this research the importance of the school as a professional learning community reflected the cultural shift where deep learning was central. The data concluded that the methods used by the principals to involve others in shared leadership impacted on the degree of teacher engagement in the school and the perceptions of the school as a professional learning community.

Schools A, C and D changed the model of professional learning from a staff meeting model of input only, to an open, collegial system where staff could articulate the teaching and learning strategies of their classrooms; where they could confidently assess, discuss and question their students' learning and where their confidence as teacher leaders could grow, so as to enable shared pedagogical practice with colleagues from other schools.

Schools A, C and D utilised the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) to examine the *Values* and *Ethics* domains to challenge perceptions, attitudes and practices of learning. These three schools' participants acknowledged that the support gained from colleagues enabled them to make changes in their teaching because of the deepening understanding of learning gained through professional dialogue, and of being challenged to align classroom practice with the

values of transformation, justice, excellence, common good and Catholicity. This was illustrated by one participant:

> I feel that opening up the discussion around pedagogy and teaching to other staff members gives us a broader perspective of what is occurring in the school. It also heightens more people's awareness of what we could do to meet the indicators if they are perceived to be lacking. The dialogue among diverse personalities prompts thinking along different lines and helps focus expectations. Shared knowledge leads to new ways of looking at things and begins to build a bond, I believe, with those participating. Mutual support and respect for endeavours and much talk around what's happening in rooms as well as where to now has stemmed from the regular time set aside to mull over best classroom practice. (ID3)

This quote symbolises the relational trust that was developing in the project school communities and was evidenced in Robinson's (2007) research where she claimed that "relational trust involves a willingness to be vulnerable to another party because one has the confidence that he or she will fulfil the obligations and expectations relevant to the shared task of educating children" (p. 18). The development of relational trust was named as important in three of the LTLL project schools (School A, C & D). Odhiambo (2007) would concur with this finding, that one of the key issues for future school leaders is not about positional power and its use (abuse), but about capacity and healthy relationship building. The importance of trust in leadership is also noted in the research of Gardner et al. (2005), Greenleaf (1997) and Hopkins and Jackson (2002) and closely related to how values were evidenced in this research.

8.2.3   Goal Setting

The next component identified was the practice of teacher and student goal setting. Three LTLL project schools named goal setting as important. This was evidenced in learning goals being set with students and shared with parents, and personal learning goals set by teachers with their peer mentor or teacher coach. The effectiveness of developing learning goals that sustain the learning in the school aligns with the research of Marzano et al. (2005) and Robinson (2007) who confirmed that goal setting increases performance and learning by focusing and co-ordinating the work of the school community.

This finding was also reiterated in the approach of one LTLL project school which involved parents in identifying students' learning goals. This resulted in explicit support for the school's initiative in learning, and enabled teachers to discuss the process of individual students in relationship to the school's overall learning goals. Involving the parents in such processes kept the teachers focused on the learning goals of each student, providing a subtle form of accountability, and enabled the students to also share responsibility for their own learning.

In two of the LTLL project schools, teachers set personal learning goals in consultation with either a peer mentor or a teacher coach. These goals helped teachers establish new teaching and learning strategies in their classroom, and enabled them to break the learning into relevant and manageable components for their students. Leadership practices that supported goal setting, acknowledged the need to work with teachers from their professional knowledge base, and support them as they trailed new teaching strategies. One principal noted that creating a learning environment where there are high expectations accompanied by high support was essential for some teams of teachers who were not possibly as intrinsically motivated as others. These goals related directly to the personalised learning capacity of the student and conforms with Caldwell's (2006) statement "the heart of leadership must remain the concept of personalised learning ... for all students" (p. 121).

The LTLL project schools' approach to goal setting reflects the findings of Robinson (2007) who asserts that, to enhance learning, goals must be specific, relevant and achievable and that there is not one formula for how goals need to be set; what formulae would need to be followed or who has responsibility for them. In this research the diversity of the learning goals established reflected the diversity of the teachers and students engaged in the goal setting processes.

8.2.4   Data Gathering Strategies in the School

The fourth component identified was the data gathering strategies in the school. These data gathering strategies included tracking individual students across their primary school years and analysing schoolwide trends in literacy and numeracy. All principals agreed that the analysis of individual student data lead to a detailed action plan of explicit teaching strategies being developed to help students move to the next stage in their learning, and to monitor the value-added component of all students' learning. In two schools (Schools A & D), individual students were closely monitored over the course of each year to ensure that they were not being idle in their learning. The findings indicated that a team approach was generally evidenced when analysing school data that included teachers collaborating in developing strategies to help students achieve from year to year.

8.2.5   Professional Development Focused on Learning

The fifth component identified was the focus of professional development on *learning*. All principals agreed that leadership practices in the school to support authentic learning required a clear and explicit focus on teacher professional development in concentrated areas. This aligns with Levin and Fullan's (2008) findings that "the next phase of large-scale education improvement will involve more emphasis on strategies that affect all classrooms, and a focus on key elements that foster ongoing quality" (p. 301). The schools in this research provided professional learning across their schools in data analysis, in developing whole school approaches to pedagogy, programming and evaluation and in three cases (Schools A, C & D) in exploring the nature of values, ethics, leading and learning as provided in the LTLL conceptual framework.

Professional development was linked to the school's strategic plan in all the schools, and themes were usually explored for several weeks at a time. Teachers worked together in groups to discuss their learning and how they could apply these to classroom practice. In two schools,

the learning was applied in the classroom and critiqued by peers. The reflections contributed to future professional learning conversations. Literature from the review suggests that this practice aligns with participants' self-regulation, where they established congruence between core values and consistent actions (Gardner et al., 2005). One school participant (D3) expressed this as seeing a change in values about how teachers understand students' learning and this was then reflected in their pedagogy. Additionally, Duignan (2006) suggests that leaders who engage and support professional learning for self and others are developing their professional capabilities to lead.

In the LTLL project schools, it appeared that staff meetings to arrange the swimming carnival, the school musical and sports carnivals were no longer held during professional development time. These events and others that happen in schools every week, and often take precedence over learning, were dealt with in other ways. This often meant that teachers were supported with release time to work together to organise these types of programs, and then a sharing time was planned on another day with those staff involved in the event (PJA1, WBJD).

8.2.6 Values

The next component identified was the importance of LTLL participants being able to explicitly discuss values associated with learning. The findings indicate that teachers and leaders developing shared understandings of learning and common practices of pedagogy across the school community was seen as important by all participants. The values associated with the ideals of Catholic social teaching and the commitment to common good to develop a society which is not just a collection of individuals, but a community called to share was discussed by participants in three of the LTLL project schools (Schools A, C & D) as needing to be directly linked to the pedagogical practices in the classroom.

8.2.6.1   The value of common good

In Schools A, C and D participants saw that deepening their understanding of common good was pertinent to ensuring that the moral purpose of schooling was explicitly discussed with the whole school community. This supports the research of Fullan (2003) who believes that moral purpose is at the heart of education and learning and that education has always been about common good. Whilst most participants were very clear that the purpose of Catholic schools was educating their students in the Catholic faith and traditions of the Church, they had previously not made the link between elements of common good and the explicit nature of authentic learning. By recognising, dialoguing and reflecting on common good, the participants were able to explain why it was important and give examples of learning strategies where the acquisition of knowledge could be related to the students' personal life, and where the learning helped the students to develop life skills required to live in a community of learners. The importance of having the language to discuss values and ethics associated with learning was also highlighted by Bezzina and Burford (2007) in the final LTLL report.

An example of the application of the meaning of common good was seen in the initiatives of all the LTLL project schools. Concern for the individual was an issue discussed by the school staff in Schools A and D as they tried to understand how they could support all students to access the curriculum in a meaningful and relevant manner. It was the rigorous debate in the same two LTLL project schools about the care of the individual and concern for the group in trying to maintain stability and good order in the classroom, which impacted on the decision to shift the LTLL project focus from trying to increase test scores to addressing the pedagogical strategies of the classroom.

The LTLL final report (Bezzina & Burford, 2007) also found that most schools (seventy-six percent), believed that the values and ethics component of the LTLL conceptual framework was of particular significance in refocusing their endeavours onto the essential principles that

they felt characterise Catholic education. This supports Duignan's (2006) previous assertion that "authentic educational leadership must promote the core values of schooling, and that reflection on and communication of this vision is essential if it is to become part of everyday practice" (p. 21). By the completion of the LTLL project, all schools in this research stated that the content of the professional development experience had led them to evaluate the purpose of Catholic education in relation to the students and the espoused values in their schools.

8.2.6.2 The value of transformation

A key challenge of the LTLL program was for the participants to make decisions about the connections between themselves as both leaders and learners and the approaches to pedagogy and curriculum in their schools. The principals agreed that they were required to address the gap between those authentic learning experiences provided for the students, and those frequent 'inauthentic learning' experiences (Starratt, 2004) evidenced in the differences of teaching practices across the school. The LTLL project provided an opportunity for leaders to reflect on the espoused authentic learning practices, described by Duignan (2006) and Starratt (2004), and to act on the research of Hattie (2005) who determined that the greatest difference in learning was evidenced in the differences of teachers' pedagogy within schools rather than across schools. In Schools A, C and D the participants shared a collective responsibility in addressing these issues.

8.2.7 Ethics Associated with Learning

The final component identified was the espoused shared vision and understanding of authentic learning. Discussing the elements of the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) domain of *Ethics* provided Schools A, C and D with a shared understanding of Starratt's (2004) ethics of the teaching profession. These are referred to as presence, responsibility and authenticity and were discussed in chapter one. According to one participant, "being able to

have a shared understanding and common language of moral purpose raised the expectations for the teachers to provide a higher quality of care for all students and of their learning" (ID1).

Participants from Schools A and D believed the new knowledge, and the language associated with ethics, provided opportunities for whole staff critical reflection and action in developing authentic learning opportunities for students. They also found that their understanding of the authenticity of learning grew and aligned with an understanding of themselves and their students as learners. Aligning values with working intentionally and consciously towards the formation of the fully alive human emphasized the ethics of 'presence' and 'care' as being essential to developing authentic learning tasks. One participant believed, partly as a result of involvement in the LTLL project, that "mutual regard, respect, acceptance, as well as forgiveness and Christian hope permeated classroom lessons" supporting the "full development of all its students" (ID1). Professional discourse on the ethical behaviours provided participants with another dimension of understanding the learning in their classroom.

8.2.7.1 Ethic of presence

Presence and the sense of an 'enabling presence' (Starratt, 2004) were articulated by three of the LTLL project school participants as being of high importance throughout the project (A1, D2, D3). The participants indicated that the ethic of presence was passionately debated as being critical to the authentic leading and learning in the school community. The importance of presence was also strongly discussed in two of the schools' final reports (Schools A & D).

The ethic of presence was important at all levels for those involved in the LTLL project: the classroom teacher, students, the school's consultant and system personnel. The director of one Catholic Education system attended every LTLL plenary session, giving a very clear message that he also supported Starratt's notion that "I can't do it alone; you can't do it alone; only we

can do it" (2004, p. 99). This was also a clear message to the leaders in this system about what was valued and expected of them as leaders in these schools.

Presence was seen as significant in developing a person's authenticity and in the manner teachers listened and responded to conversations with students and informed the practices of authentic learning. Three principals, (Schools A, C & D) concurred, that the ethic of presence is closely linked with the authentic leadership capacity of relational transparency where, as Hughes (2005) explains, exposing one's true self to others builds trust, fostering teamwork and intimacy.

8.2.7.2   Ethic of authenticity

Authenticity refers to something that is genuine and original, that is shown to be true and reliable. Starratt (2008) believes that one's authenticity is developed when one is in dialogue with someone or something else. It is through the relationship of self and others that persons deepen their understanding of their authentic self and this was illustrated in the ethic of presence noted in the previous section. It is also illustrated in relational transparency where one's values, goals, identities, and emotions are evident to others.

The participants all concurred that, as their understanding of the meaning of the ethic of authenticity developed, they could see the importance of being authentic in their relationships with others. This raised their self-awareness of how they developed strategies for dealing with inauthentic learning practices in the school and was linked to their accountability of being leaders. This research supports the notion that authenticity relates to the relationships between the members of the school communities, the pedagogies in the classroom and in how leaders dealt with issues in the community. Most participants agreed that authenticity could not be separated from the ethic of presence or from the responsibility to be authentic and present in relationship with others. However, practices associated with these ethics varied greatly

between schools and participants. It appeared that this variance depended on the individual's self-awareness and how this influenced a leader's decision-making and actions. This also impacted on the practices of shared leadership evidenced in the schools.

8.2.8   Summary of Responses to Research Question Two

There were seven key features named as leadership practices that contributed to the development of authentic learning in the schools in this research. Each of these features contributed to helping teachers establish practices in their classrooms where the focus was on the student and the learning. Specifically, the shared vision and purpose for learning, goal setting, and data gathering directly impacted on pedagogical practices in the classroom. Professional learning communities, professional development that focused on learning and the values and ethics associated with learning provided stimuli for teachers to understand and know themselves and each student deeply and to provide a personalised learning environment that challenged them in their thinking.

All participants agreed that there was a shift in the learning culture in their school, with students being challenged to be responsible for their learning and for engaging in collaborative practices associated with the principles of contemporary learning. Fullan (2007) would support this change in practice, stating that learning for right answers needs to be replaced with learning how to live in harmony with the natural and social worlds, including the classroom. The change in classroom practice was closely linked to a whole school approach of developing a culture of learning that focussed on personalisation, interaction, communication and collaboration, negotiation and risk-taking.

The engagement of teachers in purposeful educative processes, required in the LTLL project initiatives, also provided the participating teachers with many opportunities for "personal

reflection and critique", challenging professional dialogue and "creative learning experiences" (Duignan, 2006, pp. 155-156).

8.3   Findings and Discussion for Research Question Three

This specific research question seeks to discover how leaders act in response to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership. The third research question: "**How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?"** explores the interactions amongst the participants and members of their schools and their involvement in practices of shared decision-making. Duignan believes that shared leadership is "a product of the ongoing processes of interaction and negotiation amongst all school members as they construct and reconstruct a reality of working productively and compassionately together each day" (2006, p. 107). He views leadership as the "shared communal phenomenon derived from the interactions and relationships of groups" (p. 107). The data analysed from the four primary schools in this research substantiate Duignan's position and further note that the leadership practices of the leaders before their involvement in this research was diffuse, and, according to Ingvarson et al. (2006), open to a range of conflicting interpretations as to its meaning.

Nevertheless, there were four major themes collated from the participants' data that contributed to answering research question three: alignment of values, ethics, leading and learning, collaboration, shared decision-making and collective responsibility. The participants were seen as leaders in a project to develop the teaching and learning in the schools through the sharing of the knowledge and expertise gained through their involvement in the LTLL project. This was evidenced in three of the schools, however, in School B, there was limited sharing of knowledge from the participants' involvement in the LTLL project, which impacted on clarifying their understanding of shared and distributed leadership. However, in this school, there was a distribution of tasks evidenced in a perceived increase in workload associated with the implementation of the School B initiative (B5). For this reason, and the fact that the

participants from each of the four schools in this research, did not discuss the concept of the distribution of leadership the responses to research question three refer to the term 'shared leadership'.

8.3.1 Alignment of Values, Ethics, Leading and Learning

The first finding of participants' understanding of shared leadership resulted from aligning and engaging the community in the key components within the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) of values, ethics, leading and learning. Duignan and Marks (2003) argue that sharing leadership with others requires rethinking what comprises leadership in a school and how best to enable all school personnel, especially teachers, to feel a deep sense of commitment and belonging. This notion was strongly supported through the alignment of values, ethics, leading and learning in Schools A, C and D. As described by one LTLL project school participant:

> Leadership in our school is already exercised primarily from a position of care and service. It is always personal and practical. McLaughlin, O' Keefe, & O' Keefe called it Christian Personalism – "humaneness in the myriad of mundane social interactions that make up daily life" (1996, p. 71). (PPA1)

In Schools A, C and D and, to a greater extent, in Schools A and D, the leadership reflected practices of shared leadership. The leadership practices appeared aligned with developing the capacity of all those in the community, for the common good. This was acknowledged in utilising the gifts and talents of those in the community and valuing the members' contributions to the community, especially through their engagement in decision-making that focussed on learning. This was particularly noted in the increased participation of teachers willing to share leadership responsibilities in the schools concerned. This was validated in three School's LTLL final reports and supported in the findings of the research of Duignan (2007a) and Bryk et al. (1993) who claim that leaders must develop a leadership culture amongst its members.

Three principals (A1, C1 & D1) supported the notion that the values of the school could not be separated from the moral purpose of why the schools exist, from both a religious and an educational standpoint, supporting the research of Fullan (2001). A challenge noted by the principals was how to be consistently authentic to the value of Catholicity, particularly where there was an issue concerning the value of justice that required a collective understanding of the common good, as well as responding to those in the community through the ethic of care. The issues that impacted on the schools in this research challenged the leaders to align purposely values of Catholicity, justice, excellence, transformation and common good, with associated ethical behaviour evidenced in the practices of leading and learning. Whilst one principal (B1) did not discuss this issue during interviews, she did reflect on the lack of visibly Catholic values evidenced in the school and acknowledged that involvement in the LTLL project had led to her rethinking how she could bring these values into alignment with pedagogy.

An example of the growing understanding of ensuring that learning is at the heart of what a school does, is explained by one participant from School A:

> Authentic leadership which transforms learning in Catholic schools involves the inclusion of all stakeholders in the best practice of our craft. It requires special dedication and heart, qualities which are particular to communities where all members are encouraged to participate fully and enthusiastically with integrity and professionalism: communities which expect, absorb and adapt to the impacts of a changing world, changing needs and a changing curriculum. (A1)

Aligning and understanding the four dimensions of the LTLL conceptual framework required the participants to continuously engage with members of the school community in developing a professional literacy about the meanings associated with values, ethic, leading and learning in the context of the LTLL project. The ability of the participants to engage in the professional discourse required to deepen their professional literacy in this area was demonstrated through their abilities to collaborate with others in the school community.

8.3.2 Collaboration

The second finding was evidenced in the practices of collaboration. Schools A, C and D maintained their focus on changing the long term practices on learning in their communities by being inclusive with stakeholders and engaging them in collaboration and shared decision-making. The participants in these three schools verbalised the link between the inclusivity of being Catholic schools and the expectation of being collaborative and sharing the decision-making in leading and learning. In these schools, participants collaborated to implement the school's initiative and to adapt to any changes required to maintain the focus on learning.

Collaboration was evident in the manner that participants in these project schools changed the direction of their school initiative during its implementation. Changes to implementation processes of the school's initiatives aligned with the professional learning from the LTLL project. This was particularly noticeable in the collaborative nature of professional discourse that participants were engaged in at the school. This also reflected changes from the previous "one-size-fits-all-professional development", to a more individualised approach. As indicated,

> Just as there were transformed learners in the classrooms, the project team observed the benefits to staff. Where the professional development had immediate relevance and was highly individualised, it was influential in transforming teachers. (ID2)

Begley et al. (1992), would support changing practices in collaboration with members of the community when they are aligned with the moral purpose of learning. This suggests that when leadership refers to practices that extend beyond the usual context of organisational management it represents authentic leadership which is shared and democratic whenever possible. In Schools A, C and D the leadership appeared democratic and shared.

Collaboration was seen in all LTLL project schools in the processes that supported teachers as learners, leaders as learners, shared leadership, building teacher capacity, data gathering and goal setting. Collaboration was strongly evidenced in three of the LTLL project schools where

the principal also engaged in the processes of collaboration and shared the decision-making. All principals agreed that collaboration was also evidenced in pedagogical practices and was supported by the allocation of time, with planned opportunities for individual and small group action, which impacted positively on the learning in the school (sections 4.3, 5.3, 6.3.7.3).

8.3.3   Shared Decision-making

The third finding indicated the importance of involving community members in shared decision-making about learning. Participation in the LTLL project provided the participants with an opportunity to change the practices of how decisions were made in the school, which is in line with Lambert et al.'s (1996) aspirations of shifting to leadership that is "collaborative and inclusive" (p. 3). The engagement of teachers in decision-making processes in three of the schools came as a response to teachers deepening their understanding of the responsibility of fully participating in the life of the school. This often involved them in participating in school events that they would not previously have considered their responsibility.

The participants would all concur that elements of the LTLL project involved them in taking risks associated with aligning the theory of the LTLL project with the practice within their schools and classrooms. Decisions to engage fully in the LTLL project took some participants beyond the normal practice of school life. Silins, Mulford and Zarins (2002) noted that effective change agents are leaders who "protect those who take risks" (p. 618), and that effective leadership involves "the extent to which staff feel empowered to make decisions and feel free to experiment and take risks" (p. 619). Risk taking in both leading and learning was evidenced to some degree in all schools but particularly by the participants in School A and D.

Finally, in School B the decisions were developed and communicated primarily by participant B1. Essentially the decision-making practices in this school remained the principal's responsibility. The influence of the principal as a member of the LTLL project team often

affected the motivation levels of the team's participants. Observations showed that conversations were generally led by the principal with less of the rigorous debate or professional discourse shown by the other LTLL project teams. As indicated by three participants from this school, this greatly affected the cohesiveness of the project and the shared understanding of the moral imperatives of leading and learning, which in turn affected the sustainable implementation of the school initiative (Chapter 5).

In Schools A, C and D, the findings suggest that building capacity for all learners included teachers as leaders and leaders as learners collaboratively making decisions about the learning in the school. The literature review acknowledged the importance of developing teachers as leaders in the research from a number of scholars (Day & Harris, 2002; Frost & Durrant, 2002, 2003; Muijs & Harris, 2003; Mulford, 2003) who indicated that, where teachers participate in leadership activities and decision making; have a shared sense of purpose; engage in collaborative work and accept joint responsibility for the outcomes of their work, the sustainability of leadership is more likely to be achieved. In Schools A, C and D collaboration appeared to be part of the school culture. Dialogue was collegial in nature rather than competitive and the educational purpose of projects and initiatives in these three schools was shared and decided collectively by staff.

8.3.4   Collective Responsibility

The final finding evidenced in the data was the collective responsibility shown by participants to leading and learning in the school community. Collective responsibility was evidenced in the LTLL project schools through practices of shared leadership and seen in the school community's commitment to authentic learning and the espoused values of the school.

Starratt (2004) highlighted the leader's responsibility as an empathetic person who has a civic responsibility to cultivate harmonious relationships within the diversity of the school. This was

a challenge in two LTLL project schools (Schools C & D) where the issue of challenging the status quo required the leaders to make tough decisions aligning pedagogy with the school's vision and purpose. It corresponds with Starratt's observations that the "proactive responsible leader goes beyond tinkering with the status quo to a clearer sense of what it will take to transform the status quo into something more humanly fulfilling that also more thoroughly fulfils the mission of the organisation" (Starratt, 2004, p. 92). The ethical behaviours from leaders in maintaining the dignity and respect of the individual was an important component of challenging the status quo in three of the schools in a manner that was inclusive of the values of the school (Schools A, C & D).

Collective responsibility was highlighted in practices that maintained the learning focus on the school vision and through the professional learning communities operating in all of the schools. Conversely, the continuous engagement in discourse about learning of the LTLL participants kept the purpose of schooling focused on the student as the learner and informed staff of the expectations of pedagogical practices in the school. As the LTLL project initiatives gained momentum in the schools, any departure from the purpose of the initiative was quickly challenged by many of the teaching staff, demonstrating that they, as teachers, were also taking responsibility for ensuring that the focus was maintained on the learning and the learner.

8.3.5   Summary of Responses to Research Question Three

The shared nature of leadership explored in this case study, utilising skills of aligning values and ethics, with collaboration, shared decision-making, and collective responsibility support the research of Duignan and Bhindi (1997), who considered that authentic leadership was one form of leadership that fostered teamwork and cooperation and provided alternative patterns of leadership in the educational setting. The findings support the importance of leaders sharing the decision-making processes and collaborating in finding solutions to problems that impact on

the learning community. Begley (2003) would also ascertain that leadership, which is shared and distributed and democratic whenever possible, is a form of authentic leadership.

Whilst this research did not measure the impact of school leadership on student learning outcomes the LTLL participants did collectively influence the pedagogical practices in each of the schools with notable changes to student and teacher behaviour in learning. One school was recognised with a state numeracy award and all schools showed improved results in the NSW Basic Skills Tests. These results further support the research of Marzano, Waters & NcNulty (2005) and, more recently, by Robinson (2007) which indicates that leadership behaviours do impact student achievement. In this case study, the leadership was understood as a collective responsibility of a team of leaders not as a single person's responsibility and was associated with influencing behaviours rather than as a set of tasks to be completed.

8.4 Findings and Discussion for Research Question Four

Research question four seeks to explore changes to the participants' perceptions of leading and learning through their involvement in reflection and dialogue with other leaders.

How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning? This question is answered through the themes of reflection and professional discourse. However it must be noted that reflection and dialogue has been a main theme in responding to all research questions. In this research professional discourse refers to the technical language associated with leading and learning and explored through the use of the LTLL conceptual framework.

8.4.1 Reflection

The LTLL project provided opportunities for teachers and leaders to reflect on the methods of teaching and learning in their classrooms. All participants noted that practices of reflection kept participants focussed on tasks and provided a stimulus to challenge pedagogy. Reflective

practice was seen to lead to greater collective responsibility when actioned with peers, mentors or other professionals who were focussed on a shared vision for learning. Some participants concurred that, when personal goals were also aligned with reflective practices, teachers saw this as being instrumental in transforming learning. Duignan (2006) believes that leaders who are self reflective demonstrate commitment to developing their personal capabilities to lead.

However, these findings indicate that when self-reflection was not linked to some form of accountability, it was considered to be less effective in changing the pedagogy in the school. The use of the LTLL project web-based journal would also support this notion. Schools A and D participated in using web-based journaling for reflective purposes during the LTLL project. This type of reflective practice was also seen as an opportunity to align the theory of the LTLL plenary sessions with the teaching and leading practices in the school and for maintaining the cohesion of the initiative.

8.4.2 Professional Discourse

Three principals (A1, C1 & D1), in this research, used the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) as a tool to engage the teaching staff in professional dialogue in defining their vision of learning. Most participants acknowledged that the professional discourse was the most important component of developing and refining leaders' and teachers' focus on learning. The findings indicated that, as a component of school improvement, engaging whole staff in reflections on learning was particularly pertinent in challenging the status quo of teachers. This practice would support the research of Marzano et al.'s (2005) who suggest that these leaders in their schools were able to act as change agents and quietly put into place structures and procedures to challenge the status quo and upset the school's equilibrium.

Crowther et al., (2002) believe that principals who are able to make the time for ideas to be discussed as a whole staff, are able to enhance the alignment of school processes, such as

visioning, teaching practices and infrastructure whilst keeping learning as the central focus. Two of the principals in this research, (A1 & D1) concluded that they were able to broaden and deepen the leadership capacity of the school and enhance the stature of the teaching profession in the community through teacher engagement in professional discourse, and that this led to collaborative processes being implemented to support teachers as learners and leaders. Participants in Schools A, C and D showed that having a shared vision of pedagogy and sharing innovative practices, contributed to the alignment of whole school practices for assessment, data analysis and programming.

The data exposed one LTLL project school members (B2, B4, B5, B6) not sharing the principal's vision for learning or understanding the purpose of the school's LTLL initiative and that sharing time for reflection on teaching and learning was not a regular school practice. In this school, it was noted that three of the participants were not able to disclose their feelings about the perceived disjointed nature of the school initiative to the principal, revealing a lack of trust amongst members of this LTLL project team. Despite this, the school was still able to develop a whole school approach to pedagogy, driven by the principal through the implementation of the NSW QTF. As the LTLL project was a relatively new initiative, how the whole school approach to pedagogy was embedded as part of the culture of the school was not clear. The data suggested that this school appeared, in both theory and practice, to be supporting, perhaps unwittingly, leadership mindsets, paradigms and practices that perpetuate control-oriented approaches to leadership (Duignan, 2007a).

8.4.3   Summary of Responses to Research Question Four

Reflective practice and *professional discourse* were considered essential by many of the participants in the LTLL project in changing attitudes, beliefs, principles and practices of both leading and learning. When the schools engaged in high levels of professional discourse relating to learning, there was greater alignment with the project initiative and with the purpose

and vision for learning in the school. Many participants agreed that when the professional discourse was linked directly to self-reflection it was more meaningful to the participants in the research. The data synthesis led to the opinion that where the professional discourse included participants reflecting on and sharing their personal values, beliefs, principles and attitudes about learning and leading, it reflected relational transparency, described by Avolio and Gardner (2005), Gardner et al., (2005), Ilies et al. (2005) and Kernis (2003) as an authentic leadership capability .

The importance of professional discourse was also highlighted when examining leadership practices that supported authentic learning (section 8.2). Most participants recognised that, when the practices of professional dialogue and self-reflection were attached to the goals of the school or the personal learning goals of the participant, they were deemed to be instrumental in changing attitudes across the school communities. Reflective practice and professional discourse contributed to every aspect of the LTLL project and to the project initiatives in the schools involved in this research. Time for teachers and leaders to engage in the professional discourse and reflective practice was essential to building leaders' and teachers' capabilities.

8.5   Findings and Discussion for answering the Central Research Question

How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning? The professional development experience provided through the LTLL project expanded the participants' understanding of leading and learning by providing participants with stimulus material to deepen their understanding of values, ethics, leading and learning. The LTLL project challenged participants to encourage and maintain the core values of schooling in the context of their schools and contributed to the participants' greater focus on the moral purpose of schooling. The importance of being involved in an educational leadership program, such as the LTLL project, with a focus on understanding the moral purpose of leading and learning has

been substantiated in the research of Bezzina (2007), Begley (2003), Burford (2004), Duignan (2007b), Shapiro and Gross (2007), Starratt (2004) and others. The value of working collaboratively with other leaders and teachers was summed up by one principal in this research who said:

> Having the 'time' to come together and discuss, to open our minds and hearts to cutting edge theory and then to have the luxury to bounce ideas off each other around responsibility and authenticity – was a gift (FRA1).

Table 8.2 illustrates the main themes addressed when answering the central research question. There are four main themes that demonstrated the participants' understanding of leading and learning; values, ethics, teachers as leaders and collaborative partnerships.

Findings and Discussion for the Central Research Question	
8.5 *How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?*	8.5.1 Values 8.5.2 Ethics 8.5.3 Teacher as leaders 8.5.4 Collaborative partnerships

Table 8.2   Findings and Discussion for the Central Research Question

8.5.1   Values

The first element identified was values. This research would support the investigations of Bezzina (2007) who states that it is not enough to have a broad aspiration for shared moral purpose; there needs to be clarity and detail in the way that such moral purpose is understood and in particular about the values that underpin it. The LTLL project provided a framework for participants to deeply understand the values they espoused and the practices that either supported or hindered those values. Many times throughout the LTLL project, school practices were reshaped to be in alignment with the deeply held personal values of participants. Participants addressed the tensions associated with implementing authentic learning strategies

in classrooms; aligning organisational practices in the school that focused on understanding authentic pedagogy and provided professional learning that addressed authentic learning initiatives rather than focusing on meeting targets associated with Basic Skills Testing.

8.5.2 Ethics

The second element identified was ethics. The theme of moral purpose formed the foundation of many discussions in this case study and during the LTLL plenary sessions. One of the key benefits of being involved in the LTLL project, noted by many participants, was the way in which moral purpose was made explicit, supporting the research of Begley (2003). Being able to discuss moral purpose gave participants the confidence to use ethical literacy in their schools and to raise all teachers' consciousness of the purpose of schooling and the importance of values and ethical behaviours being aligned.

In Schools A and D the participants believed that reviewing Starratt's (2004) understanding of presence enabled their school staff to deepen the relationship they had with the students, parents, and significant others in the community. In one case, the 'enabling presence' of the principal was a contributing factor in the transformation of a family's ability to manage day to day life experiences. The principal, in reflecting on the young student from this family who had been particularly difficult to manage, said,

> The sense of presence that we have given this kid has paid off, mum knows that the reason we are doing these things is because we want the best for him. She is prepared to do absolutely anything we ask because she knows that we care. We all have levels of accountability that are just legalistic and we can all do this without presence at all. The presence makes the difference. The big picture is the time and energy about being present to this child and that is what it is about being Catholic and that family has become Catholic. It is an extraordinary journey. (A1)

Schools A and D participants spoke explicitly about the ethic of presence, and the importance of truly understanding their students and knowing where they were situated in the curriculum. Further, this enabled the teachers to use pedagogical practices that directly related to the needs

of the child. At the leadership level, the ethic of presence (Starratt, 2004) encouraged teachers as leaders to takes risks in deepening relationships with colleagues and to develop their capacity to engage confidently with members of the school community.

All participants agreed that learning is more than accessing and participating in an exercise or an activity. It requires the learner to become a fuller, richer, deeper human being (Starratt, 2004) through the transformation of bringing culture and faith into harmony. All participants in the research acknowledged that the LTLL plenary sessions provided them with the opportunity to become fuller, richer, deeper human beings through the transformation that occurred in decision-making and leading and learning in their schools and in themselves.

8.5.3 Teachers as Leaders

The next element identified was teachers as leaders. The findings indicate that teachers participating in professional learning, that directly relates to their leadership or teaching practice, take ownership of leading and learning in their classroom and develop confidence in discussing issues about learning. The research noted teachers' engagement in professional learning were supported by appropriate organisational practices and that this often resulted in teachers being more motivated to participate in decision-making about learning. As Duignan (2007a) and Muijs and Harris (2007) suggest, leadership can only flourish where the school culture supports teacher leadership, collaboration and partnership and associated structures allow it to develop.

Some of the participants believed that the LTLL project supported teachers, some who have been teaching for more than twenty years, to 're-form' as teacher leaders (Duignan, 2006, p. 155). The strong sense of accomplishment was evidenced in all schools. However, this quote reflects the development of teacher leaders in School A:

> The teachers in K-2 have strong curriculum knowledge. We have one teacher who now is the Co-ordinator 2. The others are seen as experts across the staff; they have the credibility which is reflected in the Co-ordinator 2 role. We ended up having two teachers present at the mathematics conference, we have them doing a lot of work with other schools, and there is a lot of visiting. We have been asked to be the pilot school that models the mathematics project. (ID1)

This would corroborate the work of Flintham (2003), reported by Duignan (2006), with the LTLL program also acting as a formation program for teacher leaders, enabling teachers to grow in confidence; grow in self-awareness; grow in risk-taking capacity and grow in 'being' rather than 'doing' (p. 155). In this research the practices associated with focussed reflection assisted leaders and teachers in developing their self-awareness and in developing relational transparency throughout the school.

As the participants in this research began to understand the principles of authentic learning and were confident that these were shared and accepted as common practice in the school, they were able to challenge practices of inauthentic learning in the school, including their own. This challenge usually came through raising consciousness of authentic learning, sharing in professional discourse in authentic pedagogical practice and providing the professional support to change practice. Many participants believed that explicit challenges to inauthentic learning required continuous focussed reflection on the principles of authentic learning and supporting teachers to learn from and with colleagues.

School leaders in this research, who were able to describe, provide and participate in practices of authentic learning, were demonstrating consistency between espoused values about learning and classroom practice. The findings conclude that authentic leadership was actualised by those leaders who were able to manage tensions and confront conflicts between their personal values and organisational responsibilities. Furthermore, these leaders appeared consistent and predictable in their actions and were acting according to their own true self.

8.5.4 Collaborative Partnerships

The final element identified was collaborative partnerships. Participation in the LTLL plenary session and exploring the concepts in the LTLL conceptual framework (Figure 1.1, p. 13) provided a scaffold for the participants to discuss leading and learning in collaboration with colleagues in similar circumstances. There was acceptance that, exploring the concepts in the framework, allowed the participants to challenge and to reconceptualise the learning and leading in their school. Many participants were surprised when they realised, through the processes of focussed reflection and dialogue, using the reflection tool (Appendix A), that some of the learning in their schools did little to build the capacity of the individuals as learners, or as members of society. The participants viewed the LTLL project as an opportunity to deepen the culture of learning in their schools and to move beyond what had been accepted but not challenged as excellent practice. The data reflected the position that *LTLL conceptual framework reflection tool* (Appendix A) was instrumental in changing teachers' perceptions of their shared responsibility to leading and learning in the school so that it was worthwhile, significant and meaningful and challenged the students intellectually.

All principals concurred that participating in the LTLL plenary sessions provided them with a framework to discuss school issues in partnership with colleagues in the school, as well as colleagues from other systems. It was their belief that the impact of discussing problems with other leaders helped clarify concerns and took the conversation to deeper levels of discernment, assessing why an issue was causing anxiety. Sharing with colleagues from within the school also gave participants an opportunity to share in the decision-making process. This included sharing fears, apprehensions, joys and successes of authentic learning in the school. Principals expressed the belief that this was an example of shared leadership and was often focussed on critical issues being experienced in the school. Participants attending the LTLL plenary sessions were invited to engage in discussions and in the issues concerning their schools. There

was no demarcation line of being identified as school principals or teachers. Every person had a voice.

One of the major themes from the professional discourse provided through the LTLL project was the importance placed on the collaboration of participants and the theoretical content of the LTLL plenary program. As participant C3 strongly articulated:

> When we have been at ACU it has been one of the most powerful things that I have learnt, particularly in the area of authenticity. That is something that really means something; that is something that is going to be for the good of that student, for the good of all the students, for the good of the school. Not just something (the lesson) because we have to do it. *(IC3)*

8.5.5   Summary and Responses for Answering the Central Research Question

The data supported the view that participating in collaborative partnerships in shared professional learning, decision-making and exploring opportunities for teachers to lead, created opportunities to investigate the moral nature of the core work of teaching: that is, the explicit cultivation of learning (Fullan, 2007). The findings indicate that teachers as learners appreciate, and feel empowered, when they are able to contribute in an intellectual way to the learning conversation in the school community. It appears that the principles of authentic learning apply as much to teachers and leaders as they do to students as learners. Teachers showed, through their engagement with colleagues, that they were empowered by being able to articulate and relate the experiences of authentic learning to changing pedagogy in the classroom; to ensure that all learners experienced meaningful and challenging learning.

Chapter nine translates the findings of this research into recommendations for assisting leaders to transform learning and leading in their schools and makes several recommendations for leaders to establish practices that support authentic learning. Chapter nine also provides a model of contemporary leadership that has been synthesised from the data provided through this research.

CHAPTER NINE - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the research and translate findings into recommendations for assisting leaders to transform leading and learning in their schools. Also considered in this chapter are contributions of the research to further develop theoretical understandings of leadership and learning, and suggestions for future research.

9.0   Introduction

The purpose of this research was to capture the understandings of participants about leadership and learning in the context of a school improvement project. The research inquired into how conversations and critical reflection led these leaders to make sense of the phenomena of significant events experienced within their leadership practice. It also examined how leaders responded and the action they took, when dealing with problematic issues concerning authentic leading and learning.

The major research question was to ascertain how the experience of working with other principals and teachers in a project on authentic leading and learning influenced their understanding of leadership and its links to authentic learning. Therefore, the research focussed on the responses of the four primary principals and the teachers who shared the experience of participating in a project designed to enable practitioners to understand explicitly the relationship between shared values and ethics, as the base for transforming learning in their schools.

This research is important because it documents the journey of the participants and their engagement with others in their school community, and from across systems in a school improvement program designed to transform learners and learning in the context of their own school. Given the increased pressures on school life, this research contributes to the current discourse on school leadership that supports authentic learning in the school community, as

evidenced in national and international research (Bezzina and Burford, 2007; Begley, 2003; Duignan, 2006; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; Mulford, 2003; Robinson, 2007; Shapiro and Gross, 2007; and Starratt, 2008). The literature review lead the researcher to ask questions how a school improvement project, which included elements of values and ethics, might develop participants' understanding of the nature of leading and learning.

9.1   Research Design

A critical and specific literature review led to the central research question.

> **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement**
>
> **project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

The central question was used to generate the following research questions. The research questions were:

1. How did participants understand the concept of leadership?

2. What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?

3. How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?

4. How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?

As the purpose of this research was to explore a phenomenon from the particular personal perspectives of principals and teachers, on leading and learning, an interpretive approach to the research was employed. The epistemological position of constructivism was adopted because, as Crotty (1998) suggests, it respects the influence that the personal interaction with the research has on participants' constructions of meaning. The use of a constructivist approach allows the researcher to gain an understanding of how leaders and teachers make sense of their world and the meaning derived from their experiences can be interpreted to provide insights into their knowledge and attitude towards leading and learning in the school.

9.2   Research Questions Answered

The first research question sought to discover the participants' personal understanding and

experiences of leadership. In particular, it explored how leaders responded to issues that

impacted on the implementation of a school improvement initiative in their school.

9.2.1   Conclusions: Research Question One

The first research question explored: **How did participants understand the concept of**

leadership?

Participants in this research understood leadership from the perspective of their own

experiences in the context of their own schools, demonstrated through their behaviours. The

analysis of the data suggests that participants' understanding of leadership was developed

through **values**, **ethics**, and how they were able to influence and be in **relationship** with others.

Participants also demonstrated their understanding of the concept of leadership through shared

decision-making, evolving from collaboration in professional discourse, professional learning

and **reflective practice,** where they were able to engage in **collaborative practices** that

focused on values and ethics in relation to leading and learning.

This research concluded that when participants were able to critically reflect on and understand

their capacity to lead they were more likely to articulate and align their behaviours with their

values for leading, and that authenticity in relationships became synonymous with their

leadership. This was an important component of leadership that also impacted on the nature of

the school climate. Self-awareness has been described as an emerging process by which leaders

come to understand their distinctive capabilities, knowledge and experience, enabling them to

challenge their own presupposition of leadership and exploring the meaning of their personal

values, often resulting in a change in leadership practice. Conversely, where the participants in

one school did not provide evidence of self-awareness or transparency in the relationships in

the school, the absence of these values impacted on the school's LTLL initiative and on the

nature of leading and learning in the school. Positive, trustworthy relationships influenced teacher leading and learning and built teacher capacity in both leading and learning.

In conclusion, exploring the factors that reflected the participants' understanding of the concept of leadership revealed the importance of leaders being able to clearly articulate their values and beliefs of leading and learning and to engage actively with those values through a shared visioning process in the school that is underpinned by moral purpose and the associated ethical behaviour. Challenges associated with engaging with the vision were linked to nurturing relationships, collaborative and reflective practice, as well as being true to the values espoused by the school community. Leadership practices that supported teachers as leaders and learners were seen as important to building teachers' capacity in leading. When these were coupled with a shared vision of relevant and contemporary theory as provided through the LTLL project, including practices of self-reflection, the leaders themselves further developed their confidence and skills in leading. Consequently, professional development in leadership which is directly related to practice enhanced the leaders' capacity to lead.

9.2.2   Conclusions: Research Question Two

The second research question explored: **What leadership practices nurtured the development of authentic learning?**

This specific research question explored the multitude of leadership practices that nurtured the development of authentic learning in the school. Identified in this research, leadership practices that nurtured authentic learning were:

1. Vision for learning

2. Professional discourse

3. Professional learning

4. Values and ethics

5. Enabling school structures

6. Reflective practice.

These six dimensions of leadership supported the participants' understanding of authentic learning and were evidenced in the flowcharts that described teachers as learners in each of the schools. Through the engagement of teachers as learners, learning about their pedagogy in collaborative partnerships and in a supportive environment, the classroom teaching and learning strategies changed in many classrooms.

The **vision for learning** included leaders, teachers and students **reflecting** on their practice in concert with understanding the **values** that underpinned that **vision** for learning. A consistent structure that supported the vision of learning was the process of teachers as learners as evidenced in each of the schools' LTLL initiatives and illustrated in sections 4.3.1, 5.3.1, 6.3.1 and 7.3.1. When the **vision** for teachers as learners was also shared with members of the school community, and they were engaged in processes of **decision-making** regarding practices to support teachers as learners, then this collective action and shared understanding appeared to have a positive impact on nurturing a **culture of learning** in the school. This required the leaders in each of the schools to purposely support the practices of teacher learning with time, expertise and resources.

Professional discourse was considered necessary to nurture practices of authentic learning in the schools involved in this research and was an essential component of teachers as learners. Professional discourse was purposely and strategically planned by school leaders throughout the LTLL project. The dialogue was most effective when it was related to the personal goals of teachers and leaders and to their classroom practice, thus increasing levels of accountability. The importance of professional discourse on the LTLL conceptual framework deepened the participants, understanding of values, ethics, leading and learning. Furthermore, this practice supported the professional discourse aligning whole school pedagogical practices, including data gathering, programming and evaluation.

Transforming learning in the school environment requires specific, relevant and timely interventions of professional learning. The participants collectively agreed that the LTLL conceptual framework element of the *Transformed Learner* related to all members in the school community. This included leaders as learners, teachers as learners, and students as learners and community members as learners. Transformation in learning was evidenced through:

1. engagement in learning that was relevant and was valued by the learner

2. choice about the learning

3. learning that involved higher order cognitive skills, including problem solving

4. time to reflect on their own learning and apply the knowledge to real life situations, and

5. development of self-awareness, their authenticity of self.

Additionally, the sustainability of learning was reflected in the practice of the skills transferred to other situations being further developed.

This research concluded that teachers understanding the **ethics** of presence, and experiencing a sense of enabling presence from significant others in the school, resulted in a feeling of being supported and valued, particularly when reflecting on their own practice. Developing an appreciation of moral purpose and ethical actions deepened the participants' resolve to provide authentic learning experiences in the school community. This would support Duignan's (2005) and Fullan's (2005) research that vital components of leadership are associated with social responsibility as well as moral purpose.

Participants noted that when the **school structures** supported teachers and leaders in professional learning, decision–making, goal setting and data analysis, they were more likely to have alignment with pedagogical practices across the school. These structures also reinforced the value placed on learning and provided opportunities for staff to engage in **processes of**

reflection and dialogue, as well as deepening teachers' capacity to trust each other when critically reflecting on their pedagogy. Trust was an important component of teachers learning from each other and these findings support the research of Fairholm and Fairholm (2000), Fullan (2003), Gardner (2005), Hopkins and Jackson (2002) and Robinson (2007) who concur that trust is an essential component of a leading and learning culture.

The allocation of appropriate 'release time' provided to teachers to support them in designing authentic learning strategies for students was also considered essential to supporting practices of developing authentic teaching and learning strategies. When teachers worked with other teachers, the collaboration and collective responsibility was more likely to ensure that these strategies were utilised in the classroom. When a teacher coach or consultant was employed, the level of engagement increased.

The following figure (figure 9.1, p. 294) conceptualises the processes of learning engaged in by teachers as learners in this research. This was a critical strategy for developing teacher capacity, employed by the schools. Teachers design their own lesson or nominate a particular focus within a lesson and share this practice with a significant other. The teacher who designed the lesson delivers the lesson to their peer. They then individually reflect on the shared practice, concluding with focussed professional discourse on the lesson focus. This provides the impetus to engage in shared decision-making to redesign the lesson in some manner that addresses the needs of the teacher delivering the lesson. As a component of ongoing teacher professional learning this model provides a structure for continuous teacher learning.
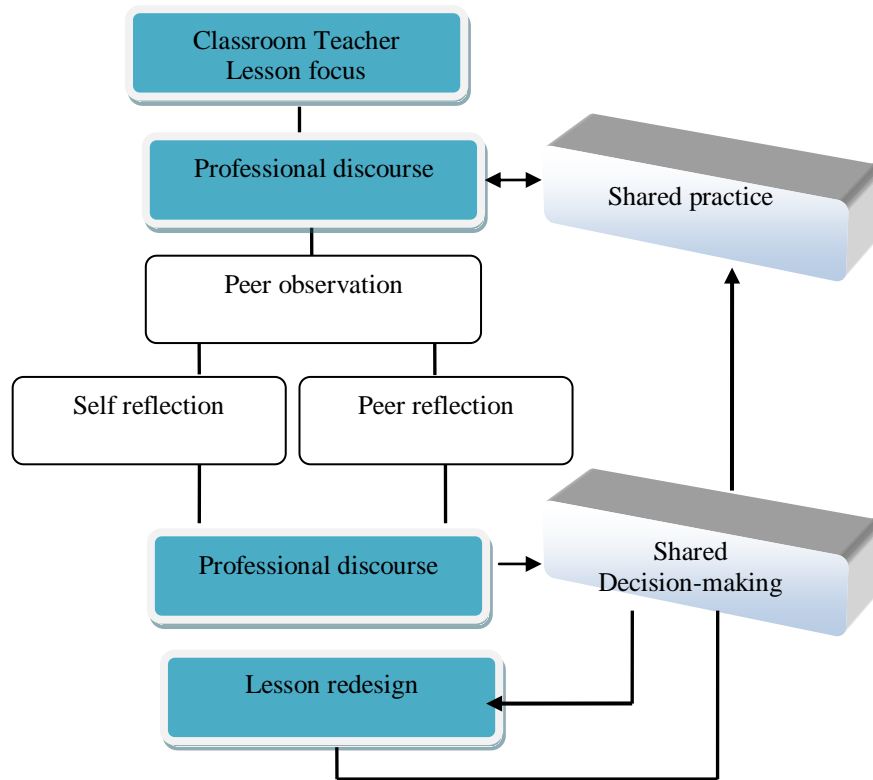
Figure 9.1   Teachers as Learners Lesson design

In conclusion, the development of an authentic learning environment through the leadership practice in the school was reflected in two distinct factors. In the first instance practices that engaged the community in developing an understanding of the vision and moral purpose of learning were more likely to support practices of authentic learning. The second factor was related to organisational leadership and ensuring that teachers were given the time to collaborate and learn from each other. Teacher learning was considered essential to aligning the pedagogical practices in individual classrooms with the vision and purpose of schooling shared across each school. This practice also contributed to the teachers' understanding of shared leadership and teachers as leaders. These issues are discussed in the conclusions to Research Question Three, below.

9.2.3 Conclusions: Research Question Three

Specifically, research question three explored: **How did leaders respond to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership?** This particular research question sought to discover how leaders responded to the challenges of shared and distributed leadership in their schools. In particular it explored the factors that encouraged teachers to be leaders.

This research concluded that the promotion of shared and distributed leadership across schools depends greatly on the principal's perception and understanding of what shared leadership looks like in practice, as indicated in the conclusions to Research Question One. Practices of distributed leadership ranged from utilising the personal talents of those in the school community to distributing tasks for people to complete. The methods used by the principal to influence and engage others in leadership greatly impacted on the nature of leadership evidenced in the schools. This was particularly notable where the perception of leadership focussed on personal power over people, as was exhibited in the fragmentation of the relationships in aspects of one school community.

When discussing particular factors that promoted shared leadership in the schools there were four factors that appeared significant. Participants in this research all believed that, the:

1. vision of shared leadership needed to be aligned with the values in the school and exhibited in the relationships between community members,

2. organisational structures needed to support community members as leaders, to enable consistent practices of collaboration, decision-making and reflective practice, which contributed to the culture of leading,

3. ethics of presence, authenticity, responsibility (Starratt, 2004) and the ethic of care (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001) needed to be aligned with the leading in the school, and

4. provision of professional learning for all staff, enabled informed and shared

practices of decision-making that impacted on learning outcomes for students.

This research concludes that the vision for leading across the school communities generally reflected shared leadership where participants were encouraged, supported and expected to fully engage in the LTLL project's professional learning and in the school initiative. The interactions and transparency of relationships of the school members impacted on the degree and understanding of shared leadership. This was strongly influenced by the principals understanding of their own leadership, as well as their understanding and experiences of shared leadership.

Participants noted that they needed time to actively engage in professional learning experiences that built their capacity to lead and to assist them in developing their conceptual understanding of leadership in practice. Additionally, when promoting shared leadership in the schools, teachers required time to collaborate and make decisions with other key people; time to visit and teach with colleagues, time to explore new resources, especially in technology, and time to reflect and problem solve with a critical 'other'.

When professional learning was linked to the ethics of leading, then participants were challenged to lead from a values base that supported relational transparency within the school community. Understanding the ethic of presence changed many participants' view on leading and the relationships between people in the school community. Conversely, when the ethical aspects of leading were not referred to, nor integrated into the leadership practices in the school, the value placed on nurturing the relationships in the community appeared to be diminished.

This research concludes that leading a culture of change by implementing a school improvement process such as LTLL, requires an understanding of the importance of values and ethics and this cannot be differentiated from the shared decision-making and collective responsibility for leading and learning evidenced in shared leadership. The collaborative nature of the LTLL project reinforced the importance of leadership being exercised with, through and by others and is not something that can be practised in isolation from the community or 'done to' members of the community.

This research also concludes that **collaborative partnerships**, learning from and with each other; students, teachers, parents and leaders, needs to be built into the organisational structures of the school community and that this results in systematic and focussed action on the learners in the community. When parents are included in the partnership of their students' learning, the **relationships** between members of the community purposefully contribute to the culture of **learning**. Consequently, leaders need to **reflect** on and align their beliefs about **leading**, including the nature of collaborative partnerships in the community, with their **values** and the school's espoused values, and explicitly attend to ensuring that the organisational structures in the school support these beliefs and values. This notion of shared leadership needs to include the **moral purpose** of leading and learning in developing a culture of leading and learning in the school.

9.2.4   Conclusions: Research Question Four

Research question four explored: **How did the experience of reflection and dialogue with other leaders impact on understanding leading and learning?**

The final specific research question sought the view of participants on the practices of reflection and dialogue within the school and, through their involvement in the LTLL project. In particular, it explored how these practices impacted on their understanding of leading and learning.

Participants acknowledged that the LTLL project provided opportunities for reflection and dialogue that enabled them to challenge their conceptual understanding of leading and learning in the school. Participants concluded that reflection and dialogue needed to be directly linked to the learning of the person involved, as evidenced in personal goal setting and in the examples of teachers as learners. Participants concluded that this link enhanced their understanding and practice of authentic learning, enabling them to be called to action to change their practice. Further, when self-awareness was inclusive of practices of reflection, such as the reflective journal or web-based journal, it provided clarity to participants' core values. Hence, the use of reflective practice assists in developing self-awareness in leaders and teachers.

This research supports leaders and teachers actively engaging in reflective practices and professional dialogue that challenges assumptions, beliefs and learning practice, deepening understanding of authentic learning and aligning pedagogy. When there is a shift in the beliefs about how students learn, then the associated values about learning can be modified to reflect these beliefs. In this research challenging classroom practices through professional discourse on how students learn motivated teachers to align their pedagogy with their values.

In conclusion, reflection and dialogue were considered critical actions in the LTLL project schools that supported participants in understanding leading and learning in the school context and the values that underpin these concepts. This is supported by the research of Chen et al. (2005) and Gardner et al. (2005) who strongly advocate practices of self-reflection in developing self-awareness and establishing an understanding of the core values embedded in leading and learning. Furthermore, the practice of engaging in reflection and dialogue with colleagues deepened the participants' understanding of the moral purpose which concurs with Duignan's (2002) research that self-reflection assists leaders influence their own leadership to benefit the school improvement process. Begley (2001) further, states that reflective practice

needs to be consciously embedded in leadership practice. Consequently, reflection and dialogue enhanced leaders' and teachers' actions in the educational practices evidenced in these schools.

9.3   The Central Research Question

The central research question sought to explore the participants' understanding of leadership and its links to authentic learning through their involvement in a project which included schools from across several Catholic Education Offices in New South Wales. In particular, it explored the experiences of reflection and dialogue about the underpinning values which inform what is ethical in leading and learning. The central research question explored: **How did the experience of working collaboratively in a school improvement project expand the participants' understanding of leading and learning?**

Principals and teachers acknowledged that, working collaboratively in a project designed to influence authentic leading and learning, challenged many of the practices of leading in their schools and gave them a greater appreciation of the complexities of leading and learning associated with primary schooling. There were three significant elements of the LTLL project that changed the nature of leading and learning in their schools through the expansion of participants' understanding of the moral purpose of education, leading and learning. These were the ethical framework made available through the *Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership* at Australian Catholic University, the collaboration with other leaders across New South Wales and the professional learning provided in the LTLL plenary sessions.

Principals believed that exposure to, and understanding the LTLL conceptual framework domains of *values* and *ethics* changed their perceptions of leading. The framework provided a scaffold where leaders and teachers could discuss the moral purpose of education within a collaborative environment. It assisted participants to think about the decision- making

processes whilst reflecting on their beliefs, values, goals and motives in relation to the moral purpose of education. It challenged them to be true to themselves, their relationships and to the nature of leading and learning in their school and in partnership with other members of the school community. Figure 9.2 conceptualises the participants' understanding of leadership which is underpinned by moral purpose and represents the nature of contemporary leadership evident in this case study.
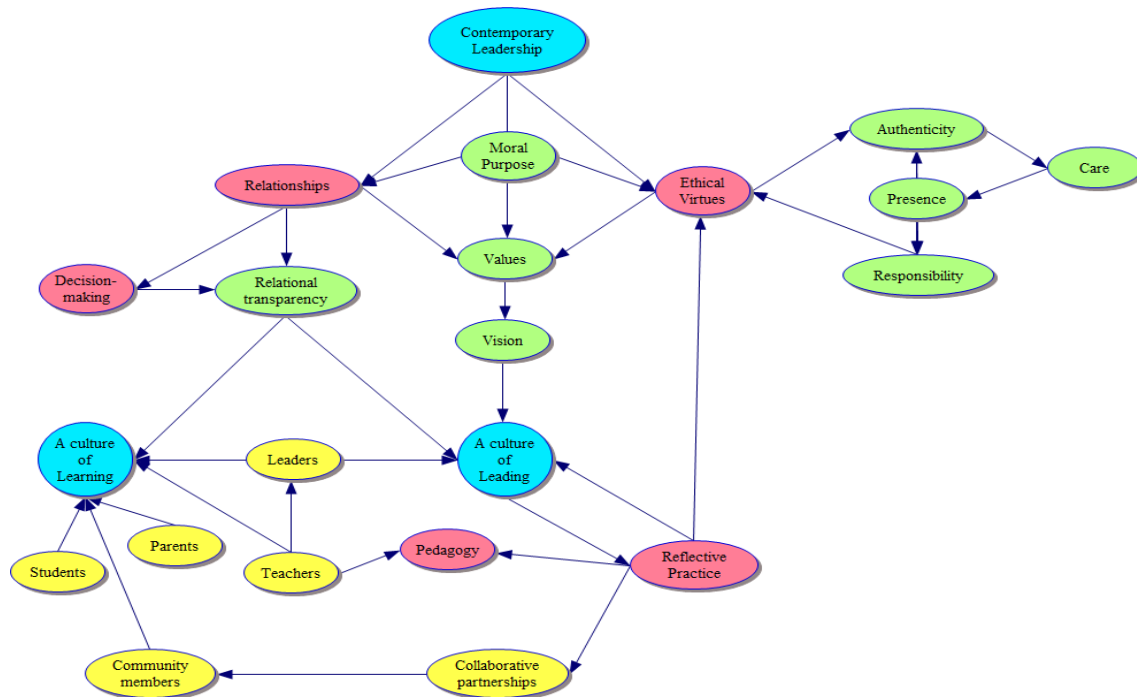
Figure 9.2 Mind map: Conceptualisation of Leadership: LTLL project schools.

Leadership is evidenced in the **relationships** within the **leading** and **learning** culture of the school community, shown by the blue circles. The action of **reflective practice** is essential to maintaining a contemporary nature to leading and learning in both **pedagogy** and in the **collaborative partnerships** within and beyond the community and is shown through the links of the pink ovals in Figure 9.2 above. Reflecting on the **ethics** of authenticity, presence, responsibility and care in the relationships is essential in aligning values within the culture of leading and learning.

Additionally, relational transparency is experienced through the shared **values**, the consequent espoused **vision** and the **ethical behaviours** in the **relationships** between leaders, teachers, parents, students and community members. The mind map (Figure 9.2, p. 300) illustrates the centrality of leading and learning and how this is brought to reality in the school community through the contemporary nature of leadership, which evolves from a moral and ethical foundation.

This research indicates that the collaborative nature of the LTLL project provided participants with a model of professional learning for use in their schools that reflected the nature of contemporary leadership. The processes of collaboration challenged participants to actively engage in the professional learning experience, to keep informed of current leadership and learning theory and its relationship to practice, and to develop transparency in the relationships with those involved in the LTLL project and with members of their school community. The LTLL project emphasis on valuing every person's participation, knowledge and talents, modelled the principles of authentic contemporary leadership.

The challenge for participants was to recreate these experiences in the context of their schools and to further deepen their understanding of the values and ethics espoused in leading and learning, and these experiences contributed to the model of contemporary leadership shown in Figure 9.2 (p. 300). Participants noted that the professional learning provided in the LTLL project was a stimulus for improving leading and learning in their schools. It provided challenges for reflecting on their beliefs and values and developed their intellectual capacity to engage with others in understanding the nature of leading and the nature of the learner.
In conclusion, participants agreed that the experience of working collaboratively in a project designed to influence practices of authentic leading and learning impacted on the transformation of leading and learning in their schools. They also agreed with Starratt (2004)

that transformation in learning did not happen by chance but required authentic and sustained leadership to bring about such change.

9.4   Conclusions of the Research

This research concludes that the provision of a professional learning program for principals and teachers that integrates values with ethics in relation to leading and learning is an important influence in developing practices of authentic leadership in primary schooling. Through judiciously providing a framework that includes supporting leaders and teachers as leaders in understanding decision-making processes, leaders and teachers as leaders are able to reflect on the nature of their leadership, which in turn influences their ability to transform leading and learning. This research confirmed the complexities of leadership in primary schools and the importance of leaders being relationally transparent when engaging in contemporary leadership practices.

The conceptualisation of the data explored in the responses to the research questions are drawn together in Figure 9.2 (p. 300). In Figure 9.2 the foundations of **contemporary leadership** evolve from **moral purpose, the values and ethics** of the **relationships** within the community. Moral purpose includes incorporating the **ethics** of responsibility, presence, authenticity and care as demonstrated in the **relationships** of the community members. Moral purpose also includes those values espoused and lived by the community members. In this research, **values** were made explicit through understanding the meaning of Catholicity, common good, excellence, justice and transformation. Moral purpose underpins the vision for leading and learning in the school community and is demonstrated in the **practices of reflection**, **decision-making** and **collaboration**. These three domains interconnect and cannot be separated. This is visually represented by the centre green circle in Figure 9.2. In this research, school improvement in **pedagogy** was demonstrated through the **reflected practices** and the **shared decision-making** processes of the teachers and leaders involved in the science

of learning. Teachers' pedagogical practices are developed in the model of teachers as learners (Figure 9.1, p. 294). Developing teachers as learners, requires specific, skilled, professional discourse that supports the development of expert teachers who can deliver authentic learning to all students. Contemporary leadership practices are essential to developing the culture of leading and learning in the community.
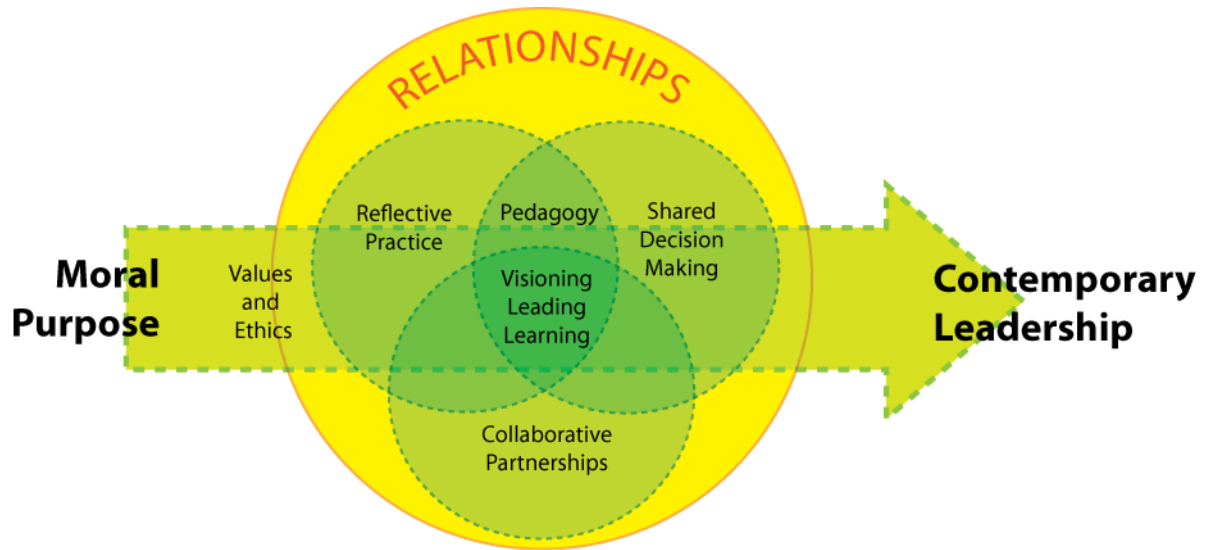
Figure 9.3   Contemporary Leadership

The visual representation of Contemporary Leadership (Figure 9.3) reflects the importance of maintaining the moral purpose of learning on the educational agenda in schools, and focussing on the values and ethical behaviours that underpin the practices of authentic learning in classrooms. This is enhanced and brought to reality through the positive and life giving relationships formed within the school community. The practices of reflection and shared decision-making in **collaborative partnership** need to be strategically planned to engage **parents and the wider community** in contributing to the learning community. Values need to be enmeshed in the vision, principles and practices of leading and learning, thus forming the foundation of the leading and learning culture.

9.5 Recommendations and Possible Future Research

The following recommendations for further research add to the findings of this research.

1. As this research focussed on a small number of participants, it would be interesting to know the extent to which other school leaders would benefit from a professional learning project where leaders collaborate with other leaders across school systems. Using the LTLL conceptual framework would provide an avenue for comparative analysis.

2. To better understand teacher leadership and its impact on student learning, ongoing research is necessary. While, in this research, teacher leadership developed from the participants' understanding of the practice of shared leadership through a specific, professional learning framework, further investigation in teacher leadership is warranted. This would provide insights to support leaders develop a culture of leadership in their schools.

3. Identifying school structures that specifically support teachers as learners and the relationship with teacher leadership would be beneficial for school and systems' leaders in providing necessary support.

4. While this research began to explore the personal capabilities of self-awareness, self-regulation, balanced processing and relational transparency in a few leaders, a more extensive study analysing reflective practices where educational leaders explicitly engage in understanding these capabilities would enhance the literature on authentic leadership.

5. While this research draws on the experiences of principals and teachers in the Catholic school sector it would be beneficial to examine similar experiences of such a conceptual framework in the broader spectrum of school system.

Additionally, the findings from this research lead to recommendations for school practice.

1. School leaders exploring the use of purposeful and relevant reflective practice should assist the development of building teacher capacity. The use of reflective practice as a tool to drive change gives insightful information about pedagogical practice for teachers and leaders in their school context.

2. System leaders could enhance the understanding of the needs of newly appointed principals and inform future leadership formation programs through using the LTLL conceptual framework as a component of a formation program.

3. The Teachers as Learners: Lesson design model (Figure 9.1, p. 294) could provide schools and education systems with a framework to develop teacher and leadership capacity. Utilising this model would provide schools with a scaffold to analyse and build teacher capacity.

4. The six leadership practices that nurture authentic learning; vision for learning, professional discourse, professional learning, values and ethics, enabling school structures and reflective practice provide school leaders with a framework to examine their own leadership practices in the context of their school.

5. Educators at the practical and theoretical level could incorporate the model of Contemporary Leadership (Figure 9.3, p. 303) to provide a stimulus for professional discourse amongst educators about leading and learning. The discussion generated

would provide opportunities to discuss moral purpose and the values that underpin leading and learning in school communities.

9.6   Summation

Participants in each school team were asked to examine the values, ethics, leadership and learning in their schools using the LTLL conceptual framework as a tool to guide their conversation. The dialogue and reflection that evolved assisted in extrapolating and questioning the values that underscored the decisions and actions in the context of the participants' schools. The research confirmed the value of enriching the thinking and discourse of educational leaders, through the systematic and reflective documentation of the experiences of being involved in a project of transforming learning in schools. This project provided school leaders with an opportunity to discuss the pressures of education from within an ethical framework and in an environment supported by peers.

The underlying motivation for this research was twofold, to explore whether there was an impact on teachers and principals collaborating in a project and to develop their conceptual understanding of leadership and its links to authentic learning. The findings propose a number of important practical and theoretical implications and recommendations, which are significant for engaging the learning community in the educational setting. These findings are also relevant to policy development in leadership and learning at the system level of management. The recommendations have the potential to further strengthen the leadership capacity of educational systems through deepening leaders' understanding of moral purpose and the ethics of the profession. A number of theoretical implications and recommendations also have the potential to contribute to deeper understandings in the broader field of educational leadership and the relationship of authentic leading with authentic learning.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

The Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners Reflection Tool

LEADERSHIP: 1- Distributed Responsibility

Distributed responsibility is about shared leadership - devolving power from the centre, and being inclusive and empowering of all. It is about enabling structures and providing resources in the organisation which provide legitimate power to those staff best-placed to make decisions about quality teaching and learning, recognizing that all have a contribution to make.

Shared leadership and collaborative work cultures are seen to be significant drivers of quality teaching and learning. Distributed leadership means that all share responsibility for effective teaching and learning with a focus on student and teacher learning and sustainable school development processes that are responsive to student needs.

Effective Catholic Schools will:

	Indicator	**Our Evidence** (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	**Rating** 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident			
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
1	Create and maintain a shared vision and goals for student development and learning.					
2	Commit to shared leadership for school development that responds to and manages the processes that lead to sustained improvement.					
3	Hold high expectations of students, teachers and the school, with an unrelenting focus on social, emotional and academic learning outcomes for all students.					
4	Support and monitor professional learning through distributed leadership.					
5	Develop and maintain high-level knowledge about curriculum and instruction.					
6	Efficiently manage the school's curriculum, teaching, management					

	and organisational practices to support highly effective learning.					
7	Monitor and respond to external forces, such as technological and regulatory changes, and competitors.					
8	Initiate innovation through a focus on action, culture building and organisation-wide learning.					
Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR DISTRIBUTED RESPONSIBILITY (Total /Number of items)						

LEADERSHIP: 2 - Evidence Based Practice

Evidence-based practice builds staff capacity by requiring the collection and analysis of relevant data which informs their planning and actions. It involves teachers taking a research stance in order to learn from their work. Good teachers and good schools collect data to reflect on their effectiveness. If they are not as effective as they had hoped, then changes are made - a new process in the school, or an alternative pedagogy. This process is stronger if there is a collaborative work culture, and the work is shared with other colleagues.

Effective Catholic Schools will:

	Indicator	Our Evidence (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	Rating 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident			
			1	2	3	4
1	Require the inclusion of sound evidence as the basis for decision making.					
2	Identify the key forms of evidence to assist in decision making for improvement.					
3	Have in place routine mechanisms for collecting relevant and current data in ethical and critical ways.					
4	Develop and implement processes for interpreting the available data, linking to best practice elsewhere.					
5	Have in place processes for enhancing staff skills in the area of evidence-based practice.					
Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE (Total /Number of items)						

LEADERSHIP: 3 – Professional Learning

Professional learning is a clear driver of change and development. In fact unless there is learning there is no change in teacher behaviour. Fullan (2003) holds that an effective professional learning community is the key in building the capacity of a school. "Professional learning communities focus on deep learning and practices that improve teacher efficacy and student outcomes."

All teachers actively engage in professional learning by 'working' with knowledge to construct enhanced understandings of how to improve students' social, emotional and academic learning so that all students achieve their potential.

Effective Catholic Schools will:

	Indicator	Our Evidence (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	Rating 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident			
			1	2	3	4
1	Embed teacher team–based learning in professional practice and utilise it as a driving force in school innovation and development.					
2	Allocate significant time and opportunities for staff to engage in ongoing, professional learning and reflection, individually and as members of teams.					
3	Articulate understandings of contemporary theories of student learning and teaching practices.					
4	Place a high value on teachers' acquired pedagogical knowledge and actively build on this through the design of professional learning environments that challenge all teachers.					
5	Construct and apply 'new' knowledge and contextual understandings of effective learning environments and student learning.					
6	Place evidence about student learning at the core of professional dialogue and practice.					
7	Utilise teacher appraisal processes to identify and support the specific learning needs of individual teachers.					
Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (Total /Number of items)						

LEADERSHIP: 4 – Sustainability						
Unless leadership is implemented in ways that are sustainable, no efforts at improvement or ongoing change can be expected to persist in a school. Hargreaves and Finks (2004) outline seven principles of sustainable leadership. Some of these have been picked up in other dimensions of this model, but are included here for the sake of completeness						
Effective Catholic schools will have:						

	Indicator	**Our Evidence** (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	**Rating 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident**			
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
1	Leadership which lasts					
2	Leadership which spreads					
3	Leadership which is socially just					
4	Leadership which is resourceful					
5	Leadership which promotes diversity					
6	Leadership which is activist					
7	Leadership which is supported and promoted by system processes.					
Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR SUSTAINABILITY (Total /Number of items)						

	LEADERSHIP: 5 – Culture and Community		
	School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the 'persona' of the school, Every school has a culture, built on its history and underlying set of unwritten expectations that shapes everything about it. A school culture influences the ways people think, feel, and act. Being able to understand and shape its culture is a key to a school's success in promoting staff and student learning (Peterson, 2002). **Effective Catholic schools will:**		

	Indicator	**Our Evidence** (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	**Rating** 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident 1 2 3 4
1	Celebrate successes in staff meetings and ceremonies.		
2	Tell stories of accomplishment and collaboration whenever they have the opportunity.		
3	Use clear, shared language to foster a commitment to core purposes.		
4	Have a widely shared sense of purpose and values.		
5	Create norms of continuous learning and improvement.		
6	Demonstrate a commitment to and a sense of responsibility for the care and learning of all students.		
7	Witness collaborative and respectful relationships with colleagues, students and other members of the school community.		
8	Establish a collaborative and supportive teacher culture through the provision of opportunities for staff reflection, collective inquiry, and sharing professional practice.		
9	Have a culture which is shaped by Gospel values.		
10	Give witness to values in ritual and story.		
	Total of ratings		
	MEAN SCORE FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY (Total /Number of items)		

LEADERSHIP: 6 – Change Management

Hargreaves (1994) wrote that even the most well intentioned change devices are often self defeating because they are squeezed into mechanistic models or suffocated through stifling supervision. This threatens to take the very heart out of teaching. The management of change – both internally and externally driven – is one of the major challenges for leadership in Catholic schools.

Michael Fullan is the foremost thinker on leading educational change. His writings allow the development of a framework of change management which is morally grounded, logically constructed and yet recognises the roles of key individuals.

Effective Catholic schools will:

	Indicator	**Our Evidence** (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	**Rating** 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident 1 2 3 4
1	Drive change out of agreed moral purpose		
2	Work with all those impacted by change so that they understand both the change processes and the change itself.		
3	Recognise that change happens best in the context of the relationships within a learning community.		
4	Have structures and processes for the development and sharing of knowledge.		
5	Build coherence through an explicit alignment of values and practices.		
6	Have leaders who are enthusiastic, energetic and hope filled		
Total of ratings			
MEAN SCORE FOR CHANGE MANAGEMENT (Total /Number of items)			

LEADERSHIP: 7 – External Networking

The Catholic school is at the heart of the pastoral work of the Church. It is a significant element of the work of the parish. Parents are always seen as the first educators, and it has been long recognised that their engagement with their children's learning is a strong predictor of success. Different communities may require different approaches to partnership.

The school provides parents with professional advice about effective ways to support their child's learning through an interactive and co-ordinated relationship between parish, home and school. The school also seeks, to build constructive alliances with other partners in the education enterprise.

Effective Catholic Schools will:

	Indicator	Our Evidence (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	Rating 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident 1 2 3 4			
1	Provide parents with information and professional advice they require to enhance and support their child's social, emotional and academic learning.					
2	Facilitate opportunities for parents to undertake training and share their experience of strategies for supporting their child's learning.					
3	Encourage and support parent involvement in their child's learning activities.					
4	Report regularly to parents in a readily understood language and format that provides interpretive comments about their child's progress in academic and non-academic areas and against school and state-wide standards, where available.					
5	Enhance student learning networks through partnerships with community networks, including business and industry.					

6	Are aware that parents select schools on the basis of their understandings of school values, and school practices in facilitating - student well-being, academic outcomes, curriculum offerings, teaching methods, proximity to home and convenience for travel.						
7	Develop a sense of shared responsibility and ownership with parents for student social, emotional and academic learning, underpinned by common understandings of educational goals.						
8	Recognise that individual teachers are generally involved in each child's development for a relatively short period of time and that co-ordination of programs across teachers and over time is, therefore, an important element of the relationship between parents and the schools their children attend.						
9	Promote the role of the school as an integral part of the pastoral work of the parish.						
10	Build capacity beyond the school through interactions with other schools, system resources/personnel and other educational providers.						
	Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR EXTERNAL NETWORKING (Total /Number of items)							

Appendix B
The LTLL Conceptual Framework Reflection Tool- Values

VALUES: 4 – Transformation

Teaching has often been described as sowing the seeds of the future. It is a vocation of hope, in which teachers constantly stretch the limits of learning – both their own and that of our students".

Catholic schools must go beyond the informational and even the formational to the transformational. As Jerry Starratt says, through transformative learning, the learner becomes a fuller, richer, deeper human being.

Schools should be vibrant learning communities which make a fundamental contribution to society by working to bring culture and faith into harmony. They should be places within which students gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes to critically engage with their society as they become effective global citizens.

Effective Catholic Schools will:

	Indicator	Our Evidence (Record here in point form the visible signs that this indicator is present in your school)	Rating 1-Strongly Evident to 4 – Not at all evident			
			1	2	3	4
1	Ensure that learning connects with the life experience of the learner.					
2	Promote the creation of personal meaning emerging from a dialogue between the learner and the learned.					
3	Create frameworks to promote intelligibility of learning material, self knowledge, relationality and personal responsibility.					
4	Find ways to enable the application of learning in academic, personal and public ways.					
5	See itself and its graduates as agents for transformation in society, adopting a stance of action and advocacy.					
6	Seek ways in which the values of the school permeate all areas of school life, not just Religious Education.					
Total of ratings						
MEAN SCORE FOR TRANSFORMATION (Total /Number of items)						

Appendix C
Project Events

Authentic Leading for Transforming Learning in Catholic Schools

Project Structure Program 2005-2006

Date	Program Outline
2005 **June 09 Program** **Seminar One**	Orientation Day: Self analysis and understanding the Project's Conceptual Framework, Content and Program structure.
August Program **Seminar Two** **(One Day Session:** **Saturday)**	Present: All participating staff at central location (ACU). School Project members and Selected Project Management Team Members and Invited Specialist: Workshop on Program and School Activities: 1) Conceptual Framework, Program Structure, Timelines and Outcomes 2) Content Presentations from invited specialists. 3) Planning and Sharing of Plans and Strategies and activities. Activities: Primary/Secondary Special Issues Session. 1) Report from Project Co-ordinators to Project Management Committee on Project Progress. 2) Sign off by Project Management Team on Individual School Project Plans.
September - December **School Team Meetings** **(Weekly) and Diocesan** **Team Meetings (Monthly)**	Planning, working and researching related to the project. Communication to Project Management Team and Project Co-ordinators for issues such as implementation problems, planning for variations, resourcing request and suggestions for next Seminar.
Project Seminar Three **(One Day Session:** **Saturday)** Central Location (ACU)	Present: School Project members and Selected Project Management Team Members and Invited Specialist Agenda: Progress and Issues Session: General and Secondary/ Primary Presentation of Requested content input and specialist feedback
December **Project Seminar Four** **(One Day Session:** **Weekday)**	Present: School Project members and Selected Project Management Team Members and Invited Specialist Procedure: Same Agenda used as in Project Seminar Three in October, plus 1) Planning for involvement of Professor Starratt in early 2006 2) Project Review for 2005 developed by Seminar 3) Planning for Starratt's involvement in the Project in 2006 4) Social Dinner (Joined by Project Management Team)
February - March 2006: **Project Seminar Five:** **(One day Seminar at ACU:** **Saturday)**	Present: School Project members and Selected Project Management Team Members and CEO Leaders. Conduct Project planning for 2006 and review plans for Starratt's involvement.
Project Seminar Six a. **(One day session -**	**Professor Jerry Starratt's Seminar** Present: All Project Members and CEO representatives

Weekday) **Project Seminar** b. **1/2 Day Session at School)**	Starratt's visits and Seminar to each Project School for "Stimulus and Issues" seminar: Suggested One Session (1.5hrs with whole school) one Session (1.5 hrs. with Project Team Present: School staff, CEO Leaders and Project Co-ordinators Recommended One day per CEO **Activities.:** 1) Starratt's report to Project Management Committee on individual school programs. 2) Reformulation of Project and Development of Project Report and Discussion Papers
February - June. School Team Meetings (Weekly) and Diocesan Team Meetings (Monthly)	Planning, working and researching related to the project. Communication to Project Management Committee regarding issues such as implementation problems, planning variations, resourcing request and suggestions for next seminar.
July **Project Seminar Seven** **(One Day Session -Saturday)**	**Present:** School Project members, Project Management Team Members and invited guests Agenda: School Presentations and Reports on School Projects to date Issues Sessions with Primary and Secondary Teams Planning for Mini-Conference to be conducted in late November. Conference committee established
July - September. **School Team Meetings (Weekly) and Diocesan Team Meetings (Monthly)**	Analysis, recording, and researching related to the project. Communicate to Project Management Committee issues such as evaluation problems, blockages, resourcing requests and suggestions for next seminar
October **Project Seminar Eight** **(One Day Session - Saturday)**	Final School and Diocesan Reports Preliminary Findings and Recommendations from the Project Mini Conference Organisation and paper presentations
November Mini Conference Central Location, (One Day Session, ACU -Saturday)	Guest Speakers, Papers from School Teams, Secondary/ Primary, Issue Groups, Diocesan Teams and Project Researchers. Project Conclusion and Celebration
December	Presentation of Project Report to Project Management Team Future Plans Social Celebration

Appendix D
The LTLL Program

Plenary Sessions Program 2005-2006

Outline of plenary sessions for LTLL

Date	Topic	Facilitator/s	Stimulus speaker
June 9	Orientation	Mick Bezzina	Patrick Duignan
July 19	Learning	Charles Burford	Steve Gross
December 6	Leadership	Mick Bezzina	Patrick Duignan
February 4	Transformed Learners	Mick Bezzina	Jason Clark*
March 18	Values and Ethics	Charles Burford	Jerry Starratt
March 20-24	School visits	Diocesan personnel	Jerry Starratt
October 27	Conference	Diocesan personnel	Patrick Duignan (Keynote)

The framework for the plenary sessions could look something like this:

0900-1000   Sharing between session tasks

1000-1100   Updates on progress of school projects

1130-1300   "Stimulus" session

1345-1445   Parallel workshops derived from emergent issues in schools/ Catholic Education

Offices

1500-1600   Refining plans and project actions in the light of the day, surfacing issues for the

future, setting up between session tasks.

Appendix E
School Self Portrait Form

Leaders Transforming Learning

Pre-session work: Participants to respond to the questions below involving appropriate school personnel and coming to a consensus view.

Self Portrait

Our kids:

What would you most want your students to say on their graduation day about their experience of your school?

What do you think they would have seen as their greatest frustrations?

Our school

What do you most value in our school?

What do you see as the most significant leadership activities in the school?

Which activities of teacher and administrators have the greatest impact on student learning?

Our selves

What do you <u>as an individual</u> want to achieve from this program?

What do you want to achieve <u>as a school?</u>

What are your greatest fears as you embark on the program?.

Mapping of school project against Conceptual framework and "self portrait" (Questions follow).
Sharing by sending an ambassador to another group.

Each individual to write a one sentence statement of the project they have in mind for their school.

Pool ideas and agree on a concise statement of the project

How does this mesh with the issues from the self portrait? (How does it respond to emergent issues?)

How do our project and our self-portrait mesh with the conceptual framework? (Which elements of the framework seem likely to be most relevant to what we want to do in the current context?)

What does this discussion affirm in our preliminary thinking about the project? What does it challenge?

Force field analysis:

What factors do we see in place in our school that will support the initiative we have in mind?

What do we see as the likely obstacles in the school?
How can we make use of these forces in our planning?

Appendix F
Research Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

RESEARCHER COPY

TITLE OF PROJECT: **A CASE STUDY OF THE EXPLORATION OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING IN FOUR CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

RESEARCHER: Kathryn O'Brien

SUPERVISIOR: Assoc. Professor Charles Burford

PROGRAM: Doctor of Education

I .... *(the participant)* have read and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

I understand that focus group discussions will be approximately one hour duration. I will also be asked to record reflective data as an ongoing component of the research. Data will be collected through observations of seminars as determined by the Project co-ordinators. Focus group sessions and seminars will be recorded (audiotape) to ensure accurate record keeping.

NAME OF PARICIPANT:

....

(BLOCK LETTERS)

SIGNATURE: ....DATE: ....

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR: ....DATE: ....

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER: .... .DATE: ....

Appendix G
Individual Interview Questions

Individual Interview Questions March 2006

Main question	1 At this stage of the project what is your understanding of the Project's Conceptual Model in an attempt to transform learning in your school?
Probing questions	i). At this stage how do you see your project fitting into the conceptual LTLL framework?
	ii). At this stage of the project what kind of learnings have you gained from the conceptual model?
	iii). How has your practice changed as a result of your understandings of the model?
	iv). How has this experience of using the conceptual model in the project influenced your thinking?
Main question	What elements of the Project had an impact on the leadership practices in your school and how?
Probing questions	i). What is your understanding of the term leadership?
	ii). What elements of the project focused on leadership?
	ii). What implications did this have for you as a leader?

Appendix H
School B mind map
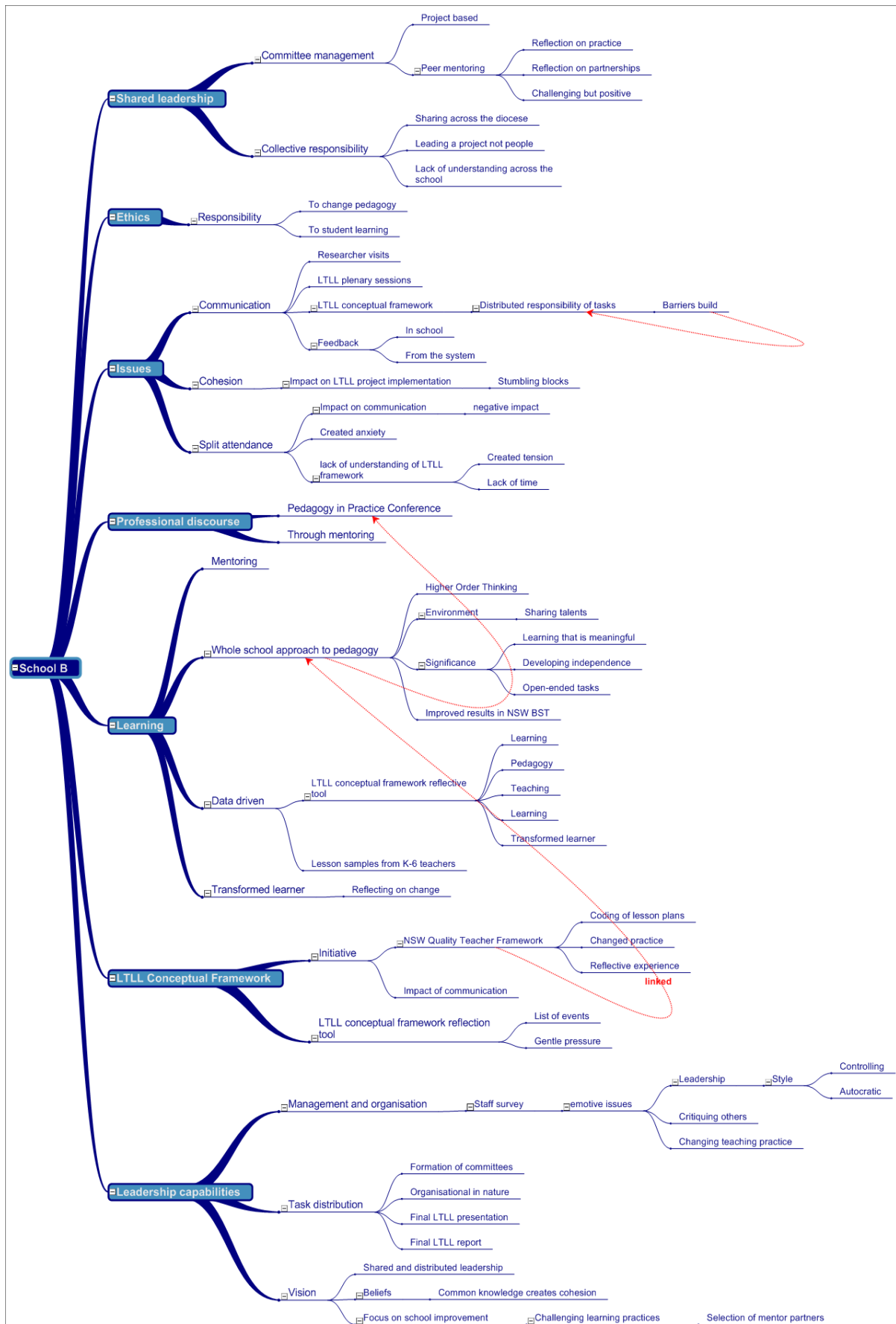
Appendix I
Proposed Research Information Sheet

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS
TITLE OF PROJECT: **A CASE STUDY OF THE EXPLORATION OF AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING IN FOUR CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

NAMES OF STAFF SUPERVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CHARLES BURFORD
NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:
KATHRYN O'BRIEN enrolled in the DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

July 20 2005
Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to invite you to be involved in a doctoral research project aimed at exploring authentic leadership and learning. In particular I am interested in collating the data from the project "Authentic Leadership for Transforming Learning in Catholic Schools" of which you are a participant. The purpose of the research is to investigate how four educational leaders nurture a leading and learning environment that attempts to stimulate transformative learning. The research inquires into how conversations and critical reflection leads to the action taken when dealing with problematic issues concerning authentic learning. The project will utilise a case study methodology involving four Catholic school primary principals.

As a participant you will be invited to attend a number of professional development opportunities co-ordinated by the Australian Catholic University which will provide the stimulus for discussion and reflection within your school learning team (as nominated by the school ie Principal and three other members of your school community). The Case Study Research methodology will involve you in professional development workshops on authentic learning, a series of focus group discussions and the gathering of reflective data from your reflective journal collated throughout the duration of the project. Overall you will be invited to attend four focus group discussions of approximately one hour duration, which will be audio-taped. Data will also be collected through observations of seminars as determined by the Project co-ordinators.

The potential benefits of the research are in the direct involvement in authentic leading and learning that will give you the opportunity to probe the underlying moral; and ethical issues that occur every day in your school and to use these understandings to inform future practice in the educational setting. Potentially the project will lead to greater understandings of authentic leadership and its relationship with learning and what it actually looks like in practice. The data collected should provide valuable insights towards a policy for leadership for authentic learning, as well as providing a framework of leadership practices for primary schools.

In accordance with established research protocols you are entirely free to decide whether or not you wish to be involved in this particular research project, without in any way prejudicing

your current or future employment prospects within the diocese of your employment. Similarly you would be free to withdraw from the project at any time without having to justify your decision in any way.

Individual research data gathered throughout the course of the project will be coded and remain entirely confidential. It is anticipated that the overall outcomes of the project will be published in appropriate forums (research journals and conference presentations), however care will be taken to ensure responses and insights are generalised and cannot be attributed to individual participants.

The nature of the Case Study methodology will ensure that you will be kept up to date with the insights being generated from the research project as they evolve. However a more detailed synopsis of research results will be available upon request to all participants.
If you have any questions regarding this project don't hesitate to contact me through my supervisor or alternatively your inquiries may be directed to my Doctoral Supervisor, Associate Professor Charles Burford at the contact numbers listed below:

Researcher: Mrs Kathryn O'Brien
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Charles Burford.
Mount St Mary Campus, Strathfield. 02 97014292
This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the 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 Researcher or Supervisor have 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.

<div align="center">

C/o Research Services
Australian Catholic University
Sydney Campus
Locked Bag 2002
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
Tel: 02 9701 4159
Fax: 02 9701 4350

</div>

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence, fully investigated and you would be informed of the outcome. If you agree to participate in this project, you should sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to the Researcher.

Signed:

_____   _____
Assoc. Prof. Charles Burford.   Kathryn O'Brien

Date:_____   Date:_____

Appendix J
School C mind map

Appendix K
School A mind map

- Values
  - Catholicity
  - Common good
    - Respect
    - Social wellbeing — Knowing the student
    - Rules, expectations
  - Excellence
  - Justice — Accessing the curriculum (IA3)

- Shared leadership
  - Collaboration
    - In decision-making
    - In planning meetings
    - In learning — In recommendations
    - Assists Poblem solving (A2)
    - Project title
    - Essential to
    - positive influence
  - Relationships
    - Trust
    - Personal WBJA2
      - Sensitivity
      - Respect
      - Empathy
    - Colleagiality — Professional
    - Professional WBJA2 — Relational trust
  - Learning
    - Whole school pedagogy
      - Dialogue
      - Initiative
      - Commitment
    - Ideas crystalised regarding links with leadership and learning
    - We all learn from one another
      - Sharing ideas
      - Sharing expertise
      - Collective wisdom

- School A LTLL Part A

- Ethics
  - Care — Knowing the student
    - Addressing obstacles to learning
    - Relating to accessing the curriculum
      - Behaviours
      - Health issues
    - Modifying curriculum
    - Giving students a voice (IA3)
  - Responsibility
    - Parents understanding learning
    - School policy supporting values
    - Students accessing the curriculum
    - Sharing across school
  - Presence
    - Parents
    - Teachers
    - Students — making a difference to people's lives (IA3)
    - Situational
  - Authenticity
    - Dealing with issues
    - Relating to pedagogy
    - Relationships

- Professional discourse
  - Staff meetings
    - Whole staff discussion
    - Shared decsion-making
  - Professional Conversation Values driven (FA1) — Networking
  - Community members
    - Parents
    - Teachers
    - Leaders

- Issues
  - Ethics — Presence — Knowing the student
    - Health issues
    - Interests
    - Abilitities
  - School size — Vision for learning
    - Expectations
    - Related to Catholicity — Common good
    - Aligning values with practices

Appendix K
School A mind map continued

- Leadership capabilities
  - Shared vision
    - Linked to leading and learning (FA1)
    - Approaches to shared leadership
    - Importance of being a Catholic School (IA2)
    - Understanding the ethical language (IA3)
  - Articulation of beliefs on Learning
    - Importance of Justice and learning (IA3)
    - Articulation of accessing curriculum (IA123)
  - Linking theory to practice
    - LTLL readings and professional input
    - Language relating to moral purpose
    - Catholicism and respect for the individual (IA2)
    - Validated the practice
  - Ability to challenge
    - Pedagogy
    - Practice — Through peer reflection (IA2)
    - Relationships (PRJA1)
    - Using reflective practice (FA1)
  - Organisational practices
    - Learning as focus — (IFA1234)
    - Promoting shared leadership (FA3)
  - Risk taking (FA4)
    - Being a teacher leader; from terrified to excited (FA4)

explicitly linked

- Learning
  - Ethics
    - Authenticity
      - Knowing the student
      - Providing relevant learning
    - Care
      - For teachers and leaders IA1
      - Transition to high school
      - For parents
      - For the student as a learner
    - Responsibility
      - Courage — Challenge
        - Beliefs
        - Assumptions
        - practices
      - Colective responsibility for learning Milestone 4 FR
    - Presence — Milestone 2 FR
  - Excellence
    - Relationship to BST results (IA1)
    - Sense of presence important (IA1)
    - Multidimensional
  - Building capacity
    - For students to learn (IA1) — For teachers and leaders to learn (IA1)
    - Participative practice — Milestone 3 FR
  - Culture of Learning
    - Parents
      - Workshops on learning (PRJA1)
      - Regular communitication
      - Related to ethical virtues
    - Community — Networking IF
      - Transition to High Schools
      - A-E reporting
      - Professional teacher judgement
  - Organisation
    - Rearranging learning times (IA1)
    - Staff meeting focus

- School A LTLL Part B

- Relationship
  - Trust
    - Acknowledging concerns, dilemmas (FA1)
    - Increased trust with parents and the community (FA4)
  - Respect
    - Small group observations in classrooms
    - Shared practice
  - Valuing others
    - Ethic of care (FA4)
    - Ethics of presence (FA3)
    - A new level of authenticity (FA2)
  - Ethical virtues
    - Gave a framework (IA2)
    - Break down barriers (IA2)
    - Care for children and families(IA2)
    - Being present, noticing children and their learning (IA2)

Appendix L
School C Data Collated

Major Interventions/Events

DATA

The Explorer Schools Project Team undertook to collect data which would yield useful information to guide us in our project. We determined that we would need to use a variety of sources for this and that we would need to look at both quantitative and qualitative data. These results are being used to inform teaching, analyse school wide trends, track the progress of individual students, provide professional learning and guide school organisation for teaching and learning.

Quantitative Data

- Scaffold Diagnostic Testing used with Grades 2, 4 and 6 in 2005, 2006 to directly inform classroom teaching.

- Basic Skills Data across a three year period indicated that there was a need to target a specific area in Mathematics across the school.

- P.A.T. Maths (ACER Standardised Tests) used to create a database which will enable us to track the progress in Mathematics of each student, across their seven years at School C. It will also allow us to track school wide changes in the area that is being specifically targeted for development in Mathematics.

Qualitative Data

- Teachers were surveyed before the formal commencement of the Explorer Schools Project about practical elements of their Mathematics teaching and their needs in the area of professional learning.

- Parents have been surveyed to ascertain their attitude towards Mathematics to glean whether attitudes (positive or negative) have been passed on to their children.

- Children have been surveyed to ascertain their attitude to and perceived abilities in Mathematics and Mathematics lessons.

- Teachers have been involved in small group conversations, chaired by a member of the team, to ascertain their attitude towards Mathematics, its teaching, their various pedagogies of teaching in Mathematics and any effect that the Explorer School Project has had so far.

Triangulation of qualitative data means that it is more likely to be authentic and therefore themes or commonalities can be identified and validated with confidence.

Appendix M
School D mind map

- **LTLL School D**
  - **Values**
    - Purpose of Schooling underpinned by values
      - Every child unique ID1 — Every child's learning unique ID1
      - Justice was importance as it lead to the right of everyone experiencing excellence FD4
      - Change in pedagogy aligned with change in values about how children learn FD2
    - Transformation ID3
      - Learning relevant to the students
        - They're questioning, they're justifying, they're observing, so they're directing their own learning and they are linking it to their life FD2
      - Freedom to learn
      - Evidence of real growth — Students in charge of their learning ID3
      - My teaching is changed forever Yr 1 teacher ID3
  - **Shared leadership**
    - Sharing reflection tool challenged pedagogy FD4
    - Lead to greater responsibility for all teachers FD4
      - Invited parents to share the learning
      - Teacher leaders had credibility across the staff FD4
        - Transformed themselves as leaders and learners FD2
        - Motivational levels high FD4
  - **Ethics**
    - Ethics
      - Presence
        - Listening to children
          - Asking questions about their learning
          - Writing comments on student's work
        - Increased motivation to learn and teach
        - Impact on leadership — Relate to teachers — Impact on students
      - Responsibility
        - Lessons relevant to the student, specifically chosen
        - Organise resources
        - Know the curriculum
        - Teachers have a responsibility to plan effectively
      - Authenticity
        - Real life experiences
        - Students love Mathematics
        - Reflected in teaching programs
        - Relates to leading and learning and the purpose of education
  - **Issues**
    - Change has its resisters FD2
    - Change practices with whole school or small groups FD4
  - **Professional discourse**
    - Lead to changes in Values about learning
    - Changed padagogy FD1
    - *discourse challenged practice*
  - **Relationships**
    - Important to transformation ID3
    - Developed through authentic learning
      - there have been some really good outcomes just in the way the children feel about themselves as learners, their attitude, their respect for each other as learners. FD3
  - **Learning**
    - Feedback important
      - Sharing — Links to observing
      - Clarifying things
      - Discussion important
    - Explicit teaching ID3
      - BST growth 10 11 12 points exceptional DI3
      - Transferred across the curriculum
      - Deliberate and focussed FD4
    - Teachers as learners
      - teacher has now transformed herself from being in FD1
      - Open their doors to peers
      - Parents became learners and leaders FD1
  - **LTLL conceptual Framework**
    - Created a common langauge IC2
      - Ethics and presence a pat of the culture ID1
      - Formed the foundation of the initiative FD2
      - using that conceptual model to guide the leadership of any change.FD3
    - Relevant to all areas of the curriculum ID2
      - Authentic to the students
      - Focus on tasks relevant to the student
      - Education: A right of every student
    - Aligned with being a Catholic School DI2
      - Focussed teachers on learning ID1
      - Changed beliefs and attitudes about teaching and learning FD1
  - **Leadership capabilities**
    - Building teacher capacity
      - I'm a leader in my own right ID3
        - Sharing with peers — Increases confidence
        - Students and teachers
        - Leaders across the grade
        - Developed ideas across the integrated curriculum
        - Other teachers visiting the school ID1
      - Curriculum expertise recognised across the school ID1 — 2 teachers presented at a conference
      - Not separate from leading and learning
    - Resourcing important FD4
      - Time
        - With consultant
        - With other teachers
        - Planning
      - Classroom resources
      - Technology
    - Must be linked to Values and Ethics ID2
      - Presence changes practice ID2
      - Distributed responsibility
      - Transformed learners and learning by developing new ways of engaging FRD
      - Values changing changed attitudes to learning and Leading FD1 FR

linked