

**THE EDUCATIONAL VISION OF FETHULLAH GÜLEN:
ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN TWO AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS**

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

The research reported in this thesis explored the Fethullah Gülen's educational vision and its interpretation in two Australian Gülen-inspired schools. The educational and social services he started with his close friends in the late 1960s grew rapidly and has become known as the Hizmet Movement. Although the Movement is involved in many different activities, intercultural dialogue and educational services are its main pursuits. Gülen's educational vision and inspiration have resulted in the establishment of educational institutions, such as childcare, schools, tutoring centres, and universities, all around the world.

The research in this thesis focussed on identifying the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy. The researcher examined a range of primary and secondary literature sources to analyse Fethullah Gülen's educational vision to provide a background. Gülen's educational vision emphasises integrity of the heart and intellect—academic and values education, and aims to raise virtuous individuals through holistic education, transforming knowledge into character development and role modelling. His educational vision reconciles science and religion, and approaches education as the best way to serve humanity.

To explore the specific educational characteristics in schools, a case study approach was adopted with data being obtained from interviews, participant observation and school documents to identify the characteristics of the two schools in different Australian cities founded on Gülen's philosophy and to determine how Gülen's inspiration was transformed into practices at the schools.

The major findings were that the schools were values-based and academically oriented. They adopted a balanced education that encompassed academic excellence and delivered

values education to raise what Gülen terms the *Golden Generation*, an ideal generation that is well-educated in the sciences, and who possess deep ethical and moral grounding. The schools emphasised pastoral care services to further support students' academic, moral and social development. Both schools were established and supported by the community, and addressed community values in the school environment.

This thesis is significant as it is the first study that examines two Australian Gülen-inspired schools and their alignment with Gülen's philosophy. It concludes with the potential contribution of Gülen's educational philosophy and Gülen-inspired schools to the wider educational field, recommendations to two schools from findings and suggestions for further studies.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

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

All research procedures reported in the thesis received ethics approval from the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) with register number V2010 11.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AMC	Australian Mathematics Competition
CE	Certificate of Education
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (of United States)
ICAS	The International Competitions and Assessments for Schools
ISSPP	The International Successful School Principalship Project
LVEP	Living Values Educational Program
LOTE	Languages Other Than English (school subject)
MOSSAD	Intelligence and Special Operations Institute of Israel
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
PE	Physical Education
PFA	Parents and Friends Association
SRC	Student Representative Council
SRI	Special Religious Instruction (policy)
TUSIAV	Türk Sanayici ve İşadamları Vakfı (Turkish Industrial and Businessmen's Foundation)
TURKSAV	Türk Dünyası Yazarlar ve Sanatçılar Vakfı (Turkish World Writers and Artists Foundation)
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Balanced education: The education that encompassed academic excellence, spiritual and moral values.

Fethullah Gülen: Turkish Islamic scholar and establisher of global civic Hizmet Movement.

Golden Generation: The ideal generation Gülen envisions and aims to raise through his entire educational philosophy.

Gülen-inspired school: The school inspired by Fethullah Gülen and opened in many different countries by Hizmet Movement followers.

Hizmet Movement: Global civic movement that provides services mainly in education and intercultural dialogue.

Mentor: Mostly graduated students who assist pastoral care teachers in implementing pastoral care activities.

Pastoral care: The services that aims academic and moral development of students and comprises various after-school activities.

Pastoral care teacher: A teacher who provides pastoral care services on voluntary basis.

Spiritual knowledge: A category of knowledge in Gülen's vision that refers to integration of a person's conscience with knowledge a result of practising with knowledge.

Anatolia: The western Asia that lies between the Black and Mediterranean seas.

Turkish Anatolian culture: The culture and values of Anatolian people in the last one thousand years.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The focus of this thesis is the influence that Turkish philosopher Fethullah Gülen has had on educational practices. The educational and social activities and services he started with his close friends in the late 1960s has grown rapidly and has become known as the Hizmet Movement which in English means the Service Movement. His educational vision and inspiration has resulted in the establishment of educational institutions such as childcare centres, schools, tutoring centres and universities all around the world. For example, there are four Gülen-inspired schools in Kenya where the country demography is: 83% Christian; 11.2% Muslim; 1.7% Traditionalists; 1.6% other; 2.4% no religion; and 0.2% unspecified, and three schools in Thailand where the country demography is: 93.6% Buddhist; 4.9% Muslim; 1.2% Christian; 0.2% other; and 0.1% no religion. The schools' student demography reflects the regions in which they were established – Kenya (Kalyoncu, 2008) and Thailand (C. Avcuogullari, personal communication, August 20, 2017). The students at the school in Nairobi, Kenya were mostly Christians, whereas mostly Muslims were at Mombasa school in Kenya (Kalyoncu, 2008). Through this study, the researcher reports how Gülen's philosophy has been adopted by two schools in separate states of Australia. The rationale for the study was stimulated by a desire to understand how the educational system in Australia responds to the diversity of cultures and religious affiliations. Over the past four decades there has been substantial immigration from Turkey whose educational system is different from that of Australia's. Fethullah Gülen has promoted a distinctly Turkish inspired model of education which has influenced a range of schools in Australia. The aim therefore was to investigate how this model informed the practices of the schools and accommodated the goals of Australian education.

The thesis commences with a background to Fethullah Gülen’s life and the research to be undertaken. Gülen’s educational philosophy was analysed from his writings and commentaries on his philosophy as shown in Chapter Two. Gülen’s educational philosophy aims to raise the *Golden Generation*, modern Muslims (Agai, 2003), educate productive and contributing individuals (Ebaugh, 2010), and actualise the ideal human through education (Carroll, 2007). His vision also aims to serve humanity through education and seeks peace through dialogue (Soltes, 2013). The Golden Generation, with its intellectual and spiritual capacity, tolerance, and understanding of other cultures, will serve the wellbeing of the society. Data were collected using the case study method in Gülen–inspired schools, as shown in Chapter Four, to examine in Chapters Five and Six how his philosophy was being implemented. This chapter begins with a profile of Gülen’s life, identifies the research problem and aims of the study, and then discusses its significance.

1.1 Biography of Fethullah Gülen¹

Fethullah Gülen was born in 27 April 1941 in the village of Korucuk, in Erzurum province in Eastern Turkey. He was the first son of Ramiz Efendi and Rafia Hanim (among their 11 children). His mother, Rafia Hanim, was his first teacher and she taught him how to read the Qur’an when he was four years old. His family moved to Alvar village in Erzurum province after he had two years of primary school education, and he went on to complete primary education through distance education. His father, Ramiz Efendi, was his Arabic language teacher. The young Gülen helped his parents and memorised the Qur’an in his leisure. He completed the memorisation of the Qur’an in 1951 with his father’s assistance. Ramiz Efendi’s exemplary life and passion for knowledge influenced Gülen deeply. Erdogan’s (1995) biography of Gülen contains a reflection from Gülen on his early life:

¹ Information in this section is taken from the Fethullah Gülen website (fgulen.com, n.d.) unless otherwise specified.

My father has great influence on me. My father lived carefully, he did not waste his time, he used to read books when he came back home from the farm until dinner was ready. Reading was a delight for him... I memorized Arabic and Persian poems by just listening to my father. He was a person who was utilized his every spare minute with charitable and spiritual works and attached importance to thought. (p. 21)

Gülen was also influenced by his grandfathers in his youth. Molla Ahmed, great grandfather of Gülen, was an exceptional character with his knowledge and piety. He had a passion for reading and worshipping. Quite often, he would fast during the day and pray throughout the night. Samil Aga, father of Ramiz Efendi, had a similar personality to Molla Ahmed and he earned the villagers' respect with his earnestness and dignity, and he had a great respect for genuine scholars (Erzurum Hayatından, retrieved from Fgulen.com, 2001).

According to Gülen's autobiographical section on the Gülen's website, from 1952, he was able to spend all his time on education. It was reported on the website that Alvar Imami,² a well-known Sufi in Erzurum, noticed his talent and said to Ramiz Efendi "We must do everything possible for the education of this child." After one year of *madrassah* [religious school] education in Hasankale, a town in Erzurum, Gülen was transferred to Erzurum Kursunlu Mosque in 1955. Here he learned from Osman Bektas, an expert in Islamic Law. Gülen was considered a very good listener; he listened to sermons and speeches very carefully, especially Alvar Imami's sermons, and he enjoyed sharing his understanding with his mother, Rafia Hanim. Alvar Imami's influence was mainly on Gülen's spirituality, while Osman Bektas and Sadi Efendi contributed to his scholarly training in his early education.

A critical incident is reported in Gülen's autobiographical section on his website (Fgulen.com, 2001). It was a *Ramadan* evening when villagers gathered in the mosque to listen to Ramiz Efendi's sermon. Unexpectedly Kazim Efendi, a well-known person in Alvar village, took the 14-year old Gülen to the sermon chair where Gülen spoke. Listeners enjoyed

² Hacı Muhammet Lutfi Efendi (1869-1956) – Turkish imam, Sufi and poet.

the magnificent sermon. During the following *Ramadan*, Gülen went, at his father's insistence, to Amasya, Tokat, Sivas and Erzincan³ to give sermons. This was a great experience for him as well as a turning point in his life, encouraging him to pursue a life of preaching and spiritual leadership. In 1957, Gülen became familiar with Said Nursi's⁴ collection which deeply influenced Gülen's philosophy and services of Hizmet movement. Harrington (2015), a human rights attorney, states that "the thought of Kurdish scholar Said Nursî on accommodating Islam to modern life and harmonizing science and religion greatly influenced Gülen" (p. 8).

Gülen's autobiography on his website reflects that, in 1957, Mehmet Kirkinci⁵ invited Gülen to visit Muzaffer Aslan, a student of Said Nursi. Gülen liked Aslan's humility and sincerity in worship and started reading the *Risale-i Nur Collection* from this time on (Fgulen.com, 2001). This influenced his entire life extensively. Gülen appreciated Nursi's writings and traces of Nursi's theories can be seen in the Hizmet Movement. Gülen adopted Nursi's ideas and put them into practice. In 1959, Gülen moved from Erzurum, eastern Turkey, to Edirne, north-western Turkey. He sat for an examination arranged by the Religious Affairs of Edirne and was the highest-ranking applicant. He was then officially appointed to the Üç Şerefeli Mosque as a second imam. He served two and a half years in this position and stayed in the mosque during this time. As with all male Turkish citizens, he served in the military and was discharged in 1963. After military service, he went back to Erzurum and presented conference on the ideas of al-Rumi who is commonly known as Mevlana.⁶

According to his autobiographical section on his website (Fgulen.com, 2001), Gülen stayed for approximately one year in Erzurum and left for Edirne. He taught the Qur'an in

³ Names of cities in Turkey.

⁴ Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (1878-1960) – Islamic scholar and author of the *Risale-i Nur Collection*.

⁵ Mehmet Kirkinci (1928-2016) – Islamic scholar and author.

⁶ Jalal al-Din Muhammad al-Rumi (1207-1273) – poet, mystic, jurist and theologian.

Darulhadis Mosque and voluntarily served as an imam. He arranged to have one small room inside the mosque and spent most of his time teaching students. He moved to the nearby city of Kirklareli as a preacher in 1965. While on annual leave, he visited Yasar Tunagur, the Islamic theologian, in the Ankara High Religious Affairs Office. Yasar Tunagur insisted Gülen go to Izmir, a major city on the Aegean coast of Turkey, and continue preaching there. Gülen accepted the offer after a little concern and went to Izmir, following a farewell visit to Kirklareli and Edirne.

It is reported in Gülen's autobiography on his website (Fgulen.com, 2001) that some people found him too young to be a principal of the Kestane Pazari Qur'an School; however, in a very short time he proved he was the right person for that position. He had a very busy schedule during the Kestane Pazari period (1966–1971). He used to travel at nights and give sermons during the day on weekends. He was also appointed to take charge of assisting Hajjis and went to Hajj⁷ for the first time in 1968.

Gülen was granted permission to preach in the Aegean region and visited many places (Antalya, Aydin, Odemis, Tire, Salihli, Turgutlu and Denizli) in that area to deliver sermons. He also visited many coffeehouses to preach. He served in Kestanepazari for five years.

Gülen left his post in the Kestanepazari Qur'an School in 1971. He reportedly spent his days reading books until he was appointed to the city of Edremit as a preacher and served there for two years. He was then transferred to Manisa. He started giving lectures on the Qur'an and science, Darwinism, social justice and his vision on education: the Golden Generation. He visited many cities in Turkey (Ankara, Çorum, Malatya, Diyarbakır, Konya, Antalya and Aydın) for that cause. The main purpose of these conferences was to deliver his message to people who rarely attended mosques.

⁷ Hajj (pilgrimage) is one of the pillars of Islam that every adult Muslim must undertake once in their life, provided they are healthy and have sufficient funds.

Gülen's autobiographical section on his website (Fgulen.com, 2001) reports that he was transferred back to Izmir in 1976 and served there until the military coup in 1980. He had a chance to go to Europe, and presented conferences in Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich. He preached a few times in the famous mosques of Istanbul and his articles appeared in the *Sizinti* journal when it was published in 1979. In 1980, a military coup occurred in Turkey and an arrest warrant was issued on the grounds of his ideas which were perceived to be threatening to the *status quo* secular system in Turkey. He resigned from preaching after the military coup. Gülen was arrested in Burdur in 1986, but released after interrogation. He preached in the Great Camlica Mosque after a six-year break and went to Hajj for the second time. The *Yeni Umit* [New Hope] journal was published in 1988, to which he contributed many articles.

Gülen preached for 62 weeks in Valide Sultan Mosque (Istanbul, 1989–1990) about the Prophet Muhammad and his way of life. These sermons were later compiled and published as a book titled *Insanlığın İftihar Tablosu Sonsuz Nur* (Prophet Muhammad the infinite light). He also preached weekly in Istanbul and Izmir (1989–1991). He encouraged educators and businessmen to invest in Central Asia, especially by opening schools.

Gülen met with many politicians, was interviewed by journalists and appeared on television programs in 1995 and thereafter. He emphasised the necessity of accepting everyone with their own identity for the benefit of the nation. He highlighted the importance of tolerance and dialogue, met with Patriarch Bartholomaeus⁸ (1996) and developed interreligious dialogue services. For Harrington (2015), “he was the first Islamic leader to have formal discussions with the Alevi, Christians, and Jews in Turkey” (p. 9). Gülen went to the US to receive treatment for health problems and returned to Turkey after three months

⁸ Bartholomew I of Constantinople (1940-) – Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

(1997). Not long after, he visited Pope John Paul II⁹ in the Vatican (1998). In 1999, he went to the US again (1999) and he has lived there since then. “Although he has lived in the United States since March 1999, when he came for medical attention and eventually took up residence in a rural retreat in Pennsylvania, his relocation did not diminish his influence” (Harrington, 2015, p. 9).

Despite Gülen being a well-known scholar whose philosophy supports tolerance and dialogue, and successful civil services, he was accused of backwardness (*irticai*) and being involved in reactionary activities. He was arrested after the 1971 Turkish military memorandum according to article 163 of the Turkish Penal Code which banned politically driven religious activities and founding a religious organisation in order to establish an Islamic state (Erdogan, 1995). He was sentenced to three years in jail however released by an amnesty law after seven months.

The military junta issued a criminal warrant in the Aegean area for Gülen after the 1980 coup. He was a fugitive until taken into custody and released in 1986. Following the 1997 Turkish military memorandum, in 2000, the Attorney General of the State Security Court filed a case against Gülen claiming he was trying to establish a religion-based regime in Turkey. The 18th Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeal finalised the case through a conditional release (2003) and in 2008 he was found not guilty. Finally, conflict started between the ruling Justice and Development Party in Turkey and the Hizmet Movement in late 2013. The party accused the Hizmet Movement of attempting to establish a parallel state in Turkey, being a terrorist organisation and orchestrating a coup attempt in June 2016 (Shaheen, 2016). For Harrington (2015), parallel state term utilized by Erdogan “to charge anyone who criticizes or challenges him” (p. 8).

⁹ Born Karol Józef Wojtyła (1920-2005) – pope of the Catholic Church from 1978 to 2005.

Gülen and the Hizmet Movement denied all allegations made against them by the ruling party of Turkey. They argued that all Hizmet activities are in accordance with the law and Islamic tradition. Gülen pressed for an independent investigation to refute the allegations about the involvement of Hizmet in the failed coup attempt. The conflict resulted in closure of all Hizmet institutions and imprisonment of thousands of Hizmet followers in Turkey. The government engaged in intensive diplomatic and lobbying activities to close schools linked to the Hizmet Movement around the globe. Some countries responded positively to the government's request, such as Somalia (Reuters, 2016), and some others did not, such as Kyrgyzstan (dit Malkom X, 2016). In Australia, the Turkish government has applied pressure to politicians to boycott events associated with Hizmet Movement. This action was rebuked by members of the Victorian and federal parliament, representing Labour, the Liberals, the Greens and minor parties (Le Grand, 2017). Since the failed 2016 coup attempt, the Turkish government has pressured the US government for Gülen's extradition.

Gülen shared his thoughts about a variety of religious, social, and educational issues with the public through his books and his website. He (1998) argued that Turkey needs heroes who have faith, hope and passion, and are dedicated to spreading knowledge, morality and virtue more than party and partisanship. Harrington (2015) stated that “social leadership—civil society—is more important than political leadership” (p .9). Thus, he preferred education over politics. At the time of writing this thesis (2017), the conflict was not resolved. This issue is outside the scope of this thesis as it is purely political, so will not be discussed further.

Several books have been written about Gülen and the Hizmet Movement. Some examples are: al-Ansari (2013), Carroll (2007), Ebaugh (2010), Esposito and Yavuz (2003), and Soltes (2013), details of the book are provided in the reference list. Gülen's website lists, as at 2016, 60 books, 54 conferences, 47 interviews—newspaper, journal and television—, and over 6000 newspaper articles about Gülen and the Hizmet Movement. According to

Gülen's website, he received many awards in various fields for example: The Tolerance Award by TUSIAV (1996) in Turkey; the TURKSAV award for his efforts to promote Turkey in the world (1997); the Contribution to Peace Award by Kyrgyzstan Ruhaniyat Foundation (2004); and the Contribution to Tolerance and Dialogue Award by the Romanian commission of UNESCO (2005) (fgulen.com, 2011). He was also on the 100 Public Intellectuals (who are still alive) list conducted by *Foreign Policy* magazine (Top 100 Public Intellectuals, 2008), and received the Peace Building Award of the East–West Institute in New York (Rabinowitz, 2011). Gülen's website contains many greetings, condolences, condemnations of terrorist activities and expressions of support for peace, love and tolerance.

An overview of Gülen's usual daily life, drawn from an article by Yücel (2010), is presented in Table 1.1. Gülen's daily life starts with *tahajjud* [night] prayer, a voluntary prayer before dawn. Until the dawn prayer, he reads the Qur'an and makes supplication. After the dawn prayer, he has study sessions until breakfast, after which he has some private time. About two hours before the noon prayer, he teaches *tafsir* (commentary of Qur'an), *hadith* (sayings or actions of Prophet Muhammad), *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and/or *aqidah* (Islamic theology) to select students who have graduated from divinity schools. He makes a supplication following the afternoon prayer in congregation, which is followed by a questions and answers session, lasting about half an hour. After the night prayer, he returns his room and continues his usual activities of reading, writing and supplicating.

Table 1.1

Gülen's Usual Daily Schedule

<i>Tahajjud</i> prayer (before dawn), <i>awrad</i> (prayers for specific times and amounts) or <i>dhikr</i> (remembrance of God)
The dawn prayer
Study session until breakfast time
Private time after breakfast (resting, reading and writing)
Study session (e.g., <i>tafsir</i> , <i>hadith</i> and <i>fiqh</i>)
Watch the news and converse with those around him
The noon prayer
Lunch (while having lunch, answer questions)/private time
The afternoon prayer – group supplication – Questions and answers session
Exercise (walking for about 40 minutes)
The sunset prayer
The night prayer/private time

Following initial rejection in 2007, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services granted permanent resident status to Gülen in 2008. Currently, he lives a life of self-imposed exile in a small room (that he rents) at an old retreat (Golden Generation Worship and Retreat Centre) in Pennsylvania and rarely leaves the compound except for medical treatments. Weekly conversations have been released on the Ozgur Hercul¹⁰ (Free Hercules) website since 2003 and these conversations continue to be published as a series of books. Gülen continues to share his thoughts and encouraging voluntary service in many different areas such as education, health, humanitarian aid, media and intercultural dialogue all around the world.

1.2 Gülen and the Hizmet Movement

The educational activities of the Hizmet Movement inspired by Gülen began as private teaching circles [*sohbet*], after-school tutoring and extended tutoring camps for educational

¹⁰ www.herkul.org

purposes in the late 1960s. The Movement opened its first school in Izmir in western Anatolia in the early 1980s. The educational services of the Movement were carried to an international platform in the early 1990s. Tittensor (2012) stated that the Movement “went global in the 1990s and has established approximately 1,000 secular educational institutions in more than 100 countries” (p. 163). Gülen’s works and educational vision became a subject of many academic study with many authors contributing to understanding (see for example Agai, 2003; Colak, 2015; Kalyoncu, 2008; Polat, 2012; and Williams, 2007 and 2008). His educational vision has been examined in academic papers presented in over 50 conferences, books and book chapters.

Gülen’s philosophy, to be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, proposes a marriage of science and religion instead of preferring one at the expense of the other (Aslandoğan & Çetin, 2007; Ebaugh 2010; Michel, 2003; Soltes 2013). Gülen’s vision emphasises a holistic education approach (Aslandoğan & Çetin, 2007; Carroll, 2007; Soltes, 2013) to assist individuals reach their full potential. Gülen believes human nature contains physical, mental and spiritual components, and each must be addressed by education (Carroll, 2007). Ebaugh (2010) interpreted Gülen’s vision as offering three forms of education (science, humanity and religion) to form the complete human being. A universal ethos is promoted in Gülen–inspired schools, despite the religious nature of the Movement (Colak, 2015). Agai (2003) argues that Gülen employs education to stop the “decline in the Muslim world” by creating “an educated elite within the Islamic *umma* (community) in general and the Turkish nation in particular” (p. 50). Thus, one of the aims of the Hizmet Movement’s educational services is to contribute to the advancement of Muslims by raising intellectuals.

1.3 Gülen Educational Inspirations in Australia

In 1967, Turkey and Australia signed a bilateral agreement on assisted migration (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d., para. 2). Following this agreement, Turkish

migrants began to arrive to Australia to settle and start a new life. They settled mostly in certain regions of major cities (e.g., Auburn in Sydney and Broadmeadows in Melbourne) to support each other in their new home. They began to establish different associations to preserve and promote their cultural and religious values after they had spent a decade settling and integrating into mainstream society.

Broadmeadows Turkish Islamic and Cultural Centre was established in 1978 (Broadmeadows Turkish Islamic and Cultural Centre, n.d., para. 1), Auburn Gallipoli Mosque was opened in 1979 (Auburn Gallipoli Mosque, n.d.) and many other similar organisations were also established to serve the Turkish–Australian community. These organisations brought different political and religious views that existed in Turkey to Australia. After the 1980s, Gülen’s thoughts also arrived in Australia with Turkish migrants, and discussions around his views began to take place. In December 1989, senior Hizmet Movement leader Mehmet Ali Sengul began to make regular visits to Australia and in April 1992, Fethullah Gülen visited Melbourne and Sydney and “encouraged the young Hizmet communities to pursue their dreams” (Barton, 2008, para. 22). Gülen delivered a sermon in each city during his visits. Following Gülen’s visits, volunteers in the Turkish community who were familiar with his thoughts established Fatih and Light Foundations (pseudonyms) to serve educational needs of the Turkish–Australian society.

The establishment of Gülen–inspired schools began in Australia in 1996. By 2009, 16 Gülen–inspired schools had been established across the country (Polat, 2012). The schools began to attract community attention almost immediately. The schools grew rapidly. Some of them opened campuses in different regions and became role models for Hizmet communities in different states. These schools define themselves as non–denominational but primarily serve the Turkish and Islamic communities in their region but are keen to accept students from all communities. As Barton (2008) reports, the Hizmet Movement influenced programs

in higher education and in 2008 the Fethullah Gülen Chair in the Study of Islam and Muslim–Catholic Relations was established at the Australian Catholic University and a similar lectureship in Islamic studies was instigated at Monash University.

1.4 Aim of the Research and Research Question

The researcher explores the implementation of Gülen’s educational philosophy in two Australian Gülen–inspired schools; Star Boys (pseudonym) and Castle College (pseudonym). First, Gülen’s philosophy of education is examined in Chapter 2. Second, a theoretical framework to analyse the characteristics of schools is developed in Chapter 3. Thus, the research in this thesis focuses on the following question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen’s philosophy? A case study methodology (Chapter 4) has been adopted to explore the characteristics of the two Gülen–inspired schools located in different Australian states. The researcher was previously a staff member of Star Boys however this does not make the research insider research as researcher was not staff member of Star Boys when the research was conducted.

1.5 Funding of Gülen–inspired Schools

The funding of Hizmet institutions and schools has been a matter of curiosity for many. The authenticity of an institution is related to its financial sources; where the funds come from and how they are spent. According to Saul (2011), there were accusations about how public money was spent at Harmony Schools, Gülen–inspired charter schools in Texas, and she raised the issue of public money being used to benefit the Gülen Movement through giving projects to certain businesses. For Gülen (2004b), the question of how Hizmet institutions are funded has been an ongoing debate to create suspicion about the Movement. This section focuses on how Gülen–inspired schools are funded.

The funding of one Gülen–inspired school may differ from another as there is no certain or specific funding system applicable for all Gülen–inspired schools in different countries. The school structures also differ from one another. There are private schools, foundation (*vakıf* in Turkish) schools and charter schools. In the Australian context, “The Australian Government provides funding for schools, both government and non–government... Non–government schools receive the majority of their public funding from the Australian Government with state and territory governments providing supplementary funding” (Department of Education and Training, 2017a). Government funds need to be accounted for and are audited in Australia; funds must be spent on school activities. Polat (2012) studied the funding of Gülen–inspired schools in Australia and claimed the major sources of funds for Gülen–inspired schools in Australia were government funds, school fees, pledges, fundraising and donations.

Çetin (2014) argued that institutions related to the Hizmet Movement (including schools) are legitimate, transparent in their bookkeeping and accounting, and subject to local inspections. Further, not all the Movement’s activities need money as some activities are run by volunteers (unpaid workers). Ebaugh (2010) reported “the Gülen schools are fee–paying private schools” (p. 97) and, if school fees are insufficient, local sponsors finance the schools in Turkey until they become financially self–sufficient. Relatively low–paid Hizmet teachers (Ebaugh, 2010) also contribute to the financial situation of the school. Some schools receive support from local authorities, such as land, building and staff, where necessary (Gülen, 2004a).

Gülen (2004b) claims the question of where the funds come from is constantly asked to create suspicion in the community. For him, Hizmet services are funded by charitable

Anatolian¹¹ people and devoted teachers, as they are paid relatively lower. Anatolia is the western Asia that lies between the Black and Mediterranean seas (see also Section 2.2.5). The schools are institutions that follow certain regulations and are subject to regular inspections; illegitimate funding would easily be detected by relevant government agents. The main financial sources of Gülen–inspired schools can be summarised as: government funds or support, school fees, sponsorships or donations, relatively low wages and voluntary works.

1.6 Significance of this Study

This thesis is significant in two ways. First, there is no publication dedicated to defining Gülen’s educational philosophy comprehensively. This thesis is significant as Gülen’s educational philosophy—definition of education and knowledge, categories of knowledge, environment and education relations, criticism about Gülen–inspired schools, school leadership—is examined in a context of relevant literature. Defining the main aspects of Gülen’s educational philosophy and characteristics of Gülen–inspired schools will also explain the reason why these schools have succeeded in over 100 countries. Examining Gülen’s value–centred philosophy and Gülen–inspired schools is inspiring for the educational institutions that emphasise and prioritise values–based education.

Gülen’s educational philosophy advocates *values education*; it emphasises universal Islamic values (Michel, 2003), encourages altruism that is the result of love, tolerance, and compassion (Soltes, 2013), and considers knowledge as a moral value (Agai, 2003). Carroll (2007) asserts that Gülen’s vision encourages a full range of academic disciplines together with traditional values. This study is significant as it explores how Gülen’s values education approach is integrated into schooling, what values he encourages and how they are taught in a context where there is an increasing focus on values education across all types of schools.

¹¹ Anatolia is the westernmost protrusion of Asia that lies between the Black and Mediterranean seas. See also Section 2.2.5

Education seen as solution to problems such as terrorism and intolerance; learning considered as an obligation; representation preferred over presentation; and establishment of the educator, parent and sponsor relationship are some components of Gülen's educational vision that are mentioned by Aslandođan and Çetin (2007). Michel (2003) argues that tolerance and multiculturalism are part of Gülen-inspired schools' character. Students in these schools are expected to develop an understanding of diverse cultures and the ability to live harmoniously in a multicultural social life. Further, Gülen's educational vision aims to modernise education given in the *madrasah*, *tekke* (school of Sufism and the dervish lodges), and the military, and establish harmony among them. Gülen's educational vision suggests that there is a relationship between the quality of education and social change (Michel, 2003; Agai, 2003).

Second, it is the first study that examines Gülen's educational philosophy and its implementation in two Australian schools. Details of Gülen's philosophy of education are provided in Chapter Two. The study identifies main characteristics of two Australian Gülen-inspired schools and contributes to a better understanding of how schools in a multicultural society can adopt values that contribute to social harmony.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter One presented a brief biography of Gülen and introduced the aim of the research and research question. Chapter Two provides a background information about the key elements of Gülen's educational philosophy. It examines Gülen's definition of education and knowledge, how this vision aligns with other philosophers, and the main aims of education in Gülen's educational vision. It also analyses some of the critiques of Gülen-inspired schools.

Chapter Three develops an analytic framework to examine the alignment of Gülen-inspired schools with his philosophy of education. This chapter explores three dimensions that

characterise the nature of a school—culture, climate and identity—under which the findings will be examined. Chapter Four provides a description and justification of the research design used to answer the research question. It explains the philosophical basis of the research design, how the research was carried out and how the data were analysed.

Chapter Five presents findings from Star Boys (pseudonym) and Chapter Six from Castle College (pseudonym) under the three dimensions: culture, climate and identity. Chapter Seven summarises the similarities and differences between the two schools, establishes connections between the literature review and analysed data, and provides a response to the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen’s philosophy?

Chapter Eight discusses the distinguishing elements of Gülen’s philosophy, Star Boys and Castle College, and what they offer to the wider educational field. It contains recommendations from the findings, discussions on the significance and limitations of the research, and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER 2: GÜLEN'S EDUCATIONAL VISION

The previous chapter provided a brief biography of Gülen. This chapter examines Gülen's vision of education and its purpose. Gülen has been given different titles such as preacher, thinker, scholar, philosopher, writer and educator. He dedicated his entire life to educational services and more than one thousand schools have been established through his inspirational work all around the world. Many different kinds of educational institutions have been opened through the inspiration of his philosophy, including kindergartens, schools, universities, university preparatory courses and cultural centres.

Gülen's articles, books, recorded conversations, website and conference papers were reviewed. In addition, books written about his educational philosophy were examined to assist with defining Gülen's vision of knowledge and education, and his aims of education. His philosophy is contextualised by the thoughts of a range of established educational philosophers, academics, and authors. The collected literature is categorised, analysed and reported in this chapter.

This chapter has three sections. Section 2.1 reports Gülen's definition of education and knowledge, and how this vision aligns with that of other philosophers. Section 2.2 outlines the main aims of education in Gülen's educational vision. It is conceptualised by drawing on the thoughts of significant philosophers and authors in the field of education. Section 2.3 reports the perspectives of various critiques of Gülen-inspired schools. The chapter is summarised in Section 2.4.

2.1 Definition of Education and Knowledge

This section (Section 2.1) examines Gülen's understanding of education in Section 2.1.1, and knowledge in Section 2.1.2, along with related literature. This section then goes on to explain

the difference between conceptual knowledge, knowledge and spiritual knowledge according to Gülen in Section 2.1.3.

2.1.1 Definition of Education

Education is a frequently used word in daily life; however, the statements of purpose and content of education differ from one philosopher to another and have always been a subject of discussion. Like many others, Gülen (1993) has posed the following questions in order to encourage readers to reflect upon education: “How should we approach teaching and education? How should generations be educated? What, how and why should we teach them? Who is going to do this holy duty?” (p. 117). Education plays a dominant role in Gülen’s life and the Hizmet Movement is well-known for its educational institutions all around the world. Gülen (2000b) states “...we should give importance to education more than it deserves and should not refrain to make the necessary sacrifices in this regard...” (p. 79).

The dictionary meaning of education is “the act or process of acquiring knowledge, esp systematically during childhood and adolescence”, “the act or process of imparting knowledge, esp at a school, college or university”, “the theory of teaching and learning,” and “a particular kind of instruction or training” (Education, n.d.). (Online version of Collins English dictionary has been used for translating words throughout this thesis other than “tekke” which was not available in Collins English dictionary.) Gülen’s understanding of education contains the elements mentioned in this definition; moreover, he extends this definition with his Islamic philosophy. Gülen relates the definition of education to the second verse of chapter Fatihah [the Opening]: Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds (Qur’an 1:2). The Arabic word *Rabb* translated as “Lord” has several meanings: Sustainer, Master and Owner. Gülen interpreted the word *Rabb* as Educator. The Turkish words *terbiye* [education] and *murebbi* [educator, instructor] were derived from the word *Rabb* and support Gülen’s interpretation of this word. The word *Rabb* is often used to address God.

Gülen (2014a) has argued, “Education [terbiye] is the branch of science that aims to shape human beings according to disciplines that are introduced by *Rabbul Alamin* [Supreme Lord of the Worlds]” (13:31)¹². God created the universe and established natural laws that took place at every corner of the universe. Central to Gülen’s belief is that God educated every entity in the universe in accordance with these rules. Thus, a human being has to be educated in accordance with the rules that take place in the universe (Gülen, 2011h). Gülen, as an Islamic scholar, argues that education should be in harmony with the nature of human beings, natural laws and Qur’anic teachings, as these all come from the same source – God. Therefore, there is no inconsistency in accepting scientific principles alongside the principles that are revealed in the Qur’an. However, Gülen did not give more details about natural and divine rules. These natural and Qur’anic rules, argued by Gülen, have to be identified and their relations with the education of a person should be examined. Then, the principles of human education could be established on this base in harmony with the rest of nature or universe (Gülen, 2011h).

Educational sociologist, Kay Wood (2011), characterised several approaches towards education such as “education as schooling”, “education as the acquisition of knowledge and skills”, “education as the process of learning”, and “education and the moral dimension” (pp. xii–xiii). Schooling and learning are strongly related to education; however, in Gülen’s view, education is an activity that affects not only school years, but all stages through the life of a person. He also separates education from teaching and learning. For him, educating a person is a much more challenging task than teaching. Gülen’s approach suggests that education should develop the natural capacity of a person, in accordance with natural rules, and in a harmony with the rest of the nature. Gülen (2011h) asserts that education is the progress of each existence within their natural limits. Thus, his broad principle is that education should

¹² The number 13:31 refers to 13th minute and 31st second of the video file.

produce a character who is in harmony with other human beings as well as with the rest of nature. Achieving this result, he argues, requires more than teaching.

Gülen's educational vision contains intensive moral elements and accommodates "education as the acquisition of knowledge and skills" approach, mentioned by Wood (2011, p. xii). Gülen was influenced by the Sunni Muslim theologian Nursi. Michel (2003) stated, "In seeking to present the faith and practice of Islam in a way that responds to the needs of modern believers, Gülen can be said to carry forward the tradition of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi" (p. 81). Thus, his educational philosophy comprises faith and morality of Islam together with teaching modern sciences. Gülen (1993) emphasises the natural sciences—accumulation of knowledge—as the light of the mind and religious sciences—forming of character—as the light of heart, and the necessity of combining both for a comprehensive education. Thus, Gülen's educational vision accommodates elements of acquisition of the knowledge, skills and moral values.

Gülen is not alone with his thoughts on religion, Islam, and science relations. Al-Hayani (2005), a lecturer and legal expert on Islamic jurisprudence, examined the relationships between Islam and science, and reported that the Qur'an and *hadith* encourage questing for knowledge and consider this effort to be a form of worship. She acknowledged that between the eighth and fourteenth centuries, Muslim scholars contributed significantly to the advancement of science and knowledge. This situation declined in 1258, after the Mongol forces destroyed Baghdad, the centre of Islamic knowledge. She also proposed two reasons Muslims have not been performing well in the area of science over the last five centuries following the destruction of Baghdad: discouragement of new *ijtihad* [reasoning]; and resistance caused by the colonisation by the West of most Muslim countries. She concluded her analysis with the assertion of her belief that "Both the Qur'an and Islamic law show that

no contradiction exists between Islam and the sciences; Islamic sources offer ample directives and injunctions that support a concordance between them” (Al-Hayani, 2005, p. 575).

Every entity in the universe is a subject of divine education in Gülen’s vision (Gülen, 2011h). He argues that the enduring order that can be observed in the universe is evidence that everything, from a flower to the sky, is educated by God and created in perfect harmony and wisdom. However, the main focus of this study is the education of a person. For Gülen (2011h), the human being is a comprehensive mirror for the names of God. That means human nature has diverse and vast capacity. Identifying human nature, its capacity, and preparing an educational plan to develop each individual to their full capacity is a crucial matter of education in Gülen’s vision.

For Gülen (2011h), humanity can reach perfection only through education by God. Thus, he views reaching perfection as one of the aims of education. God, as the Master of human beings, introduced the way to reach perfection through divine revelation and His creation. Gülen considers the universe to be a book of God in a different form, as Nursi did. Thus, during establishment of an education system nature, natural laws and divine revelation should be taken into consideration.

Gülen also articulated that education is about developing something to its ultimate level. For instance, when a tree bears a fruit, it has developed to its ultimate natural limit (2011h). For human beings, the ultimate level is *insan-i kamil* [the person who has reached perfection], but perfection differs from one person to another as individuals have different interests and abilities. Gülen argues that human beings can reach their ultimate level through being *educated by God*. This means being a complete mirror for the names of God—developing perfection within the scope of natural capacity—or reaching the summit in truthfulness (Gülen, 2011h). Gülen’s approach can be paralleled with the notion of *self-actualisation* as

proposed by Abraham Maslow. For Maslow (1962), the core definition of self-actualisation is:

(a) acceptance and expression of the inner core or self, i.e., actualization of these latent capacities and potentialities, “full functioning,” availability of the human and personal essence; and (b) minimal presence of ill health, neurosis, psychosis, of loss or diminution of the basic human and personal capacities. (p. 36)

Thus, Maslow’s self-actualisation theory is like Gülen’s vision of reaching the ultimate level and represents growth of an individual toward fulfilment of their highest potential.

Gülen (2011h) uses a fruit tree analogy and some parts of his vision are comparable with the *education as growth* theory of the American philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952). Dewey (1916) considers life as growth; as a living creature goes satisfactorily through the various stages of life, education supplies conditions to ensure the creature has an adequate life in any stage through their life. Similarly, Gülen understands education to develop something to its ultimate level. Gülen and Dewey consider a tree bearing fruit to be similar to education. The difference is that Gülen seeks perfection for each individual within their own capacity as an outcome of education and Dewey seeks competency throughout the life of an individual.

Dewey (1916) argued that growth leads to further growth; thus, education should not cease in any stage of the life. He stated, “the purpose of school education is to ensure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth” (p. 70). This means growth is an enduring process specifically in the education of a person. For Gülen, education is also an enduring process to be a complete mirror for the names of God or to reach the summit in truthfulness. Further studies are needed on the issues in Gülen’s vision, such as: What is the ultimate level for a human being? What does education of God mean? What is the meaning of being a complete mirror for the names of God?

In summary, Gülen's nature of education contains some similarities with other educational theories and differs with its Islamic perspective. For Gülen, education is about developing an individual to their own ultimate natural capacity in accordance with the natural laws and disciplines introduced by their Rabb. Gülen combines faith and natural laws in the definition of education. Religion and science are the two faces of a single truth in his vision. This definition of education includes religious and natural sciences in educational activities. Religious elements of the definition do not offer much for nonbelievers, and this is one of the weaknesses of Gülen's definition of education. It also requires further study in identifying the disciplines that are introduced by God, how they affect the education of a person, the meaning of being a complete mirror for the names of God, and what the natural limits and capacity of the human being are.

2.1.2 Definition of Knowledge

In this section, discussion on the definition of knowledge and its alignment with Gülen's understanding of knowledge will be examined. The attributes of knowledge in his vision are outlined and discussed in the context of philosophers such as Nel Noddings (2012), John Dewey (1916), and Keith Lehrer (2000), and finally, a summary of the suggestions of Gülen's concept of knowledge for schooling is provided.

Knowledge is defined in dictionaries in various ways such as “the facts, feelings, or experiences known by a person or group of people; the state of knowing; awareness, consciousness, or familiarity gained by experience or learning; erudition or informed learning; specific information about a subject” (Knowledge, n.d.). The concept of knowledge has been a matter of discussion among philosophers alongside its history. For instance, Socrates discussed various definitions of knowledge with Theaetetus in the dialogue written around 360 BCE (Plato, 360 BCE/2001). In this dialogue, Socrates and Theaetetus emphasised three possible meanings of knowledge: knowledge as nothing but perception; knowledge as true

judgement; and knowledge as a true judgement with a logical account including supportive arguments. In this dialogue, Socrates also acknowledged he could not find a satisfactory answer for the question of what knowledge is. Contemporary philosophers, such as Lehrer (2000), continue this search for the meaning of knowledge. Lehrer examined several meanings of what is known. First, it can be used in a sense to have some special form of competence as in, for example, “I know how to play the guitar.” Second, it can be used in a sense of being acquainted with something or someone as in, for example, “I know John.” Third, another sense of knowing is the recognition of something as true; for example, “I know that the neutrino is electrically neutral.” After considering these meanings of the word, know, Lehrer regarded knowledge as correct information. He stated “The role of such knowledge in human reasoning is essential to its nature. One essential role of knowledge is the employment of it to reason to conclusions, to confirm some hypothesis and refute others” (Lehrer, 2000, p. 6).

Interpreting Dewey’s perspectives, Noddings (2012) reported that “All statements or beliefs that guide inquiry are to be regarded as knowledge. Not all such statements will survive the test of inquiry, but those that do we may call ‘true’” (p. 113). Discussions still continue in defining what is knowledge and what it is not. For instance, Lehrer (2000) considered two theories: (a) externalism; and (b) internal coherence and personal justification in determining what the knowledge is. He wrote, “The central tenet of externalism is that some relationship to the external world accounting for the truth of our belief suffices to convert true belief to knowledge without our having any idea of that relationship” (Lehrer, 2000, p. 177). He further explained that, in externalism, true belief is regarded as knowledge when the appropriate connection is established between belief and truth. Internal coherence and personal justification in obtaining the truth, thus knowledge, is another theory examined by Lehrer. According to this theory, humans accept the truth and avoid the error through what Lehrer describes as a system of acceptances in which new knowledge is coherent with

existing understandings. Internal coherence with this system also plays a role in determining what is reasonable to accept.

Gülen (1995) considers that most of the problems affecting everything from educational institutions to government offices are generated by an inadequate definition of knowledge. Thus, he argues that it is vital to clarify what knowledge is and what it is not; what we can expect of it; and what its aims are (Gülen, 1995). Knowledge is comprised of three main aspects in Gülen's educational vision: existence, being human, and God. His vision encourages enquiry of knowledge through constant observation and comprehension about the intertwined relationships of existence, being human, and God. Gülen has mentioned in his writings a variety of attributes of knowledge based on these three main aspects. Nine attributes of knowledge are summarised in Figure 2.1. Gülen's approach is comprehensive and combines philosophical and religious aspects. The nine attributes of knowledge for Gülen are:

1. "To feel and understand what entities and various phenomena narrate" (Gülen, 2000a, p. 116);
2. "To think, to realize, to understand objects as they are" (Gülen, 2008b, p. 290);
3. "To comprehend what the physical world displays" (Gülen, 2000a, p. 116);
4. "To read existence again and again to discover the absolute truth" (Gülen, 1996c, p. 173);
5. The relationship between the human being and existence (Gülen, 1996c);
6. "Information obtained through sensory organs by reading, observing and listening" (Gülen, 2008b, p. 290);

7. To direct brainpower towards eternity without seeking any selfish interest (Gülen, 1996c);
8. “To realize the lofty purposes of the Creator” (Gülen, 2000a, p. 116); and
9. “Truthful information” and “information directly sent by God through revelation and inspiration” (Gülen, 2008b, p. 290).



Figure 2.1. Summary of Gülen’s understanding of knowledge.

Figure 2.1 presents Gülen’s nine attributes of knowledge that emerged from three main aspects of knowledge. The three main aspects of knowledge are presented in different colours: existence is coloured dark blue in the figure; the blue section is shared between existence and

being human; being human is coloured red in the figure; and God is coloured green in the figure.

The first three attributes of knowledge are related to the meanings of objects and natural events. The fourth and fifth attributes relate to the relationships between being human and consciousness [*şuur*] of our environment. In the fourth attribute of knowledge, Gülen's (1996c) expression of "to read existence again and again" (p. 173) suggests knowledge has to be the product of a process of constant examination. This approach draws him closer to Noddings' (2012) definition of knowledge as a "subset of truth that has been acquired by human investigators" (p. 113). Thus, investigation is necessary to acquire knowledge rather than just having bare perception or opinion as knowledge. The fourth attribute also draws Gülen closer to Socrates. Socrates considered knowledge as a true judgement with a logical account. Gülen's (1996c) expression of "to read existence again and again to discover the absolute truth" (p. 173) suggests he also regards knowledge as a true judgement.

The sixth and seventh attributes emphasise how human beings process knowledge, which is through sensory and cognitive organs. In the sixth—where information is obtained through sensory organs—and ninth—where information is sent directly by God—attributes of knowledge, Gülen combines knowledge and religion. As an Islamic scholar, Gülen considers religious information and divine revelation as knowledge; —the first part refers to conceptual knowledge and the second part to religious knowledge. The term, *truthful information*, in the ninth attribute may include information provided by experts, scholars and prophets; therefore, they are considered as knowledge in Gülen's vision.

Gülen's expression of *selfish interests* in the seventh attribute suggests he has concerns about contamination of knowledge or bias. For him, knowledge has to be liberated from selfish interests, including individual, economic and political interests. Thus, inquiry for knowledge should be processed sincerely. Gülen shares postmodernist concerns, as Noddings

argues (2012), postmodernist thought knowledge in general cannot be studied in any meaningful way as it was contaminated by social and political power. Gülen is aware of the risk of contamination of knowledge by selfish interests; thus, he described inquiry for knowledge that is not contaminated by different reasons as true knowledge.

The eighth and ninth attributes of knowledge relate to human being and God relationships. The eighth attribute is to realise that the lofty purposes of the Creator could be interpreted as religious—Islamic—knowledge as religious philosophy contains discussions on divine wisdom in existence and events that God created.

Gülen's ninth attribute of knowledge, truthful information, is reminiscent of Lehrer's (2000) *correct information*. Lehrer regards knowledge as correct information and assumes there is an inseparable relationship between human knowledge and reasoning, justification, confirmation and refutation. Lehrer considers the information received from a trustworthy source as possession of information, not knowledge. Although Gülen values reasoning when acquiring knowledge, he regards information obtained from a reliable source as knowledge. Gülen's understanding of knowledge may give different results from Lehrer's definition, as Gülen is an Islamic scholar and his philosophy is based on the Islamic faith. Thus, information coming from reliable Islamic sources may not be correct information for Lehrer, whereas it is truthful information for Gülen. The weakness in Gülen's approach is that what is considered a reliable source differs between people and this affects the nature of knowledge directly. For instance, the Bible is a reliable source for a priest and the Qur'an for an imam, but neither is considered a reliable source of information by an atheist. Gülen's knowledge vision differs from Dewey's as Dewey accepts belief as knowledge but that not all knowledge is *true*, whereas Gülen regards all knowledge as true; for him, if knowledge is not true, then it is not knowledge.

There are two main discussions about the nature of knowledge: internalism and externalism. For Poston (n.d.), internalists (e.g., Laurence BonJour, Ernest Sosa, Earl Conee and Richard Feldman) argue that “justification is solely determined by factors that are internal to a person,” whereas externalists (e.g., Edmund Gettier and David M. Armstrong) believe that “justification depends on additional factors that are external to a person” (para. 1). BonJour and Sosa’s (2003) work, *Epistemic justification: Internalism vs. externalism, foundations vs. virtues (Great debates in philosophy)*, and Conee and Feldman’s (2004) work, *Internalism defended*, provide more discussions on internalism. Externalism is discussed in Gettier’s (1963) work, *Is justified true belief knowledge?*, and Armstrong’s (1973) book, *Belief, truth and knowledge*. Thus, internalists regard justified true belief as knowledge, whereas externalists do not. Gülen’s vision of knowledge combines internalist and externalist epistemological approaches of knowledge as he emphasises the role of God, humans and human relationships with the external world in determining what knowledge is.

For the most influential Greek-based theory of knowledge among Western philosophers, knowledge has to meet three conditions: it must be believed; there must be good reason for the belief; and it must be true (Gingell & Winch, 1999). Gülen’s understanding of knowledge also encompasses belief, reasoning and emphasis of truth; however, employment of these similar principles may give different results in determining what knowledge is and is not, as there is cultural diversity between Gülen’s Islamic background and Western traditions.

In Gülen’s (1996c) view, knowledge should not be like an item displayed in a museum; on the contrary, it should be spread among the members of the nation and nourish them like blood in the vein and be a source of life to prepare human beings for every new day. Thus, practicality of knowledge is important in Gülen’s vision (2011c), as he considers theoretical knowledge that does not offer practical benefits as insufficient. For Gingell and Winch (1999), as a result of Dewey’s (1916) thoughts on practice, “national curriculum documents in

England insist that students develop skills (know-how) as well as learning facts” (p. 127). Dewey argues that education is not preaching, lecturing or writing about it, that it should be brought to life with practice, and that the learning environment should be equipped with tools and physical materials for students to learn by doing. Thus, for Dewey and Gülen, knowledge has to be transformed from text form into practical form. The difference between the two approaches is that, for Dewey it is do—practise—to learn, and for Gülen it is learn to do—practise. However, this might be a challenging task as the amount of documented knowledge expands very quickly, and it is very difficult to turn all documented information into practice because of the limited teaching time in schools. Hence, including development of basic skills in the curriculum is a more achievable goal.

Gülen’s understanding of knowledge suggests the following contexts for schooling:

To teach natural sciences in the context of nature, human and God relations (Gülen, 1993);

- To improve reasoning to discover the truth (Gülen, 1993);
- To examine surroundings with sensory organs (Gülen, 2008b);
- To understand the meaning of natural objects and events (Gülen, 2000a);
- To keep education free from the contamination of selfish interests and bias (Gülen, 1996c);
- To study religion or religious philosophy (Gülen, 2000a);
- To relate education to the daily life (Gülen, 2000a); and
- To establish education that provides practical results (Gülen, 2011c).

Gülen’s approach from the Islamic perspective is a weak point of this theory, as this theory limits the level of finding truth and becoming truthful by embracing the Qur’an. However, in reality, many scientists are not aware of the Qur’an, yet find the truth and became truthful through knowledge. The next section examines the categories of knowledge in Gülen’s philosophy.

2.1.3 Scientific Knowledge, Knowledge and Spiritual Knowledge

Gülen makes a fine distinction between scientific knowledge [*bilim*]¹³, knowledge [*ilim*] and spiritual knowledge [*marifet*]¹⁴ in his writings. Gülen considers the knowledge based on experience and learning such as concepts of mathematics, science, and history as *bilim*, finding the truth and being truthful through scientific knowledge as *ilim*, and integration of a person's thinking with true knowledge as *marifet*. Figure 2.2 illustrates the relationship among scientific knowledge, knowledge and spiritual knowledge, and this section examines the meaning of these three terms given by Gülen.

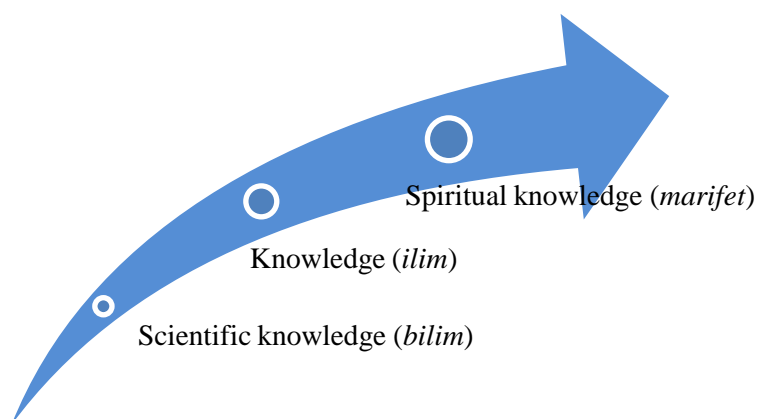


Figure 2.2. Levels of knowledge in Gülen's view.

For Gülen (2008b), scientific knowledge is the explanations of phenomena acquired through experience, which are improved through new experiences and further developed and matured through reflection. Thus, scientific knowledge forms the basis of what could be described as the processes of science and does not necessarily improve a person's character. That is, from Gülen's perspective, scientific knowledge can be learned from science books. True knowledge is establishing a connection between this scientific knowledge and God, thus scientific knowledge contributes to spirituality and morality at this level. When one accepts

¹³ The Turkish word 'bilim' can be translated as 'science', 'learning', 'scholarship', or 'knowledge'. Here 'bilim' translated as 'scientific knowledge' to maintain the meaning within the context being discussed.

¹⁴ The Turkish word 'marifet' can be translated as 'Gnosticism', 'ingenuity', 'talent', or 'knowledge'. Here 'marifet' translated as 'spiritual knowledge' to maintain the meaning within the context being discussed.

the belief that God created everything, His creation also reflects His morality. Thus, God's morality is explained explicitly by religion and referred to implicitly in His creation—science.

Gülen (2008b) defines knowledge [ilim] differently from the definition of scientific knowledge [bilim], and in his view, knowledge includes developing a good character and true belief.

True knowledge is the knowledge of truth that enables one to walk on the straight path by embracing all disciplines of science that interpret the manifestations of the Divine Names of God, whilst it is also embracing the Qur'an which is the sole guide to happiness in both this world and the hereafter. (p. 291)

Scientific knowledge is turned into the knowledge of truth, the knower becomes a truthful person, and the relationship between God, existence and a human being is established at this level of knowledge [ilim]. In Gülen's philosophy, religion urges truthfulness. In religion, it is expected that a person will be more religious when they learn more about God and thus be more truthful. True knowledge also brings a person closer to God and makes them religious, thus truthful. From Gülen's perspective, religion is not separate from science and, when the connection is established, they both produce a moral individual. Gülen's approach is similar to Nursi's in this regard. Tittensor (2012) stated in his analysis of Nursi that "he [Nursi] argued that science simply uncovers the signs of God in the universe, and that through a better understanding of God's creation we can become closer to God" (p. 175). Thus, in Nursi's and Gülen's understanding, religion and science serve the same purpose; to build better understanding of God to become closer to Him.

Spiritual knowledge, for Gülen (2011f), is the integration of knowledge with the knowing person in order to become part of their nature. Thus, every attitude of the knowing person should be an interpretation of the known. He also considers spiritual knowledge as conceptual knowledge to be felt and known in conscience [*vicdan*], and for him this level can only be obtained through practice (Gülen, 2011b). At this level, the knower becomes a

virtuous character. His philosophy encourages constant transformation from scientific knowledge to knowledge, and knowledge to spiritual knowledge. The next section examines Gülen's vision about the aims of education.

2.2 Aims of Education

Philosophers and educators have examined the aims of education and suggested many different ideas in accordance with their philosophical perspective. For instance, Gingell and Winch (1999) summarise the major educational aims as to: promote autonomy; give the individual a secure cultural background; give an individual the ability to take part in society through an occupation; promote economic development; preserve the society's culture; and produce good citizens. This section examines the aims of education according to Gülen's philosophy under five main headings: holistic education of the human being, in Section 2.2.1; raising the Golden Generation, in Section 2.2.2; service to humanity in Section 2.2.3; dialogue and peace, in Section 2.2.4; and disseminating Turkish Anatolian culture, in Section 2.2.5.

2.2.1 Holistic Education of the Human Being

Human beings are composed of different faculties, such as body, self [*nefis*], conscience [*vicdan*], spiritual heart, feelings, and spirit, in Gülen's philosophy, and each of these faculties should be addressed by education for the best outcome. This approach brings Gülen into a similar line with holistic education philosophy. This section examines the different components of human nature and explains holistic education. Then, it will outline the position of the human being in the bigger picture of the universe, show how education should address human beings' feelings, and explain the necessity of ongoing education to move in steady progress towards perfection, thus identifying the elements of Gülen's holistic education approach.

Gülen's educational vision aims to address all faculties of a human being. Unal (2002) analyses Gülen's educational thoughts and emphasises some important points that should take place in education provided in schools, such as knowing the student very well; gradualism; and addressing the mind, soul, heart and feelings together. Gülen considers human beings as not physical creatures only, but composed of many different faculties such as the self [nefis], soul, intellect, heart, conscience [vicdan] and feelings. Thus, he claims we need a holistic approach to the education of human beings by considering the development of all these faculties in a balanced way for the best results. Carroll (2007), writer and scholar of religious studies, compares Gülen with Confucius and Plato on education and remarks "He [Gülen], like his ancient colleagues understands the human self as a being comprised of corporeal, mental and spiritual components. Each of these components must be developed properly to achieve full human potential, and this development occurs through education" (p. 71). Graskemper, an American scholar, studies Gülen and Jesuit Educational approaches and emphasises "students in Gülen and Jesuit schools are educated holistically in the sciences as well as ethics and social justice" (n.d., para. 8). Gülen's vision contains similar elements with the holistic philosophy of education as this philosophy is "concerned with educating the whole person—body, mind, and soul—to develop his or her fullest potential" (Darken, 2009, p. 417).

Holistic education was developed throughout the influence of many philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746–1827), Maria Montessori (1870–1952), Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Abraham Maslow (1908–1970). John Miller and Ron Miller are current leading figures in the field of holistic education (Darken, 2009). Ron Miller (1991) summarises the aims of holistic education as:

Instead of single-mindedly pursuing wealth and status, people will desire health, wholeness, and meaningful participation in community life. Instead of competing

relentlessly, individuals will strive to understand other people and other cultures, to work with them, and to form mutually supportive relationships. Rather than aiming narrowly for lucrative positions of power, human beings will endeavour to develop to the fullest extent their personal talents and interests. (p. 108)

For Darken (2009), “Holistic education has developed largely as a reaction to what its proponents view as the mechanistic, reductionistic, and materialistic conceptions that have come to dominate popular thinking and education in the last century” (p. 417). In extending a holistic education perspective, Gülen (2011h) has argued that:

God is Lord (Educator) of the universe and He created the universe as a whole. When the universe is considered as a poem, the human being is part of this poem as a couplet and should be in a rhyme with the rest of poem. (p. 147)

Thus, according to his vision, education should cater to all faculties of an individual, and, moreover, should generate an individual that interacts harmoniously with society and the wider environment. Holistic education philosophy contains similar themes: “Holistic education views all aspects of life as interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent. As such, it is ecological and global, encouraging an understanding and appreciation of multiple contexts and connections” (Darken, 2009, p. 418).

According to holistic educational philosophy, education is not a mere learning process or delivering information, but unfolding the potential of individuals (Darken, 2009). Gülen shares similar thoughts, arguing that education should develop the positive potential of the individual and cultivate good character beyond the mere teaching and learning process.

According to Gülen (1996d), humans are like a ball of wool consisting of thousands of feelings rolled up one over another. The feelings have angelic and satanic dimensions; the former can elevate the individual to the highest level and the latter to the lowest. The purpose of education is to take control of the negative side of human nature and channel it towards goodness, while developing the positive side. A person can achieve perfection by controlling

the negative side of their nature and harvesting positive outcomes (Gülen, 1993). For instance, it could be inferred that *hate* is a negative emotion, yet it can be transformed into *hate of evil*, which is positive. Uncontrolled *lust* could be harmful; however, it can be turned into *chastity* through the help of willpower. Similarly, *stubbornness* could be converted into *steadiness*, and so on.

Gülen (2000a) states “The human being is a marvel, who, through sudden deviations can fall into a rank that is the lowest of the low while he or she is elevated to a rank that is fit for heaven” (p. 57). Thus, his comprehensive vision suggests education should be an ongoing process to ensure steady development of an educated person throughout their entire life. Figure 2.3 represents his perception of the role of education in developing human potential and preserving good outcomes (yellow arrow) in the struggle between imperfection and perfection.

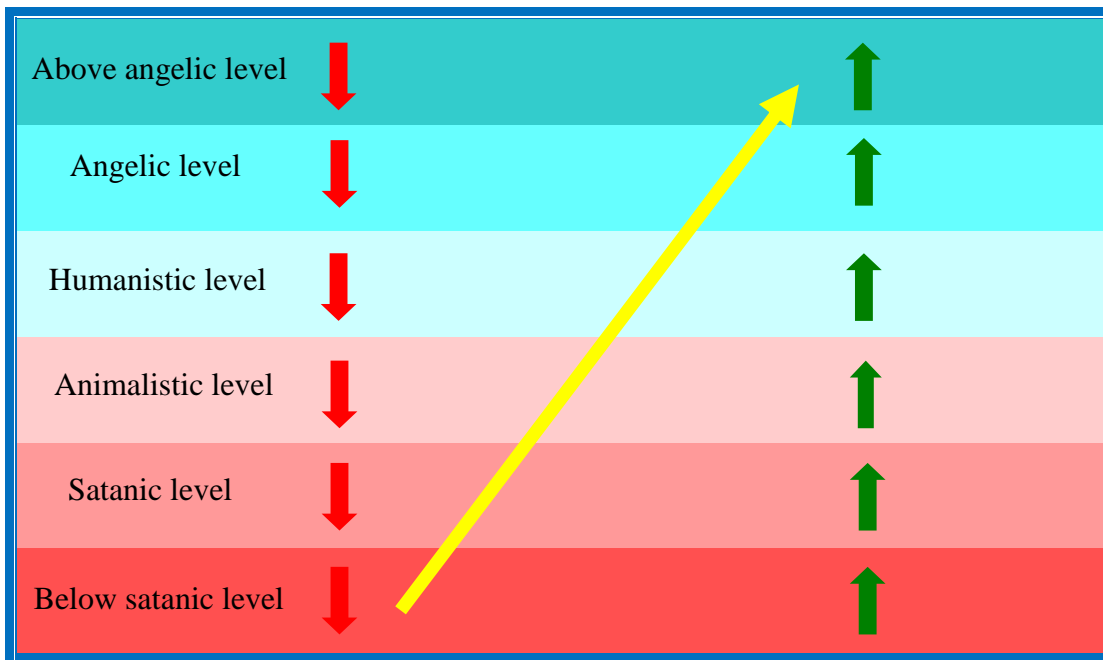


Figure 2.3. Fluctuation of individual throughout life.

Gülen’s holistic educational vision contains the following elements: addressing all faculties of a human; developing the angelic nature of a human and controlling its animalistic

nature; considering the human being as a harmonious part of the universe; disciplining imperfection in human nature to reach perfection; and considering education as an ongoing process throughout the human's entire life.

2.2.2 Raising the Golden Generation

The Hizmet Movement's educational services could be interpreted as an implementation of Gülen's vision of education and his dedication to raising the Golden Generation. This section discusses the qualities of the Golden Generation according to Gülen's vision. The term, Golden Generation, is the symbol of an ideal character Gülen envisions and aims to raise through his entire educational philosophy. Certain attributes form the Golden Generation which is considered saviour generation of all times by Gülen (1976). Agai (2003) argues Gülen's Golden Generation is the Modern Muslim and their main characteristics are faith, love, idealism, selflessness and action. To solve the problems of the future with their knowledge and moral character is another attribute of the Golden Generation for Agai. Yildirim and Kirmizialtin (2004) assert that the Golden Generation contains people well-educated in modern sciences and morality. People of the Golden Generation have to reach their best potential spiritually and mentally in a balanced way as stated in the Gülen Movement website,

They will rely equally on reason and experience, but give as much importance to conscience and inspiration as they do to the former. They will pursue the perfect in everything, establish the balance between this world and the next, and wed the heart to the intellect. (Gülen movement, n.d., para. 2)

Gülen defines this exemplary generation with a variety of terms in his writings, which also indicate his ambition to educate the young generation: ideal generation (Gülen, 1998), blessed generation (Gülen, 1998), ambitious generation (Gülen, 1998), bright generation (Gülen, 1998), generation of spirit (Gülen, 1996c) and generation of hope (Gülen, 1998). Gülen (2000a) also gave the title *This Era and the Young Generation* to one of his books.

Gülen (1976) introduced the term, Golden Generation, after he organised a conference with the title of “Golden Generation” in Diyarbakir¹⁵ and he described some qualities of this generation as follows; to act according to the methodology; to obey to the book of the universe (physical sciences) and the book of the Qur'an; love and to be in a state of unrest for the cause [cile in Turkish]; to be patient; to have physical and spiritual competence; self-questioning; having love and affection towards existence for the sake of Creator; and fulfilling their responsibilities with passion. Gülen (1977) mentioned further attributes of this generation in Corum¹⁶ conference which are being people of action; working for the salvation of others after improving their inner self; and self-control. The term has been used frequently in Hizmet communities since then and refers to the ideal generation that Gülen’s educational philosophy aims to raise. Yavuz (2012) interprets Gülen’s Golden Generation as people well-educated in both science and religion, and modern Muslims who join “modern secular societies without compromising their faith in religion” (p. 98). Tittensor (2012) articulated that Gülen’s philosophy aims to raise a “religiously oriented elite” generation (p. 165).

Educating and training the young generation are among the essential duties of parents, educators and relevant government departments in Gülen’s philosophy. According to him, the most important issue, in modern times, is to refashion the young generation, who have no ideals and are willing to follow any ideology presented to them, by instilling the concepts of virtue, patience, love of work, admiration for history and a passion to probe the future into their hearts (Gülen, 1995). Soltes (2013) has written that Gülen hopes to raise a generation who can comprehend his entire philosophy and act in accordance with its precepts to improve the world:

¹⁵ Name of a city in south-eastern Turkey.

¹⁶ Name of a city in northern Turkey.

It may be said that Gülen primarily steps beyond the concerns of Rumi or any other Sufi predecessors whom we have considered in the emphasis he places on actively trying to shape a new generation that understands the issues about which he has spent a lifetime teaching and writing and is eager not just to theologize and philosophize but to push for action toward improving the world. (p. 103)

Gülen (2000b) proposes that the confused generation should be brought back to humanity first through instilling faith in their character and the manners required by faith. Then, values such as the embracing of everything with compassion, passion for service without any expectation of privileges, dutifulness, and responsibility should be catered for in their education. Protecting values throughout a person's entire life is no less important than instilling them initially. Gülen (1996c) states "Our priority should be to bring back the values which were taken away from humanity and to raise generation who would protect these values for eternity" (p. 186). The educational sociologist Wood (2011) expressed similar priorities for education when she wrote "Education cannot be neutral; it has to know the difference between right and wrong and offer a spirited defence of the former" (p. xiv). One approach of the Scottish educator Alexander Neill (1960) espouses a philosophy of freedom from adult coercion and emphasises student and community self-governance. Gülen-inspired schools differ from Neill's Summerhill School, which has neither moral training nor religious instruction (Wood, 2011). Gülen's educational vision is value-centred and generally based on his interpretation of Islam.

According to Gülen (2009), the ongoing education of the young generations and stability in their education are strongly related to the existence of a nation. He states, "The preservation of the young generation is the first assurance of the continuous existence of a nation" (Gülen, 2009, p. 169). He also believes nations prepare their own end by not catering for the education of the next generation, in contrast to a sensitive gardener who keeps the garden free of weeds and protects it from harm.

Agai (2003) argues that “This generation embodies Gülen’s major aim, pious Muslims making use of science without adopting materialism and positivism and with a firm Islamic identity that unites them with ordinary people in Turkey” (p. 58). The educational process should keep the young generation as a part of the wider community by preserving their national and cultural identity along with delivering knowledge and skills. A similar education aim is mentioned by Wood (2011) as “teaching the young about the world they live in and preserving particular cultures and traditions” (p. 35). Thus, Gülen’s educational approach also encourages preserving cultural identity and social cohesion.

Producing good citizens is considered by Gingell and Winch (1999), and Wood (2011) to be one of the major aims of education. However, in Gülen’s educational vision, the emphasis is on generating virtues rather than developing good citizens. Developing good citizens is the objective of most secular schools and faith-based schools often focus on building a faith-based identity. Faith-based schools usually address issues such as compassion, caring, respecting others and their property and willingness to serve others, and a faith-based identity equipped with these values would be seen as consistent with developing good citizens. Gülen’s vision goes further and promotes raising not only a good citizen, but also a virtuous individual—Golden Generation. Gülen’s Golden Generation contains active virtuous individuals who are equipped with modern sciences and good morality, able to understand contemporary complex issues and respond accordingly, and contribute positively to humanity. He argues that promoting this generation is strongly linked to the existence of nations. Some characteristics of the virtuous generation mentioned in this section are: love, action, self-control, patience, love of work, admiration for history, faith, compassion, passion for service without expectation of privileges, dutifulness, responsibility, idealism and selflessness.

2.2.3 Service to Humanity

Service [Hizmet] to humanity is one of the objectives of Gülen's educational philosophy. There are many ways to serve humanity, such as providing food, medicine and shelter for the needy, but for Gülen, education is the best way, along with establishing dialogue with other communities or nations (Gülen, 2004a). Gülen (2004a) sees ignorance as one of the major problems of humanity along with "poverty and internal schism," and the cure for these problems is "knowledge, work-capital, and unification" (p. 86). Education also contributes to the solution of other problems of humanity, such as hunger and poverty. Gülen-inspired schools cater for a variety of ethnic and religious groups in the world to actualise the objective of serving humanity. This section will discuss the views of a range of scholars on Gülen's philosophy of employing education in service to humanity.

Gülen (2004a) believes "education is a humane service, for we were sent here to learn and be perfected through education" (p. 86). Ebaugh (2010), a religious sociologist, also emphasises the link between education and serving humanity according to Gülen's vision: "Mr. Gülen encouraged people to serve their country and humanity in general through promoting and supporting education" (p. 95). The name of the Hizmet Movement suggests commitment to service is essential not only in education, but also in all activities undertaken. Agai (2003), a doctoral scholar of Gülen, notes "*Hizmet* for Gülen implies that a person devotes his or her life to Islam,¹⁷ serving for the benefit of others, which is beneficial for life after death" (p. 59). Tittensor (2012) argues that Gülen extended the notion of serving God to also serving the community "through everyday actions that serve society" (p. 164).

Hizmet's serving humanity philosophy is slightly different from the service-learning educational approach, which gives practice and learning opportunities for students through serving in the community. Ehrlich (1996) has proposed that "Service-learning is the various

¹⁷ Gülen understands the religion of Islam to be a "way leading a person to perfection or enabling one to reacquire one's primordial angelic state" (Michel, 2003, p. 83).

pedagogies that link community service and academic study so that each strengthens the other” (p. xi). In this approach, students learn certain sections of the curriculum by serving in the community. Eyler (2002) argues that service learning “provides opportunities for students to form bonds with each other, with faculty, and with community members”; encourages students “to apply what they are learning to real–world situations”; “promotes an interdisciplinary approach to academic study and breaks down barriers between college and community or school and community” and improves “skills and knowledge necessary for effective citizenship” (p. 518).

Aslandoğan¹⁸ and Çetin (2007), acknowledge that the aim of learning is to satisfy individual and community needs and to provide solutions for global problems, in Gülen’s view. Williams (2007), a senior lecturer in religious education, also noticed the link between education and serving community in Gülen’s philosophy; he argues the Movement’s educational and dialogue services “lessen the gaps between people” and contribute to “the common good and peace” (para. 21).

Hizmet’s educational services address not only students, but also the society at large. While Gülen–inspired educational institutions, such as childcare centres, schools, reading halls, tuition centres and universities serve the education of students, other Hizmet programs such as evening gatherings, camps, trips and conferences and institutions such as cultural centres, television and radio stations, websites, newspapers and publications serve the education of the broader society. In Gülen’s philosophy, education is employed to tackle the problem of ignorance, contribute solutions to problems and serve the wellbeing of humanity.

¹⁸ Executive director of the Alliance for Shared Values (an umbrella non-profit organisation serving as a voice for civic, culture and service organisations around the U.S)

2.2.4 Promoting Dialogue and Peace

As a result of advancements in transport and communication technology, the countries of the world become closer every day and the importance of education in establishing mutual understanding and peaceful co–existence has increased. Philosophically, many politicians, educators, academics, and philosophers are advocates of peace; however, realising peace is a challenging task for humanity. The Hizmet Movement aims to contribute to the common good and peace of humanity through its activities. Williams (2008) stated, when discussing Hizmet’s educational services, “It invited students and other people to coexist peacefully in diversity. It called for dialogue between different spheres of society and different ethnic and religious traditions in the world, peace and love” (para. 47). This section explores Gülen’s dialogue and peace vision as one of the main educational aims.

Ebaugh (2010) proposes that dialogue is seen not as luxury but a necessity in today’s global world, and since his retirement, Gülen’s efforts have concentrated on establishing dialogue among the various cultures, religions and ethnic groups throughout the world. Williams (2007) has made similar remarks about Gülen’s dialogue and peace vision, namely that dialogue with other civilisations is the best way to serve humanity, by coming together with mutual understanding and respect to work for the peace, and preventing the predicted clash of civilisations. Williams (2008) further notes:

Hojaeffendi¹⁹ encourages people to serve humanity both through education and in the course of intercultural and interfaith activities and institutions. The goal is to bridge the gaps between people and to establish connections for the common good and peace. (para. 61)

The Hizmet Movement conducted dialogue and world–wide educational activities in the early 1990s. Since then, emphasising and establishing the importance of dialogue, peace and tolerance among students became one of the aims of Gülen’s educational philosophy.

¹⁹ The Turkish term Hojaeffendi means “respectable imam.” Here it refers to Gülen.

Dialogue should be developed on the basis of mutual understanding, recognising the values of the other and tolerating differences. Yücel (2011) stated that “This universal approach [of Gülen] accepts that every individual, group, community, race, or nation has positive attributes. Recognizing this allows for the building of common ground and working together on projects regardless of the type of community” (p. 71). Ergene (2008) draws attention to Gülen–inspired schooling and dialogue relations as he argues the schools’ endeavour to prepare the foundation of dialogue for diverse cultures and civilisations. Thus, Hizmet’s dialogue and educational services are intertwined, in both support of each other and their aim to contribute social harmony locally as well as globally. Michel (2003) and Kalyoncu (2008) have similar opinions to Ergene. Michel’s observations of the Philippines Turkish Tolerance School and Kalyoncu’s remarks about Gülen–inspired schools in Kenya indicate the positive effects of the schools in multi–religious and ethnic environments.

Weller (2007) emphasised that Gülen’s understanding of dialogue is based on his vision of Islam. Examples of dialogue can be found in the traditions of Prophet Muhammad and practices of the Ottoman Empire. Gülen also sees differences as a part of human nature, and understanding this principle will ease tension and prevent many problems, as reported by Weller:

Different beliefs, races, customs and traditions will continue to cohabit in this (global) village. Each individual is like a unique realm unto themselves; therefore, the desire for all humanity to be similar to one another is nothing more than wishing for the impossible. For this reason, the peace of this (global) village lies in respecting all these differences, considering these differences to be part of our nature and in ensuring that people appreciate these differences. Otherwise, it is unavoidable that the world will devour itself in a web of conflicts, disputes, fights, and the bloodiest of wars, thus preparing the way for its own end. (Gülen, as cited in Weller, 2007, p. 99)

Çetin (2009) also draws attention to the contribution of Hizmet services to the social wellbeing in multicultural communities:

It absorbs conflicting pressures and eases tension within fragmented communities. It has transformed the potential to use coercive means to induce changes in political systems into peaceful efforts to produce beneficial services. It has, despite provocations and ill-treatment, never shown any inclination whatever towards violence or extra legal tactics of any kind. (p. 104)

The commentaries about his vision suggest one of Gülen's educational aims is to establish dialogue and peace. Dialogue is a necessity for peaceful coexistence; schools can contribute to the harmony of society thorough dialogue; dialogue can prevent many social problems; and individual and cultural differences are part of human nature. Sunier (2014) claims "Gülen and his followers that constitute the core creed of human interdependence: (1) tolerance, love and compassion; (2) dialogue, peace-building and coexistence; and (3) responsibility, civility and citizenship" (p. 2197). Thus, his philosophy encourages schools to teach different cultures and practices to promote peaceful coexistence. The schools are not strong enough to establish peace at a global level; however, they can contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and their local society.

2.2.5 Introducing Turkish Anatolian Culture and Shared Values

The Gülen-inspired schools disseminate Turkish Anatolian culture in the areas in which they operate through a planned curriculum, but also through the hidden curriculum. Turkish Anatolian culture could also be worded as *Turkish Islamic culture*, as this term relates to the last thousand years of Turkish Anatolian culture. Gülen also adopts the term *Turkish Islam*. For Unal (2002), Gülen's Turkish Islam does not refer to a separate religion beside Islam, but how Turks practised Islam and interpreted Islamic culture, civilisation and jurisdiction. Gülen stated in an interview with Aksiyon (1998) that one of his purposes in encouraging the opening of Hizmet schools was to introduce Turkish Anatolian culture to different parts of the world. Aksiyon (1998) asked Gülen in the interview, "What is your purpose in opening the schools? Is it to enter the ex-Ottoman Empire's geography with education?" (para. 16). Gülen states the schools opened in many places, such as Yakutia, England, and America, which are

not related to the ex-Ottoman Empire; the schools serve the self-expression of the Turkish nation globally through education.

The term *self-expression of the Turkish nation* suggests one of the purposes of Hizmet schools was to introduce the Turkish Anatolian culture to the world through education. The term Anatolian culture has wide meaning from the pre-Islam and pre-Christian eras to the modern culture of Turkey. In this section, Turkish Anatolian culture refers to the culture and values of Anatolia in the last one thousand years, as Gülen (2016) encourages Hizmet volunteers to take one thousand years of Turkish Anatolian cultural values to every corner of the world. Gülen (2010d) also considered this thousand-year period as a golden age.

Gülen (2007b) highlighted that the schools serve as honorary cultural ambassadors and provide opportunity of self-expression to Anatolian people and introduce Turkish people and language to the world. Gülen (2010d) stated that the Turkish people have a glorious history, and it is the right and duty of Turkish people to exhibit and introduce the beauties accumulated over history in educational institutions, schools, cultural centres and businesses.

How are schools introducing Turkish Anatolian culture? In response to this question, Gülen (2010d) believes that the character and mode of the Anatolian people who work in these institutions reflect the history, art, religious and moral conceptions of Anatolia. Turkish Anatolian culture is also introduced through the diverse curricular and extra-curricular activities at the schools. These activities differ depending on the nature, conditions and location of the school.

Along with the overt intention to introduce Turkish Anatolian culture, the Hizmet Movement also emphasises shared values including those of the location in which the schools exist. Gülen (2014c) asserts that “respect for universal humanitarian values is the common denominator” (para. 9); because Hizmet volunteers respect people, they can live together with

everyone regardless of their faith. Ebaugh (2010) stated in an interview with Aksiyon that localisation is the most important aspect of the globalisation of the Hizmet Movement, and the establishment of good relationships with local people enables them to participate actively in Hizmet activities. Thus, the Hizmet Movement creates a shared area from humanitarian, local and Anatolian values to establish a base for Hizmet activities, which differ in accordance with local conditions.

2.3 Criticisms of Gülen–inspired Schools

Although academic interest has increased in the Movement since 2000, it is difficult to find literature critical of Gülen’s educational vision. This section examines some published examples of criticisms of Gülen–inspired schools related to his education vision, such as the purpose of establishing schools in Section 2.3.1, a perception of a reactionary educational agenda in Section 2.3.2, gender segregation in Section 2.3.3, development of personal skills in Section 2.3.4, and limitations in the curriculum in Section 2.3.5.

As discussed in Section 2.2. above, Gülen–inspired schools are admired and appreciated by many academics, scholars and politicians; however, there have been some concerns and allegations about the motives of the Movement and its schools. Some examples of criticisms of the Hizmet Movement include: having a secret agenda (Tittensor, 2012); secretly indoctrinating or brainwashing students in Gülen affiliated dormitories/schools (Aksiyon, 2010; Tittensor, 2012); planning to establish an Islamic state in Turkey or destroy the secular regime of Turkey (Sheehan & Wojcik, 2016); receiving funds from foreign sources, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, the U.S. and Israel; Gülen’s being a CIA agent; being supported by the U.S. government; infiltrating state institutions (Aksiyon, 2010); establishing a parallel government in Turkey; establishing terror networks; and orchestrating the 2016 coup attempt with the aim of collapsing the elected Government of Turkey (Shaheen, 2016). For Harrington (2015), Hizmet movement criticized in three main themes by its opponents; first, to infiltrate

to government institutions to establish a religious regime, second, “not having formal organizational structures, it lacks transparency and is therefore suspect” (p. 12), and third, Gülen represents foreign powers such as Mossad and CIA. Although there are extensive discussions, mainly in the media, there is limited documentary evidence in research literature substantiating the claims. An exploration of these mostly seemingly politically inspired claims is beyond the scope of this thesis, the focus of which is the alignment of Hizmet–inspired schools with Gülen’s beliefs about education.

2.3.1 Purpose of Gülen–inspired Schools

The purpose of the Hizmet Movement opening hundreds of schools in and out of Turkey has been a matter of curiosity for many people. Aksiyon (1998) asked Gülen; “What is your purpose in opening the schools? Is it to enter the ex–Ottoman Empire’s geography with education?” Gülen responded as follows:

The map of the world is hanging in my room. The contemporary world is getting smaller, now everyone can go everywhere. Moreover, the area of the schools established abroad from Yakutia to England and from South Africa to America is unrelated to ex–Ottoman Empire’s geography. And what is to be feared from the self–expression of the Turkish nation in different parts of the world through education? (para. 16)

According to Park (2008), the Hizmet movement aims to reconnect central Asian Turks by disseminating Turkish Muslim culture in the region. For Park, Turkish staff are dominant in leadership team, Turkish language is taught and the Turkish national anthem is sung in Gülen–inspired schools. Gülen does not deny the schools’ mission in disseminating Turkish culture. Gülen claims that one of his purposes in encouraging Hizmet volunteers to open schools was the self–expression of the Turkish nation by means of the introduction of the Turkish Anatolian culture around the world through education, as mentioned above. Aksiyon (1998) asked Gülen if his purpose in promoting the opening of these schools is to establish an alternative to the existing education system. Gülen’s response was “These schools are

established and operating within the framework of existing laws. In all of these institutions, the same programs and curricula are implemented with the formal educational institutions, to do otherwise is not possible” (para. 17).

Gülen’s aim is not to establish an alternative education system, but to employ the existing educational system effectively. One of the intentions of Gülen–inspired schools is to promote academic excellence and values education within the legal boundaries of related educational departments. Along with introducing the Turkish Anatolian culture around the world, Gülen states (2010b) his ultimate purpose is to obtain the pleasure of God, which is the most exalted purpose. Obtaining the pleasure of God [*Allah rizasi*] is an Islamic term that is the main purpose of any Islamic action.

2.3.2 Gülen–inspired Schools Provide Reactionary Education

Gülen–inspired schools promote religious and cultural values where possible. This has led to the claim that Gülen–inspired schools accommodate backwardness [*irticai*] and provide reactionary education specifically in Turkey. Gülen argues the schools in Turkey and abroad are under constant inspection; many people from different professions visit and observe the schools’ activities, and no evidence is provided to support the claims the schools are providing reactionary education (Aksiyon, 1998).

2.3.3 Gülen–inspired Schools Prefer Segregated Education

A reporter for Aksiyon (1998) asked the reason Gülen–inspired schools prefer mostly segregated education rather than co–education where possible. Gülen believes segregated education better achieves the objective of providing quality education. He argues there is no evidence that co–education is a necessity for modern education; on the contrary, educators and statistics all over the world state otherwise in this regard.

Contrary to the opinion of Gülen (1998), whether segregated education or co-education serves better for the educational purposes in schools is a topic debated widely in educational literature with no clear benefits supporting one or the other. Garcia-Gracia and Donoso Vázquez (2016) conducted research to discover if there are differences in the academic results in mixed schools and single-sex schools in Catalonia. Their research result was that there are no significant differences in academic achievements between mixed schools and single-sex schools in Catalonia. Although there are advantages and disadvantages of both approaches, Gülen clearly advocates segregated education over co-education. Two Gülen-inspired schools studied in this thesis were Star College and Castle College. Star College preferred co-education in primary level and single-sex education in secondary level where as Castle College implemented co-education in both primary and secondary as the number of the students was not enough to create separate high schools for girls and boys.

2.3.4 Gülen-inspired Schools Prevent Development of Personal Skills

Sevindi (1997) pointed out the dilemma of developing students' interests and abilities in the formal structures of the Hizmet community when she interviewed Gülen. Gülen shared similar concerns with Sevindi and he states the Movement may have an overt or covert hegemony. Hegemony is supremacy of one social group over others which is not appreciated by Gülen as it may prevent development of the personal skills of the dominated group. For Gülen, the educators in these institutions are reflecting general thought, custom and morality of the Turkish society. This character, supremacy of one person over another, may be inherited from Turkish ancestors and should be amended in order to provide an environment for the flourishing of an individual's abilities (Sevindi, 1997). Although Gülen encourages development of personal abilities, the education in some Gülen-inspired schools emphasised science subjects over other subjects (Yavuz, 1997) which is discussed in the next section.

2.3.5 Limited Opportunities for a Liberal and Creative Curriculum

Given the perception that Gülen–inspired schools emphasise academic achievement and moral development, Yavuz (1997) challenged Gülen in an interview with the proposition that the students in Gülen–inspired schools dislike complex thinking, are not interested in art and literature, are accustomed to think through formulas, and are not creative. Gülen’s response to this question was:

I think the schools provide education based on thinking and research rather than education that is one type, formalistic and based on certain patterns. I would like to point out that our education perception is not to dress students in one type of uniform [ie type of education], by contrast, importance should always be given to the individual differences and these differences are encouraged in our education perception. Moreover, students are interested in science subjects and this inclination is established from the conditions of the current day, not from the schools. Thus, the students, to a certain extent, cannot find the opportunity to demonstrate individual differences through art and literature. (paras. 5–6)

Gülen argues that science subjects are emphasised in schools in response to the conditions of the present time and to meet parents’ demands. Along with this explanation, Gülen believes that, in Hizmet schools, many different shades of colour within the fields of critical thinking, art and literature can be observed among students (Yavuz, 1997).

Gülen–inspired institutions have grown steadily all around the globe and Ergil (2015) provided a list of schools, cultural centres and universities that are established in different countries. They attract students and gain the appreciation of parents and local communities with their contemporary educational services and achievements in a variety of fields. Ebaugh (2010) stated that “... they are elite schools in which students tend to score high in academic achievement such as entrance into university and success in national and international scholastic competitions” (p. 97). The schools are regularly inspected by relevant departments and observed by many visitors from different professions (Aksiyon, 1998), community

members and students. In a sense, they are transparent. Some people are critical and have concerns about the schools, as examined above. Examining the nature and core causes of these critics and concerns will help improve Gülen–inspired schools.

2.4 Conclusion

Gülen’s definition of knowledge contains some religious elements such as understanding the purpose of God, discovering absolute truth through existence, information directly sent by God and logical elements such as studying entities and phenomena of the physical world, understanding objects as they are, and examining the relationship between the human being and existence. Truthful information is considered knowledge by Gülen and knowledge has to offer practical benefits. His definition of knowledge combines mind and heart, and art—nature, and artist—God. Gülen’s approach provides many benefits for Muslims, as his definition of knowledge encourages people to study science as a part of their religion and vice versa.

Gülen’s distinction lies in his practice with this philosophy through Hizmet services, such as the opening of hospitals, schools, universities and the establishment of scientific publications such as *Fountain* and *Ekoloji* [Ecology] magazines. Thus, education, in Gülen’s view, should cater to the cognitive and spiritual needs of a person by establishing connections between God, nature and the human being. Knowledge should be investigated with sincerity and constant examination.

This section identified five main purposes of education in Gülen’s vision. First, Gülen’s educational philosophy is aimed at the holistic education of a person, which includes addressing their body, soul, conscience, feelings, heart and mind through education. This process helps human beings reach perfectness and places them harmoniously in a bigger picture of the universe. Raising a virtuous generation is the second aim of Gülen’s educational approach. This Golden Generation, which is equipped with competence in knowledge and

skills as well as values, will contribute positively to the existence of nations and harmony of society.

The third main aim of education, according to Gülen, is serving humanity. The name of the Movement, which is Hizmet [service], indicates that service to humanity is its main objective as well as that of Hizmet schools. In Gülen's philosophy, quality education is a way to reach the peak of perfection and one of the best ways to serve humanity.

Dialogue and peace is the fourth aim of education, in Gülen's perspective. Differences are seen as part of human nature and accepting everybody with their own status is the essence of dialogue. Schools contribute to the wellbeing of society by addressing topics of dialogue and peace through education. Strengthening dialogue potentially plays a preventative role for many individual and social problems. Because dialogue has a potential to reinforce community ties, and to eliminate biases and misperceptions. The fifth main aim of education is disseminating the Turkish Anatolian culture. For Gülen, the schools have the role of honorary ambassador of culture and the introduction of the Turkish Anatolian culture takes place in schools through curricular and extra-curricular activities.

This chapter has presented Gülen's philosophy of education and also examined some critics and their concerns about Gülen-inspired schools and provided responses from Gülen to these critics. The purpose of the next chapter is to develop a framework with which to examine the alignment of Gülen-inspired schools with his philosophy of education.

CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERISING GÜLEN–INSPIRED SCHOOLING

The previous chapter reviewed Gülen’s philosophy of education, the definition of education and knowledge, and its relationship to other theorists. This chapter develops the framework with which to examine the alignment of Gülen–inspired schools with his philosophy of education. It explores three dimensions that characterise the nature of a school: culture, climate and identity.

To support the reader with understanding these three dimensions, Table 3.1 presents multiple conceptualisations of school culture, climate and identity that have been drawn from the literature. In this thesis, school culture, Section 3.1, reflects the beliefs and values of the foundation that established the school and governing body. Gülen’s philosophy informs and shapes the school’s culture through the governing body, according to the conditions or location of the school. School climate, Section 3.2, refers to how culture is manifested through the activities of the school and in relationships among the school community—staff, students, parents and community members. It also reflects the social and physical environment. Finally, school identity, Section 3.3, reflects the perceptions of the wider community about the school’s aims and intentions. The chapter is summarised in Section 3.4.

The concept of identity is often applied to individuals and conceptualised as the perception a person has of themselves and how they present themselves to the world. The concept of school identity represents those attributes of the organisation that distinguish it from others in the public view (Whetten, 2006).

Table 3.1

Key Characteristics of a School

Dimensions	Elaboration
School culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A system of shared orientations (norms, core values, and tacit assumptions) held by members, which holds the unit together and gives it a distinct identity” (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991, p. 5). • Overt behavioural regularities, rituals, patterns of discourse, use of symbols and general assumptions about the purpose of the organisation (Schein, 2011).
School climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The quality and consistency of interpersonal interactions within the school community that influences children's cognitive, social, and psychological development" (Haynes, Emmons & Ben-Avie, 1997, p. 322). • “The combined culture of the adults and students within a school – both the culture they share as an organization and the diverse cultures they bring from home” (Keiser & Schulte, 2009, p. 45). • How values of people are expressed in the day-to-day operations of schools (Payne, 2000). • The willingness of parents to become involved in school life (Zehava & Peled, 2002). • Practices of a school to establish positive relationships that address students’ social, emotional and moral wellbeing (Hearn, Campbell-Pope, House & Cross, 2006).
School identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes of the organisation that distinguish it from others in the public view (Whetten, 2006). • The school’s teaching approach (teacher-centred, student-centred) (Wardekker & Miedema, 2001). • Perceived curriculum orientations of a school (Schiro, 2013; Wardekker & Miedema, 2001).

Although this chapter keeps these three topics as distinct and this is also reflected in Table 3.1, there is an overlap between these dimensions because of their strong interactions. Daily relationships and dynamics of a school will be influenced by culture, leadership and the nature of the teaching and support (e.g., pastoral care) provided to students. The identity of the school will be influenced by the culture, the orientation placed on learning and achievement, curriculum, and the school’s reputation established by the principal and

teachers. These dimensions are adopted in this thesis as a framework to structure Gülen's writings and philosophy of education.

3.1 School Culture

Concepts of school culture draw on broad anthropological assumptions about communities and groups of people. Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991) proposed that school culture is "a system of shared orientations (norms, core values, and tacit assumptions) held by members, which holds the unit together and gives it a distinct identity" (p. 5). School culture focuses on the dominant beliefs, norms and expectations of the school management, governing body and community. In this respect, culture is manifested through the overt behavioural regularities, rituals, patterns of discourse, use of symbols, and general assumptions about the purpose of the organisation (Schein, 2011). A range of instruments has been developed to capture the various components that contribute to a school culture and climate. These instruments are mostly interviews and questionnaires completed by teachers, students, parents and school administrators that explore issues such as components of the school environment, teachers' and parents' perceptions about school climate, and features that contribute to the school's effectiveness (Roach & Kratochwill, 2004).

A review of the literature guides the next section. It explores Gülen's core cultural values by exploring his vision on values education in Section 3.1.1, behaviour management in Section 3.1.2, school environment and education relationships in Section 3.1.3, multiculturalism at school in Section 3.1.4, religious education in Section 3.1.5, single-sex or co-education in Section 3.1.6, hidden curriculum in Section 3.1.7, and role modelling in Section 3.1.8.

3.1.1 Values Education

Values education has been and continues to be an important aspect of education. Issues such as a definition and content of values education, and reasoning and justification of values continue to be matters for discussion among educators. Values are an important aspect of culture; through identifying the values adopted by a school, one can identify its culture as well. This section examines the definition and content of values; whether schools should teach values; Gülen's view on morality; and similarities between "positive education" (Gable & Haidt, 2005) and Gülen's approach to values education.

3.1.1.1 Definition and Content of Values

Value is defined in the dictionary as "the desirability of a thing, often in respect of some property such as usefulness or exchangeability; worth, merit, or importance; ... the moral principles and beliefs or accepted standards of a person or social group" (Value, n.d.). Thus, individuals and groups can have their own set of values relevant to the "importance and worth" of something and this can differ according to the individuals and groups.

Sutrop (2015), from a practical philosophical perspective, argues there is no agreement in defining the concept of values. Further, "Values have been variously defined as things considered *good* in themselves (such as happiness, beauty, truth, love, honesty and loyalty) or good because they are in relation to a living being's wellbeing." (p. 194). Inglehart and Welzel, political scientists (n.d.), examined values from a social perspective in their cultural map under four categories: traditional values versus secular-rational values; and survival values versus self-expression values. They argue that "*Traditional values* emphasize the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values. People who embrace these values also reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide" (para. 3). *Secular-rational values* take the opposite perspective to traditional values. The societies who accommodate secular-rational values "place less emphasis on religion, traditional family

values and authority. Divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide are seen as relatively acceptable” (Inglehart & Welzel, n.d., para. 4). The societies that accommodate *survival values* place emphasis on “economic and physical security” and this situation is fairly linked to “low levels of trust and tolerance” (para. 5). In *self-expression values*, the emphasis is placed on “environmental protection, growing tolerance of foreigners, gays and lesbians and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life” (para. 6). Gülen’s writings provide rich data about values that indicate their importance in his philosophy. His approach to values is congruent with traditional values as defined by Inglehart and Welzel; Gülen’s value concept is based on his interpretation of Islam, and emphasises Islamic values in general and Turkish Anatolian values in specifically (see 2.4.2). The values mentioned in Gülen’s writings address all readers generally and sometimes address Hizmet communities specifically.

Gülen has addressed all readers with the following example of values: morality (Gülen, 1993); virtue (Gülen,1993); humbleness (Gülen,1997b); dignity [*vakar*] (Gülen,1997b); chastity (Gülen, 2000a); balanced compassion (Gülen, 2000a); respect for others (Gülen, 2000a); tolerance (Gülen, 2000a); forgiveness (Gülen, 2000a); patience (Gülen, 2000a); faith (Gülen, 1997b); hope (Gülen, 2000a); determination (Gülen, 2000a); sincerity (Gülen, 2000a); action (Gülen, 1997b); enthusiasm (Gülen, 2000b); self-examining [*muhasebe*] (Gülen, 2000a); love of science (Gülen, 1993); love towards existence (Gülen, 1993); having high goals (Gülen, 1993); being strong-willed (Gülen, 1993); responsibility (Gülen, 1993); and sacredness of labour (Gülen, 1997b).

In the following examples of values, Gülen addresses Hizmet communities specifically: acting for the love of God [*hasbi*] (Gülen, 2000a); trustworthiness (Gülen, 2011c), dedication (Gülen, 2012a), expectation of nothing in return (Gülen, 2012a); endurance (Gülen, 2000a); tolerance (Gülen,2000a), responding to evil with kindness (Gülen, 2011c); altruism (Gülen,

2000a); refraining from pursuing any personal advantage (Gülen, 2000a); living for others (Gülen, 1995); being *handless* to those who hit and *mute* to those who swear (Gülen, 2010b); adopting the idea of serving the nation (Gülen, 1995); and aiming all endeavours at forming a society of peace (Gülen, 2000a).

The terms Gülen uses when he addresses values in his writings generally are: humanitarian (2011c); universal humanitarian (2011c); moral (1998); religious (2011e); national (2011e); and historical (2011e) values. He also mentions *foreign values* and considers these acceptable when they are adopted in accordance with national values (2011e).

Table 3.2 compares the values in Australian schools (taken from Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011a), the Living Values Educational Program (LVEP) (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2004) and Gülen's writings. The six values in bold are common among the three groups (care, compassion and love are regarded as the same value). The three values in italics are common between the LVEP and Gülen's writings. Trustworthiness is a common value between Australian schools and Gülen's writings. The values in the rest of the list are not shared among these three groups and the long list of values in Gülen's writings not shared with the two other groups are not included in the table. Table 3.2 indicates many similarities among three groups about values. Seven values in Gülen's writings are the same as values promoted in Australian schools, and nine values in Gülen's writings are same as values promoted by the LVEP.

The LVEP is a values educational program practised in schools. It was initially planned in the U.S. in 1990 and was turned into printed manuals in 2001. Information about the LVEP in this section is based on an article written by Arweck and Nesbitt (2004). The program's materials are named the *Living Values Educators' Kit*. The program's ideas, methods and resources were tested as a pilot from 1997 to 1999 and the number of the sites participating reached over 800 in 74 countries by 1999. After this successful pilot phase, the program was

implemented at 1500 sites in 62 countries by 2002. In the UK, the program was implemented in more than 100 sites, mainly primary schools.

Table 3.2

Values in Australian Schools, the LVEP, and Gülen’s Vision

Values in Australian schools	LVEP	Values in Gülen’s writings
Freedom	Freedom	Freedom
Honesty	Honesty	Truthfulness
Respect	Respect	Respect
Responsibility	Responsibility	Responsibility
Tolerance	Tolerance	Tolerance
Care and compassion	Love	Love and compassion
Integrity	<i>Peace</i>	<i>Calmness</i>
Understanding and	<i>Cooperation</i>	<i>Collectiveness</i>
Inclusion	<i>Humility</i>	<i>Humbleness</i>
<u>Trustworthiness</u>	Happiness	<u>Trustworthiness</u>
Doing your best	Simplicity	Forgiveness
Fair go	Unity	Self–confidence and hope

The values emphasised in the LVEP are “Peace, Respect, Love, Tolerance, Honesty, Humility, Cooperation, Responsibility, Happiness, Freedom, Simplicity and Unity” (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2004, p. 139). Although the LVEP promotes these values, it is flexible and can accommodate individual, local or community values. The program is implemented with selected groups of students through various methods, such as talking about values, practising values, visualisation, inclusion of a *value of the month* section in school newsletter, stories, songs and games. The program is designed to help students identify values, feel them, and relate them to themselves and others. The activities about values take place in assemblies, at the beginning of lessons, in art or language lessons, in dedicated times or specifically assigned lessons. *The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* is a document developed by the Department of Education, Science and Training and endorsed by Ministers

of Education in all states of Australia since 2005 (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011a). The core Australian values are presented in Table 3.2.

Values are a difficult topic to define, teach, and practise as the same value can be interpreted differently by an Australian school, LVEP educator or Gülen–inspired teacher. The three groups agree on the importance of passing certain values to younger generations. The LVEP is more organised and structured in this regard when compared to Gülen’s values approach. Gülen leaves values unstructured and therefore creates opportunity for them to be structured according to the needs of a specific nation or culture. The next section gives more details about Gülen’s morality and values understanding.

3.1.1.2 Morality: The Greatest Capital

Morality is a complex phenomenon, the meaning of which has been argued about by philosophers. Gert and Gert (2016) argue that the term “morality” can be used:

Descriptively to refer to certain codes of conduct put forward by a society or a group (such as a religion), or accepted by an individual for her own behaviour; or

Normatively to refer to a code of conduct that, given specified conditions, would be put forward by all rational persons. (para. 2)

In descriptive morality, the society or group need to specify the codes put forward and considered as moral. Although the morality may emerge from the religion, morality and religion are different themes. The scope of religion is wider than morality. For example, morality is related mainly to conduct of a person whereas religion is related to morality, worship, historical stories, supernatural events, and information about life after death. Gülen (2005a) accepts the definition of religion by early Islamic scholars as “the divine laws that guide people to the goodness with their own will” (p. 179). In Gülen’s approach, morality and religion are strongly related and support each other. Sometimes he refers to morality as an essence of religion (1996c) and at other times he refers to faith as an essence of morality

(2002). For him, religion prepares the fundamental nature of morality in the character of a person and vice versa.

Gert and Gert (2016) further argue that “In the normative sense, ‘morality’ refers to a code of conduct that would be accepted by anyone who meets certain intellectual and volitional conditions, almost always including the condition of being rational” (para. 5). Yavuz (2003) reports that “Gülen constantly refers to a common saying of Prophet Muhammad, that ‘Islam is about good morals, and I have been sent to perfect the good character’” (p. 25). Yavuz’s remarks indicate that Gülen’s morality approach is descriptive, as Islam plays significant role in his considerations about certain codes as morality. Discussions about morality in Gülen’s writings are based on his Islamic knowledge. Examples of values that he emphasised in his writings are presented in Table 3.2.

Morality has great value in Gülen’s educational philosophy; it can be seen in almost every topic Gülen has written about concerning education. He emphasises the importance of morality when he mentions the concepts of the Golden Generation, content of education, teaching, schooling and parenting. For example, Gülen (2009) wrote “Indeed, through morality a human being climbs to unreachable summits and holds the peak of humanity that cannot be reached by any other means of worship” (p. 152).

Gülen (1997a) linked morality and spirituality when he wrote “Morality contains some sort of noble principles related to human behaviour that all originated from high spirituality” (p. 60). He (1996c) believes “Values such as truthfulness, trustfulness, rightfulness, keeping promises, self-confidence, respectfulness and commitment to spirituality are the essence of the moral and basic dynamics of the human soul” (p. 188). For him, morality is the greatest capital of a person or a nation that never loses its value (1997a). In a moral sense, Gülen emphasises virtue as a key aspect of his espoused values. For example, Gülen (1993) describes virtue as the possession of the most supreme morality and a love for the entire

existence. He considers virtue as an essence of the moral life, and happiness as an outcome and reward of virtue (1993). For Gülen (1995), nobility of the soul, good morality and virtue are the sources of happiness in a society rather than luxury and fantasy. The strong emphasis Gülen places on values and morality is evident, as his educational philosophy is value/morality-centred. The schools that are successful in academic and values education best represent Gülen's philosophy. The next section examines the position of schools in pursuing values education.

3.1.1.3 Gülen's Vision on Teaching Values

Before coming to Gülen's vision on teaching values, it is important to discuss two main arguments about values education, namely, that values education should be addressed by schools; and education should be value-neutral. There is growing support among educators for values education in schools. In the 1970s, "many education scholars began supporting so-called 'value-free' education" and "they regarded the teaching of values as inappropriate in an increasingly secularized pluralistic society" (Sutrop, 2005, p. 191). In recent years, this belief has changed with the recognition of the necessity of values education in schools. Etherington (2013), a Canadian educational philosopher, has argued that educators, parents and children are concerned about violence, social problems and the lack of social cohesion; therefore, values education programs have been produced and implemented in schools in response to these concerns. In Australia, a framework for values education was developed and has been endorsed subsequently by Ministers of Education since 2005 in all states. This document provides guidance on how to implement values education and introduces nine values for Australian schooling: care and compassion; doing your best; a fair go; freedom; honesty and trustworthiness; integrity; respect; responsibility; understanding; and tolerance and inclusion (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011a). There are similar practices of values education in the U.S. and Britain (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). These examples indicate values education is not just

promoted by educators on an individual basis, but also appears in curricula for broad implementation. This can be seen in terms of moral educational philosophy.

Madan (2010) discusses the moral education philosophy of Emile Durkheim, the significant French sociologist, in his article. Durkheim (1961) discussed moral education over one hundred years ago and his work was republished in 1961. In this work, it is suggested that an effort should be made to develop a modern moral education that is secular and not dominated by religion. Durkheim's "search for a new moral education implied a process of finding elements that were shared by all" (Madan, 2010, p. 230). An aspect of Durkheim's (1961) work was his perception that diverse cultural groups of a society should be able to coexist harmoniously without a feeling of injustice. Durkheim's emphasis on the necessity of moral education for the peaceful co-existence of diverse cultural societies is echoed by Gülen. The difference is that Durkheim argues that science discredits religion, and moral education should be provided by secular agents (Madan, 2010), whereas Gülen (2009) argues that science and religion are different facets of same truth and should work together to raise moral individuals who will form the society.

Sutrop (2015) believes values-free schooling is impossible as issues related to schooling, such as aims of education, selection of subjects, assessing learning outcomes, and praising and punishing students involve value-based judgements. Gülen's educational vision also promotes values education with the belief it can be achieved, and the Golden Generation is the best product of his value-centred educational philosophy. Thus, Gülen's views are in alignment with the scholars who believe values education is a necessity in contemporary schools.

Another important aspect of values education is training teachers about content and implementation of values education in schools. Sutrop (2015) believes "a teacher's professionalism includes being a values educator" (p. 189) and that teachers must obtain skills

to address necessary values education in classrooms. This author argues that teacher training is focussed on providing competency on teaching subjects, and that teacher training is lacking in issues such as values education and development of a whole personality. Similarly, the teacher is seen, in Gülen's (2011d) writing, as a guide and a person who glorifies the morality and character not only of students but also of the nation. Thus, for Gülen (2012a), teachers should also be trained perfectly as they are guides for the younger generation.

Gülen sees values education as necessary and achievable in schools and this is in tune with scholars such as Sutrop (2005) and Etherington (2013). Sutrop and Gülen both believe teacher training should cover skills in character education along with competency in subject teaching. For Gülen, values can be taught in schools specifically and the best method to teach values is to represent them in the school environment through the disposition of the school staff. The approach of positive education also argues that values can be taught in schools, a process that is examined in next section.

3.1.1.4 Positive Psychology and Gülen's Approach of Values Education

Studies in positive psychology are inspiring for educational practices in schools. "Positive psychology is the study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions" (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Positive psychology promotes a vision of "positive education," which is "defined as education for both traditional skills and for happiness" (Seligman et al., 2009, p. 293). According to positive education proponents, the skills to achieve happiness—wellbeing—could and should be taught for three reasons: to lessen depression, to increase happiness and to promote learning (Seligman et al., 2009). Furthermore, supporters of positive psychology claim that schools should emphasise creative thinking along with critical thinking, as it is argued that an emphasis on critical thinking alone can result in a negative mood in the classroom. Seligman et al. (2009) define happiness under three main categories to make it measurable and

teachable: positive emotion, engaged life, and a meaningful life. Based on this philosophy, they create wellbeing programs and research their implementation in schools with the result of their research indicating that wellbeing—happiness—can be taught.

In Gülen's (1998) writings there is an intensive focus on character building, morals and values. He remarks that there is no doubt that the way leading to true humanity passes through moral values and spiritual life even though some people do not recognise their value. Gable and Haidt, (2005) argues that "... psychology learned much about depression, racism, violence, self-esteem management, irrationality, and growing up under adversity but had much less to say about character strengths, virtues, and the conditions that lead to high levels of happiness or civic engagement". In this regard, Gülen's approach is in alignment with positive psychology as it aims to raise an exemplary generation by focusing on education, morality, and values.

Gülen (2005a) considers values as a source of energy and happiness for a person and this is also in alignment with positive psychology. For him, these values, such as faith, determination, passion for truth and systematic thinking, will produce positive outcomes over time, in the way trees bear fruit in the right season. Gülen (2011c) believes that the hard work in promoting and instilling human values will change the world positively.

Summarising this section on values education, Gülen's philosophy emphasises the necessity for values education; however, it does not offer a complete values program that is applicable in schools, such as the LVEP (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2004). Gülen leaves the detailed work, such as which values to teach in schools, when and how, to educators. The advantage of not providing a solid values educational program is that it creates flexibility in values education for Gülen-inspired schools that operate in many diverse cultural environments. In the Australian context, two Gülen-inspired schools address the values introduced by the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (see Table 3.2), community

values and some Gülen–inspired values. Gülen’s emphasis on values indicates values are the underpinning philosophy of Gülen–inspired schools and the culture of the school is strongly guided by his perspective on values.

3.1.2 Gülen’s Vision on Behaviour Management

This section examines Gülen’s vision on behaviour management and how his vision stands among the four main classroom management approaches summarised by Tauber (2007). Gülen emphasises the importance of behaviour management to promote an orderly life, specifically in schools and generally in life. Gülen (2010d) describes the Movement as the *disciplined people’s Movement* and, for him, the volunteers should observe order and discipline in every issue. Gülen (2010c) defines discipline as “rules and prohibitions that need to be followed so that orderliness could be achieved” and “intellectual, behavioural and spiritual education that are necessary for becoming a balanced individual” (p. 313). Gülen’s philosophy emphasises the parental contribution to the instilling of self–discipline in the character of a person through establishing a disciplined family life. In this regard, Gülen (2007a) states “It is a universal rule that discipline and cleanliness at home is hereditary, therefore it passes from the mother and father to the child” (para. 18). Self–discipline is an attribute of a believer in Gülen’s (2011g) writings; there should be order and moderation in every mood and action of a believer, and a believer should have a life accorded with rules and discipline. Gülen’s philosophy permits parents and schools to manage and direct processes to influence children’s behaviour and aims to raise self–disciplined and self–responsible individuals. Gülen’s philosophy starts with *external directed behaviour management*, where parents and schools manage the behaviour of students and ends with *internal directed behaviour management* where students develop a sense of self–responsibility and no longer need external input. Thus, it aims to achieve behaviours driven by intrinsic motives through extrinsic modes of motivation that are created by parents and school management. For Gülen

(2011b), compassion has to be a component of all Hizmet services. In Gülen's (2012a) philosophy, correcting mistakes compassionately and with care without humiliating the individual are part of behaviour management.

Gülen's (2002) vision allows schools to employ rewards and punishments to improve children's behaviour. For him, rewarding achievements is the ethic of God, and he advises parents to reward their children relatively for their achievements. He is against smacking or threatening the children as a form of punishment. He believes that, if a child needs to fear something, it should be the fear of losing the compassion of parents. The displeased expression on a parent's face should be enough to discipline a child (Gülen, 2002). Thus, there is a room for rewarding and punishing the students as a discipline strategy; however, his philosophy does not permit physical punishment. Reward and punishment would be counter to a positive self-management process. Rewards and punishments represent extrinsic modes of motivation. Obligation, responsibility and self-regulation require engagement in behaviours driven by intrinsic motives.

Tauber (2007) identifies four main classroom management approaches. First, Wolfgang and Glickman (1980) examined classroom management practices under three main categories: interventionists; noninterventionists; and interactionalists. For interventionists, environmental conditions are effective in the development of children and it is a teacher's duty to modify children's behaviour. Interventionist teachers employ rewards and punishments to modify student behaviour. Noninterventionists adopt a belief that a child's growth should be processed according to the child's capacity, not by teachers' control. Thus, a teacher's duty is to support, facilitate and motivate students. Interactionalists stand between interventionists and noninterventionists. They argue that the problem should be solved by the participation of all related parties in the decision-making process. The conflict was caused by two parties, so

should be solved with both parties sharing power equally. For Wolfgang and Glickman (1980) students are offered various choices and they are responsible for their own choices.

In the second classroom management approach, French and Raven (1960) argued that educators influence students by using five social powers. These social power categories are practised in life as well as in classrooms. Depending on the teacher's classroom management belief, some of these powers may be used more often, thus they can be used all together in different proportions. These five social powers are; coercive power, reward power, legitimate power, referent power, and expert power. In coercive power, teachers direct student behaviour, whereas, in reward power, students allow the teacher to use power over them by giving or withholding of rewards. Both powers may result in negative outcomes when the teacher is not competent about how to use them. In legitimate power, students see teachers in a position to prescribe behaviour. Referent power is probably the most powerful among the five social powers. Through referent power, students come to respect and are personally influenced by the teacher. Teachers care about students and their influence over the student goes outside the classroom. Finally, in expert power, students are influenced by knowledge of the teacher and the teacher–student relationship is professional rather than personal.

The third classroom management approach is Skinner's behaviourism (1953) and Rogers' (1953) humanism. In Skinner's behaviourist approach, the teacher is responsible for creating an environment that consists of consequences and conditions to modify students' behaviour. Thus, the teacher influences students' behaviour by establishing a certain classroom environment. In this approach, rewarding students is used to a greater extent than punishment to teach them the desired behaviour. Skinner's (1953) approach is in alignment with Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980) interventionist approach. In Rogers' (1953) approach to classroom management, teachers help students to help themselves actualise self-discipline. In this view, it is assumed that it is natural for human beings to desire to develop in a positive

and constructive manner. Thus, a teacher's duty is to facilitate students' growth in accordance with their natural goodness. A teacher shares their power with the students and facilitates the establishment of an environment that empowers students to develop according to their abilities. Roger's approach is in alignment with Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980) noninterventionist approach.

The fourth classroom management approach is discussed by Lewis (2004). Lewis (2004) argues there is a relationship between student responsibility and classroom discipline. He encourages teachers to discuss misbehaviour with students, involve them in decision-making, mention students' misbehaviour, recognise their good behaviour, and not to be punishment-oriented in order to increase students' responsibility in the classroom. This strategy is helpful in decreasing misbehaviour and increasing students' responsibility in classrooms.

Gülen's philosophy does not promote a particular behaviour management theory; however, his philosophy contains similar elements to Skinner's (1953) behaviourist approach. His philosophy permits reward and punishment strategies to modify behaviours in order to achieve orderliness in life and to develop self-discipline. Gülen's vision regarding discipline-behaviour management-needs more study to transform it into a classroom management strategy. Holistic education—intellectual, behavioural and spiritual, orderly family life, school/parents' cooperation, balanced compassion where misbehaviour is not ignored and the problem is solved without dishonouring the person, and the use mostly of rewards and non-physical punishments would be the main components of a classroom management strategy, according to Gülen's vision.

Gülen's vision offers schools a behaviour management system to develop desired behaviour patterns of students, and aims to raise self-disciplined and self-responsible individuals. This system has mainly rewards and fewer punishment strategies. For best results

in behaviour management at school and home, the school and parents should work together. The next section examines the relationship between the environment and education, and their contribution to the school's culture.

3.1.3 Environmental Factors in Education

This section examines the relationship between the environment, both physical and social, and education in Gülen's philosophy; the role of the environment in emerging and developing character and individual abilities; and the contribution of the environment to education, school culture and human civilisation.

In Gülen's (2011b) vision, human beings need a sound environment to discover and develop effectively the vast potential they have, "just like a seed that finds the right soil" (p. 151). From a broad perspective, a sound environment is cooperation among family, school, religious bodies, media and government agencies to raise the desired character, which is named the Golden Generation by Gülen. He emphasises the importance of home, street—environment, school and mosque—place of worship (Gülen, 2000b; Gülen, 2011c; Gülen, 2012a) for the education of generations. These factors have a significant effect on the education and character development of individuals. Dewey (1916) has similar thoughts about "educative or formative influence" of the social environment on a person "unconsciously and apart from any set purpose" (p. 25).

In Gülen's (2005a) view, individual abilities and qualities emerge in suitable environments, and a gifted individual who has not found a suitable environment is destined to be wasted. The environment is one of the most significant educational factors to ensure a better future together with "the love of knowledge, determination of study and methodology" (Gülen, 2005a, p. 31). The essence of this view is also represented in Dewey's (1916) work.

Dewey (1916) argues that beliefs and attitudes are formed by “the particular medium in which an individual exists” (p. 18). Gülen also emphasises that the environment plays a key role in the character development of a person, and their values and morality are mostly formed according to the cultural and social environment in which they live. “As today’s generation carry the signs and colours of religious, patriotic and social atmosphere which they have nurtured and developed in, the generation of tomorrow will express themselves with the characteristics of the social environment of today” (Gülen, 2008a, p. 133).

Gülen (2005a) argues that inventors, gifted and talented individuals who contribute significantly to the civilisation of humanity, were raised in suitable environments. There is a reciprocal relationship between culture and environment, and for Gülen, they are both important contributors in the education of an individual. For Gülen (1993), “Customs, traditions and influence of local and distant environments play an imperative role in the education of human beings” (p. 118).

For Gülen, the environment is strongly related to the education and character development of an individual and society together with culture. Co-operation among parents, the environment, educators, religious authorities and any other related parties (such as media) is needed for the education of a Golden Generation. Thus, the education of the young generations involves team work and a wider educational team including the environment, parents, tradesmen, media members and so on, even if they are not aware of their contribution. The physical environment of a school carries elements of culture and contributes to the education of students, which is examined in the next section.

3.1.3.1 Physical Environment of a School

This section explores Gülen’s vision about the physical environment of schools. Research extending back to the 1970s has shown that a range of aspects of a school’s physical environment can affect student learning (e.g., Weinstein, 1979). The research conducted by

Blackmore, Bateman, Loughlin, O'Mara, and Aranda (2011) was about relationships between built learning spaces and student outcomes. They suggest there is insufficient literature available on the relationship between learning space and learning outcomes; much of the literature deals with conditions and quality of space and is not focussed on how the space is perceived and used effectively by students and teachers.

Gülen's (2012a) educational vision encourages consideration of local traditions and culture during the establishment of a school's physical environment. Thus, the environment of each Gülen-inspired school differs in accordance with the local conditions and building standards in which they are established, and the school's financial resources. Parents' expectations, the nature of student bodies, local regulations, inspiration from senior Gülen-inspired schools and the school's financial strength are important factors in forming the school environment.

Although the schools are inspired by an Islamic scholar and established by Muslims, they are not Islamic schools and the religious affiliation is not overtly visible in the school environment. However, some religious elements may occur within the school buildings when there is demand from the local community, such as halal food, prayer rooms and ablution facilities. For example, Michel (2003) visited several Gülen-inspired schools in Zamboanga in the Philippines and Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia, but found no explicit Islamic content in the curriculum or symbolism in the physical environment. Thus, the physical environment, while accommodating diverse ethnic and religious groups, does not explicitly promote symbols and icons of a faith-based nature.

The schools are also keen to have a student dormitory to extend learning/teaching time. The schools contain standard spaces as in any other school, such as administration offices, classrooms, a library, laboratories and a gymnasium. They may also have special purpose

rooms depending on the student body of the school, such as for music, chess, food technology and so on. Multipurpose rooms may be used for pastoral care services.

The school community expects high academic achievements from school students and values education is emphasised in Gülen’s vision. Thus, the school environment should encourage academic achievements and values education. The school environment may have elements that welcome multiculturalism, which is addressed below.

3.1.4 Multiculturalism

Gülen-inspired schools—Star Boys and Castle College to be discussed later in Chapters Five and Six—assert that they do not serve a specific community, but are open to diverse ethnic and religious groups and committed to the formation of a non-denominational school. According to Michel’s (2003) observations, Christian and Muslim students in Zamboanga, and Buddhist and Hindu students in Kyrgyzstan receive education in the same classrooms. Employment of teaching and non-teaching staff also reflects multiculturalism. Ebaugh (2010) reports that many principals and teachers are Hizmet followers; however, there are also teachers who have never heard of Gülen. The two Gülen-inspired schools studied in this thesis do not advertise themselves as such: thus, they do not require staff *to be familiar with Gülen’s philosophy* as an employment criterion.

For the Australian Government, “multicultural is simply a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia” (Department of Social Services, 2014, para. 1). The department’s website (2014, para. 1) states “We are, and will remain, a multicultural society,” and reports three dimensions of the Commonwealth Government multicultural policy:

- Cultural identity: the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion.

- Social justice: the right of all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth.
- Economic efficiency: the need to maintain, develop and use effectively the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of background. (Department of Social Services, 2014, para. 3)

Gülen's (1996a) teachings such as *to be open for all* and *to have concern for the wellbeing of everybody* encourage the idea of multiculturalism. The name of the Movement, which is Hizmet [service], also indicates *servicing humanity* is one of its main characteristics and thus supports multiculturalism. To be open for everybody is one of the cultural elements of Gülen-inspired schools. Therefore, Gülen's and the Gülen-inspired schools' philosophy that are the subject of this study are in accordance with the Australian Government's multicultural policy. The next section examines the stand on religious education taken by Gülen-inspired schools.

3.1.5 Religious Education

Gülen-inspired schools emphasise morality and teach elementary religious knowledge as a subject where local regulations and curriculum allow. Teaching religion is not a primary goal of Gülen's philosophy which is mostly concerned with raising exemplary moral character.

In the context of Australian education, individual states legislate religious education in government schools. For example, the Special Religious Instruction (SRI) policy was introduced in Victoria in 2016 (Victoria State Government, 2017). This policy mentions that education in government schools must be secular and "not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect" (para. 3) according to the Education and Training Reform Act (Victoria State Government, 2017). However, this policy allows recognition of important religious days, such as Christmas, Eid al-Adha or Hanukkah and related educational

activities. The SRI policy also allows non-compulsory special religious instruction that meets the requirements of the Victorian State Government. The content of the program must be examined by the school principal. However, approximately 40% of Australian children attend non-state schools (Independent Schools Council of Australia, 2016), many of which are affiliated with specific religious organisations, and are committed to teaching religion either as a formal state-accredited subject, such as *Studies of Religion*, or as doctrine-based subjects aligned to their affiliation.

Gülen's philosophy encourages religious education; however, it does not insist upon it. In some cases, religious subjects focussed on doctrine are not taught in Gülen-inspired schools at all. The issue of whether to teach religion is mostly decided by the school's governing body, depending on local regulations and parents' expectations. For Agai (2003), Gülen-inspired schools emphasise values education as a unifying element and common ground among diverse communities; "... they do not teach religion, even though religious faith is a primary motive for their creation. Rather, they stress the teaching of ethics [*ahlak*] ..." (pp. 48–49). Teaching ethics is a significant component of school culture and it mostly occurs through representation—role modelling.

3.1.6 Single-sex Education

Gülen believes single-sex education is better for the objectives of education and there is no evidence for the belief that co-education is a necessity in modern education (Section 2.3.3). Islamic culture could affect Gülen's preference for single-sex education over co-education. Consequently, Gülen-inspired schools are likely to prefer single-sex education over co-education in high schools where conditions and regulations permit. However, Gülen-inspired schools provide co-education in primary schools.

3.1.7 Hidden Curriculum

The term *hidden curriculum* was initially used by some writers in the 1960s to indicate that the schools had aspects of their curriculum that was not clearly obvious along with the explicit curriculum; that is, to instil certain values and characters such as respecting authority and developing a sense of competition with others (Harris & White, 2013). Boostrom (2010) argues “The term hidden curriculum has been used in two quite different ways in curriculum studies” (p. 440). First, it can be considered as “student learning that is not described by curriculum planners or teachers as an explicit aim of instruction even though it results from deliberate practices and organizational structures” (p. 440). According to this view, students learn from classroom experience and environment “how to live in a crowd of other students, how to gain praise from the teacher, and how to respond to the authority of the teacher and the institution” (p. 440). The second usage of the term concerns “knowledge students ought to acquire, but do not, because it is not part of the official curriculum” (p. 440). Boostrom claims “hidden curriculum” has been turned into “hidden agenda,” which contains “a set of deliberate practices with intentional, and largely detrimental, outcomes” (p. 441).

Hidden curriculum is inevitable when it is considered that learning occurs in a classroom/ school environment influenced by the culture of the institution and beliefs of the teacher. The term, especially in the sense of a hidden agenda, can potentially cause concern if the content is not welcomed by parents or the larger community. The outcome of education is the best way to measure if hidden curriculum works for the benefit of students and community, if it is in a line with cultural/national values or turned into a hidden agenda and produces unfavourable results.

Gülen–inspired schools have a hidden curriculum in the sense of school culture that affects the outcome of education and is not explicitly written in formal documents. Role modelling, which is encouraged by Gülen and examined in the next section, could be

considered part of the hidden curriculum as school staff and senior students set an example for junior students sometimes without knowledge or intent. The institutional culture should be reflected in the contribution of all staff, students, parents, and local and Turkish Anatolian culture, as fostered by Gülen’s inspiration. Therefore, as per local culture and the school community, the hidden curriculum might differ from one Gülen–inspired school to another.

3.1.8 Role Modelling as a Contribution to School Culture

One of the characteristics of Gülen’s philosophy, and hence also predictably a characteristic of the Gülen–inspired school culture, is teaching through role modelling. Gülen (2012c) believes there is no problem that cannot be solved by disposition. The term disposition refers to role modelling through attitude and personality. One of the attributes of “the spirits who dedicated to the truth” (p. 36) is to make knowledge and thoughts meaningful with representation—role modelling—and to work hard to guide who follows and imitates them to achieve high humanitarian values (Gülen, 2011c). He (2011c) also argues that oratory is insignificant compared to disposition, and when there is performance [*temsil*] there is no need for preaching [*tabligh*].

Yücel (2011) remarks “In his [Gülen’s] philosophy, representation comes before communication or tabligh” (p. 65). In Gülen’s philosophy, knowledge transformed into representation—attitude or personality—is a very effective educational method to be employed in realising the objectives of education. Knowledge, morality and values–based representation of staff, specifically teachers, also contributes significantly to the formation of school culture. Aslandoğan and Çetin (2007) assert that “An important principle of Gülen’s educational philosophy was representation” (p. 41). The values–based Hizmet Movement encourages its followers to adhere to morality in all respects of their lives. Ozdalga (2003) reports that the Movement prefers, “being a good example through one’s deeds (*temsil*)” over “open declaration through preaching (*tabligh*)” (p. 86).

Gülen's philosophy of teaching through modelling is advocated for schools, specifically in moral and values education. Ebaugh (2010) claims that "Without the commitment of Gülen-inspired teachers who view their work as religious service, these quality schools would not exist" (p. 30). Therefore, the individual staff member's personality and behaviour becomes a priority alongside their experience and knowledge of the profession. Ebaugh (2010) remarks, "The teachers in the schools are specially selected and trained in the notion of *temsil* or representation" (p. 98).

Representation based on knowledge and morality is adopted as an educational method in Gülen's philosophy. Knowledge without exemplary disposition and disposition without knowledge have less to offer for educational purposes; the best result is obtained in combination in Gülen's philosophy.

3.1.9 Summary of School Culture

School culture focuses on the dominant beliefs, norms and expectations of the school management and community. Values education is one of the major components of Gülen-inspired school culture. Gülen's educational vision is value-centred and requires values education in family and schools. Gülen's writings contain rich value/morality themes and, for him, true humanity can be realised and perfected through values. Gülen advocates the necessity of values education in schools, in line with scholars such as Sutrop (2005) and Etherington (2013). He agrees with Sutrop about the necessity of training role model teachers who are competent in subject teaching and values education.

Gülen's approach aligns with positive psychology in values education—if not in behaviour management—when he argues that individuals and communities can flourish with morality and values. No formal values educational program has been developed and practised in Gülen-inspired schools, as in LVEP. Gülen's writings are inspirational and detailed work about values education should be processed by Gülen-inspired institutions. Gülen's

philosophy does not promote a certain behaviour management theory; however, his philosophy contains similar elements with Skinner's (1953) behaviourist approach. Parents and schools should instil discipline in the character of children by establishing an environment that encourages an orderly life and contains balanced compassion, rewarding and punishing.

The school environment, both social and physical, is a part of the school culture and is strongly related to the academic and values education of students. The abilities of an individual flourish best in a sound environment that includes school, home, street, religious bodies, media and government agencies. Multiculturalism is welcomed in Gülen-inspired schools as part of the school culture, as Gülen's vision inspires to serve humanity, regardless of ethnicity or cultural differences. Religious education is not a main part of the school culture; however, basic religious education is provided where parents' demand is present. Gülen-inspired schools prefer co-education in primary schools and single-sex education in high schools where conditions permit.

The hidden curriculum is acknowledged and addresses learning from the classroom environment and school culture that is not stated in school curriculum documents. The hidden curriculum and role models adopted by staff contribute to the educational outcomes of all students. For Gülen, representation (role modelling) and disposition based on knowledge and morality are effective teaching methods, specifically in values education. The next section examines the concept of the school climate as a second attribute that defines a school.

3.2 School Climate

Substantial research has explored the concept of school climate and these studies suggest that there is a connection between school climate and student accomplishments (Rich & Schachter, 2012). The findings of the research conducted by Kuperminc, Leadbetter, and

Blatt (2001) indicate that the positive school climate contributes “to prevent maladjustment in young adolescents” (p. 156). Keiser and Schulte (2009) have defined school climate in general as being “created through the combined culture of the adults and students within a school – both the culture they share as an organization and the diverse cultures they bring from home” (p. 45). Climate may represent how people’s values are expressed in the day-to-day operations of schools (Payne, 2000). Others have focussed on the interactions that occur within a school. For example, Haynes, Emmons and Ben–Avie (1997) consider “the quality and consistency of interpersonal interactions within the school community that influences children's cognitive, social, and psychological development” (p. 322) as being a critical attribute of school climate. The notion of climate has been extended to consider dimensions of ethics. According to Zehava and Peled (2002), the willingness of parents to become involved in school life is predicated on the school’s ethical climate. Schools have adopted practices such as pastoral care to establish positive relationships that address students’ social, emotional and moral wellbeing (Hearn, Campbell–Pope, House & Cross, 2006). The teacher–student relationship is as important as pastoral care services in the wellbeing of the students.

The exploration of school climate will be presented in the following subsections: Gülen’s ideas on school leadership in context with other philosophers in Section 3.2.1; teacher: holy master with respect to roles and qualities of teachers in Section 3.2.2; pastoral care: semi–formal subject matter in Section 3.2.3; and school and parents’ cooperation in Section 3.2.4.

3.2.1 School Leadership

Leadership plays a key role in the establishment of school climate as it is strongly related to the culture of the adults and students, interpersonal interactions, and values of people that are reflected in school environment. Leadership also contributes to improve student engagement and outcomes and provide vocational options and skills.

From the perspective of Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004), the main aim of contemporary school reforms is to improve teaching and learning in schools. They argued that there are many different theories and methods to achieve this aim; however, the success of all these various approaches depends on qualities, enthusiasm, and cooperation of local school leadership. Thus, for Leithwood et al., the success of school reforms is strongly related to the successful leadership and the leadership is an important factor in students' learning after classroom teaching.

Leadership is one of the important issues for the success of a school and positive learning outcomes. Bush and Glover (2014) claim that leadership is the second most important aspect in students' learning after classroom teaching. Gülen (2002) argues the leader is the spring—core—of the system and represents order in the institution they manage. Deviation or integrity in the leader will reflect directly on the system and staff for which they are responsible. For Gülen (2009), there is no distinction between the ruler and ruled, and he considers upper and lower levels in society as a component of a whole, one within the other. Social order is not based on one's superiority over the other, but on awareness of responsibilities. Within school leadership, the following topics will be discussed: school leadership models; and qualities of successful school leaders.

3.2.1.1 School Leadership Models

There are many school leadership models, some of which Bush and Glover (2014) review in their article, namely, Instructional Leadership, Managerial Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Moral and Authentic Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Teacher Leadership, System Leadership, and Contingent Leadership. Among these leadership models, Gülen's vision is more compatible with the models, Transformational Leadership, Moral and Authentic Leadership, System Leadership, and Contingent Leadership. The brief explanation of these four leadership models according to Bush and Glover is given below.

Transformational Leadership is concerned with increasing commitment and capacities of organisational members for accomplishing organisational goals. Moral and Authentic Leadership is focussed on values, belief and ethics of leaders, and leaders develop and support values-based goals of an institution with their personal and professional values. System Leadership is important where there are federations, networks and executive headship. It creates clear leadership opportunities for school groups as principals learn from one another and struggling schools are helped by the seconding of high performing principals for a certain period. Contingent Leadership is adapting leadership models according to the diverse nature of the situation or schools instead of applying one model of leadership for all situations and schools. Gülen's writings do not offer specific leadership models, instead they focus on the qualities of an ideal leader.

3.2.1.2 Qualities of Successful School Leaders

Gurr (2015) has examined successful school leadership by analysing the findings from the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP). The project, since 2001, has been studying the work of successful principals in eight countries: Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, England, Norway, Sweden and U.S. Data have been collected through interviews, document analysis and observation of principals' work.

Gurr (2015) summarises 11 elements for successful school leadership: demonstration of reasonable high expectation; pragmatic approaches; leadership distribution; core leadership practices (in four main areas: setting direction; developing people; leading change; and improving teaching and learning); heroic leadership; capacity development of students and staff; trust and respect; continuous learning; personal resources such as personal qualities and values; context sensitivity to adjust responses according to context and culture; and sustaining success.

Table 3.3 presents an alignment of the attributes of the leader according to Gülen and qualities of successful school leaders as described by Gurr (2015). The similarities between

Table 3.3

Qualities of Successful School Leaders

Gülen	Gurr (2015)
Servant leader (2012a)	Acumen
Giving importance to team work (2011b), building warm environment	Collaborative
Caring (2012a)	Strong ethic of care
Compassionate (2012a), affectionate (2009), has a smiling face (2009) and wins hearts (2012a)	Benevolence
Discipline (2011b)	Optimism and humbleness
Just (2009)	Curiosity and fairness
Respectful , dignified and serious (2009)	Respectful and resilience
Self-questioning (2012a) and practising accountability (2009)	Managing accountability expectations
“Success belongs us and failure belongs me” attitude (2009)	Empathy and tolerance
Correcting mistakes without humiliating (2012a)	Believe in freedom and democracy
Capable teacher and passionate learner	Continuing professional learning
Trustworthy and honest (2009)	Trust and honesty
Accomplished and successful (2009)	Use of strategic problem solving
Determined and steadfast (1997b)	Persistence
Experienced (1997b) and virtuous (2009)	Good at balancing individual versus collective care, and so forth.
Devoted, responsible and self-sacrificing (2009)	Value individuality
Shows prophet-like effort (2009)	Commitment to making a difference
Careful, cautious and sincere (2009)	Alertness and openness
Transparent (2009)	Engaging the school and wider community
Appreciated and respected (2009)	Using transformational and instructional leadership practices
Dutiful and hardworking (2009)	Courage
Altruistic and expect nothing in return for service (2009)	
Source of hope, supportive and encouraging, courageous , patient and firm (2009)	

the two authors are in bold, with almost half of the qualities mentioned by Gülen and Gurr being similar. Some qualities mentioned by Gurr, such as humbleness, tolerance, and

engaging the school and wider community, are further attuned to Gülen's philosophy. Leaders can be in different leadership models as explained before, however this table suggests that according to Gülen and Gurr, these qualities play a crucial role in the success of the leaders. According to Gülen (2012a), a leader should be a servant leader; he or she should join people in service. A leader should not have a domineering and compulsive attitude. Seniority should be utilized as an advantage to dominate and oppress the staff (Gülen, 2018). Duties that need to be fulfilled must first be undertaken by the leader before encouraging others to provide services. For Gülen (2011b), a leader should establish positive team spirit among the staff. He believes that a leader should not underestimate the views and thoughts of his or her colleagues, should acknowledge their efforts, and should encourage them. A leader dignifies staff members, accelerate their enthusiasm, give them hope, and divide responsibilities according to limitations and abilities of the staff (Gülen, 2018).

Gülen (2011b) asserts that a true leader does not walk alone, but travels together with the people they are in charge of by using their abilities, and takes them in the direction of achieving certain objectives. For Gülen (2009), an ideal leader has to possess an ability to create a familial, warm environment and strong bonds in the school and among the school community. A leader should be caring, affectionate and compassionate towards those who serve under their authority. A leader should be their partner and supporter in their hardships, and should interact with them continually to share their problems and concerns (Gülen, 2012a). This requires a compassionate leadership approach.

Compassion is one of the essential values encouraged by Gülen and it should be a component of all qualities in the Hizmet Movement. Gülen (2011b) remarks that "Indeed, one of the most important essences of our profession is compassion: compassion next to discipline; compassion next to work ethics; compassion next to orderly life..." (p. 201). The importance of balanced compassion is also emphasised by Gülen, as sometimes compassion

can work against the correction of mistakes and the taking of necessary precautions. Thus, compassion should not result in inadequate work ethics or lack of discipline.

According to Gülen (2011b), having a strong work ethic and being disciplined in action is very important for an ideal leadership. For him (2009), the ideal leader should also have opposite qualities in a balanced way. For example, often it will be necessary to be disciplined and compassionate at the same time; “The leader is compassionate when he or she is just and when he or she flows with compassion he or she is upright” (p. 190). A leader is a person who should question and bring themselves to account on a regular basis (Gülen, 2012a). In Gülen’s (2009) philosophy, the leader should praise staff for achievements and should blame only themselves for failures. Gülen (2018) considers failure of the staff as failure of the leader.

Gülen (2018) emphasizes a leader must be sensitive in human relations human relations that are based on Quranic morality, affection and gentleness. A leader should carefully correct and guide a person to prevent possible humiliation. For Gülen (2012a, 2018), when correcting mistakes, a wrong should not be left as a wrong, hence it should be corrected but without offending the person who made the mistake. According to Gülen (2009), a leader should be a passionate learner, a capable teacher, and a trustworthy, honest, accomplished and successful individual.

Gülen (1997b) believes “a leadership team should become experienced through self-supervision, belief in the cause [*dava*] and restless thoughts, and reach the peak through the process of natural elevation similar to producing cream by boiling milk” (p. 51). A leader should be promoted to this position after a long period of experience.

Gülen’s (2009) vision promotes values-based leadership; for him, a leader is a person of morality and virtue. Further qualities of a leader, according to Gülen (2009) are that a leader is: transparent, appreciated and respected, dutiful and hardworking, altruistic, not

expecting rewards for achievements, a source of hope, supportive and encouraging, courageous, and having patience and firmness. Gülen did not prefer one gender over the other in his leadership discussions, rather, he focussed on qualities of leadership. Thus, anyone who possessed these qualities could be good leaders regardless of gender.

Gülen's inspirations and Gurr (2015) are in tune with the findings of the ISSPP and Gülen's writings focus on qualities of leadership rather than practices. Gülen's writings provide general qualities of a leader and these can be adapted in many diverse types of leadership, including for schools.

3.2.2 Teacher: Holy Master

Gülen considers teachers as leaders and this section examines Gülen's thoughts about a teacher's status in education and attributes in context with Hattie's (2012) views.

Teachers are the crucial actors in education and they are an "army of light" (Gülen, 1997b, p. 100) that fights against the darkness of ignorance. For Gülen (2000a), a person may learn from many different factors, but none of them can replace the teacher. Gülen (2000a) believes teachers have a significant influence on shaping individuals, parents and the community. Wood (2011) also emphasises the effect of teachers in transforming the society. For Gülen (2000a), the teacher's influence can be found in every stage of life and the teacher is the holy master who shapes the entire life from birth to death. Hattie (2012) considers teachers as "the major players in the education process" (p. 22) and "among the most powerful influences in learning" (p. 19). Thus, for Gülen and Hattie, teachers are one of the most important contributors to the educational process.

Gülen discusses some qualities of teachers in his writings, and he names the teachers who have these qualities as *real teacher* or *genuine teacher*. Hattie (2012) also uses the terms such as *powerful*, *passionate*, *accomplished teacher*, *expert teacher* and *experienced teacher*

in his research on visible learning. The attributes of a real teacher according to Gülen and how his thoughts align with Hattie’s vision will be examined systematically through Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Attributes of a Real Teacher According to Gülen

Being dedicated, enthusiastic and energetic (1993)
Being compassionate and earnest (2010a)
Teaching clearly understood knowledge to the students (2000a)
Endearing book and school (2000a) and following students step by step (1993)
Making students familiar with the high purposes of knowledge (2000a)
Giving aims and high ideals to students (2000a)
Teaching students every aspect of life, guiding them (2000a), and elevating them to true humanity (1993)
Developing every student positively (2000a), giving wings to the soul (1993)
Strengthening (2000a) and enlightening (1993) the students’ heart
Showing the truth through the lens of science, teaching the truth, and setting the thinking to the truth (1993)
Achieving the truth in his/her own spirit then delivering inspirations to students (1993)
Comprehending the triangulation between entities and events (2000a)
Establishing a relationship between life and conscience (2000a)
Integrating students with the universe (2000a)

For Gülen, to be dedicated to guiding and teaching, to be enthusiastic about elevating students to true humanity, to be energetic (Gülen, 1993), and to be compassionate and earnest in a balanced way (Gülen, 2010a) are among the attributes of a real teacher. For Hattie (2012), some attributes of teachers are “directive, influential, caring, and actively and passionately engaged in the process of teaching and learning” (p. 19), to have high respect for students, to show passion for the success of students, and to demonstrate care and commitment.

An ability to teach (Gülen, 2000a) is an important quality of a teacher. The teacher should be able to convey to the students the knowledge and skills outlined by the curriculum by employing various pedagogical methods. In Hattie's (2012) similar approach, a "powerful, passionate, accomplished teacher" should also "focus on imparting new knowledge and understanding, and then monitor how students gain fluency and appreciation in this new knowledge" (p. 19). Gülen argues that the knowledge provided to students should be understood and not cause conflict or confusion.

In Gülen's (2000a) view, "to endear book and school, and make people familiar with the high purposes of knowledge" (p. 80) are among the duties of teachers. Education will be enjoyable when students love the book, teacher and learning. For Hattie (2012), an expert teacher has an ability to create the best learning environment, where there is trust, where admission of errors is welcomed, where learning is cool, and where teachers are involved with students in the process of learning. Gülen's real teacher follows students step by step (Gülen, 1993), and teachers should observe the academic and moral development of students, giving necessary support accordingly. Hattie's (2012) expert teachers also monitor students' progress of learning according to success criteria and provide feedback to students.

Giving aims to students and equipping them with lofty ideals (Gülen, 2000a) are among the qualities of real teachers. Aims and ideals may differ from one subject/teacher to another; teachers set aims and lofty ideals according to the subject. Serving humanity without any expectation (Gülen, 2000b), embracing everything with compassion (Gülen, 2000b), and accepting everyone in their otherness (Gülen, 2012b) are some examples of lofty ideals mentioned in Gülen's writings. Hattie (2012) also believes the expert teacher must set challenging goals, rather than those that advise students *do your best*, to ensure students achieve better outcomes.

A real teacher sows the pure seed and preserves it, and in the teacher's mystic hand, the crudest and most worthless things become invaluable diamonds (Gülen, 2000a). Just as a seed turns into a complete tree/plant in the hands of a good farmer, student turns into a perfect human being in the hands of a real teacher. Thus, real teachers develop all students positively according to their interests and abilities. Hattie (2012) expresses a similar view in his statement, "Expert teachers believe that all students can reach the success criteria" (p. 26). For Hattie, an expert teacher should believe intelligence is not fixed, but changeable (e.g., a growth mindset), should have respect for students as learners, show passion for the success of the students, and demonstrate care and commitment to ensure all students reach the agreed success criteria. Therefore, Gülen's real teacher and Hattie's expert teacher develop all students positively at least to a minimum level of success criteria.

Gülen argues that the teacher educates students about every aspect of life, guides them in their life (2000a) and elevates them to true humanity in every stage of life (1993). Hattie's (2012) analysis contains a similar approach, as in "expert teachers influence surface and deep student outcomes ..., such outcomes are not confined to test scores, but cover a wide range" (p. 27). This outcome covers "students developing into citizens who have challenging minds and the disposition to become active, competent, and thoughtfully critical participants in our complex world" (Hattie, 2012, p. 27). The Gülen's real teacher and Hattie's expert teacher must have an ability to prepare students for their future life. Strengthening (Gülen, 2000a) and enlightening (Gülen, 1993) the student's heart, and giving wings to their soul are among the responsibility of a teacher in Gülen's vision.

Teachers should personally obtain the truth, ignite their heart with the truth, and then inspire the truth into the hearts of students (Gülen, 1993). Guiding students to the truth through science, teaching the truth, and setting thinking to truth are among the responsibilities of teachers in Gülen's (1993) philosophy. The term, *setting thinking to the truth* could be

interpreted as to improve reasoning in order to seek and find truth through the complexity of life. Hattie (2012) also sees “developing a way of thinking and reasoning that emphasizes problem–solving” (p. 19) as an attribute of a “powerful, passionate, and accomplished teacher.”

Real teachers translate the meaning of entities and events to students, establish a connection between life and conscience, and integrate students with the universe through the enlightenment of their soul (Gülen, 2000a). Thus, real teachers help learners to be harmonious members of the wider surroundings, which also could be interpreted as being able to develop a sense of connectedness with their class and school.

Hattie’s approach is clearly structured and ready for practice for the teachers who wanted to be a “powerful, passionate, accomplished, experienced, or expert” teacher. Gülen’s thoughts inspire the transformation of the teacher into a real teacher. Teachers are the most important fundamental of Gülen–inspired schools. Thus, transforming the teacher into a real teacher should be a crucial issue in Gülen–inspired schools. For Gülen and Hattie, teachers should possess an adequate level of training and spirituality in order to perform their roles perfectly. However, a significant difference between Gülen and Hattie is that Gülen often emphasises moral development, whereas Hattie does not emphasise the moral development of the student as the teacher’s duty.

3.2.3 Pastoral Care: Semi–formal Subject Matter

Pastoral care is concerned with the physical and spiritual wellbeing of people. From the school perspective, for Hammond, a head teacher and author, and Kirkland, a teacher and school counsellor, pastoral care is “a system of welfare and guidance for all pupils and staff and other people involved in school life” (Hammond & Kirkland, 2012, p. 42). Pastoral care includes “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils” (p. 42) and along with “caring, nurturing, guiding, counselling and protecting” (p. 42), behaviour and discipline are

also important issues of pastoral care. Effective pastoral care needs to be carefully thought about, planned, monitored and evaluated, and more importantly “it needs to become part of the school culture” (p. 55). Charlton and David (2012) suggests six pastoral care approaches: “welfare and liaison, health and medical services, life crises and counselling, managing behaviour, bullying, and starting secondary school” (p. i).

Along the same line, Gülen’s writings refer to pastoral care issues using the terms guidance [*rehberlik*] and guide [*rehber*]. For him, a training guide is an important issue and some of the qualities the guide should possess are: to be known by the community to have a good reputation and trusted (Gülen, 2010b); perfectly educated and equipped; able to read contemporary acquisitions very well and reach new findings and analysis; able to examine existence and occurrences from a broad perspective; able to solve different problems of diverse cultures with knowledge and experience (Gülen, 2012a); and to be a grown—experienced—person who achieves the truth initially in their own spirit, then delivers the sparks of inspiration to students’ hearts (Gülen, 1993). According to Gülen, guidance principles and strategies should be adopted in accordance with the understanding and emotions of the people—students—to whom these services are offered (Gülen, 2010b). He also advocates that guidance should be primarily in accordance with the local cultural environment neither according to Turkish culture nor the culture of the guide (Gülen, 2012a).

Gülen’s approach to pastoral care is in alignment with pastoral care that is concerned with the “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils” (Hammond & Kirkland, 2012, p. 42). Gülen’s main aim of pastoral care is to raise exemplary characters; thus, his thoughts related to pastoral care could be classified as *welfare and liaison* and *managing behaviour* among the six categories of pastoral care mentioned by Charlton and David (2012). Pastoral care services strengthen the relationship among pastoral care staff, participant students and parents, as a significant amount of interaction occurs during activities; thus, they

contribute positively to the school climate. Voluntary-based and optional pastoral care services are a crucial part of Gülen's educational philosophy that contributes to the character development and values education of the learners.

3.2.4 School and Parents Co-operation

For Gülen (2002), the home should function like a school and place of worship, which means the academic and values education of a child should be addressed by parents. Unal (2002) asserted that, according to Gülen, parents' responsibility doubles when a child reaches school age. To fulfil their responsibility, parents should establish a sound and ongoing relationship with the school. Carroll (2007) says "Gülen's educational vision involves not only schools, but also families, communities, and media. All major components of society must be aligned in the work of educating the youth in all beneficial knowledge" (p. 74). Zehava and Peled (2002) point out the relationship between parents' involvement in school life and school climate. A school climate that includes healthy school-parents' relationships contributes positively to the educational outcomes of students.

Gülen's educational philosophy has placed special emphasis on the role of parents as educators. He notes that parents are the first educators of the child (Gülen, 2002) and their role is as important as the school's (Gülen, 1997b) in educating the Golden Generation (2002). For him, home—the parents—is the first element for excellent education of children, the school is second, the circle of friends is third, and study mates are fourth (Gülen, 2002).

Parents' partnership with the school is crucial in Gülen's philosophy to achieve the best educational results. Soltes (2013) reported Gülen's vision in this regard as "the process of shaping young minds is a partnership between the family and the school—and presumably, if the family falls short, it will fall to the school, fashioned along Gülen-inspired lines, to pick up the slack" (p. 108). The Department of Education and Training (2017b) also positions families as partners in learning. The department encourages school leaders to develop

strategies for establishing school–family partnerships beyond the traditional school–parent relationship through consultation with staff and families. Thus, Gülen’s educational philosophy about school–parent partnership is consistent with Australian government policy.

The importance given to the role of parents in the education of children raises the issue of their qualification in carrying out this crucial duty. Ongoing personal development is needed in the area of education for parenting, and the issue of educating children should be taken into consideration starting from the early days of marriage.

3.2.4.1 The Unique Role of Parents in a Child’s Education

In Gülen’s philosophy, parents have a unique role in raising the ideal next generation. Gülen devoted one of his books, *From a Seed to a Cedar Tree: Another Perspective of Family Education*, to this teaching. For Gülen (2002), the home is the first school in education and training, and parents are the first educators of their children. Furthermore, Gülen (2009) associates the family with a well–organised state on a small scale. Thus, elements (such as funds, skills, planning, education and training) that are needed to run a state are also necessary to run a family. Gülen (2009) adds “The humanity of a person is completed with a family, perfected with a family, and becomes permanent with a family as well” (p. 159).

In Gülen’s (1997b) view, family and school are two vital institutions in educating the young generations and it is hard to prefer one over the other. The education issue is multifaceted and there are many contributors in the education of the young generation; however, the role of parents in education is unique and cannot be replaced by any other institution. Gülen (2002) claims “Even though an excellent teaching and education policy is crucial in the education of the ideal human, the family will always remain important in terms of its present and future contributions (in education)” (p. 36).

According to Gülen’s philosophy, in many respects, there is a strong relationship between family and society. For instance, a healthy social structure depends on a healthy family life. Gülen (2009) argues that “A healthy family is a holy institution that assures peace and security, and it is the most significant base of society” (p. 159). Gülen (2002) believes sound family life contributes significantly to the perfection of a society and stability of education. According to Gülen (2002, p. 36), the morality of society is also strongly related to family morality.

Gülen (2002) urges parents to spare some time every day for the education and training of their child. For him (2010a), there has to be discipline and rules in a family, and the child’s subconscious should be nourished with the role modelling of parents.

Partners who have established a marriage according to our criteria have achieved something great. Such a home provides services sometimes as a mosque and sometimes as a school, and provides services to an entire nation by breathing out the spirit of revival like a house of God. (Gülen, 2002, pp. 43–44)

Parents need to be aware of their crucial mission as educators and design their homes as schools. They have to develop their knowledge and skills to meet the educational needs of their children. Gülen’s emphasis on the important educational role of parents suggests the involvement of parents in the education of their children should be noticeable in Gülen–inspired schools and school leaders should engage parents in the educational process.

3.2.5 Summary of Perspectives on School Climate

School climate consists of interpersonal interactions within the school community; the combined engagement of staff and students within the school; the involvement of parents in school life; and practices of school that address the social, emotional and moral wellbeing of the students. The qualities of school leaders and teachers, pastoral care services that address

the wellbeing of students, and active school–parent relationships feature strongly in a school climate informed by Gülen’s beliefs.

Leadership is one of the most important aspects in students’ learning and general success of the school. Gülen’s writings do not offer specific leadership models, instead they focus on the qualities of an ideal leader, such as compassion, respect, justice, honesty, discipline and being hardworking. A successful leader should possess these qualities and they can be employed in various leadership models. In Gülen’s vision, the role of the teacher is unique in forming the individual and society. In order to be a real teacher and educator, the teacher should have certain qualities such as dedication, enthusiasm, the ability to make education enjoyable, and the capacity to develop every student positively and elevate them to true humanity. Gülen’s real teacher is the essential element for the creation of a successful school.

Pastoral care services are another essential part of Gülen’s educational vision aimed at the wellbeing and character development of pupils. The staff who are responsible for pastoral care should be well–educated and equipped, and the content of pastoral care services should be developed in accordance with the local culture. These volunteer–based services strengthen the ties between teacher, student and parents, and create a positive school climate. Gülen considers parents as educators and he emphasises the importance of school–parent relationships for the best educational outcomes. Parents should increase their educational knowledge and spare time for the education of children, and family life should be used to contribute to children’s education.

The next section examines school identity, the third dimension that characterises the nature of a school, and how Gülen’s philosophical beliefs potentially inform school identity.

3.3 School Identity

Identity means “the state of having unique identifying characteristics held by no other person or thing; the individual characteristics by which a person or thing is recognized” (Identity, n.d.), and identity is attributed to individuals to describe who they are. The concept of identity has been extended to organisations. In business, the term *brand identity* is widely used to indicate how a business wants to be perceived by its customers (Nandan, 2005). This need for a distinctive profile has been extended to universities, where there is a focus on establishing distinctive identities or brands to attract students (e.g., Hemsley–Brown & Goonawardana, 2007). Organisations such as schools also have an identity—character, qualities, beliefs, aims and roles—that distinguishes them from others.

Wardekker and Miedema (2001), in a review of Christian schools, attempted to define school identity by drawing on the post–modern concept of personal identity. They argued that personal identity is “a form of life–story” (p. 37) in which individuals are created through the “use of story schemata, genres, motives, metaphors, examples and other elements that are found in culture” (p. 37). This identity is co–constructed through interactions with others. They argue that school identities should contribute to the development of personal identity. From an educational perspective, they suggest schools can be identified by the teaching approach based on an ontological framework where knowledge is objective and students need to learn facts or an assumption that knowledge contributes to a “mode of being” (pp. 39–40) and is manifested through students’ participation in “culturally structured activities” (p. 40). Thus, educational identity is framed around transmissive or transformative conceptions of teaching. In other words, educational practices are dominated by teacher–centred or student–centred approaches, with students engaged in holistic and active learning. Schools adopting a transformative educational identity would provide multiple opportunities for students to construct and apply knowledge, which may extend beyond the classroom.

Wardekker and Miedema (2001) further argue that the school's curriculum orientations can be described in terms of a *preclusion* or *equality strategy*. A school implementing a preclusion strategy would limit all experiences to those in accordance with their own ideological convictions, whereas in adopting an equality strategy, schools emphasise diversity in the content of the curriculum. Thus, a school with a preclusion strategy may be highly restrictive in who it employs and admits, and may attempt to implement subject matter and teaching strategies distinctive to its beliefs. However, schools with an equality strategy may be aligned nominally with a particular ideology, but promote a pluralistic program of content and approaches to teaching. Thus, the schools' curriculum orientations contribute to their identity.

The following section studies Gülen–inspired school identity through exploring Gülen's vision on the aims and roles of the school and role of a teacher in Section 3.3.1, curriculum in Section 3.3.2, and subject matter in Section 3.3.3.

3.3.1 Roles and Aims of the School

This section examines Gülen's thoughts about roles, definition and aims of the school in context with other authors and philosophers, and summarises the important aspects of the school in Gülen's vision. This section provides groundwork to answer the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy?

3.3.1.1 Roles of the School

The school is an institution dedicated to educational purposes, usually for children and adolescents, and usually associated with the compulsory phase of education (Gingell & Winch, 1999). Throughout history, the school has taken place in society in different formats. In the contemporary world, schooling is usually compulsory for certain age groups.

Schools differ in many aspects and are established for multiple reasons. Flanagan (2003) argues that schools play an important role in fostering positive integration of youth into contemporary society. She describes schools as “mediating institutions” (p. 258) in which the values, rules and norms of society are enculturated. In the Australian context, three sectors are recognised as representing the major provisioning of education: government, independent and Catholic. Each is required to align formal curricula with the national goals as articulated by the *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority* through the Australian curriculum. However, each maintains its own distinctive culture or identity as promoted by the relevant governing bodies. For instance, in Scotland, where Catholic schools have been fully state-funded since 1918, schools have retained a distinctive identity and responsibility for recruitment of staff (McKinney & Conroy, 2015). A similar situation exists across Europe, where faith-based schools have a high degree of independence in deciding on curriculum, teaching materials and operation, and commitment to a particular religious ideology (Maussen & Bader, 2015). Thus, schools have their own identity in terms of how they are recognised.

Many educational philosophers and educators have discussed the school, its aims and roles in relation to the individual and society. There are also some philosophers and educators who believe schools are hostile to educational aims (Gingell & Winch, 1999). For instance, Ivan Illich (1970) advocates the idea that “society can be deschooled” (p. 3): “The paradox of the schools is evident: increased expenditure escalates their destructiveness at home and abroad” (p. 10). Illich thinks an increase in the number of schools is as dangerous as an increase in the number of weapons. Gülen’s thoughts are generally in favour of schooling; however, if a school is failing as deschoolers claim, Gülen (2000a) does not consider such bodies as schools.

3.3.1.2 Gülen's Definition of a School

In Gülen's philosophy, schools are very important and opening schools in many different countries is one of the fundamental educational activities of Hizmet. Gülen (2000a) gives at least three definitions of school: "The school is a vital laboratory, the lessons are the elixir of life and the teacher is a holy expert of this mysterious treatment centre" (p. 101); "A school is a place of learning, where everything related to this life and the next is taught; actually life itself is a school, but we even learn life by the assistance of schools" (p. 101); and "The school is a unique institution where religious and national matters are taught along with all disciplines of science, the habit of methodical thinking and studying is conveyed to students, and the good traits ... are developed" (1997b).

Gülen's definition suggests that the distinguishing aspects of schools inspired by him are that: the contemporary sciences are taught in relation to realities of life with expert teachers; everything related to this life—academic and vocational education—and the hereafter—religious education—is taught; and national and religious values are instilled. Gülen-inspired schools differ with these viewpoints from other schools in Turkey as there are three main schooling practices in Turkey: secular schools; religious schools; and vocational schools. The secular schools emphasise academic education, religious schools emphasise religious education, and vocational schools emphasise development of skills for work. Gülen's philosophy expects schools to teach all these areas in a balanced way.

3.3.1.3 Aims of the School

Gülen's educational vision contains general similarities to Wood's (2011) analysis of the purpose of schooling. These similarities are shown in Table 3.5. For Gülen (2000a), schools should pay attention to everyone individually, instil spiritual and national values through modelling, and cultivate virtuous people in order to achieve this aim. The schools should also cover vocational education and training (1997c).

Table 3.5

Similarities Between Wood and Gülen on The Purpose of Schooling

Wood's (2011) analysis	Gülen's vision
Schooling for work	Have an emphasis on vocational education and training (1997c)
Good behaviour	Schools should raise virtuous people (2000a)
Social control: to produce tolerant human beings who are willing to think of the needs of others and not engage in many belligerent acts	"Be so tolerant that your heart becomes wide as the ocean. Be inspired with faith and love human beings" (1996a, p. 32).
Social cohesion: Teaching the young about the world they live in. Preserving particular cultures and traditions (p. 35). Creating good citizens (p. 36)	"The education and training issue is related significantly to the existence and stability of all nations which is one of the foremost issues almost in every country" (1993, p. 114).
Promoting equal opportunities	"There is no distinction between the ruler and the ruled in Islam. Upper and lower levels are considered a component of a whole, one within the other..." (2009, p. 187).
Personal development	Education should give brightness to the mind and a wing to the soul (2000a).
Social transformation	"When knowledge is handled through sound reflection, experience and conscience, it elevates social life and promises happiness to society" (2009, p. 93).

Students should adopt the characteristics of tolerance, care and love of humanity (Gülen, 1996a). The education and training provided in schools should contribute to the stability and wellbeing of country (Gülen, 1993). Gülen's philosophy emphasises justice and rejects superiority of one group over another in the society (e.g., superiority of ruler over ruled).

Gülen's educational philosophy aims to educate each person as a whole (2000a) and promotes betterment of social life through knowledge, reflection, experience and conscience (2009). Additional purposes of schooling mentioned in Gülen's writings are:

- To elevate students spiritually and physically (1993);
- To instil passion for the truth, love of knowledge, and research spirit (2000b);
- To develop good morals and eliminate bad ones (1997b); and
- To set lofty goals and high ideals for students, and to protect them from aimlessness (1993).

Gülen (2000a) claims the aim of an ideal school is to guide students to contribute to building a higher order within our civilisation. Agai (2003) suggests that Gülen and Hizmet explain what Islam means in contemporary settings by establishing educational institutions and encouraging Muslims to be part of modern life. He states that "The movement has responded to the social and economic issues of the modern world, a response they perceive as crucial. They try to find a place for Muslims in a globalized world" (p. 68).

Truth-seeking and love of knowledge are the core principles of schools. Gülen (2008a) urges educators "to awaken the passion for science and truth" and "rear up people with determination and longing to do research" (p. 69). Wood (2011) shares similar thoughts; "Education should be enjoyable. It should foster creativity and engage all of them, their bodies, brains, minds and emotions" (p. 40).

For Gülen (1997b), "The first duty of the school is to protect and develop the good seeds already scattered in the child's soul and to weed out the bad ones" (pp. 99–100). Thus, school plays an important role in character building—values education—and Gülen (2000a) argues the child's actual identity and personality are formed in the school. Guiding young generations to lofty goals and protecting them from aimlessness are among the responsibilities

of the school in Gülen's (1993) vision. Gülen (2005a) thinks the school could play the role of a wharf, harbour, ramp or planning department and project centre; however, it alone cannot solve all individual and social problems. Thus, expectations should be in accordance with the school's limitations.

3.3.2 Gülen's Thoughts on Curriculum

Education is one of the main activities of the Hizmet Movement; however, there is no curriculum developed for its educational institutions. This section examines Gülen's thoughts about curriculum through his writings, how Gülen's curriculum ideas align with other curriculum ideologies, and commentaries about curriculum practices in Hizmet institutions.

3.3.2.1 Mapping Gülen's Curriculum Ideologies

Schiro (2013) has studied the curriculum ideologies that have been implemented in American schools over the last hundred years and categorised them in four main groups: "the Social Efficiency ideology, the Scholar Academic ideology, the Learner-Centred ideology, and the Social Reconstruction ideology" (p. 4).

Schiro (2013) states "Social Efficiency advocates believe that the purpose of schooling is to efficiently meet the needs of society by training youth to function as future mature contributing members of society" (p. 5). Identifying the needs of the society, developing the curriculum to meet these needs and helping learners to develop skills and practices to be competent in their daily life and workplace are the main themes in this ideology. Gülen's vision advocates similar beliefs; however, his main focus is raising the Golden Generation by addressing the whole faculties of an individual. When this goal is achieved, the Golden Generation will contribute to the needs of the society.

Schiro (2013) argues that "Scholar Academics believe that over the centuries our culture has accumulated important knowledge that has been organized into the academic disciplines

found in universities” (p. 4). According to this ideology, there are three hierarchical groups in search of truth: scholars who discover the truth, teachers who disseminate the truth, and students who learn the truth. Gülen’s educational vision differs from this ideology, which aims to help students learn these academic disciplines. Gülen’s philosophy employs academic disciplines to develop intellectual capabilities and aims to integrate intellect with spirituality. Thus, teaching academic disciplines are not the sole purpose of Gülen’s philosophy.

Schiro (2013) asserts that the Learner–Centred ideology focuses on the needs and concerns of individuals. “They believe schools should be enjoyable places where people develop naturally according to their own innate natures” (p. 5). Educators should prepare a curriculum and create enjoyable environment to develop the “intellectual, social, emotional, and physical” (p. 5) abilities of individuals. Learning occurs through the interaction of an individual with teachers, students, ideas, and the environment. Hence, the result of learning is unique for each individual. The learner is the main objective of education in this theory. Gülen’s curriculum approach does not fit completely in this category. Gülen’s philosophy also addresses issues such as developing natural abilities; addressing the needs of students according to age; the importance of interaction between educator, learner, and environment; and free will and the personal choice of learner. The difference is that Gülen’s philosophy focuses on raising the ideal individual, and educators and educator–parents are the main actors to realise this objective. Thus, Gülen’s curriculum philosophy can be identified as Educator/Subject Centred with the curriculum primarily formed by educators.

The Social Reconstruction ideology assumes that “The purpose of education is to facilitate the construction of a new and more just society that offers maximum satisfaction to all of its members” (Schiro, 2013, p. 6). Social Reconstructionists believe the current society is unhealthy and try to develop a better vision of society. They assume curriculum and education are the best ways to realise this vision. For them, individuals are formed by cultural

assumptions and social experiences; thus, undesired elements of culture should be replaced by desired ones in order to reconstruct a better society. Gülen (2005a) also advocates that education provided in schools contributes to the betterment of society; however, it is not strong enough to reconstruct an entire society. Gülen's educational philosophy focuses on raising ideal individuals and it expects these ideal individuals will contribute to the reconstruction of a better society.

Gülen's educational philosophy does not fit completely in any of the four curriculum ideologies that are introduced in Schiro's analysis. Gülen's educational vision contains some elements from each of the four curriculum ideologies. His thoughts about developing natural abilities and addressing the individual needs reflects elements of the Learner-Centred ideology. In Gülen's vision, the ideas mentioned in the Scholar Academic ideology are employed in raising the Golden Generation with academic excellence. The Golden Generation should serve the needs of the society and in this regard, it contains the Social Efficiency ideology. The Golden Generation should also contribute to the wellbeing of the society, now this is reflective of Social Reconstruction ideology where new and more just society should be reconstructed.

3.3.2.2 Key Elements of Gülen's Vision Related to Curriculum

Although Hizmet has not developed a curriculum, such as the International Baccalaureate, for use throughout its schools, Gülen's writings contain some ideas about curriculum. The key elements of Gülen's vision related to curriculum are summarised in Table 3.6.

Gülen (1997b) claims a good curriculum, sound education system, and devoted and knowledgeable teachers are a marvellous source of power. Schools, curriculum, students and projects related to students should be taken into account in accordance with present and future time and cause-effect considerations for best results (Gülen, 1996c). Gülen believes the

curriculum or syllabus should emphasise the students' emotions in primary and their reasoning in secondary schools.

Table 3.6

Key Elements of Gülen's Vision Related to Curriculum

Related to learning areas	<p>Combine heart—religious and values education—and mind—physical sciences</p> <p>Provide the basis for academic and technical abilities to be developed further by specified education</p> <p>Provide contemporary science and technology</p> <p>Ensure literacy</p>
Related to methods	<p>Identify objectives, learning areas, procedures and methods, and ensure they are clear for educators.</p> <p>Develop a learning program according to the age and needs of the learner</p> <p>Provide theory and practice together to prepare students for life</p>
Related to objectives	<p>Provide academic and values education to raise knowledgeable, skilful and virtuous individuals</p> <p>Ensure the learner can develop the ability of establishing new theories on the basis of current achievements</p> <p>Address individual differences and needs by curriculum.</p> <p>Set high ideals and expectations for learners.</p> <p>Cover religious and morals values, national culture, and manners</p> <p>Address essential issues such as respect, ethics, high ideals, national values and love for humanity to produce beneficial and harmonious members of society</p>

Gülen expressed in an interview with Sevindi (1997) that education should highlight essential issues such as respect, ethics, high ideals, national values, and love for humanity in primary schools, as students' emotions overwhelm their reasoning in this period. For him, these issues should be addressed by role modelling, curriculum, and pastoral care programs, while avoiding dictating ideas and disregarding the students' free will and personal choice (Sevindi, 1997).

Gülen (1993) considers education that is not well-planned will make students into information porters, and planning should cover goals, objectives, topics, procedures and methods. Planning should also cover religious morals and values, national culture and manners (terbiye), along with contemporary sciences, technology and wisdom (Gülen, 1997b). Gülen (2012a) argues that method and strategy should be established to foster morality and spirituality according to the age of a person, just as a nutrition program based on age is implemented for children.

Gülen (1996b) argues that an eight-year-old student who is enrolled in primary school and has a moderate level of intelligence could complete primary and secondary school within five years with the help of well-designed curricula and effective teachers. Gülen believes that the education conceptions of the Nizamiyya madrasahs²⁰ can be adapted to contemporary conditions. Thus, understanding the educational philosophy of Nizamiyya madrasahs will assist in understanding Gülen's educational philosophy. Göktürk, associate professor, and Dağ, assistant associate professor, (2014) assert that the Nizamiyya madrasahs were established in 1067 in the era of Alpaslan and improved by vizier Nizam al Mulk. They were higher institutions, established by the government, worked as research and specialisation institutions, and provided free higher education. They aimed to unify the Sunni faith and eliminate harmful religious trends. Education was provided in three main areas: Islamic sciences; philosophy and natural sciences; and language and literature. Lecturers were experts of their teaching subject and followed their own methodology of teaching. Memorisation, repetition, comprehension, discussion between students under supervision of the lecturer, and question and answer techniques were employed as methods of teaching. The madrasahs contained boarding houses for the students.

²⁰ Abu Ali Hasan ibn Ali Tusi (1018–1092), better known by his honorific title of Nizam al-Mulk, was a Persian scholar and vizier of the Seljuq Empire. He founded madrasahs in cities throughout his empire, which were named Nizamiyya after him.

Gülen has five beliefs about the importance and content of curriculum. First, Gülen (2010c) claims the curriculum should address issues such as eloquence in speech and being able to express thoughts comfortably. For him, writing an essay is insufficient to achieve this goal and the schools should provide improvisational speech lessons. Second, the curriculum should cover trades and crafts beginning from elementary level, and the school should provide theory and practice to prepare students for life (Gülen, 1997c). Third, a strong relationship needs to be established between learning and practice where learning should contribute to the practical competence of a learner and be part of life (Gülen, 2000a). Fourth, curriculum should serve to raise a person who can understand contemporary science and knowledge perfectly, and reach new theories and analysis (2012a) based on this knowledge. Thus, the learner should not be satisfied with learning only available knowledge, rather they should aim to produce new knowledge. Finally, Gülen (2012a) believes one of the objectives of the curriculum should be to raise intellectuals for the nation, and it is crucial to review the curriculum from primary school to universities to accommodate an educational program capable of creating intellectuals. Thus, Gülen's philosophy encourages schools to provide vocational education and education for gifted students along with basic education.

3.3.2.3 Curriculum in Gülen–inspired Schools

Hizmet educational institutions follow the curriculum guidelines of the jurisdiction in which they are established. Gülen states “These schools are established and operating within the framework of existing laws. In all of these institutions the same programs and curricula are implemented with each formal educational institution. It is not permitted to otherwise” (Aksiyon, 1998, para. 17). Williams (2008), Çetin (2014) and Ebaugh (2010) have reflections similar to Gülen's statement. Williams (2008) states “There is no one conformist curriculum for the schools as they adopt the prescribed curriculum of the state within which they are placed” (para. 36). For Çetin (2014), the Hizmet Movement has no specific curriculum, and Hizmet schools and universities follow local curriculum and regulations.

Additionally, Ebaugh (2010) asserts that the schools implement a secular curriculum that is approved by the state and that Islam is taught formally using state–approved materials with one hour lessons.

3.3.3 Subject Matter or the Content of Curriculum

The subject matter or content of a curriculum is one of the important and difficult topics in educational decision–making. The lessons and topics to be taught at certain levels of schooling and how they deliver educational objectives have been a matter of many discussions. The following section draws on the psychological work of Gilbert (1976) and curriculum perspectives of Deng (2012) to examine the appropriateness and processes in selecting subject matter. This discussion is followed by an examination of Gülen’s vision about subject matter.

For Gilbert (1976), “the foremost unresolved issue in education is subject matter” (p. 29). He suggests that student objectives should be set first, then the subject matter, to ensure objectives can be achieved. Further, a long topic list of subjects should be delimited by criteria, and what the students will accomplish when learning these topics should be considered. To select disciplines and topics that best serve student objectives, Gilbert proposes three criteria: generalisation power; importance; and student deficiencies. Generalisation power is used to check if fundamental principles are applicable for the subjects and objectives; the importance criterion indicates the selection of related subjects; and student deficiencies must be measured to determine which subjects best serve their needs.

Deng (2012) presents his own methodology in developing subject matter, for example, he reports how a liberal studies subject was developed in the curriculum of Hong Kong. This subject was identified as one of four core subjects, along with Chinese, English and mathematics. A student–centred approach with three aims was implemented in selecting

subject content, namely, to help students to understand themselves, their relations with others, and their relations with their environment. Three broad areas are identified based on this philosophy: “Self and Personal Development”; “Society and Culture”; and “Science, Technology and the Environment” (p. 46). Then, six learning modules were established: “(1) personal development and interpersonal relationships; (2) contemporary Hong Kong society; (3) modern China; (4) globalization; (5) public health; and (6) energy technology and the environment” (p. 46). These modules were further detailed under four sections: prologue; key issues; related issues; and related values and attitudes. The section “related values and attitudes” aligns perfectly with Gülen’s philosophy. Following these procedures, the end product was a teaching plan for each unit, ready to be implemented in the classroom.

Gülen–inspired schools do not have certain procedures to develop subject matter as the subjects they teach have already been developed by relevant government departments. Gülen’s philosophy does not identify the scope of the subject matter in any detail as by Gilbert (1976) and Deng (2012). However, it provides thoughts and vision that inspires educators to choose teaching materials aligned with his philosophy. Gilbert’s or Deng’s methods could be applied to Gülen’s subject matter vision, which is summarised in Table 3.7, to establish a school subject compatible with his philosophy.

Table 3.7

Criteria for Establishing Subject Matter Offered by Gülen's Philosophy

Components	Contents
Learning areas	Contemporary technology Contemporary modern sciences Social sciences Religious sciences Covering academic and work skills
Aspects related to learning areas	Understandable Life related Necessary Reasonable size of data Practical outcome
Outcomes of learning areas	Preparation for life and improvement of personality Harmony with environment Personal and social harmony Instilling of national, cultural, and moral values Comprehension of meaning of entities and phenomena Improvement of learner's ability to establish new theories
General aspects	Catering to individual differences Considering age and culture of a learner Teaching theory with practice Highlighting comprehension instead of memorisation

Knowledge is expanding every day in all areas of scientific disciplines. As it is not possible to learn everything, selecting the core content of education is crucial. Gülen (2000a) argues, similarly to Gilbert and Deng, that knowing what to teach and when to teach it, at the very least, is just as important as learning and teaching. For Gülen (1996c), issues related to schools, curriculum, the university system and students should be evaluated according to a cause and effect relationship.

Gülen's philosophy advocates addressing all faculties of a person with education and improving personality; thus, learning—knowledge—should enlighten the person and give brightness to the mind and a wing to the soul (2000a). The content of education should cover moral, national and religious values. A person should be in a harmony within their self as well as with their surroundings and to achieve this result, learning needs to establish a harmonious connection between person—learner, entities and phenomena (Gülen, 2000a). Gülen's approach is similar to the three aims observed in selecting the main areas of liberal studies in Hong Kong. Learning should also contribute to social harmony in Gülen's (1996c) perception.

Learning should address contemporary sciences and technologies (Gülen, 1997b), and curriculum should be reviewed and updated constantly as there is rapid growth in science and technology. Gülen (1997c) argues that “a community's survival depends on idealism and good morals; as well as on reaching the necessary level in scientific and technological progress” (para. 18). For Gülen (2000a), specialisation in different academic fields and work skills are necessities of contemporary life. Thus, curriculum in educational institutions should address the diverse abilities of learners. However, Gülen's writings provide broad guidelines and do not offer further detail on how to establish a curriculum to meet individual differences; work on such details is left for educators.

In Gülen's view, education should be gradual and flexible according to the needs of the learner. The facts of age and culture should be taken into consideration in the subjects taught to youth, and subjects should be understandable and in an amount that they can grasp rather than turning them into porters of memory (Gülen, 2000a). Therefore, Gülen's view encourages comprehension instead of memorisation in learning. Gülen also argues that the curriculum should cover subjects that can be categorised as necessary, since “pointless

knowledge and knowledge obtained only out of curiosity often have an effect of a deadly poison on the learner” (2000a, p. 106).

The Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, n.d.)—Foundation to Year 10—offers nine main learning areas: English, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Science, Work Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences (History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business)”, Technologies (Design and Technologies, Digital Technologies)”, the Arts (Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music, Visual Arts), and Languages (Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Indonesian, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Vietnamese). Gülen emphasises four main learning areas: modern sciences; religious sciences; social sciences; and language education. However, he has not established specific learning subjects for these areas. Gülen (2011a) argues that it is the very right time to combine modern sciences (i.e., mathematics, science) and religious sciences; in fact, developed nations give importance to social sciences, and leaders and politicians of the future will be raised by social sciences. Language and history are also disciplines that are highlighted by Gülen. For him (2001), historical consciousness keeps society active and alive, and helps people to preserve their own identity. Finally, language is an important factor in protecting national culture and values (Gülen, 2005b).

Gülen expects schools to develop a curriculum that combines moral and academic education; covers contemporary sciences, contemporary technologies, social sciences and language education; conducts regular revisions; listens to the voice of students and addresses their needs; includes parents’ perceptions; and works to realise these objectives together with parents. Compatibility of subjects and learning objectives with Gülen’s philosophy could be measured by the criteria summarised in Table 3.7. The more criteria met by the subject, the more compatible with Gülen’s philosophy and vice versa. These criteria could also be used to establish a subject matter that is compatible with his teachings.

3.3.4 Summary of School Identity

The literature reviewed in this section proposes that a school's identity can be recognised through the character, qualities, aims and roles of a school, its teaching approach and curriculum orientations. Gülen, unlike deschoolers, believes schools are crucial in preparing generations as valuable members of society with knowledge, high morals and skills. For him, schools should pay attention to each student individually, and aim to raise virtuous individuals, form the identity of students, instil a love of knowledge in them, and contribute to the establishment of high civilisations. Gülen shares similar thoughts with Wood (2011) about the purpose of schools, and these are presented in Table 3.5. He argues that schools should work in harmony with other national institutions in educating the young generation.

For Gülen, there is a need for a perfect curriculum and raising the Golden Generation should be the main focus. The perfect curriculum should address academic and values education, and the development of emotions and reasoning of learners. Cause–effect relations, present and future time should be considered when preparing the curriculum. It should also be concerned with learners' eloquence in speech and the ability to express thoughts comfortably. The curriculum should be capable of addressing the needs of society and raising intellectuals.

Gülen–inspired schools implement subject matter introduced by relevant government departments; however, Gülen's writings provide inspiration on subject matter. Subjects that are taught in schools should contain important and necessary knowledge and skills, and should address all faculties of each person. Gülen's vision emphasises four main areas in learning/teaching: modern sciences and technology, religious sciences, social sciences, and language. According to Gülen, individual differences and social harmony should be considered in the subject matter. These discussions provide criteria to assess the extent to which the schools present with an identity comparable to Gülen's philosophy.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has established a framework around three dimensions that define the nature of a school: culture, climate and identity. Gülen's vision for education was analysed through the culture, climate and identity of a school along with related literature in order to establish a framework that will be used in this study to examine in Chapters Five and Six the characteristics of two Gülen-inspired schools.

The culture of Gülen-inspired schools accommodates value-centred education. Gülen's writings contain intensive discussions on values and, for him, values can and should be taught specifically by role modelling in schools. The physical and social school environment should support the academic and moral development of students, and religious elements should not be promoted explicitly. Schools should be open to all ethnic groups and cultures, and basic religious education may be provided if there is a demand by the school community. The school culture accommodates a hidden curriculum—learning that occurs in the school environment and is not mentioned in the curriculum. The school environment, the school community and Gülen's inspiration contribute to the content of the hidden curriculum. The school culture encourages educating through role modelling based on knowledge and good morals.

The school climate is formed by interpersonal interactions within the school among staff, students and parents; parents' participation in school life; and pastoral care services provided to students. The leadership role is connected to all school-related matters and has a significant effect on students' learning outcomes and the success of the school. Gülen's vision does not provide a leadership model; he regards leaders as the core of the system and presents many qualities for successful leaders, such as leading by example, being compassionate, and creating a familial climate. Gülen's understanding of a good teacher is also based on personal qualities and the quality of educational services depends on the teachers' performance. Thus,

Gülen's virtuous, dedicated and enthusiastic real teacher is the main actor in the school climate. Real teachers shape individuals and not only teach but also educate, make education enjoyable, set lofty ideals for students and prepare students for life. One of the characteristics of Gülen-inspired schools is pastoral care that is aimed mainly at the moral development of students and which creates a positive school climate by establishing warm connections among teachers, parents and students. The cooperation between school and parents for the best possible education of students is also part of the Gülen-inspired school climate.

The chapter also studied the Gülen-inspired school identity through examining the character, qualities and aims of a school; and the teaching and curriculum understanding of a school according to Gülen's vision. The school should teach morality and values along with contemporary sciences; form student identity; and instil love of knowledge in cooperation with other institutions of society, specifically parents. Providing vocational education and training, raising virtuous individuals and harmonious member of society, preparing students for life, and contributing to the progress of society are the main aims of the school. The curriculum should be prepared in accordance with cause-effect relations, conditions of present and future time, developing the emotions and reasoning of the learner, and considering the needs of society in order to realise the school's aims. Gülen emphasises four main learning areas: modern sciences and technology, religious sciences, social sciences, and language. The content of learning should address individual differences and the person as a whole. Addressing a person as a whole, in Gülen's philosophy, requires a combination of academic education and values or religious education where possible. Therefore, the schools appear to the public as academically oriented values-based schools.

This chapter has provided a framework within which to examine the alignment of schools established under Gülen's influence with his philosophy of education. The next

chapter examines the methodology that is implemented in this thesis to respond to the research question.

CHAPTER 4: THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter provides a description and justification of the research design that was used to answer the research question posed in Chapter One: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? It explains the philosophical basis of the research design, how the research was carried out, how the data were analysed, and which methodology was adopted for this research in Section 4.1. The chapter then goes on in Section 4.2 to describe the methods selected for data collection, namely, documentary analysis, participant observation, and interviews. The chapter also discusses the validity of research in Section 4.3 and ethical issues in Section 4.4. The chapter is summarised in Section 4.5.

4.1 Methodology

Consistent with his or her epistemology and theoretical perspective a researcher should decide whether to use qualitative or quantitative approaches or both to collect the related data in response to the research question. Each approach has different assumptions about knowledge and reality. Both qualitative and quantitative research draw on rich traditions that come from multiple disciplines. Creswell (2007) provided the following definition of qualitative research: "Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 36). Flick's (2006) statement is useful in understanding the purpose and nature of quantitative research. In explaining the limits of quantitative research, he stated:

Guiding principles of research and of planning research have been used for the following purposes: to clearly isolate causes and effects, to properly operationalize theoretical

relations, to measure and to quantify phenomena, to create research design allowing the generalization of findings, and to formulate general laws. (p. 12)

The characteristics of the two methods are now discussed. Qualitative researchers emphasise a holistic interpretation of phenomena. They perceive facts and values as inextricably mixed. In contrast, quantitative researchers look for more context-free generalisations. They focus on individual variables and factors, rather than concentrating on a holistic interpretation (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).

Qualitative and quantitative methods of research have different research procedures and designs. Wiersma and Jurs (2009) indicate that quantitative researchers tend to adopt standardised research procedures and methods with predetermined designs. Qualitative researchers are more flexible and iterative during the research process adopting multiple methods more frequently than quantitative researchers. Interpretation by both the researcher and the participants occurs in qualitative research, hence it is more subjective. Objectivity of study is important in quantitative research and therefore research studies are designed to eliminate the researcher's personal influences and biases (Flick, 2006).

The two forms of research have different purposes. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand social phenomena whereas quantitative research seeks to determine relationships, effects, and causes (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Qualitative research takes place in natural settings. The researcher goes into the field to gather relevant data in reference to the research question. Creswell (2007) emphasises the importance of natural settings when he argued that "Qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field, at the site where participants' experience the issue or problem under study" (p. 37). Creswell highlights the role of the researcher as the key instrument of qualitative research sourcing multiple forms of data from documents, observations of behaviour, and interviews with participants.

Given the aims of this study were to explore specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's educational vision and how his philosophy was interpreted and practised in two schools, a qualitative methodology was considered necessary.

4.1.1 Case Study

Given the aims of this study were to understand a complex phenomenon, namely Gülen's educational vision and how his philosophy was interpreted and practised in two schools, a qualitative methodology was chosen. Specifically, this research study employed a case study methodology in order to collect the data from school documents, school staff, students, and parents in response to the research question.

The case study is “a type of qualitative research in which in-depth data are gathered relative to a single, individual, program, or event for the purpose of learning more about an unknown or poorly understood situation” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 108). For Merriam (1998), case study is “an intensive description and analysis of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, program event, group, intervention, or community” (p. 19). According to Merriam, a case study creates an opportunity to develop knowledge for the researcher about the case through engaging and interacting with participants in natural settings.

For Yin (2009), “case studies are the preferred strategy when (a) ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, (b) the investigator has little control over events, and (c) the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (p. 2). Yin (2009) emphasises that case study is a research strategy that allows the investigator to collect multiple forms of data using certain clearly defined procedures or steps. Researchers study single or multiple cases of the phenomenon according to their research topics. Yin (2009) stated that “Every research method can be used for all three purposes—exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory” (pp. 7–8). Yin's explanatory case study methodology was adopted in this thesis to explore the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy.

Diezmann (2002) argued that an explanatory case study enables a researcher to go beyond description and investigate the relationships between components of a proposed theoretical framework and practices. Harder (2010) posits that “The explanatory case study methodology ... can be employed to test theories and hypotheses and to set the stage for richer, more in-depth acquisition of knowledge” (p. 373). The study adopted a framework discussed in the previous chapter to guide analysis of data and thus it is an explanatory case study.

The case study is employed in order to learn more about certain situations related to an individual, a group, or an organisation. It is suitable for and preferred in examining contemporary events. Some concerns are raised about case studies such as whether findings are generalisable to other situations or not, and if the evidence is reported fairly, or whether there is bias involved. However, this can be addressed by triangulation and validation. Furthermore, Yin (2009) argues that case study is not intended to be generalised to other situations. Rather case studies are argued to be effective in generating theoretical positions.

Following Yin’s (2009) concept of the explanatory case study, the following process was adopted. A general framework, synthesised from the literature, was developed. This framework, reported on in Chapter Three, provided a lens through which to document the characteristics of schools. The findings of an initial case, Star Boys, were compared against the framework. Thus, data from multiple sources were analysed to identify how Gülen’s philosophy informed the culture, climate, and identity of the schools. A second case, Castle College, was then analysed and the findings compared with the first case, Star Boys, to refine how these schools’ characteristics aligned with Gülen’s educational philosophy. The case study can also be described as a multiple case study as each individual school was studied separately with convergent and contrasting evidence being sought regarding the evidence of alignment in each case.

4.1.1.1 Case Study Procedures

Following Yin (2009), the case study in this research consists of six steps: definition of research questions; case study design; preparation to collect the data; data collection; analysing the data and report writing as it presented in Figure 4.1.

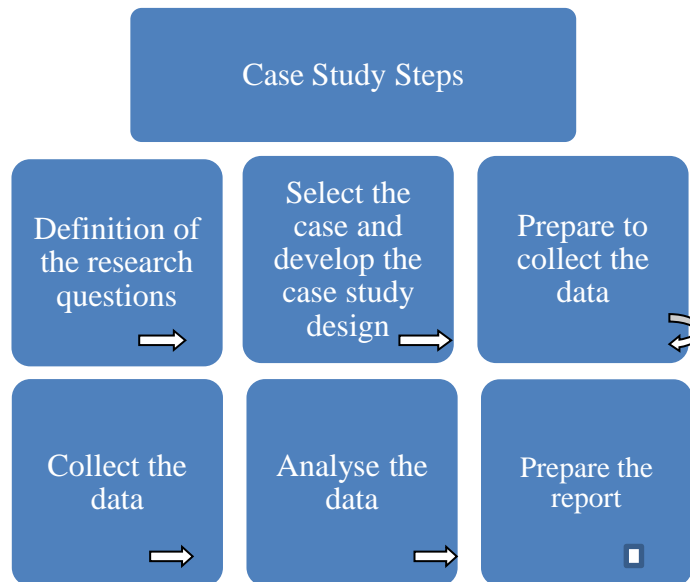


Figure 4.1. Case study steps according to Yin.

First, a case study begins with the definition of the problems or issues to be studied and development of a case study design. In this thesis, the problem has been articulated in Chapters One and Two. Second, Yin (2009) stated that “A research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of study” (p. 24). For Yin “a research design is *a logical plan for getting from here to there*, where *here* may be defined as initial set of questions to be answered, and *there* is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions” (p. 26). As a framework to guide data analysis, Chapter Three posed that schools can be characterised in terms of their culture, climate and identity.

The second step was preparing a case study design. Case study design is useful to eliminate irrelevant data and collect the most relevant data. The design may be altered if

necessary during the progress of the case study. Preparation involved two steps, selecting the cases and identifying the sources of data. The selection of the cases was influenced by several criteria. As discussed in Chapter One, Turkish immigrants to Australia established a number of schools across the country. These schools were supported by two Foundations inspired by Gülen's philosophy. The researcher, with insider knowledge of the Hizmet Movement, discerned that these schools were established or supported by the Hizmet Movement. The second criterion was convenience. The geographical proximity of the two selected schools provided opportunities for a "less structured and more prolonged engagement" (Yin, 2009, p. 93). The researcher developed a case study protocol that included the range of data sources, interview questions, planned participant observation details, and decisions about which school documents to check in order to collect the necessary data in response to the research question. In keeping with case study protocol, while investigating the case and collecting evidence, the researcher referred to the research question repeatedly so as not to deviate from the purpose of the study.

In the third step, following on from conceptualising the case study design, the researcher prepared for data collection. Case study research has the potential to produce a large quantity of data from a range of sources. Hence, preparation for data collection is crucial to run the research smoothly and not to drift away from the actual research objectives. Yin (2009) advised that the researcher should have the desired skills such as being able to ask good questions and interpret the answers, to be a good listener, to be adaptive and flexible, and to have a grasp of the issues being studied. In this study, the researcher prepared a set of interview questions to have participants' perceptions in relation to the research question. He had interview questions reviewed by his supervisors and peers to develop them further.

In the fourth step, after preparation for data collection, the researcher collected data from multiple sources and stored them. Gillham (2000) advised researchers to collect

evidence from six sources: documents; records; interviews; detached observation; participant observation; and physical artefacts. Data were collected from document analysis, interviews, and participant observation in this thesis. The collected data were categorised for the purpose of analysis, interpretation and formation of findings related to the research question. The relationship between the topic and evidence was observed during the entire data collection process. Yin (2009) advised researchers of three principles to maximise the benefits from six possible sources of evidence: (a) use multiple sources of evidence; (b) create a case study database; and (c) maintain a chain of evidence (pp. 101–122). These steps were followed: the multiple data sources used were school documents, interviews, and participant observation; all data were stored electronically; and all data were analysed through the coding and member checking providing a chain of evidence.

The fifth step was to analyse findings to provide evidence in order to relate the outcomes of the study to the research question. Yin (2009) noted that “Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining evidence, to draw empirically based conclusions” (p. 126). The various methods and analysis techniques of the case study gave the researcher opportunities to increase the credibility and validity of the results through member checking, prolonged engagement with the case and triangulation of the data.

Finally, composing the case study report required the transformation of complex findings into a clear and understandable form. As Gillham (2000) stated, “You will have developed an overall grasp and understanding of the data ‘in your head’ though this last stage will improve on that. Without that you will not be able to make sense of your material” (p. 93). Summarising the research process from data to report: research question was defined; the schools were selected to conduct the case study; interview questions were developed; interview participants were selected; participant observations were planned in cooperation

with the schools' leadership team including the principal, deputy principal and pastoral care deputy principal; documents to analyse were selected; data were collected and analysed in Chapters Five and Six. The findings were compared and reported on in Chapter Seven.

4.2 Methods

This section provides a brief context in Section 4.2.1 about two Australian Gülen–inspired schools that are studied in this thesis, then, in Section 4.2.2, the selection of participants is explained. Data sources are enumerated in Section 4.2.3 and the process of data analysis is described in Section 4.2.4.

4.2.1 Context

Hundreds of schools have flourished all around the world since 1992 as a result of Gülen's educational philosophy. Çetin (2014) asserted that these schools are “secular private schools inspected by state authorities” (p. 24) and that they “follow national and international curricula and any regulations which apply in the locale where they are established and run” (p. 26). This section provides brief information about the schools upon which the case studies were conducted. The selected schools are referred to in this thesis using the pseudonyms of Star Boys and Castle College.

Star College is a private Gülen–inspired school established by a non–profit organisation that was established in 1992 by the Australian Turkish community. The school separated from the Foundation and established its own board in 2016. Star College commenced its operation in 1997 with only 28 students and, due to enormous community demand, the school was able to open six campuses in the state. In 2016 more than 2000 students were enrolled. The majority of the students come from an Australian Turkish Muslim background. The first case study site is based on the boys' secondary campus of Star College and referred to as Star Boys in this study. Star Boys provided education to approximately 400 high school boys in 2017.

Star College is a non-denominational school. It welcomes students from all backgrounds, regardless of religion, race, colour, belief, culture or gender and it provides education from Prep to Year 12. According to the 2006 School Prospectus, it is a school where diversity is strength and students are therefore expected to understand, tolerate and respect all differences. The school seeks a balance between academic and values education, and it has a pastoral care department to cater for students' welfare needs. Star College's first graduates were in 2002. The success of the students in Certificate of Education examinations attracted community attention, and community support has played a significant role in the rapid growth of the school. According to the school website (D6),²¹ "Today, Star College plays a leading role in educating young generations with its academic excellence and disciplined education; and continues to contribute to the future of Australia" (para. 16).

Castle College is a private Gülen-inspired school established in 2005 by Youth Foundation (pseudonym) that was established as a non-profit organisation in 1994 to provide education, accommodation and counselling services for young people in an Australian city in a different state from Star Boys. According to the school's Staff Handbook, the school supports multicultural values and principles. Community involvement and support are welcomed by the school. The Parent and Student Handbook (D13, p. 4) states that "The mission of Castle College is to achieve academic excellence and to prepare the students to participate in the Australian and international community as informed, responsible and active citizens." Castle College classes were mixed gender in primary and high schools. Although the school prefers single-sex education in high schools, the single-sex education was not feasible because of the small number of the students (as at 2016). Briefly, the school's stated aims is to educate its students as the Golden Generation. Agai (2003) summarised the main qualities of Golden Generation: faith; love; idealism; selflessness; and transforming a "combination of moral values, science, and knowledge into action" (p. 57).

²¹ See Table 4.1 for coding details of school documents.

Although the school is open to all students regardless of their faith and ethnic backgrounds, the majority of the current students come from Muslim families. Turkish and Arabic languages are taught to meet the demands of families. Values education is important in the school culture and the subject, *Religion and Values*, has been introduced to teach and instil school values in the school environment from Preparation to Year 10. According to Castle College's Deputy Principal (A5), the syllabus of this subject is developed by subject teachers in curriculum meetings. The school has been growing slowly since its establishment in 2005 and was able to open a second campus in 2010. It provides 13 years of education from foundation at age 5 years to Year 12 across both campuses to over 400 students in 2016. Castle College's first high school graduates were in 2014.

Both schools are following the Australian Government Department of Education and Training Guidelines. The schools also have campus principals who work under the general principal who holds responsibility for all campuses. The Gülen-inspired schools in Australia established a federation in 2012 to advance professional development of the schools and staff, and to exchange experiences. Thus, both schools are founding members of this federation.

The data were collected from Star Boys between May 2010 and April 2011, and from Castle College in November and December 2012. Some of these data such as student numbers, campus numbers, and NAPLAN or CE scores of the schools in 2017 were updated from online sources. Thus, the case study spanned 2010 to 2012 but public domain data were supplemented in subsequent years to 2017.

4.2.2 Selection of Participants

Identifying the characteristics of two Gülen-inspired schools and how Gülen's philosophy is interpreted in these schools' practices are the aims of this research. Purposeful sampling was used in selecting participants guided by advice from the principal concerning staff who might have some familiarity with Gülen's philosophy. The schools employ mostly

national staff and some international staff who were mostly Turkish teachers assumed to be familiar with Gülen's philosophy. Participants who were teachers working in pastoral care services and students accessing these services were selected for interview. The researcher selected participants who were involved in pastoral care services for their broader knowledge about the objectives and activities of the school. Although the schools did not provide any professional development to introduce Gülen's philosophy to the staff and did not advertise themselves as Gülen-inspired schools, the researcher with an insider knowledge of the Hizmet Movement, knew that the schools were Gülen-inspired schools. Thus, parents and staff may have had limited understanding of Gülen's educational philosophy or the influence of the Hizmet Movement. Pastoral care services were voluntary in both schools, thus not all the students made use of these services.

Students who participated in pastoral care services were selected for two reasons: first, they experienced pastoral care services of the school which are crucial in Gülen's philosophy; second, they developed a better understanding about schools aims and objectives. Parents whose child utilised pastoral care services were selected for interviews for the same reason, that is, that they have a broader knowledge about the objectives and activities of the school because they experienced the full services of the school—academic services and pastoral care services. Thus, the researcher preferred to select participants who could provide extensive answers to the research question with their broader knowledge and experience of the school. Similar questions were asked of the leadership team, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and students in order to identify characteristics of the schools from the diverse experiences of participants. Further details about the participants are provided in Appendix J.

In Castle College, participants were selected in accordance with the criteria mentioned above. Interviews were conducted with the leadership team, teachers, non-teaching staff and parents. Printed interview questions were provided to the participants and their answers were

collected in written format. The school's leadership team assisted the researcher in the selection of participants. Students were not interviewed in Castle College as there were limited pastoral care activities there, thus, limited student participants for pastoral care activities.

4.2.3 Data Sources

There are three sources of data in this study: document analysis, interviews and observations of pastoral care meetings and activities—camp and after-school activities. These will be discussed in the following sections.

4.2.3.1 Document Analysis

Gillham (2000) noted that “Document research and analysis ... epitomizes the case study research strategy” (p. 43). Yin (2009) asserted that “Except for studies of preliterate societies, documentary information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic. This type of information can take many forms and should be the object of explicit data collection plans” (p. 101). There were a wide variety of document sources such as letters, minutes of meetings, public records, private papers, progress reports, newspapers, biographies, and visual documents. In this research, documents such as school policies, newsletters, school websites, and Staff and Student Handbooks have been examined in order to locate related data in response to the research question. School documents were coded as presented in Table 4.1, examined, and the findings were categorised.

Table 4.1

Coding of School Documents

Code of documents	Name of documents
D1	School Newsletter – 2010 (Star Boys)
D2	Staff Handbook – 2013 (Star College)
D3	Student Handbook – 2009 (Star College)
D4	School Prospectus – 2006 (Star College)
D5	School Prospectus – 2009 (Star College)
D6	School Website (Star College)
D11	School Newsletter (Castle College)
D12	Staff Handbook – 2011 (Castle College)
D13	Parent & Student Handbook – 2012 (Castle College)
D14	School Website (Castle College)
D15	Welfare Policies (Castle College)
D16	Volunteer Policy (Castle College)

These findings from school documents helped the researcher to learn about the following themes:

- Schools' aims and objectives;
- Activities and programs to achieve these aims;
- Characteristics of Star Boys and Castle College;
- Leadership roles and organisational structure of the schools; and
- Behaviour management, pastoral care and school–parent relationships.

The researcher further coded school documents with numbers where necessary, for example, D1–2 refers to the Star Boys newsletter issued in February 2010, D1–3 refers to the

newsletter issued in March 2010, D11–21 refers to the twenty–first issue of the Castle College newsletter, and D14–1 refers to the first document that was retrieved from the Castle College website. The codes between D1–D6 refers to Star Boys’ documents and D11–D16 refer to Castle College’s documents.

An important task was to establish the credibility of the document and the data. For example, Yin (2009) has drawn attention to the practice whereby the transcripts of official U.S. congressional hearings are deliberately edited by stakeholders before being printed in final form. Triangulation of data in which one source is corroborated with findings from another source is a helpful method to enhance the validity of data and to avoid being misinformed by documentary evidence.

In analysing data from documents, the researcher was aware that the documents under study had not been written to provide answers for specific research questions but to serve specific purposes and to inform certain audiences. Gillham (2000) emphasised that “These documents were not drawn up to answer your research questions: but they’re the part of the evidence base” (p. 43). It was crucial to relate the data collected from document analysis to the actual research questions.

4.2.3.2 Interviews

Among the six sources of data listed by Yin (2009), interviews were mentioned as one of the more important. Yin described three types of interviews: in–depth interview, focussed interview, and interview with more structured questions. In–depth interviews are time–consuming and do not finish in one sitting, and the interviewee can suggest other people to interview or other sources of data. Focussed interviews finish in one sitting, may contain open–ended questions, and for the purpose of this case study, certain sets of questions were followed. Interviews in this thesis fall into the focussed interviews category as they finish in one sitting and followed certain sets of questions to find answers to the research question:

What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy?

Wiersma and Jurs (2009) advised following aspects for conducting interviews: the interviewer must be trained; a mutually convenient interview time should be selected; an information letter about the study is effective for cooperation; comfortability of interviewee is important; atmosphere has to be businesslike and friendly; data recording procedures should be planned; and accuracy checks for data are recommended.

Interviews were conducted in English with a range of the leadership team, teachers, students, and parents at both schools. The researcher used codes to refer to the interview participants as follows: A – members of the leadership team, T – teacher, N – non-teaching staff, P – parent, and S – to by student. Pseudonyms are used to refer to participants in this thesis to protect their identity. In this thesis, the leadership team and teachers are referred to by their title, for example “the Principal (A1)”, and non-teaching staff, parents, and students are referred to by pseudonyms. Details of participants, their codes or pseudonyms, and interview dates are provided in Appendix J. The interview questions put to different participants—staff, parents, students—are provided in Appendix I. The rationale and focus of interviews are now discussed.

4.2.3.2.1 Structure of Interviews

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) have emphasised that “An interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge” (p. 3). The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews are widely used nowadays in qualitative research by social workers, counsellors, medical staff, marketing staff, politicians, researchers and many others.

Wiersma and Jurs (2009) stated that “The interview should be structured to obtain the necessary information efficiently in a friendly but business like atmosphere” (p. 223). A well-planned structure is needed for the success of all kinds of interviews; it gives the framework to the interviewer to control and run the interview smoothly. The interview structure was planned to address the following key issues in this thesis: educational aims of two schools; perceptions of participants about the school; teachers’ contribution; values education and values emphasised by schools; pastoral care activities; and school parents’ communication. Some responses were audio recorded and some responses were received in written format.

The researcher should maintain objectivity and ensure the credibility of the collected data throughout the interviews. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) expressed that “In principle, a well-crafted interview can be an objective research method in the sense of being unbiased” (p. 242). There are tests and tactics available to test the credibility of data such as triangulation, weighting the evidence and getting feedback from informants. The researcher had feedback from informants, participants, and an Islamic scholar who reviewed the findings. Thus, triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing were employed to ensure the credibility of the data in this thesis.

The interviewer should manage the interview situation, and this includes preparing recording equipment, planning how to protect and store the recorded data, and choosing a suitable physical environment for the interview. Wiersma and Jurs (2009) suggested that the interviewer should have a flexible timetable to organise a mutually convenient interview time. The researcher informed participants about the content, purpose, and duration of interviews and arranged a mutually convenient time and place for the interview to take place. All interviews were conducted on school property with the permission of the Principal.

In this study, interviews with leadership team members, teachers, parents and students allowed the researcher to collect data on their personal experiences and thoughts. These

interview data provided evidence about how Gülen's educational views served the educational needs of students and developed their qualities.

4.2.3.2.2 Topics for the interviews

The same series of interviews were conducted in each of the case study schools (see Appendix I for interview questions). In each school, interviews were conducted with the leadership team—three staff in Star Boys and two staff in Castle College—aiming to learn about:

- Objectives and priorities of the education of that particular school;
- The kind of programs and activities organised to reach their educational goals;
- The difficulties in achieving their educational aims and objectives and how they were overcoming these difficulties; and
- What the important aspects and characteristics of the school are and what this school could offer to others.

Interviews with eight teachers—five in Star Boys and three in Castle College—assisted the researcher to understand:

- The purpose of their teaching;
- Their priorities in educating the students and how they built and maintained these priorities;
- Their opinion of the best teacher, student model and what could be done to be the best teacher and to educate the best student; and
- The important aspects and characteristics of the school and what this school could offer to others.

The interviews conducted with five non-teaching staff—three in Star Boys and two in Castle College—provided:

- Their opinion about the behaviour of students;
- Their perception about the school as a working environment compared with their previous school employments; and
- What made the school different from others in their view.

Interviews with seven parents—four in Star Boys and three in Castle College—helped the researcher to understand:

- The reasons parents chose Gülen-inspired schools for the education of their children;
- Their experience about the services they are receiving from Gülen-inspired schools;
- Whether parents were happy with their child's moral and educational progress; and
- How the schools met parents' educational expectations.

The researcher interviewed five students in Star Boys to understand:

- The students' approach towards the educational activities, and
- How these schools helped them to acquire knowledge and building character.

The researcher spent between 15–45 minutes with each participant for the recorded interviews. Some participants preferred to provide their answers in written form. In both cases, the participants were comfortable in sharing their thoughts with the researcher about the issues raised in interviews. The next section examines the participant observation which was employed to collect data from Star Boys.

4.2.3.3 Participant Observation

The third source of data was generated through participant observation. Yin (2009) describes participant observation in the following way, “Participant observation is a special mode of observation in which you are not merely a passive observer. Instead, you may assume a variety of roles within a case study situation and may actually participate in the events being studied” (p. 111). Wiersma and Jurs (2009) noted that “The *participant–observer* attempts to generate the data from the perspective of the individuals being studied” (p. 284). Fine (2015) pointed four advantages of the participant observation: collection of rich data; validity—researcher collects data from the scene; interpretive understanding—researcher is directly involved in activity; and low cost. He also mentioned four disadvantages of participant observation: proof—reliability of findings; generalisability—whether findings can be extended to other situations; bias— difficulty in separating if the data reflects the perspective of researcher or bias; and time—it needs significant amount of time.

For Spradley (1980), there are several types of participation such as passive participation, moderate participation and active participation available, according to the preferences of the researcher. In passive participation, the researcher is present in the field but does not interact with other people to any great extent. In moderate participation, the researcher seeks to maintain a balance between observation and participation, while in active participation the researcher seeks to do what other people are doing.

The researcher adopted a passive participation approach in this study. The participant observation gave the researcher an opportunity to confirm the information gathered through other sources such as interviews and document analysis, and to learn more details about the study. By participating in the activities of the selected group, the researcher monitored the affiliation between thoughts and practices of participants. This was considered to be an

effective strategy to learn about Hizmet's school cultures and to receive information directly from participants and school activities in natural settings.

According to Fine (2015), there are no firm rules set up to guide how to conduct participant observation; however, sociology and anthropology suggested some flexible strategies, namely, access to convince the group to allow the researcher to observe their activities; socialisation; developing relationships; field notes including actions, statements, and feelings of the observer; and ethical concerns around consent, confidentiality, and accuracy of description. Gillham (2000) has suggested that where there is a trusting relationship, participants are likely to be more open in their revelations. The researcher had the opportunity to access the case study site and socialise with the staff and students as he was previously a staff member of Star Boys. All related information and evidence were recorded without delay after observation. Gillham (2000) noted that "If you write up your observations as soon as possible they will be easier to recall and also more accurately recorded" (p. 48). Accordingly, the researcher made short notes while in the field and updated the observation records without delay, going through these notes. Ethical issues were addressed in the information letter given to participants prior to observation. The letter explained the purpose of the study, the nature of the observation, and maintenance of the confidentiality.

Using the participant observation method, the researcher observed pastoral care departmental meetings, students' camps, after-school activities with a view to observing potential outcomes of Gülen's educational vision in the Star Boys environment. Participant observation was not conducted in Castle College as pastoral care departmental meetings were not well established in Castle College. The researcher conducted general observation in the field. Therefore, participant observation was conducted in Star Boys only as one of the methods to collect the relevant data. The data obtained through participant observation are revealed with the PO code in this thesis and Star Boys participant observation schedule is

provided in Appendix J. Coding, interpretation, and analysis of data are explained in the Data Analysis section that follows.

4.2.4 Qualitative Data Analysis

Analysis of qualitative data involves a process of categorisation, description, and synthesis (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). There are different types of methods to analyse qualitative data. This case study aimed to identify the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy and implementation of Gülen's educational philosophy in these schools through the frame work that developed in Chapter Three.

4.2.4.1 Implementation of Analysis

This study adopted and followed the recommendations of Creswell (2014, pp. 197–200) in data analysis. He recommended six generic steps for the analysis of qualitative data:

1. Organise and prepare the data for analysis.
2. Read through all the data to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning.
3. Start coding all of the data.
4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the settings or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.
5. Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative.
6. A final step in data analysis involves making an interpretation in qualitative research of the findings or results.

The purpose of this case study was to collect data to explore the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy. Thus, related sources of data such as the Student and Staff Handbooks, the website, and newsletters were selected rather than studying all possible sources of data. The data collected for the case study included the school documents, the school websites, interviews and participant observation recordings (step 1). Then these texts were examined closely to establish familiarisation before the categorisation step (step 2).

For Creswell (2014) coding is segmenting data (text or picture) into categories and labelling each category with a term. Coding is helpful to reduce the data into a manageable size. Arranging the data into groups is important in order to be able to analyse them to find responses to the research question. In step three, the main categories that emerged from the literature review were used to group the qualitative data in this study. The groups were: school culture (Cu), school climate (Cl), and school identity (I). Appendix E provides an example of how data were coded during the analysis.

Examining the collected information further by the help of coding assisted in the generation of several themes (step 4) and these themes are displayed in Table 4.2. For instance, the code Cu.1 indicates that the data describe aspects of school culture (Cu) such as the emphasis on balanced education (1). Table 4.2 summarises the remaining codes. In the coding process, the data were first grouped according to these categories in separate document as preparation for detailed analysis. Tables and figures are used to narrate information related to certain aspects (step 5). Then the collected data were analysed and findings reported in Chapter Five and Six.

Table 4.2

Categorising the Collected Data Through Coding

Main categories	Main themes
School culture (Cu)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Balanced education 2. Character development and values education 3. The school's approach to behaviour management 4. Multiculturalism
School climate (Cl)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastoral care programs 2. School–parent relationships 3. Leadership 4. Student relationships 5. School environment
School identity (I)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Espoused focus on academic education 2. Curriculum orientation 3. Community relations and Gülen's inspiration

The data collected from the case study were needed to explore responses to the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? As discussed previously, these data were drawn from sources through school documents, observations of the practices within the schools, and interviewing staff, students and parents.

4.3 Validity of the Research

This section explains how validity and reliability were achieved in this research. Validity and reliability of the findings are essential for all forms of research. Validity in qualitative research is different from validity in quantitative research, reliability and generalisability (Creswell, 2014). "Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different

projects” (Gibbs, as cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 201). For Wiersma and Jurs (2009), there are two types of validity: internal validity, about accurate interpretation; and external validity, about generalisability of research findings. Reliability deals with consistency and replicability of research and it contributes to the validity of the research.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest four criteria to assess the trustworthiness of a research study: credibility; applicability—the extent to what findings are applicable in other situations; consistency—the findings are consistent and repeatable; and neutrality—confirmability of whether there is a researcher bias. Credibility and applicability are addressed by Creswell (2014) as reliability and generalisability. Creswell considers reliability and generalisability are minor considerations for qualitative research. From that author’s perspective, validity is interpreted in qualitative research to decide whether the findings are accurate from the perspectives of the researcher, the participant, or the reader. He suggests that researchers should use multiple approaches to assess the accuracy of data and he listed eight primary strategies to check validity of findings: triangulation; member (participant)–checking; use of thick description to convey the findings; clarification of the bias the researcher brings to the study; presentation of negative information that runs counter to the themes; spending prolonged time in the field; use of peer debriefing; and use of an external auditor. Triangulation, member–checking, spending prolonged time in the field, and peer debriefing are employed to ensure the validity of the case study findings in this research study.

Triangulation strategy was employed in this case study on data collected from various sources: school documents, interviews, and observations. Interpretations and justifications were based on data that was collected from these sources. Though the case study was conducted in two sites, Star Boys and Castle College, the researcher spent an extended period time collecting data in Star Boys. The researcher was known to most of participants in Star Boys as he had worked in the school for two years prior to the study, but he was not in such a

position of power that could possibly influence the participants in their data provision as he was not employed by the school at the time of data collection.

The case study took ten months in Star Boys and two months in Castle College. The researcher spent two years as a teaching staff member in Star Boys. He followed the establishment and growth of Castle College closely and visited the school several times during the study. He was also acquainted with the principal and some teaching staff before the collection of case study data was conducted. The extended time he spent in Star Boys helped him develop a better understanding about the school, its purposes and activities. Although the researcher spent less time in Castle College during the case study, the researcher's connections with Castle College helped him to collect the necessary data during this shorter period. Obtaining some interview responses in written form also provided some additional time for data collection and observation. Thus, the familiarity between the schools studied, the participants and the researcher contributed positively to the data collection process.

These findings of the case studies were also checked by a process of member-checking. One participant from each school in a leadership position, the Certificate of Education Coordinator in Star Boys and the Deputy Principal in Castle College, examined the findings and their interpretations. An independent Islamic Scholar who is familiar with Gülen's philosophy also examined the case study findings. Member-checking and peer debriefing contributed to the credibility of the research by preventing possible misinterpretation and bias that would affect negatively the accuracy of results.

4.4 Ethical Issues

The case study that involved human participants in the data collection process was conducted to collect data from two schools in response to the research question. Therefore, ethical approval was sought and given to protect the welfare and rights of all participants. Ethical issues should be considered in all stages of the research from writing the research

question to the conclusion of the research. This research followed a framework that was introduced by Australian Catholic University Code of Conduct for Research (2004) and the ethics clearance approval was granted from the Human Research Ethics Committee for the case study in May 2010 with register number V2010 11 (Appendix A). The researcher applied to the Human Research Ethics Committee for an extension to collect data from Castle College, and this was approved in September 2012.

The information letter provided to participants explaining the purpose and benefits of the study and the phone numbers of the principal supervisor and the ethics committee were provided for participants' further inquiries (Appendix C). The participants were informed that they could refuse or discontinue participation in this study without giving any reason. The participants were assured that the confidentiality of their data will be maintained and their names will not use in any report or publication. The participation time was organised in accordance with the participants' preference and availability. The signed consent letter was obtained from all participants.

The researcher organised observation and interview times carefully at a mutually agreed time taking care not to disturb participants, schools and their daily activities. Creswell (2014) suggested that the collected data should be discarded after a reasonable period, thus the collected data from participants will be discarded 10 years after the completion of the study. The researcher conscientiously undertook to preserve the objectivity of the data and not to manipulate the data to meet his own needs or the needs of the readership audience, nor to provide advantages for certain individuals or groups.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has identified the components of the methodology that are employed in this research study. It emphasised that the research method employed was qualitative, and

therefore concerned with individually constructed subjective meanings and their interpretation. This chapter has also specified how the related data were collected and analysed in response to the research question: *What are the specific educational characteristics of two schools (Star Boys and Castle College) founded on Gülen's philosophy?*

The data for this case study were gathered through two sites, Gülen-inspired schools, Star Boys and Castle College. Document analysis, interviews and participant observation were determined as data collecting methods. Examination of the related documents, participant observation, and interviews with the people who were familiar with pastoral care services of the school gave the researcher a chance to collect related data to answer the research question.

The data analysis method recommended by Creswell (2014) allowed the researcher to interpret the collected data from its natural settings. The procedures concerned with the validity of the research and ethical issues were introduced. The following two chapters focus on the findings from Star Boys and Castle College.

CHAPTER 5: STAR BOYS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the first of two case study schools, namely, Star College. Star College is a multi-campus school and the case study was conducted in the Star College Boys Campus. In this section, the title Star College is used if the data were obtained from school documents and refers to all campuses. Star Boys is used if the data were related only to Star College Boys Campus. Findings related to the second school, namely, Castle College, are reported in Chapter Six. These findings address the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy?

As described in Chapter Four, the researcher collected data through interviews, passive participant observation and analysis of school documents. In the process of collecting data, the researcher interviewed staff (N=11), parents (N=4), and students (N=5). All participants were familiar with the pastoral care services of the school. He also observed pastoral care staff meetings, a students' camp, and after-school pastoral care activities, and examined relevant documents such as newsletters, handbooks, the school prospectus and website.

The framework developed in Chapter Three was used to organise and structure the reporting of these findings. Thus, the findings are examined under three main dimensions: school culture in Section 5.2; school climate in Section 5.3; and school identity in Section 5.4. Sources of the data in this chapter are referred to by codes as explained in Table 4.1 in Section 4.2.3.1 and Appendix J. Thus, for example, D1 is referred to the data were extracted from the 2010 Star Boys school newsletter. Then D1-2 refers to 2010 February issue. Data from leadership team members, teachers, parents, and students are referenced as A, T, P, and S

respectively. Non-teaching staff, parents and students are referred to by pseudonyms, for example Mr Ahmet, and students by their first name, for example Burhan. The chapter is summarised in Section 5.5.

5.2 School Culture

This section reports findings about the Star Boys school culture which refers to the espoused values, norms of practice, and general assumptions about the purpose of education. The section addresses the four themes that emerged from the data and which reflect school culture: balanced education in Section 5.2.1; values education in Section 5.2.2; the school's approach to behaviour management in Section 5.2.3; and multiculturalism in Section 5.2.4.

5.2.1 Balanced Education

One of the school's philosophies consistent with Gülen's writings was to provide a balanced education that encompassed academic excellence and moral values. It can be broadly stated that the majority of interviewed participants shared the same opinion about the achievement of a balanced education as shown in Table 5.1). The mathematics teacher (T2) asserted that "It is a college [school staff] that strives to help each student to achieve their highest potential academically, encompassed with high moral values." Thus, a balanced education as an essential element of Star Boys' school culture is evident in T2's assertion.

This goal is represented in the school emblem by the image of a student who is trying to reach the star that symbolises the educational vision of the school which is "excellence in both academic and values education" (D6). Coding details are shown in Table 4.1. "To enhance the students' personal and academic achievements" and "to develop students' discipline, moral values and social responsibilities" were mentioned as the part of school's mission (p. ii). Curriculum and pastoral care services provided by the school supported the development of academic excellence and instilled moral and ethical values in the students. Pastoral care

services are the practices adopted by the school to embed moral values within the student body. The role and impact of pastoral care are further examined in Section 5.3.

According to the 2006 School Prospectus (D4), “It is the interaction between children’s peers and adults, and their relationship with parents and teachers, that foster growth, which is the basis for excellent education” (p. i). The school mission statement included, “to educate students to care about all other human beings,” and, “to protect all other creatures and the universe as a whole” (D4, p. ii).

Students are expected to be a part of society as model citizens, as a result of the education offered by the school. The school aims “to prepare the students to participate in the contemporary Australian society as informed, responsible, active, caring, and contributing citizens” (D5, p. 4). The 2006 School Prospectus (D4) stated that “We endeavour to provide a balanced education that encompasses academic excellence on the one hand, and the imparting of spiritual and moral values on the other” (p. i). Thus, the balanced educational philosophy of the school aims to raise ideal individuals who are well-educated in the sciences and well-rounded in values education and whom Gülen called the Golden Generation (see Section 2.2.2). Raising this generation is a priority of Gülen-inspired schools and a crucial part of school culture.

The school explicitly states in numerous documents its aim to raise “the Golden Generation – the generation with nobility of mind and spirit and who have the strength to shape the future” (D4, p. 2). For example, school newsletter (D1–2) stated that “In many ways, we hope to play a role in raising the golden generation” (p. 8) and a statement in the 2006 School Prospectus (D4) is that this generation should possess “values such as honesty, compassion and respect” (p. 3). The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3, see Appendix J for codes) described the Golden Generation as academically and ethically excellent students. Academic

excellence and moral perfection are two indispensable components of a Golden Generation: the ideal generation that the school aimed to form.

5.2.2 Values Education

Two different approaches of morality were introduced by Gert and Gert (2016) and discussed in Section 3.1.1.2, namely, descriptive and normative. Gülen has a descriptive morality approach as his discussions on morality are based on his understanding of Islam. Among the four values categories introduced by Inglehart and Welzel (n.d.), Gülen's approach to values is coherent with traditional values. He emphasised Islamic and Anatolian Turkish values in his writings. When moral values related to the schools are discussed in Chapters Five and Six, they refer to Australian, Islamic, and Turkish values as shown in Table 5.3. In this section, the term values education refers to delivering Australian, Islamic, and Turkish values through curricular and extra-curricular activities.

This section reports the findings from Star Boys about values education under the following themes: values education from the perspective of the school's objectives; perspectives about priorities—academic or moral values; categories of values; list of moral values; and outcomes of moral values. Values education is one of the major components of the balanced education of the school, along with academic excellence. Both components are emphasised strongly by the majority of participants as shown in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2).

5.2.2.1 Values Education from the Perspective of the School's Objectives

Summaries of the views of participants about values education at Star Boys are presented in Table 5.1. These views were expressed in response to questions such as “What values are taught in Star Boys?” “How are they implemented?” and “How do you help students in their moral development?”

Table 5.1

Values Education from The Perspective of School's Objectives

Data	Data sources
Balanced education (academic excellence and moral values).	A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, N1, N3, P1, P3, S1, S3 & S5
“To develop students' discipline, moral values and social responsibilities.”	D4
“Our biggest success is character development ...”	A1
“The most important thing is the emphasis on behaviour.”	A2
“The school has strong emphasis on building good character in students, which includes establishing sound moral values leading to good citizenship.”	N3
“Morality is the foundation upon which all other things are built.”	P2
“The school is enthusiastic about teaching how to behave.”	N2
“They are trying to make their students to be good examples...”	P3
“They need these moral values as a fuel to travel towards their educational success.”	P3
“We are trying to integrate these students into life, and to build solid characters that will help them throughout their lives.”	A1
“Through him these schools have been opened up as we know, we called his method “service” and this service is to humanity.”	A2
“I've seen many cases in which parents asked us to keep their sons in the school environment regardless of academic success.”	A1

Seventeen of the 20 participants emphasised that values education is a major component of balanced education and a crucial element of school culture. A1's statement that “Star Boys is [a] very successful institution that is trying to cater for the needs of academic excellence as well as the moral values,” and T1's expression, “I think both of them are important [academic & moral] because you cannot separate [them], they like a wing, it is like a bird with two wings, I think they should go together” emphasise the importance of a balanced education. Mr Hasan's (P3) argument indicates parents' expectations of a balanced education, “We have, as

parents, some basic concerns about our child's educational improvement and also while having this education also having the moral values" and Burhan's (S3) statement suggests that the school provided a balanced education and met parents' expectations, "In study wise [the school is] very successful and also the moral values that they give to students." In other words, he expressed satisfaction with the opportunities to learn and to develop values. The school established a pastoral care department to reinforce its academic and values education.

As presented in Table 5.1, four participants (A1, A2, N3 & P2) highlighted the importance of character building as a part of values education. For the Principal (A1), character development was the greatest success of the school and for the Deputy Principal (A2) the school placed more emphasis on behaviour. The non-teaching staff member Mr Erhan (N2) argued that the school had a strong emphasis on building a good character to educate good citizens and for Mr Ahmet (P2), morality was a foundation on which all other virtues are built. The views of 17 participants out of 20 underlined the importance of values education in the school culture.

According to the Mr Erhan (N2), the school was enthusiastic about teaching students how to behave. The expression, *behave*, refers to good behaviour that is acceptable to the school community and reflects the values education the school is trying to achieve. For Mr Hasan (P3), moral values taught in the school empowered the students to achieve in academic fields when he said, "They [students] need these moral values as a fuel to travel towards their educational success." As a result of values education, the school was aiming to generate role model students, and these role model students were to transfer the school culture and values to the junior students as well as being an example to others in the wider society. For the Principal (A1), when he used the words, "While we are trying to integrate these students into life we at the same time trying to build solid characters that will carry on throughout their lives" he conveyed that the character education given in the school aimed to improve the

character of students positively and permanently For the Deputy Principal (A2), the notion of ‘service to humanity’ inspired by Gülen was one of the major features in the culture of the school when he said:

Star Colleges are inspired by [a] very well-known figure in the Islamic world, Turkish world, also in the international arena, and I'm talking about Mr. Fethullah Gülen. He is an educator himself, a spiritual leader to many people, and through his work, through his books, through his inspiration the Turkish community in particular has been inspired by this great scholar and opened up schools not only in Turkey but all over the world. These schools have been opened up [and] as we know, we called it his method, service, and this service is to humanity. I think that's the main factor that really identify Star College and Star Colleges.

Schooling is a significant way of serving humanity and it is implemented through educating youth.

The Principal (A1) stated that the greatest success of the school was the character development of students. Some parents had expressed an opinion similar to the Principal (A1) stating that they just wanted to raise their children as good human beings and keep their children in the school environment without necessarily expecting great academic achievements. For example, Mr Gurol (P1) said:

The child does not have to be brilliant to go to Star Boys and even if they not at a certain academic level at the end of their education they will still have moral values that will help the environment and the family for the rest of their lives.

5.2.2.2 Perspectives about Priorities: Academic or Moral Values?

The researcher asked parents and teachers who participated in the interviews, “Is academic achievement or moral development more important in the school?” (Appendix I). Their responses are presented in Table 5.2. Six of 11 participants prioritised moral improvements. The Principal (A1) said, for example, “Character building comes first, and then the academic excellence.” Five other participants explained that academic and moral

improvements are equally important; for example, the chemistry teacher (T1) stated that “Both of them are important because they are inseparable.”

Table 5.2

Academic or Moral Values Come First

Data	Data sources
“Character building comes first, and then the academic excellence.”	A1
“May be the emphasis is more on behaviour.”	A2
“Moral values will be one step ahead of academic values.”	P1
Moral improvement is more important.	P2 & P3
“A student that has moral values; this is what the school wants.”	T5
“Both of them are important because they are inseparable.”	T1
“They both go hand in hand; you can’t have one without the other.”	T2
“They are both equally important ...”	T4
“Should go together.”	P4
“We endeavour to provide a balanced education that encompasses ‘academic excellence’... and ‘spiritual and moral values’.”	D4
“Until Year 10, ... moral development, but at the CE ²² level, academic achievement becomes more imperative.”	T3

During the interviews, the majority of teachers and Mr Mustafa (P4) preferred a balanced education that covered both academic and moral development. For four participants (T1, T2, T4 & P4) academic excellence and moral values were inseparable. Therefore, both components were considered essential in supporting one another.

Mr Mustafa (P4) and the school documents supported the opinions of the teachers by stating the importance of promoting a balanced education. The Certificate of Education (CE) coordinator’s (T3) approach to the question was quite different. He articulated that the school gave emphasis to moral improvements until Year 10, and after Year 10, academic

²² A CE is granted to students who complete secondary education in Australia.

achievement became a priority. The participants valued both components of balanced education—academic and values education.

5.2.2.3 Categories of Values

The definition of the word, value, is quite extensive, thus individuals may derive different meanings from the term. In order to define the meaning of values, from the school's perspective, the researcher asked the participants about the values addressed in the school environment and received some general and some specific responses. A list of specific values and their frequency are presented in Figure 5.1 in Section 5.2.2.4.

Humanitarian values were mentioned by four participants, common values mentioned by one participant and universal values were also mentioned by two participants. These three groups can be merged into one group—universal values. To seek the truth, to seek justice, self-respect, respect and caring for others, caring for other living things and the environment are a few examples of universal values as defined by Kinnier, Kernes, and Dautheribes (2000).

The categories of religious values and moral values were pointed out by five participants (T5, P1, P2, P3 and S3). The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) stated that although the school welcomed people of all faiths and cultures, currently all students of the school were Muslims. Therefore, participants who referred to religious and moral values were most likely signifying Islamic moral values. Piety, sincerity, purity, truthfulness, fairness, loyalty and having a good attitude towards others are a few examples of Islamic moral values (Al-Hashimi, 1999). Truthfulness, as shown as honesty in Figure 5.1, loyalty and having a good attitude towards others, “to care all other human beings ... to respect their differences”, (D4, p. ii) are mentioned in school documents or by participants. A few examples of Australian values are:

respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual, freedom of religion, commitment to the rule of law, Parliamentary democracy, equality of men and women and a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces mutual respect, tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need and pursuit of the public good. (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, n.d., para. 4)

According to the Student Handbook (D3, p. 39), the school aimed to raise a young generation with strong bonds to Turkish culture and a desire to be good Australians. The school community was also Australian Muslim, thus, the category of Australian, Turkish and Islamic values well defines the school values.

5.2.2.4 List of Moral Values

This section contains more specific data about values and also participants' opinions about the success of the school in delivering values education. The researcher asked: What values are raised in the school? Participants mentioned the values that appealed significantly to them and these are presented in Figure 5.1.

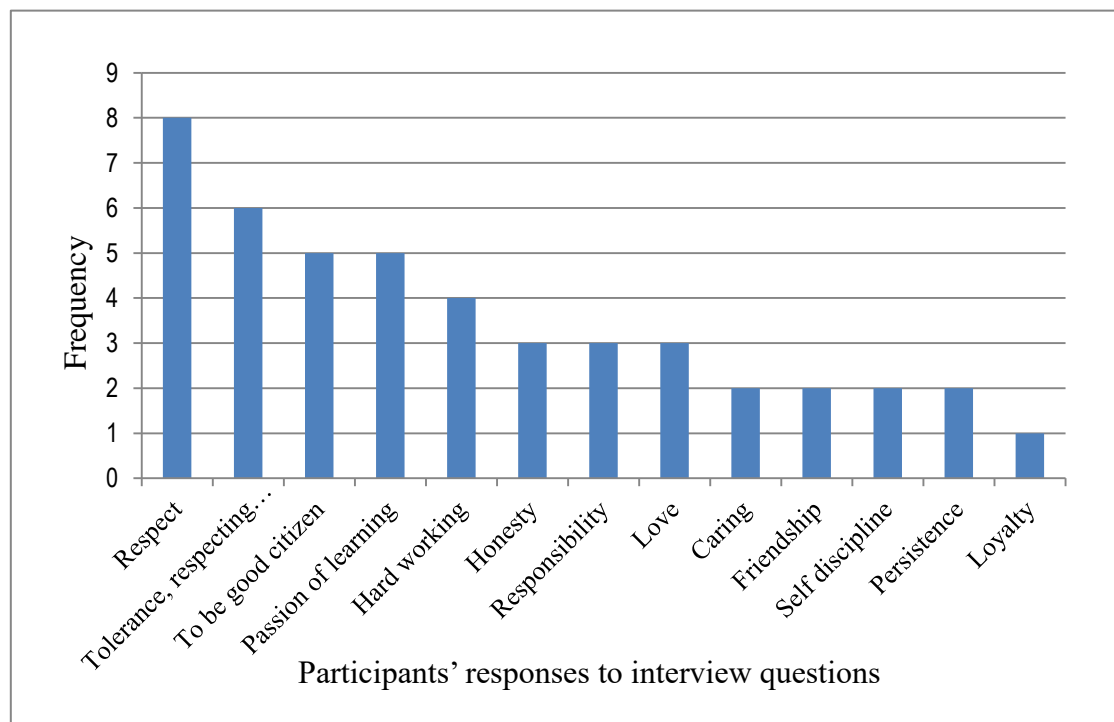


Figure 5.1. List of moral values.

The notion of respect was the dominant value which was mentioned in three documents and by eight participants. The participants covered various perspectives of respect: respecting one another; respecting elders; respecting the community; respecting diversity; respecting the environment; and respecting all living things. For instance, the Deputy Principal (A2) expressed “The main value is respecting elders, loving youngsters. To respect your elders is part of our culture ..., respecting the environment, respecting the community, main focus is on respect and becoming respectful citizens in Australia.” Respect held an important place among other values as it makes school life smoother for students, parents and staff.

Responses incorporating tolerance, understanding and respecting differences were recognised as school values in many responses. Learning about the ideas, thoughts and beliefs of others and respecting them were valued by six participants. This was considered an essential value for the formation and preservation of a peaceful community as a significant range of diversity exists in today’s society. The 2006 School Prospectus (D4) stated that “Star College is a school where diversity is strength and students are expected to understand and respect all differences” (p. ii).

Becoming a beneficial member of society, supporting the disadvantaged, the youth, entire humanity and the environment all of which represented attributes of being a good citizen were mentioned by five participants. Passion for learning was highlighted by five participants. The Deputy Principal (A2) stressed that he was overwhelmed with the students’ interest in learning when he commenced teaching in the school. He said, “We had a serious drug problem in the school that I taught ..., [but] when I came to Star Boys, everyone was interested in learning.”

“Hardworking” was underlined by four participants and “honesty”, “responsibility” and “love” were mentioned by three participants. Caring (S4 & D), compassion (D) and empathy (P3) contain similar meanings. “Friendship”, “self-discipline” and “persistence” were

mentioned by two participants, and “loyalty” mentioned by one participant. Among the values named above, respect and tolerance, becoming a beneficial member of society, and passion for learning were the values most emphasised by participants. For example, the Deputy Principal (A2) said “I think the best model is a student who is responsible, respectable and also beneficial to a society.”

The researcher asked participants if they found the school to be successful in delivering a values education. All responses were in the affirmative. Nine participants replied ‘yes’ without any hesitation, the remaining 11 participants stated that school was successful in delivering a values education, but also stated that there was room for further improvement in values education. For example, the Deputy Principal (A2) said “Yes, heading to that” and Mr Ahmet (P2) said “Yes, it is getting there”.

Three participants expressed that the school was successful in the delivery of a values education and it was heading towards better achievements. The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) stated more clearly that “Yes, but not 100%; we are trying our best”. He mentioned one reason for this: insufficient number of mentors (pastoral care staff). For the Deputy Principal (A2) and Mr Ahmet (P2), the school was heading towards better success in delivering values education. Their opinion ran parallel to that of Principal (A1) when he stated that “If we got more mentors helping their younger brothers [other students], the pastoral care activities will be done with more success, although it is successful these days but it can be improved a bit better.” In other words, the school’s success in values education was satisfactory, but expectations were not fulfilled yet because of insufficient number of pastoral care staff. The expectation outcomes from values education are summarised in Table 5.3 in Section 5.2.2.5.

The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) said the school was successful in delivering values education, but it did not cover the entire body of students. This meant that some students did not attend optional after-school pastoral care activities and missed the values education that is

delivered by pastoral care programs. He stated that “[The] majority of our students ... do not do anything during the term breaks or semester breaks because [the] pastoral care unit can cater only [for a] certain number of students, ... 70, 75% of the students is [sic] not being catered [for].” Thus, betterment of delivering values education is related to the expansion of pastoral care activities to the entire student body.

On the other hand, the Year 10 Coordinator (T5) stated that the school was successful regarding the quality if not the quantity and he used an analogy to support his view: “A farmer would be considered successful if he is able to grow one tree out of 10 seeds he had planted.” Mr Hasan’s (P3) and Harun’s (S2) response to the question of “Is school successful in moral (values) education?” was ‘yes’ but this affirmation contained a touch of hesitation. The chemistry teacher (T1) found the school successful “to some extent.” Naturally, it is difficult to measure success in delivering values education as the definition of values education and expectations in this field may vary according to individuals.

Nine participants found the school very successful in education while four participants (A3, T3, N3 & P4) found the school generally successful in delivering values education, three of them did not specify the reason why they did not find the school 100% successful. The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) stated that the school could achieve better success by increasing the number of mentors. The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) indicated that the school could improve its success in delivering values education by expanding pastoral care activities, as from his perspective, current activities were addressing only 25% of the students. The chemistry teacher’s (T1) response was “to some extent I can say yes.” He provided a reason for this response and it was that “our philosophy is not to satisfy with the current achievements so should always look forward to gaining more success.” Four participants (A2, T3, P4, & S2) found the school generally successful. However, they did not discuss the issue further by explaining how it can achieve full success. The Principal (A1), Mr Ahmet (P2), and Mr Hasan

(P3) considered the school needed more time to improve its degree of success in delivering values education. The overall review of the responses indicated that the school achievements in delivering values education were successful. However, the school needed more time, and more mentors to expand its pastoral care services to the entire student body in order to achieve better success in delivering values education. How the school accomplishes moral values is examined in the section on school climate.

5.2.2.5 Outcomes of Delivering Values Education

As examined above, perceptions of participants suggest that the school strongly emphasised values education and made significant efforts to reach this objective. The researcher asked participants the question: “What is the best model of student that the school is trying to achieve?” (see Appendix I). This question sought to find out what kind of character is expected from the education that is offered by the school. The related data are presented in Table 5.3.

The majority of participants stated that the overall education provided by the school should produce well-educated and well-mannered students. These two areas represent a balanced education; hence an ideal education is not achieved in the absence of one of the components.

According to 10 participants, the school expected to produce productive and contributing members of society. The students should develop social responsibility and aim to be beneficial to the broader community. The expectations of five participants were similar in relation to a service context; they expected students to be helpful and supportive to the younger generation, to their families, to humanity as an entirety, and to the environment.

Table 5.3

Outcomes of Delivering Values Education

Data	Data sources
Respectful and contributing citizens	A1, A2, T1, T2, T3, T5
Responsible, respectable and beneficial to a society	N3, P2 & P4
Helpful to the environment, helpful towards all humanity	A3, N1, P1 & S4
Students with two wings: academic excellence and moral values; Golden Generation; well-educated, well-mannered	A1, A2, A3, T3, T4, T5, N3, P1, P2, S1 & S5
Respectful to others	A2, T2, T4, N1, S1, S2, S3
To value the differences of others, to accept people as they are	A1, T5, P2 & S4
Role models for others	P3, P4, N2 & N3
Who cares other people, who loves people all humanity	A3
Responsible	N1 & A2
Mature	N1
Hardworking (S2), smart, intelligent (S4)	S2 & S4
Very confident	T4
Willing to learn and knows a lot. A student who loves to learn	S3 & S4
Tries to include more people in this education and mission	A3

Having respect for others and being respected by others was pointed out by seven participants (A2, T2, T4, N1, S1, S2 & S3), whereas to value the differences of others (A1) and to accept them as they are (T5) was mentioned by four participants (A1, T5, P2 & S4). The natural outcome of respect is not to discriminate between people because of their differences. Four (P3, P4, N2 & N3) participants stated that producing role model students should be one of the objectives of education.

Participants mentioned some other qualities they would like to see in the component of students' character: Care and love for others, maturity, responsibility, hard work, confidence,

and passion for learning. The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3), when he discussed the best model of the student, mentioned a unique quality; he went on to argue that students should try to attract others to the educational services:

The best model of student would be the one who is seeking the knowledge in the highest level besides this that person should have moral and ethical values who cares [for] other people ... and then actually tries to make some activities so that more people will include themselves in this education, mission.

5.2.3 The School's Approach to Behaviour Management

Models of behaviour management and discipline are an important reflection of school culture. Although the word, discipline, contains the meaning of punishment or correction, it is used in this section in the sense of having an orderly school life and behaviour management education. The data related to discipline are reported under the following headings: behaviour management approach; importance of behaviour management; establishing the rules of behaviour management; and relationship between education and behaviour management.

5.2.3.1 Behaviour Management Approach

The questions related to behaviour management were asked of the school's leadership team and teachers and findings are presented in Table 5.4. The staff had more accurate knowledge about behaviour management as the related policies were established and implemented by them. For the Principal (A1), behaviour management was considered one of the strongest areas of the school and for the Deputy Principal (A2), the school was seen to be renowned for its effective behaviour management approach.

Table 5.4

Understanding the Concept of Behaviour Management

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“Our simple approach to discipline is a whole school focus on mainly responsibility, we want self–discipline, and we want self–responsibility where they are responsible for their own behaviour.”	A2
“Teacher is responsible to teach and the student has the right to learn.”	A2
“Discipline, responsibilities and respect to other people with discipline.”	T5
“We are trying to teach the work ethics; responsibilities, punctuality and also appearance...”	T5
“Caring attitude, caring behaviour, even [if] they are at fault we are still caring about their wellbeing. We are not penalising their character we are penalising the misbehaviour.”	A1
“We don’t want them to feel that they have been labelled.”	A1
“Discipline is trying to establish a friendship between teachers and students, once they like teachers they follow the rules.”	A3
“When implementing it, you have to be careful not to be too harsh nor too light.”	T2
“We are [a] disciplined school obviously not very strict, flexible.”	A3
“The school tries to be consistent and fair by implementing a level system. ... same punishment or praise for each same action.”	T2

According to the Deputy Principal (A2), the school tried to establish the practices of self–responsibility and self–discipline and this idea reflects Rogers’ approach in Section 3.1.2. If this was achieved, students would be well–behaved even when they were not supervised. For him, the main issue was that a teacher was responsible to teach and a student had the right to learn. Any kind of misconduct in the school potentially prevented teachers from fulfilling their responsibilities and interrupted the education of students. For the Year 10 Coordinator (T5), discipline was all about responsibility and respecting others when he said “Discipline

[is] responsibilities and respect to other people... there is a lot of discipline rules that would uphold those values.”

The principal’s (A1) approach to behaviour management was from the perspective of caring for the wellbeing of students through helping them to correct their misbehaviour. The Principal (A1) stated that the focus should be on the act of misconduct itself rather than the individuals who misbehaved. He argued that the students should not feel that they have been marked by the school staff or discipline committee. The students involved in disciplinary issues were accepted as other students were and the school behaviour management system was there to help them to improve their behaviour.

The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) posited that love and friendship were the essence of behaviour management. He argued that if a school had a well-established teacher–student relationship where the students enjoyed coming to school, there would be no behaviour management problems. This approach is similar to French and Raven’s (1960) referent power and Lewis’s philosophy (see Section 3.1.2). The mathematics teacher (T2) explained that balance should be observed when implementing the disciplinary system; he preferred a middle way stating, “When implementing it, you have to be careful not to be too harsh nor too light.”

For the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3), the school was a well-disciplined school but it was not very strict. He preferred flexibility in solving the disciplinary issues and expressed that each case should be handled according to the nature of the misbehaviour. The mathematics teacher (T2) emphasised consistency as the key element of behaviour management. He suggested that the school had the responsibility to respond to identical cases by taking consistent disciplinary measures. According to the mathematics teacher (T2), the school implemented a particularly even-handed approach, which is called a *level system*, to establish consistency and fairness in the school. He expressed his view as “The school tries to be

consistent and fair by implementing a level system. ... same punishment or praise for each same action.” The level system is examined in the next section.

5.2.3.2 Views of the Importance of Behaviour Management

The opinions of some participants of the importance of behaviour management are presented in Table 5.5. The mathematics teacher (T2) stated that it was not possible to run the school without behaviour management. Behaviour management rules outline and clarify the school’s expectations of its students’ behaviour. The chemistry teacher (T1) said that behaviour management was important to provide a safe learning environment and to pass academic and values education on to the students.

Table 5.5

Importance of Behaviour Management

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“Without discipline the school would not run, it would fall apart, so it is very important. It lets the students know what is expected of them.”	T2
“To provide a safe learning environment discipline is important. To be able to deliver the required things it is important.”	T1
“Without discipline the behavioural control of students can be very hard and this can affect the moral development.”	T3
“My understanding of education is based on moral values, which also includes discipline, and also I think discipline brings educational success as well.”	P3
“Without discipline, you can’t talk success; without discipline, you can’t organise people.”	A3

For the CE Coordinator (T3), behaviour management helped and supported the moral environment of the school positively. A parent Mr Hasan (P3) considered behaviour management as part of moral values. According to him, good manners and behaviour

management were keys to success both at school and in life. There is a relationship between moral values and behaviour management. For instance, if respect for others is valued highly then behaviour management would involve procedures to encourage respect for others. For the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3), behaviour management was a precondition and a fundamental for success. Overall, behaviour management was seen to be necessary to run the school smoothly, to organise the staff and students, and to be successful in student's academic and values education.

5.2.3.3 Establishing the Rules of Behaviour Management

The researcher asked the teachers about how they established the rules of behaviour management in the school and their responses are presented in Table 5.6.

They approached the question from different perspectives. The Principal (A1) suggested that the teachers should consider implementing some preventive measures prior to any disciplinary issues occurring in the school. This strategy would contribute to behaviour management of the school more efficiently and with less effort. The Deputy Principal (A2) stated that behaviour management rules have to be very clear for the students. Moreover, he stated that the fairness of the rules should be explained and students needed to know who is in charge.

Table 5.6

Establishing the Rules of Behaviour Management

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
"... we need to have some preventative solutions to discipline issues."	A1
"It has to be written down, it has to be very clear to the students."	A2
"They want to know three things; Rules? Are these rules fair? Who is boss?"	A2
Student's Handbook.	A1 & A2
"Parent information nights to make them aware of our discipline expectations."	A1
Reward/award system (A2, T2). Discipline system (levels zero to ten) (A1, A2, T2).	A1, A2, T2
The staff involved in discipline procedure: Teachers (T3); year level coordinators (A1, A2, T1); school counsellor (A2); discipline committee (A1); management (T3 & T5); deputy principals (A2); principal (A2).	A1, A2, T1, T3 & T5
"I believe if a teacher teaches well, that teacher will automatically have the respect of the students and that would be establishing discipline."	T2
"To establish a good friendship with the students."	A3
"When students see stability of teachers, they prefer to behave ..."	T3
"Consistency ..., the same punishment or praise for each same action."	T2
"...you have to be careful not to be too harsh on certain things and not too light either."	T2
"We are a disciplined school, not very strict, flexible."	A3
"We have a good communication with parents to help each other."	T3
"... give detention ... refer it to the coordinators ... contact parents..."	T4
".., to amend your discipline system accordingly (character of classroom)."	T5

The staff tried to pass on information about the behaviour management system of the school in many ways. First, behaviour management rules were explained in a Student Handbook that was given to each student (A1 & A2). Second, the year level coordinators informed the students about behaviour management issues related to their year level (A1).

Lastly, parent information programs were organised to inform the parents about the school and its behaviour management rules (A1).

Several participants highlighted the school's award system (D3, A2, & T2). This system was intended to encourage students to exhibit excellence through academic achievement and exemplary behaviour. According to the Student Handbook (D3), "If a student receives any suspension, he/she will not be eligible for any academic awards" (p. 31). In addition, the school had a behaviour management system to instigate behaviour management measures in the school. Several respondents (D3, A1, A2, & T2) mentioned that the system comprised the levels from zero to ten. Students who displayed unacceptable behaviour in the school were categorised according to the severity of their misbehaviour. Different corrective actions were implemented at different levels and a student was expelled when he reached level ten (D3). The Deputy Principal (A2) stated that he experienced two cases of expulsion over the eight years of his career at the school. One student was expelled in 2015 and there was no expulsion in 2016. This information suggest that the school has adopted a behaviour management system that minimises disruptive behaviour and seemingly fosters harmonious behaviours.

In the Student Diary (D3) the level system and *the commendation scheme* are explained. For student diary "the aim of the level system is to enable the students to modify their behaviour by preventing unacceptable behaviour interfering with teaching and learning processes in the classroom, playground and sport" (p. 21). Each student commences the year at level zero. After a certain amount of misbehaviour, a student is put in higher levels. At levels one, two and three, the home group teacher monitors the behaviour of the student. At levels four, five and six, the year level coordinator monitors the behaviour of the student. The deputy principal monitors the student at levels seven, eight, and nine. The principal monitors the student in level ten and the student may face expulsion if the desired behaviour is not developed. The aim of the commendation scheme was "to award students for excellence in

both their academic achievement and their behaviour” (p. 23). Students receive awards in four main areas: academic achievement, sport, culture, and role model behaviour (D3).

The behaviour management policies and a behaviour management system were put into practice by the school staff. The staff involved in the behaviour management procedures were teachers, home group teachers, year level coordinators, the school counsellor, the discipline committee, and management—deputy principals and principal.

For the mathematics teacher (T2), gaining the respect of students through high quality teaching was quite effective in establishing behaviour management. This idea reflects French and Raven’s (1960) expert power (see Section 3.1.2). The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) articulated that establishing good friendships with students was helpful in establishing behaviour management. For the mathematics teacher (T2) and the CE Coordinator (T3), stability was crucial. If the school documents about disciplinary issues, and teachers’ actions were consistent in their response to them, students would modify their behaviour to avoid corrective consequences.

The mathematics teacher (T2) emphasised the value of a middle way between gentleness and harshness in establishing behaviour management when he said, “...you have to be careful not to be too harsh on certain things and not too light either.” When he commented on behaviour management, the Pastoral Care Deputy’s (A3) approach was similar. For him, the school was both a place of discipline and flexibility, depending on the nature of the incident strategies had to be used, “We are a disciplined school, not very strict, flexible.”

For the Principal (A1), CE Coordinator (T3) and Religion and Values teacher (T4), contacting the parents took place at a certain level of the behaviour management procedure. The CE Coordinator (T3) explained that the school had good communication with parents and this relationship had a positive effect on the education of the students as well as on behaviour

management. The Religion and Values teacher's (T4) strategy was first to give detention to the disruptive student. If this was not helpful then he would refer the incident to the coordinator and contact the parents, if necessary. The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) explained that every classroom had a different make-up and he preferred to adopt a suitable behaviour management strategy according to the nature of each classroom of students when he said:

I have to treat every classroom differently, ... each classroom has got a character of their own... you need to test the waters, see what they are good at, what they are weak at and try to amend your discipline system according to that.

5.2.3.4 Relationship between Education and Behaviour Management

Representative data contained in Table 5.7 illustrates the relationship between education and behaviour management. The perception existed that behaviour management was needed not only to implement the curriculum effectively but also to run the school efficiently (T2). According to the Deputy Principal (A2), the key point was to understand that teaching was the responsibility of the teachers and learning was the right of students and behaviour management was essential to create an environment for productive teaching and learning.

The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) maintained that success is not achievable without behaviour management. For Mr Hasan (P3), behaviour management rules contributed to the academic success of the school. The chemistry teacher (T1) considered that behaviour management was crucial in providing a safe learning environment that enabled the school to educate its pupils academically and morally. The CE Coordinator (T3) emphasised that behaviour management supported delivering values education at the school in a positive manner. He commented that there was a link between high quality teaching and behaviour management measures instigated in the classroom. In summary, five participants highlighted a strong relationship between education and behaviour management. The school had to provide necessary education in order to establish behaviour management and vice versa

Table 5.7

Relationship Between Education and Behaviour Management

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“Without discipline the school would not run, it would fall apart, so it is very important. It lets the students know what is expected of them.”	T2
“[The] main thing is that the teacher in the school is responsible to teach and the student has the right to learn.”	A2
“We are serious about education. We want students to come school to learn.”	A2
“I think discipline brings educational success as well.”	P3
“Without discipline, you can’t talk success.”	A3
“To provide a safe learning environment discipline is important to be able to deliver the required things—academically and morally.”	T1
“Without discipline the behavioural control of students can be very hard and this can be affect the moral development of [the] school environment.”	T3
“If a teacher teaches well, he will automatically have the respect of the students and that would be helpful in establishing discipline.”	T2

It is perceived that behaviour management was one of the strongest areas of Star Boys and the school endeavoured to provide an orderly school life by establishing self-responsibility, self-discipline, and respect of others. The behaviour management system was implemented to improve students’ behaviour, not to punish them. Good relationships between school staff and students, stability, and quality of teaching were considered positive contributing factors to the effectiveness of the behaviour management practices.

The participants (T1, T2, T3, and P3) stated that a well-established behaviour management scheme contributed positively to the moral and academic education of the students. Thus, the school’s aim was to develop students’ positive behaviour, to establish self-discipline and respect, and to create a positive learning environment through behaviour management.

5.2.4 Multiculturalism

This section reveals the multiculturalism approach of Star Boys after providing a brief explanation backgrounding the meaning and history of the term in the Australian context. In Australia, multiculturalism “is the recognition in public policy that a society is composed of varied elements, especially those based on language, nationality or religion” (Jupp, 1996, p. vi). Following federation in 1901, the Australian policy on immigration has moved from a position which was to exclude immigration of non-European people to Australia, to one of assimilation in 1947, to integration in 1964, and eventually transformed into multiculturalism in 1973 (Jupp, 1996). Australia developed its own multiculturalism approach based on an immigration program that includes standing against racism and promoting equality. At the time of this study, Australia’s policy on multiculturalism was updated in 2011 and this reaffirmed that its multicultural composition is at the heart of Australia’s national identity.

The Australian Government is strongly committed to a multicultural Australia. According to Australia’s Multicultural Policy, multiculturalism is an important part of the Australian national identity, and multiculturalism supports cultural and religious diversity. The policy states that “Australia’s multicultural policy embraces our shared values and cultural traditions. It also allows those who choose to call Australia home the right to practise and share in their cultural traditions and languages within the law and free from discrimination” (Department of Social Services, 2011).

The Star College culture accommodates multiculturalism that aims to provide a harmonious school life for all staff and students coming from different backgrounds. The school adopted the multicultural policy of Australia however those in the current student body had Islamic ethnic and cultural backgrounds. There were almost no students from Jewish, Hindu, Christian, or Buddhist backgrounds although the school was branded non-denominational. From a religious perspective, the established culture of the school was an

Islamic culture. However, Islamic culture is not one single culture, it contains many different subcultures, for example Turkey's and Saudi Arabia's Islamic culture each contains different elements such as diversity in religious dressing.

The school adopted a multicultural approach in the school environment consistent with that of Australian policies. For the Year 10 Coordinator (T5), multiculturalism was another area of school success, "At Star College, we welcome students from all ethnic and religious backgrounds. ... we believe that the most important aspect of a school is its humanity" (D5, p. 6). According to the Principal (A1), 80% of the students came from a Turkish background, and 20% came from different cultural backgrounds such as African, Indonesian, Indian, Pakistani and Iraqi (2010). This ratio changed dramatically to approximately 67% from non-Turkish and 33% from Turkish background students in 2017. In 2017, the ratio of first four languages spoken at Star Boys students' home was 37% Arabic, 33% Turkish, 11% Somali, and 10% Urdu. The major reason for the descending ratio of Turkish students was the conflict between the governing party of Turkey and Hizmet since late 2013. Although the total enrolment of the school was steady, the negative publicity about Hizmet schools from the governing party of Turkey could have created concerns and hesitation among the Australian Turkish community, resulting in the decline in the ratio of students from a Turkish background.

The school staff form a mosaic of various ethnic backgrounds; "African, Asian and European" (D5, p. 28) which gives students an opportunity to view the world through different lenses. The school employed some international—Turkish—staff who were assumed to be familiar with Gülen's philosophy. The staff and student body of diverse cultural backgrounds can be found in most Australian schools as Australian society is destination for many immigrants. Thus, it is not unique to the school to have staff from diverse backgrounds and a culturally diverse student body. Documents, the Principal (A1) and Year 10 Coordinator

(T5) suggested that multiculturalism was welcomed by the school, and that though the school had students and staff from diverse cultural backgrounds, they were predominantly Muslim.

5.2.5 Summary of School Culture

This section examined the school culture of Star Boys to identify the specific educational characteristics of the school based on data collected from the school site. The school culture adopts an educational focus characterised by balance that prioritises academic excellence and values education. The school curriculum and the pastoral care department strived to achieve a balanced education. The school aims to raise exemplary citizens and the Golden Generation, an ideal generation in Gülen's educational philosophy, through balanced education.

Values education is an essential element of school culture which was emphasised marginally above academic achievements by participants. Here, the school focussed mainly on good morality of the students and referred to its academic successes. The school encouraged Australian and Islamic values to develop good citizens who would be contributing members of society. Participants emphasised the following values: respect; tolerance; being a beneficial member of society; and passion for learning. The participants emphasised the following aspects as outcomes of delivering values education: being responsible; being respectful and contributing citizens; being well-educated; being a well-mannered Golden Generation; accepting people as they are; and, being role models for all.

The school culture contains a behaviour management system to establish an orderly school life and to contribute to a positive behaviour education that results in positive student behaviour. Participants approached behaviour management as a way to establish self-responsibility and self-discipline (A2), respect for others (T5), and to contribute to the wellbeing of students by encouraging correct behaviour (A1). It was argued that this assisted the smooth running the school (T2) and provided a positive learning environment for

academic and values education (T1) which contributed to the success of students (A3). Participants expressed that establishing the behaviour management system contributed positively to the success of the school.

The school culture adopted a policy of multiculturalism that was typical of Australia. The school was open to all ethnicities and religions; however, the school community was mainly a Muslim community. The student body contained various Islamic cultures yet there were almost no students from other religious cultures as at 2016. In summary, the school culture promotes a balanced education program, values-centred education, an emphasis on behaviour management for an orderly school life, and multiculturalism.

5.3 School Climate

This section reports findings about the climate of Star Boys school, recalling that school climate refers to the enacted beliefs, practices, interactions, relationships and processes that occur within the school among staff, students and community as discussed in Section 3.2. An effective school climate is one where positive relationships exist, students' needs are met, and a sense of harmony is achieved. This section addresses the five dimensions that influence school climate: pastoral care programs in Section 5.3.1; school-parent relationships in Section 5.3.2; leadership in Section 5.3.3; school staff in Section 5.3.4; and school environment in Section 5.3.5.

5.3.1 Pastoral Care Programs

The first category was the pastoral care programs and the data related to this section are examined under the following topics: pastoral care approach of the school, Section 5.3.1.1, and pastoral care activities and their outcomes, Section 5.3.1.2.

5.3.1.1 Pastoral Care Approach of the School

As previously reported in Section 5.2, values education was one of the fundamental tenets of the school that defined its culture. This section examines the pastoral care approach of the school, the contribution of pastoral care to meeting the catering for individual needs of the students, and how moral values were implemented in the school to achieve a desirable climate.

The school established the pastoral care department to organise and undertake a range of services outside school times. The school pastoral care program was offered to students from Year 4 to Year 12, as at 2016. On specific days throughout each week, students were involved in various activities that aimed to develop “team spirit” (D5, p. 20). A school newsletter (D1–2, p. 5) emphasised the importance of positive social environment in its statement:

The Pastoral Care Department is responsible for the promotion and maintenance of the social and emotional wellbeing of our students and strives to provide and promote a positive environment where students not only can learn but also socialise and develop their own abilities.

Attending pastoral care programs was not compulsory in Star Boys, therefore only interested students participated in the services. The pastoral care staff—deputy principal, teacher and mentors—provide pastoral care services on a voluntary basis (A1). Mentors were former students of the school and usually they were university students. The researcher observed two pastoral care activities: Year 8 camp which lasted for three days in the school holiday, and the after-school program that ran between 4–6pm. These times were teachers’ and mentors’ private times however, they spent their private time voluntarily for the education of the students.

According to the Religion and Values teacher (T4), the pastoral care department focussed on the ethical, moral and spiritual aspects of students through related activities and programs, both educational and recreational, to further improve the wellbeing of students and to prepare them for the future. For the Deputy Principal (A2), pastoral care was an intensive and organised program within the school, and education was not only teaching facts to students, but also teaching the next generation about values.

The pastoral care department aimed to serve the wellbeing of the students by preparing a positive environment and by focusing on moral values through certain activities. Although the pastoral care department worked intensively with the students, the department also offered some services to teachers and parents with the objective of creating a warm school environment. According to the Principal (A1), the school attempted to build strong relationships among the students as well as among the teachers through an extensive pastoral care program.

The school provided rooms for pastoral care activities, a prayer room, and student dormitories where some of the after-school activities were held. These kinds of physical arrangements enabled the pastoral care activities to run efficiently. The school implemented a Religion and Values subject, different from the pastoral care program, as the formal program of the school to teach basic principles of Islam, Islamic history and civilisation as well as to deliver values education. The subject was developed by the Religion and Values department of the school. The subject was compulsory and offered from Preparation to Year 10, three periods in a week—two periods used for teaching and one period for memorisation of prayers. The subject contains religious education as well as delivering Islamic moral values. Religious education covers topics such as beliefs (e.g., believing in God, angels and life after death) and Islamic practices (e.g., praying, fasting, alms giving, performing hajj/pilgrimage). Values education covers Islamic values (e.g., compassion, generosity, modesty and sincerity) and

Islamic manners (e.g., eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing and speaking). An overview of the contents of Religion and Values lessons is provided in Appendix F. Five modules taught in Year 9 Religion and Values lesson are as follows: Islamic History; Science of Qur'an; Science of Hadith; Islam and Humanity; and Muslim Contributions to Civilisation.

Values education was also delivered through semi-formal pastoral care programs and role modelling in the school environment. The pastoral care programs were responsible for delivering values education, however the school documents did not provide data that explained the structure or content of the values education program of pastoral care. Furthermore, the pastoral care department did not prescribe standards for the program's desired outcomes. Pastoral care was still in a development stage and for this reason it is described as semi-formal subject matter in Chapter Three. Intended outcomes of pastoral care from the perspective of participants are presented in section 5.3.1.2.

In summary, for participants, the pastoral care strategies contributed to a stable school climate through the development of team spirit, the development of the social and emotional wellbeing of students, socialisation of students, teaching of students about values, and the building of strong relationships among the students.

Pastoral care programs contributed to the catering for individual needs approach of the school. The school appears to recognise individual differences among students and provides the best possible education to improve individuals according to their capacities. Data from six sources, shown in Table 5.8, acknowledged that the students have different interests, abilities and capacities. Thus, educators should correctly identify the differences of students and give appropriately tailored education to nourish every single individual's mind and heart.

Table 5.8

Catering for Individual Needs

Data	Data sources
“We try to train our students with two wings: academic excellence and moral values. We don’t aim to enrol all students into universities only... there are different capabilities...”	A1
“Every child probably has limits to what they can achieve, I think the school pushes the boundaries to the maximum.”	P1
“Understanding that each student’s potential is different.”	T2
Elective subjects.	D6
“To provide a diverse and challenging curriculum that will meet the needs, interests and abilities of the students.”	D2
“The curriculum is organised to cater for the educational and social development of all students.”	D3

Pastoral care programs also reinforced the students’ educational and social development. Pastoral care programs and activities created opportunities to identify individual needs and differences as mentors and pastoral care staff spent significant periods of time with students during the range of various pastoral care activities. Typical programs and activities are summarised in Table 5.10 in Section 5.3.1.2. It can be seen, therefore, that the school’s curriculum, elective subjects, clubs, and numerous pastoral care programs contributed to the meeting of individual needs of students thus, contributing to the establishment of a positive school climate.

Pastoral care programs strongly contributed to the actualisation of moral values. Actualisation of moral values is examined in this section rather than the school culture section as it is related to practices of the school that impact directly on the school climate. The participants mentioned moral values slightly ahead of academic improvement, as seen in Table 5.2. The school staff saw the delivery of values education as one of its most important duties and it was also one of the crucial responsibilities of the pastoral care department.

Moreover, delivering values education was highly valued by parents. The researcher examined how the school implemented this important task and related data are presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9

Implementation of Moral Values

Theme	Theme sources
Crucial role of teachers, mentors, and staff in actualisation of moral values	A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, N1, N2, P1, P3, P4, S1, S2, S3, S4 & S5
Pastoral care activities (discussions, soccer...) and weekend activities (camping, fishing...)	A1, A2, A3, T1, T3, T4, T5, N3, P1, P2, P4, S1, S3, S4 & S5
Curriculum and <i>Religion and Values</i> classes	A1, T1, A2, N3 & S3
Role of camps	T5 & A1
Contribution of family visits	A3 & T5
“Role model students’ input”	A3
“Discipline system and values relationship”	S2
“Counselling”	T5

The majority of participants stated that teachers, mentors and staff brought about the delivery of values education in the school. The teachers and mentors modelled moral values with their exemplary behaviour in the school, and students observed and received values education through the staff who served as role models. For the Principal (A1), moral values cannot be taught unless they are modelled and shown to students. The activities organised by the pastoral care department were considered the second main factor to accomplish the character education of the school.

Some of the pastoral care activities mentioned by participants were discussions [*sohbet*], soccer, computer games, camping, fishing, go-karting, movie-watching, and

interacting with teachers and mentors. The term ‘discussion’ refers to a conversation and dialectical exchange, but the word discussion also contains the meaning of debate and argument. It is used with its former meaning in the school to refer to a pastoral care activity. Discussion sessions that were organised one or two times a week allowed teachers and mentors to discuss moral values with students in a friendly atmosphere where finger foods were shared. The Pastoral Care Deputy Principal assisted pastoral care teachers in selecting the topics for discussions. These sohjets were usually followed by soccer or computer games. Pastoral care activities were organised in after-school times, weekends and school holidays and this required a great deal of voluntary work. The Pastoral Care Deputy Principal and the principal attended some of these activities and observed the implementation of pastoral care activities.

The Religion and Values subject and pastoral care were strongly related as both were implementing values objectives of the school. The formal teaching, specifically of the subject Religion and Values, was mentioned by four participants. It aims to nurture students' social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing at the school (D3). The curriculum enabled moral and religious values to be discussed and taught in the Religion and Values subject in a systematic way. Discussions in the Religion and Values subject were based on textbook material and dialectical interchange between teacher and students.

According to the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) and Year 10 Coordinator (T5), family visits also contributed to the delivery of values education of the students. Pastoral care teachers and mentors organised visits to families and these visits created a connection between the school and the families. This in turn created a triangular—staff, student and parent—connection which enabled the effective running of pastoral care activities.

A behaviour management system (S2), counselling (T5) and role model students (A3) also played a role in actualising values education and contributed to the implementation of

pastoral care objectives. For the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3), mentors helped the students more than the teachers due to the reduced age difference. The interaction between the mentors and students resembled a relationship between an older and younger brother (other students) (P1). Through this interaction some students became role models and they also contributed to actualising the pastoral care objectives. Therefore, role modelling by the staff and the teaching of the Religion and Values subject supported the pastoral care department in delivering values education and creating a positive school climate.

5.3.1.2 Pastoral Care Activities and Their Outcomes

This section examines the pastoral care activities and their outcomes from the perception of participants. The variety of pastoral care activities was emphasised by the interviewed participants. Some participants provided a general name for the activities such as after-school activities, sport and recreational activities, whilst others mentioned a specific name for each activity. Pastoral care groups undertake these activities in accordance with the expertise and availability of each teacher. These activities are implemented by pastoral care teachers and mentors. According to the school newsletter (D1-2), Star Boys allocated 14 pastoral care teachers and 20 mentors to 21 home groups in 2010 when this data was collected.

The researcher observed a Year 8 pastoral care activity which was held in one of the foundation's houses. After the formal school day, students arrived at the house with their pastoral care teacher. They rested for a while and then gathered in a hall for a brief discussion about values which was followed by a prayer. Students played table tennis during the break, and after the break they were summoned for mathematics tutoring. Dinner was brought to the house by a parent and two students were on duty to serve the meal under the guidance of the teacher. After dinner, parents collected the students. This activity was an example of how the school supported the academic and moral development of a student, strengthened a student's

socialisation, improved the teacher, parent, student relationship through pastoral care programs and how pastoral care programs contributed to school climate.

The assessment of success in delivering values education is a complicated task. The ratio of disciplinary actions taken to correct student misbehaviour is one of the measures that indicate the success of the school in delivering values education. The Deputy Principal (A2) stated, “I remember of (sic) two cases in the school in the eight years where we have asked that boy to leave the school,” and this seemingly indicates the school’s success in delivering values education. The opinions of the school community about the issue is another indicator where the school community has seen that the school is successful in delivering values education, as discussed in Section 5.2.2.4. The implication is that students are respectful of each other and accept the school rules, thus establishing a harmonious school community.

For the purposes of this analysis, the activities in Table 5.10 have been categorised as social, educational, sport and recreational activities. *Iftar* [fast breaking] dinners, parent visits (D1–8) and parent picnics were categorised as social activities that created an environment where teachers, parents and students socialised. Another social activity involved fundraising activities to support some projects like a synthetic soccer field (D1–11), contribution to the library of a sister school or to the relief of disaster victims (D1–8).

Table 5.10

Pastoral Care Activities

Data	Data source
Weekend activities	A2 & P4
Recreational activities	S1
After-school and weekend activities	A3, P1 & N3
Sport activities	S3
Pastoral care activities	P4 & S3
Picnic with parents	A3
Visiting parents	A3 & D1–8
Fast breaking [Iftar] dinners	D1–8
Fundraising activities	A3, S5, D1–8 & D1–11
Discussions [sohbet], get together	A2, A3, S3 & S4
Excursions	P3, N3, S1 & D1
Intensive CE study programs	D1–8
Book reading	S1
Reading and writing competitions	D–9
Tutoring	A3, T4, P4 & S1
Camps	A2, A3, T4, P2, P3, N3, S1, S2 & D5
Basketball	S3
Wrestling	S2 & D1–5
Soccer	S1, S2, S4 & S5
Swimming (S5), fishing (A2)	S5 & A2
Computer games	A2 & S2
Cinema & go karting	A2 & S5
Trips	A2, D1–6 & D1–10

Discussions, excursions, book reading and tutoring fit the educational classification. Discussions were organised once or twice a week and designated teachers or mentors discussed values and moral issues (A2, A3 & S3) with students. Excursions were mentioned by three participants and many of them were reported in school newsletters. However, excursions were organised by subject teachers and they were not exclusively pastoral care activities. Furthermore, it was reported in the school newsletter (D1–8) that intensive study programs were organised to help students to achieve better results in their school certificate examinations. A range of other activities reported in the newsletter highlighted the breadth of pastoral care activities, for example, “During Ramadan, pastoral care teachers held various activities. These included: year level iftar dinners, family visits, intense VCE study for year 12 students, recitation of Qur’an during lunch time and after-school PC activities” (D1–8, p. 8).

Book reading programs were organised during after-school activities or school camps. During the book reading sessions, the pastoral care teacher prepared a book list according to students’ levels, and students were encouraged to read a book from the provided list. Sometimes the pastoral care department organised a quiz about the content of these books to promote comprehension and reward the best achievers (D1–9). Tutoring (A3, T4, P4, & S1) was arranged after-school hours, weekends and during school camps. A subject teacher or a mentor helped students in their studies during these sessions. Reading and writing competitions were also held by the pastoral care department (D1–9).

Camps were mentioned by many participants (A2, A3, T4, P2, P3, N3, S1, & S2) and usually contained many different activities: social; educational; recreational; and sport. For the school newsletter (D1–4), camps and extra-curricular activities played “a big role in the formation of students' wellbeing”, and they also facilitated “harmony, friendship, trust and other Australian values” (p. 11). Generally, these camps were organised with a duration of 3–

10 days in school term holidays and they were often reported in school newsletters. Based on participant observation (PO) and the school newsletter (D1–7), students were supervised by pastoral care teachers and mentors. Usually camps comprised book reading, study and discussion sessions, guest speakers, watching movies, performing prayers, and recreational activities.

Some benefits of camps reported in school newsletters were as follows: students had a chance to form strong bonds with their fellow students and teachers (D1–2); they learned through sharing knowledge with peers and teachers in a non–school environment; they gained some skills such as cleaning the environment, problem–solving and team work (D1–10); and they gained independence, responsibility and self–esteem (D3).

A number of sporting activities were organised by the pastoral care department and these included basketball, wrestling (D1–5 & D1–10) and soccer. The department organised national and international (D1–2 & D1–6) trips for staff and students. Playing computer games in the computer laboratory, watching a movie, fishing, and go–karting were other forms of activities organised by the pastoral care staff. The activities were not limited to the list mentioned in Table 5.10.

The opinions of participants on outcomes of pastoral care activities are shown in Table 5.11. Seven participants stated the pastoral care activities contributed positively to the overall academic success of the students. This was an expected result as some of the pastoral care activities contained tutoring which was aimed directly at academic improvement of the students.

Table 5.11

Outcomes of Pastoral Care Activities

Themes	Theme sources
Contributing to academic success of students	A1, A2, T5, P3, N3, S1 & S3
Implementing values	A1, A2, T1, P1, P4
Positive contribution of pastoral care to the behaviour of students	N2, N3 & S3
Contribution of pastoral care to socialising and schooling	S1
Building warm relationships between students, and teachers and students	S3
Building better friendships	S2, S4 & D4
Opportunity to interact with other people and to implement their learning, also to learn through practice	P2
Developing teacher–parent relationship to know students better	T5
Contribution to wellbeing and learning through interaction	P2
Creating an enjoyable learning environment	S2 & S4
Raising awareness to serve community	S5

The second key outcome of the pastoral care activities was the positive contribution to delivering moral values. Five participants (A1, A2, T1, P1, & P4) stated that these activities allowed the school to implement and practise moral values. During the pastoral care activities, a pastoral care teacher and mentor had a chance to display school values and observe the behaviour of the students. The students had the opportunity to interact with their teachers and peers, also to practise what they had learnt. According to Mr Erhan (N2), Mr Adil (N3) and Burhan (S3), pastoral care activities contributed positively to the behaviour of the students. For example, Burhan’s (S3) response to the question of “Why do you participate in welfare

programs?” was “It helps me with my studies and teachers ask about respect to others, how we should respect them, and moral values.”

Four participants (T5, P2, S1, & S4), considered that pastoral care activities created a social environment among the participating staff and students. Participants had an opportunity to interact with each other on a personal level and to develop better relationships. According to the 2009 School Prospectus (D5), pastoral care allows students to develop social skills and an understanding of one another, which is critical in learning to live and to work together. The positive affect of pastoral care activities was acknowledged by Mr Ahmet (P2) who stated,

The weekly pastoral care groups and occasional pastoral care camps are the highlight for my children and others as well. We see them effective positively and come back refreshed after such activities and they seem to learn positive things from one another as well at these camps and pastoral care groups.

The 2006 School Prospectus (D4) expressed that the mentors played an important role in guiding the teenager students positively. According to Harun (S2) and Huseyin (S4), students enjoyed the activities and learned simultaneously. Ugur (S5) participated in the activities with an objective of becoming a useful member of the society. This was evident in his response during an interview, “I participate in welfare programs, so I can be a useful person in the community, also so I can help the people who are poor”. This was consistent with one of the aims stated in the school’s mission; “to prepare the students to participate in the contemporary Australian society as informed, responsible, active, caring, and contributing citizens” (D4, p. ii).

The students’ perception revealed in interviews provides evidence about how the pastoral care programs were contributing to the development of a positive school climate. The students were asked what they like most about the school. Their responses were: “bridge between teachers and students” (S1); “peers, environment, teachers’ commitment” (S2); “dedication of teachers and friends” (S4); “good environment, the teachers are very helpful in

many ways and everyone is given a chance at school” (S5); “I like the environments that we [are] studying; ... the teachers are very friendly ... you don’t get bored ..., they take you to welfare programs ... and also canteen is very nice” (S3). Students were also asked what they like most about pastoral care programs. Their responses were; “relationship between mentor and student” (S1); “it’s fun, get friends and have a good time” (S2); “it’s a kind of get together with friends ... you have teacher like a brother [as close as a family member] that helps you” (S3); “I think that it is the best way to get to know your friends better and have the most fun with them...” (S4). Ali’s (S1) statement about the relationship between teachers and students indicates that the students communicate with teachers easily about any matter that concerns them; “you could approach teachers not only in Mathematics and English questions, questions about your life, they’re like counsellors.” The students’ responses such as “you don’t get bored” and “it’s fun” indicate that they enjoyed being in the school and participating in pastoral care programs. Their positive statements about the teachers and their friends suggest that there were warm relationships existing among students and teachers. Their statements about the environment provide further evidence for the positive school climate. The students’ perceptions suggest that the pastoral care program had an influence on creating a warm school climate.

In summary, the discussions above indicate that pastoral care has a high profile in this school’s practices. The pastoral care department aimed to maintain the social and emotional wellbeing of students and to address the moral and spiritual education of the students. The department carried out its objectives through a variety of educational and recreational activities where students socialised, developed their various abilities, and had discussions about moral and spiritual issues. The pastoral care programs were employed to identify and address individual needs of students, assisted building good relationship among the school community, and contributed to the positive environment of the school. Pastoral care staff organised and ran pastoral care programs voluntarily. The school allocated one pastoral care

teacher, and one mentor, who was a former student and now attending university, to each home group. Although all students were encouraged to participate in pastoral care activities only some students were interested and attended. The pastoral care department was a significant contributor to the social, academic and moral development of the students, and hence an important initiative in creating a positive school climate.

5.3.2 School–Parent Relationships

The second category of school climate was school–parent relationships. The researcher asked participants—the leadership team, teachers and parents—about the school–parent communications and the data related to this section are examined under the following headings: significance of school–parent relations in Section 5.3.2.1; school–parent communication in Section 5.3.2.2; contribution of parents in Section 5.3.2.3; community–school relations and Parents and Friends Association (PFA) in Section 5.3.2.4.

5.3.2.1 Perceived Significance of School–Parent Relations

One of the aims of the interviews was to collect data about the perception of school–parent relations and how parents contributed to the school and school education. The researcher collected data from a range of sources including documents and interviews. Examples of these data are presented in Table 5.12. According to the Student Handbook (D3), high priority is given to parent–teacher communication at school, where the document stated, “The school takes pride in maintaining close partnership and networks with families and communities” (p. 15).

Table 5.12

Significance of School and Parents' Relations

Data	Data sources
"We try to keep our relationship very close with our parents this is our one of the biggest success."	A1
"High priority is given to parent–teacher communication at school."	D4
"The school takes pride in maintaining close partnership and networks with families and communities."	D3
"With the families, we can help the kid."	T5
Teachers, students and parents like the three foundations beneath a successful education.	A3 & P1
"We would like to see our parents involved in their son's education."	A1
"If we got contributing and cooperating parents with school, then our students will look at their parents' positive relationship with their school then they will feel sense of belonging to the school."	A1
"School and parent communication is very important for the development of the student as consistency is needed."	T2
"Problems and issues are minimised earlier on in the piece before they grow too big to handle."	P2
"I think it is a vital aspect of a successful school, if there is no communication and there may arise many problems."	A2
"Most of the times we see them (parents) very supportive, we also accept their criticism ... and we try to fix if there is any concern."	A3

Participants highlighted the importance of close relationships involving parents and cultivating good communication to enhance a harmonious climate. For example, the Principal (A1) said that "We try to keep our relationship very close with our parents [and] this is our one of the biggest successes." The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) asserted that "with the families, we can help the kid," which means with the support of parents, the school could help its pupils more effectively. Three participants (A2, A3, & P1) claimed that collaboration of teachers, students and parents was essential for a successful education. For example, the

Deputy Principal (A2) said, “I think it is a vital aspect of a successful school, if there is no communication and there may arise many problems.”

The Principal (A1) also argued that the school showed enthusiasm about involving parents in the education of students and made a considerable effort to get their support. The principal expressed that he believed a good relationship between the mother and father had a positive effect on a child’s development, and so did a good relationship between the school and parents when he said,

If a child sees his mother is getting along very well with his father then that child feels very secure and very happy, ... At a larger scale, if we got contributing and cooperating parents together with school, then our students will look at their parents’ positive relationship with their school then they will feel sense of belonging to the school. And they will feel this is my second home. But, if there is a conflict between parents and school then I don’t think we can be successful in this approach.

A statement in the Student Handbook (D3) reinforced the school’s belief that “it is through the active support of parents” that students “feel encouraged to achieve their best at home and at school” (p. 13). This philosophy was commented on in a number of documents. For example, the School Prospectus (D4) stated that “the establishment of a close relationship with parents” was one of the school philosophies, and these relationships play “an important role in the successful education” (p. 1) of their children. Individual staff also reflected on the importance of good parent relationships. For example, the mathematics teacher (T2) stated that school–parent communication played a significant role in the development of the students because it maintained continuity between home and school, “If the same basic teachings are not implemented at home it becomes difficult for the student. If the school tries to teach one thing and it’s all undone when the student gets home that’s a sad situation. Students need consistency.”

Good relationships were deemed important across the views of all stakeholders. Both the Deputy Principal (A2) and Mr Ahmet (P2), stated that a good communication and co-operation between the school and parents was helpful in minimising the issues and handling the problems at an early level, before they escalated and became very difficult to deal with. The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) stated that the school received some constructive criticism from parents, and their criticism helped the school to improve its facilities and services: “We also accept their criticism. If it is a constructive criticism, we listen to them and we try to fix if there is any concern. ... I believe having parents’ criticism ... will help us to improve our education” (A3).

5.3.2.2 School–Parent Communication

Participants were asked about the function of school–parent communication in the school and their answers are displayed in Figure 5.2.

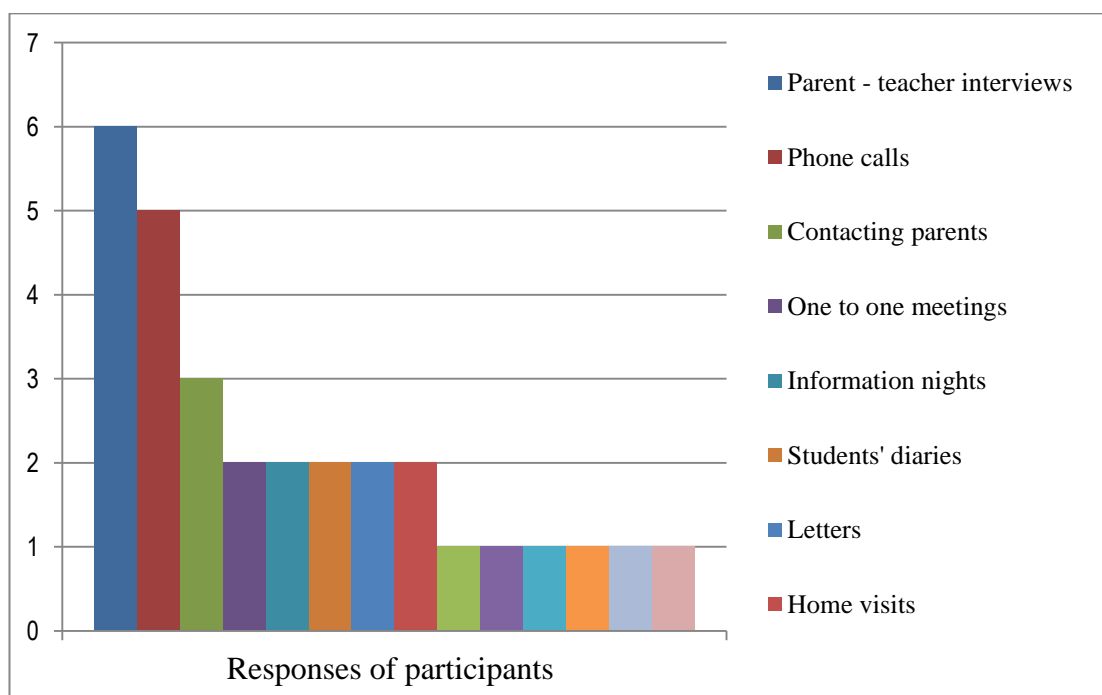


Figure 5.2. School–parent communication at Star Boys.

The school staff were keen to communicate with parents and tried to establish communication in several ways. Five participants and the Staff Handbook (D2) emphasised

the parent–teacher interviews organised every school term where teachers and parents discussed the student/child’s improvement. Informal and non–scheduled communication was monitored as according to the Staff Handbook (D2), staff must complete a communication log form after contacting a parent/guardian.

The school leadership team was not satisfied with the efficiency of parent–teacher interviews for the chemistry teacher (T1) and sought an alternative way to reach the parents who did not attend the scheduled interviews. He stated,

Generally, the parents following the students well ... are coming [to] those interviews but the parents who’re required to be there generally don’t come. So, they cancelled that, [and] instead of arranging big parent teacher interviews we just minimize that to one to one meetings.

One suggestion was to meet parents individually in private interviews (T4). Five participants mentioned phone calls as being part of the school–parent’s communication method. The Religion and Values teacher (T4) and Mr Hasan (P3) stressed that teachers called the parents if they had any concerns about academic matters or behaviour adopted by the student (T3 & P2).

The Staff Handbook (D2) and three participants emphasised that the school welcomed and encouraged the parents to contact the school about the progress of their children at any time, and to arrange a meeting to discuss the issues of concern with the relevant school staff. According to the Deputy Principal (A2) and school newsletter (D1–2), the school organised information nights for the new parents. Furthermore, the school organised an interview with new parents, which was attended by three senior school staff—principal, deputy principal and year level coordinator. Sometimes, the school staff communicated with parents through letters (T3 & T4), text messages (T4) or students’ diaries (P2 & D2).

The school staff organised different activities such as parents' barbeque programs (T4 & D1-2) at the beginning of the year and iftar dinners during Ramadan month (A3 & D1-8) to strengthen the school-parent relationships. These programs created opportunities for the school community to socialise. This socialisation contributed positively to the positive school climate. According to the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3), some pastoral care teachers organised class picnics to bring families together and the school invited parents to attend some of the class activities. The pastoral care teachers' schedules and availabilities differed as they ran the pastoral care activities voluntarily. Thus, not all pastoral care teachers participated in the same set of activities rather they contributed to programs in accordance with their availabilities.

Pastoral care teachers and mentors were encouraged to organise at least one home visit in a year to establish better relations with parents (A3). The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) argued that family visits created an opportunity for mentors, teachers and parents to discuss the issues related to the student and to act together with the parents to enhance the student's situation. The mathematics teacher (T2) articulated that pastoral care teachers and mentors would have a better understanding of student psychology through family visits. The school newsletters (D2) were another means for the school to communicate with parents and to inform them about school activities and agenda.

According to the CE Coordinator (T3) and Mr Ahmet (P2), the school-parent communication was at a satisfactory level, and the school involved the parents in their child's education (P2). The CE Coordinator (T3) considered that the staff and parents supported each other for the child's schooling. Mr Gurol (P1), Mr Hasan (P3) and Ali (S1) explained that the relationships between the students, parents and teachers were good however, there was room for improvement. According to Mr Gurol (P1), reducing the teachers' work load would be helpful in improving this relationship. For Mr Mustafa (P4), the school - parent relations should be improved through listening to the issues brought forward by the parents. He said

that school–parent relations “can have more of an impact if voice of the parents were listened to” when he discussed the matter.

5.3.2.3 Contribution of Parents

Parents contributed to the school in various ways and their contributions were valued and welcomed by the school community. Data on parents’ contributions to the school are presented in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13

Contribution of Parents

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“I have worked in other schools also and one of the things that really stand out is the amount of contribution that parents make to the school.”	A2
“During the interview, we ask parents how you can contribute to our school.”	A2
“We have professional parents who have a profession who have a business they could help out ... and this makes us special.”	A2
“Parents they have to value their child’s education. That’s a first step. Second step is providing a good environment for the students.”	T5
“Well if the child knows that the parent is paying attention to his education ... students are restrained to the certain point.”	P1
“When the kids feel like they have been followed up by the teachers and parents (it) keeps them on track on the way to their educational and moral success.”	P3
“They attend parent forums.” “They check students’ homework.”	T4
“If the same basic teachings are not implemented at home it becomes difficult for the student. ... students need consistency.”	T2
“Students should see role models starting from teachers, mentors and parents.”	A3
“We ask parents to send their child to extra classes or camps or activities. If they support their child to attend all these activities, it is very helpful for us.”	T3

The Deputy Principal (A2) found the parents' contribution to the school outstanding after comparing it to other schools in which he had worked. All new parents were interviewed by the leadership team and asked how they could contribute to the school. They were contacted when the school needed their contribution (A2 & A3). These contributions included repairs, maintenance, and assistance in pastoral care and extra-curricular activities. When the students observed parents taking an active role in the schools, they recognised that their parents valued their school and education (A2 & D1–6).

The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) stated that the parents could contribute to the children's education by valuing their education and sending them to the right school. Mr Gurol (P1) and Mr Hasan (P3) argued that the parents should follow up their children's academic and values education, and the Religion and Values teacher (T4) stated that they should check homework regularly as their contribution. Parents' contribution to the child's education includes attending parent-teacher interviews, checking the student's diaries, and checking their SEQTA account regularly. "The SEQTA suite is an all-in-one teaching and learning ecosystem that enables teachers, students, and parents to work together in an interactive and supportive online community" (SEQTA, 2017, para. 6). When the students were aware that their parents are following their educational progress, students put more effort to achieve better results (P1 & P3). The Religion and Values teacher (T4) said that parents could contribute to the education of the school by attending forums and information nights organised for them.

The mathematics teacher (T2) and the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) emphasised the crucial role of parents in values education. The mathematics teacher (T2) indicated that the school and parents should approach (values) education of students in the same way to assure success in values education. The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) argued that the desired level of success was not achievable in values education if the parents did not model the same values.

The CE Coordinator (T3) expressed that one way for parents to contribute in values education was to send their children to extra-curricular and pastoral care activities.

In conclusion, based on the data presented in Table 5.13, participants' views on how parents could contribute to the school could be summarised as follows: by helping the school through their professional skills; by enrolling their children in the right school and following their educational development; and by supporting the values education of their children through adapting the school's values educational program to their family life. Data suggest that parents' contribution to the school is usually in extra-curricular activities and that there is no parent involvement in teaching, such as in a position of teacher aide or co-teaching.

5.3.2.4 Community School and Parents and Friends' Association

In the 2009 School Prospectus (D5), the school acknowledged the generous support of the community which helped establish the school. Three participants mentioned that the school was, in a sense, a community school and that it created a warm community atmosphere. The deputy principal's (A2) perceptions aligned with the 2009 School Prospectus (D5) as he stated that the school was a community school and this was why it had parents who were committed to the school and who tried to contribute to its success. The views of the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) aligned with those of the Deputy Principal (A2) when he said that "They [community] are going and finding sponsors for our needs, ... we have many parents coming and helping us whatever they can do; some of them fixing the roof, some of them helping with gardening" The Pastoral Care Deputy's (A3) statement supports the notion of a community school. Building on this notion, Mr Hasan (P3) said he was happy with the strong relationship that existed between the school staff and parents, and described the whole picture as a bonded community.

The school established a Parents and Friends Association (PFA) to form better relationships and communication with the community through a formal structure. The PFA's

mission was “to provide all parents with the opportunity to participate and contribute to the school–related social activities” (D6, para. 1). According to a school newsletter (D1–6), “PFA aims to represent parents' voices, it always looking for ways to get more parents involved in the day–to–day life of our school” (p. 4).

Responses from several participants to interview questions indicated that the PFA committee was very active (A1, A3, & T2) and effective (A1) in the school. The PFA committee came together in monthly meetings (A2) and organised activities. It organised year level breakfasts (A1, A2, & D1–6), parents' seminars (D1–3, D1–4, & D1–6) on various themes such as nutrition, road safety and sleeping disorders (A1), iftar dinners for parents (A1 & D1–7), fund raising activities (D1–8, p. 2), Mother's Day events (D1–5) and different courses for parents (D1–10). These programs allowed the parents to share their voices with the school (A1), and ensured that parents understand the school and its functions (A3).

5.3.3 Leadership

Quality in leadership is necessary for the long lasting and continuous success of institutions. The success of the school points to the quality of its leadership and positive school climate. Leithwood et al. (2004) argued that there are many different theories and methods to achieve this aim however the success of all these various approaches depends on qualities, enthusiasm, and cooperation of local school leadership (see 3.2.1). Thus, successful leadership is an important factor in students' learning.

5.3.3.1 Leadership and School Climate Relations

The leadership in the school was one of the main causes of the formation of the positive school climate. John and Taylor (2017) assume that “significant relationships would exist between principals' leadership style, school climate, and the organizational commitment of

teachers” (p. 32). The data related to school climate were collected through personal communication with two teachers: T9 and T10.

The relationships among the school community are based on understanding and respecting each other (T9). Respecting each other and respecting values of others were important for the harmonious school climate as the school community contained numerous ethnic groups (T9 & T10). Students were confident to share their thoughts and concerns with the leadership team, and to request further assistance from teachers in their studies (T10). The school community was engaged in school activities. Two examples follow: first, the students asked non-teaching staff if these staff could prepare a breakfast for teachers to raise some funds to support an orphanage. The non-teaching staff accepted the offer and teachers who attended this breakfast contributed to fundraising (T9). Second, T10 indicated that in 2016 two themes were emphasised in school: using appropriate language, and keeping the school environment clean. Sometimes students and teachers cleaned the school yard together to raise awareness about keeping the environment clean (T10). Students also had an opportunity to engage in school activities through the Student Representative Council (SRC) (T10). For instance, the students established and ran chess club in the school (T10).

Education at the school was a value-centred education, where the school emphasised the importance of values in the school environment. The list of the values provided in Figure 5.1 could give an idea about the shared values of the school which were emphasised by the participants. Star Boys also emphasised issues such as promoting appropriate language, keeping the school clean, and having a bully-free school environment (T10).

The school took the necessary steps to provide a secure physical and social school climate. For instance, the school was surrounded by high fences and doors were kept locked after students entered the school until they were dismissed. Visitors were allowed to enter the school with the assistance of the secretary or security staff (PO). The school also organised

seminars for students about preventing bullying and for parents about cyberbullying in order to enhance the social security of the school (T9). The school provided a safe and positive social environment that assisted the ethical progress of the child (P4). Mr Hasan (P3) stated that the child did not experience any negative events when he said the school “provides safe environment that you can trust and feel safe that your kids are okay in the school and they will not face with dangers like experiencing drugs...” For Burhan (S3), pastoral care programs were created a good study environment. The school environment was appreciated by most participants and described as safe, friendly and protective. For example, the chemistry teacher (T1) asserted that “The school is also providing [a] protective environment for students. In this century, there are some bad habits among the students and our school is trying to provide that learning environment for them: a protective learning environment.”

Role modelling of teaching staff was an important contributor for the school climate. Through role modelling, teachers emphasised sympathy, respect, peace and tranquillity and students were encouraged to share their thoughts confidently (T9). Teaching staff aimed to prepare students for their future, to give them skills to overcome obstacles of life, and to raise them as respectful individuals for the humanity (T10).

Teaching staff are generally satisfied with their occupation in the school with some of them staying in after-school hours to prepare their lessons or to further assist students (T10). Teacher satisfaction was obvious when their students achieved positive results for their work such as good results in CE examinations in their subject (T9) or when seeing high performing students in school ceremonies (T9).

T10 reported that teaching staff evaluated the success of the school during the intercampus and campus meetings. Staff discussed reasons and solutions if the success criteria were not achieved in certain area. The success of the school in CE scores indicated that the teaching staff were achieving their objectives (T9 & T10). Teachers were attending

Professional Development programs to develop their teaching and management skills (T9). The leadership team supported the needs of teaching staff by supplying supportive materials such as technology, programs, books (T9) and responding to teachers' specific requests (T10). As well, it was reported that the leadership team were keen to meet teachers' requirements as much as possible to increase teaching quality (T10). Thus, the leadership team of the school contributed to the formation and maintenance of a positive school climate.

5.3.4 Contribution of School Staff to the School

A positive school climate encourages staff participation across a range of initiatives. The staff and activities run by them are an important part of school climate. John and Taylor (2017) believe there is "a strong case for a relationship between the climate of a school and the level of teacher commitment" (p. 31). The school staff consists of leadership team, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff. The staff can be categorised as familiar and non-familiar according to their familiarity with Gülen's philosophy. The staff interaction with the school community contributes significantly to the positive school climate. However, what really makes a school a Gülen-inspired school are the interactions and contributions of the staff who are familiar with Gülen's philosophy. Thus, their interactions in the school environment, specifically in pastoral care activities, contributed significantly to the positive school climate.

The teaching staff who were voluntarily contributing to pastoral care services are named as pastoral care staff. Employing pastoral care staff was one of the characteristics of the school. These teachers interpreted Gülen's inspirations and put them into practice in the school environment through their voluntary efforts, and they usually offered to be appointed [tayin] in sister schools. Thus, they are transferrable teachers.

The researcher observed pastoral care departmental meetings. His observation suggests that pastoral care staff play a significant role in planning and implementing pastoral care

activities. Mentors, mostly former students, assist pastoral care teachers in implementing pastoral care activities and they can be considered as voluntary school staff. They are university students who are familiar with Gülen's philosophy, pastoral care programs of the school, and school values. Mentors' roles in pastoral care are significant (A3) as they can better communicate with students. The relationship between the pastoral care teacher and student will always remain a teacher–student relationship; however, mentors can establish a brotherhood relationship with students which creates a warm atmosphere and contributes to their values education. Mr Gurol (P1) had a similar opinion when he described mentors as “university students regarded as older brothers or sisters (as if close family members)” and explained why mentors easily established good relationship with students when he said “there is not a generation gap between them, and child probably relates to the older brother [mentor] in the much better way.” The Principal (A1) also mentioned the role of mentors when he depicted a “mentor who is a usually university student ... trying to serve their younger brothers and sisters.” Ali's (S1) reply to the question; “What do you like most about welfare programs?” was “Relationship between mentor and student.” The researcher observed the warm relationships between mentor and students during school camp (PO). These perceptions (A3, P1, A1, S1, & PO) indicate the important role of mentors in pastoral care programs. Mentors contributed significantly to the pastoral care programs and, therefore, to the positive school climate.

5.3.5 School Environment

This section reports data collected from school documents and participants about the social and physical school environment which contribute to the school climate, and shows their opinions presented in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14

Opinion of Participants About School Environment

Data	Data sources
“A thriving environment of serenity and care”	D4
“A non–denominational school environment that is conducive to learning”	D4
“It is the policy of Star College that the learning and working environment is positive and supportive for all members of the school community.”	D2
“Everyone interested in learning... they have respect towards their teachers”	A2
“Working atmosphere is perfect very friendly everyone is supportive, everyone is caring”	A3
“Students have a very warm personality and the staffs are professional and courteous”	T4
“Teacher like a brother that helps you”	S3
“Everyone is caring for each other”	S5
“It is like a home”	S1 & N1
Everyone respects each other	A2 & S5
Friendly, contained honesty (N2)	A2, A3, N1, N2
Friendly (S3), polite (S3 & T4) and supportive (S5) teachers	S3, T4, S5
Friends (S2 & S4); friendship (N1 & N2)	S2, S4, N1, N2
“Comfortable and multicultural”	A1
Prayer room and good canteen (S3) that serves halal food (A2)	S3 & A2
“Good relations with parents and graduates”	A1
“Communal ownership”	A2

The school documents described the school environment as follows: “a thriving environment of serenity and care” (D4, p. i), “a non–denominational school environment that is conducive to learning” (D4, p. i), and “the learning and working environment is positive and supportive for all members of the school community” (D2, p. 12).

The participants described the school environment in similar terms as the school documents as “caring, conducive to learning, and supportive [of] working” but they used different words. For instance, the Deputy Principal (A2) stated that “Everyone interested in learning, they wearing a uniform, they have respect towards their teachers”; the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) asserted that “The working atmosphere is perfect: very friendly, everyone is supportive, everyone is caring”; the Religion and Values teacher (T4) said that “Students have a very warm personality and the staff are professional and courteous”; Burhan (S3) commented that “Teacher [is] like a brother that helps you”; Ugur (S5) proclaimed that “Everyone is caring for each other”; Ali (S1) and Mrs Hilal (N1) specified that “It is like a home.”

This paragraph describes the physical school environment based on observation by the researcher. The school is surrounded with high fences and entry for visitors is granted by school secretaries. The students changed their classrooms according to their timetable as most of the subjects have their own dedicated room. Each student has a locker for his learning equipment. The subject teachers designed the classroom according to their teaching methods. The desks in classrooms mostly faced the front and in some classrooms, there is also a separate set-up, for example, a U shape (Appendix G). The school provided a tearoom for staff, pastoral care rooms, a prayer room, and a canteen that provides halal food. Table tennis tables were located in school corridors. The school yard contained a basketball court and soccer fields. The school was planning to establish a synthetic soccer field which was completed in 2015, a tennis court, completed in 2016, and a gymnasium for PE lessons—not completed as at 2017. The school also provided bus services for students whose parents were not available to drop off or pick up their children.

The school social environment was further explained by participants as follows: everyone respects each other (A2 & S5); friendly (A2, A3, N1 & N2); friendly (S3), polite

(S3 & T4) and supportive (S5) teachers; contained honesty (N2); friends (S2 & S4); friendship (N1 & N2); comfortable and multicultural (A1); (Turkish & Islamic) culture, contains prayer room and good canteen (S3) that serves *halal food* (A2); good relations with parents and graduates (A1); and a communal ownership (A2).

The school environment was one of the major reasons, after quality education, for the participants to choose the school, and it was considered to be one of the distinctive aspects of the school by five participants (A1, A2, A3, S3 & S5). For example, the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) remarked that the “Working atmosphere is perfect very friendly: everyone is supportive, everyone is caring” and S3 said that the “Environment in Star Boys is very nice; all my friends are going there. Teachers are very nice towards you; they respect you” The school environment was also the feature of the school most appreciated by participants. They considered that the school environment contributed positively to success (A2, N3, S2 & S5). S2, for example, commented that the school was successful for three reasons: “teachers and good students, good environment to learn”. The school environment also assisted in the delivery of the values education of the school (P3 & P5). For example, Mr Hasan (P3) stated that “This is one of the issues that I love in this environment, not to preach, not to just give a good speak to the kids but to provide a good example to the others.”

As reported in the school newsletter (D1–2), the pastoral care department endeavours to provide a positive environment where students not only learn but also socialise. Four participants (T5, P2, S1 & S4) expressed their view that pastoral care activities created a positive social environment among the school community. For example, S1 explained why he participated in the pastoral care programs in his statement: “To socialize with my friends after-school, get better results in my classes, because we have tutoring together. It helps me in both aspects; socializing and in my schooling.” The activities organised by school such as

iftar dinners, staff breakfasts, parent visits and parent picnics also contributed to the formation of a positive school environment.

The interaction among the school community, the activities of the school, and the presence of community culture in the school created a positive school environment that assisted students' academic and moral development. Parents and the school community were contented with the school environment.

5.3.6 Summary of School Climate

The major contributors to the school climate were pastoral care programs, school–parent relationships, leadership, school staff, and school environment. Pastoral care programs were important in Star Boys as they were involved in the implementation of moral values, which is an important component of a balanced education, so as to enhance the ethical, moral, social and emotional wellbeing of students. The programs contribute to the establishment of a positive school climate through promoting team spirit and good relationships among the school community. Pastoral care programs contributed significantly, actualising the values education vision of the school through various activities. These activities were designed to promote success for the students as well as their moral development.

School–parent relationships were another aspect of the school climate. The school had given high priority to school–parent relations (D3) and this relationship assisted in the success of the school (A2, A3, T5 & P1) by lessening problems (A2 & P2) and increasing benefits in the school. The school leadership team were keen to communicate with parents and tried to establish communication in various ways, as shown in Figure 5.2. Parents contributed to the maintenance of the school and education of the students at home in different ways, as shown in Table 5.13.

The success of the school in delivering academic achievement and values education was seen as an outcome of successful leadership practices. The leadership roles in the school were coordinating principal, campus principal, deputy principals and coordinators—year level, SRC, and CE. These leadership roles contributed to establishing and maintaining a positive school climate. The relationships of the school community are based on respect and they generally developed in school programs and activities. The school emphasised values, school staff established shared values and worked together in actualising these values by their role modelling. The school tried to provide a school climate that was physically and socially secure. Generally speaking, the teaching staff were satisfied with their work and reached their educational objectives. Students were confident in sharing their thoughts with staff and were involved in management through the SRC.

School staff were the main actors in forming the school climate. All crucial educational objectives such as academic excellence and the delivery of values education were undertaken by school staff. Pastoral care programs were provided by pastoral care staff on a voluntary basis. The relationships among the school community contributed to the establishment of a positive school environment which is part of the school climate. The school environment was described by participants as non-denominational; supportive of learning and working; safe; friendly; respectful; warm; and caring. Participants stated that the positive school environment provided a good platform for students' academic and moral development.

5.4 School Identity

This section reports findings related to the identity of Star Boys and this refers to the public profile, promotional perspectives, the school as an educational facility, and what the school wants to be seen as by the community. In other words, what is the distinctive brand of the school? The section addresses the following aspects that define school identity: academic

education in Section 5.4.1; curriculum orientation of the school in Section 5.4.1 and Section 5.4.2; and being a community school and Gülen's inspirations in Section 5.4.3.

5.4.1 Academic Education

The first aspect that defines the school's identity is its focus on academic education. This section examines the following themes: the school's understanding of success; perception of success; and outcomes in terms of the areas of success.

Like most schools, Star Boys utilised its academic success to promote the school. This was seen when the CE results were released. The school promoted the CE success of students through flyers, banners, newspaper advertisements, the school website, and the school social media accounts. In the interviews, participants are asked what they thought about school success, the areas of success and the reason for the success if they found the school successful. The majority of participants (19/20) expressed an opinion that the school was academically successful, although they gave different reasons for this. Their reasons included: quality of students' work (N2); higher achieving students (S2); quality of subject teaching (T4 & T5); high university enrolments (S1 & S4); and good CE scores (A1, A2, A3, T2, T3, T5, N2, S1, S3, S5 & N3). The interviews demonstrated that the participants associated 'academic achievement' mostly as academic performance in CE scores.

The Principal (A1) stated that the school earned most of its reputation through academic success when he said, "In the community we are known as the leading school in terms of the CE success especially in the north-western area". For three out of four parents (P1, P3 & P4), perceptions of academic success were one of the main reasons to choose the school.

The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) suggested the academic success of the school made it attractive for parents. The Principal (A1) argued that academic excellence did not necessarily mean having every student achieve university enrolment, but to educate them according to

their abilities and interest to prepare them as contributing citizens. According to the CE Coordinator (T3), in Year 11 and 12, academic concerns are greater than delivering values education as CE examinations are the main concerns of students and parents during this period.

“Is Star Boys a successful school in your opinion?” This question was asked of all interview participants (Appendix I). Responses shown in Table 5.15 indicate that almost all participants stated the school was successful.

Table 5.15

Is the School Successful?

Participants’ responses	Data sources
Yes	A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, N1, N2, N3, P1, P2, P4, S1, S2, S3, S4 & S5
No	None

Some qualified their responses, for example, three participants (P3, A1 & T1) said the school was successful but there was room for improvement. Mr Hasan (P3) replied “there is always room for improvement, no one is perfect. But when you see someone else is on track and going on the right direction, you can say they going to achieve the best all the time.” The Principal (A1) expressed similar sentiments: “There is always room to improve and we are trying our best and we will improve in future.” The chemistry teacher (T1) responded that the school was successful in its region but recognised that there was room for improvement, “but of course this is not enough, should be carried further”. The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) also recognised that the school was successful in certain subjects such as Mathematics and Science but argued that it “needs a bit more establishment in literacy and other fields—sport, hospitality, occupational health and safety.”

Although the success of the school was enough to satisfy the school community, four participants (P3, A1, T1 & T5) expected better achievements that were broader in nature and across a variety of subjects. This expectation was being pushed as the school became more established and more experienced.

Data in Table 5.16 indicate that three participants stated that the school mission was to provide a balanced education that considered academic excellence and moral values. Mr Adil (N3) emphasised only academic excellence. The chemistry teacher (T1) pointed out that the school must constantly seek further academic improvement even when satisfied with current achievements. For the Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) and Mrs Hilal (N1), the willingness and effort of the students has led to the school’s continued academic achievement.

Table 5.16

Academic Achievement from The Perspective of The School’s Aims

Theme	Theme sources
The school is very successful that is trying to cater for the needs of academic excellence as well as the moral values.	A1, A3 & T2
“It is a school based on achieving high academic standards.”	N3
“Our philosophy is not to [be] satisfied with the current achievements.”	T1
“The best model of student would be the one who is seeking the knowledge in the highest level.”	A3
“School offers best education to the students who want to learn.”	N1

The school success in NAPLAN and CE examinations is now discussed. NAPLAN stands for National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy which is a yearly assessment undertaken by all students in Australia in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9. Students are assessed in reading, writing, language, and numeracy. A report provides two types of scores: SIM and

ALL. SIM score indicates ‘schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds’ and ALL score indicates ‘Australian schools’ average’.

The researcher checked the 2016 NAPLAN results for Star Boys Year 7 and Year 9 students who would have been in Year 1 and Year 3 at the time the data were collected on site. According to this report, Year 7 students achieved average success in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy in SIM and ALL categories. They achieved below average only in reading in the ALL category. Year 9 students achieved average success in reading, writing, and grammar and punctuation in SIM and ALL categories. They achieved above average in spelling in SIM category and above average in numeracy in SIM and ALL categories. Star Boys Year 7 and Year 9 students generally achieved average in SIM and ALL categories.

In three tables, Table 5.17, Table 5.18, and Table 5.19, Star Boys results for the CE over the three years 2014, 2015 and 2016 are compared with those of surrounding CE schools within 10km range, based on the data provided by Better Education. The fourth column in the tables provides the ranking of the best schools in CE achievements among the 532 schools (528 in 2015). Star Boys achieved the best ranking among the surrounding schools. The fifth column provides the ratio of high achieving (top 9% in the state) students. In this category, Star Boys was the most successful school among the surrounding schools. The sixth column provides data about median CE scores which refers to the average achievement of all students in that particular school. In this category, in 2014, Star Boys was fourth among the seven schools in the region; in 2015 it shared third place, and in 2016 shared first place. The data suggest Star Boys’ CE achievements confirm its identification as a school emphasising academic excellence.

Table 5.17

CE School Ranking – 2014

School name	School type	Distance to Star Boys	Rank / 532	Scores of 40+ (%) ²³	Median CE score ²⁴	Student enrolled in CE
Star Boys	Independent	0km	159	7.2	28	136
I College	Independent	2.1km	227	4.9	29	113
R College	Public	6.4km	410	1.7	24	262
A College	Independent	9.8km	215	5.2	30	150
G College	Public	4.8km	293	3.6	29	347
P College	Catholic	3.5km	382	2.1	28	300
H College	Public	1.9km	334	2.9	25	134

Source: Better Education, (n.d).

Table 5.18

CE School Ranking – 2015

School name	School type	Distance to Star Boys	Rank / 532	Scores of 40+ (%)	Median CE score	Student enrolled in CE
Star Boys	Independent	0km	104	10.3	28	129
I College	Independent	2.1km	166	6.8	28	122
R College	Public	6.4km	477	0.7	24	258
A College	Independent	9.8km	183	6.3	30	158
G College	Public	4.8km	237	4.8	29	324
P College	Catholic	3.5km	334	2.7	28	307
H College	Public	1.9km	409	1.8	24	174

Source: Better Education, (n.d).

²³ A study score of 40 or above in any study represents exceptional performance (about the top nine percent in the state).

²⁴ The median study score is the middle score when all the study scores obtained by students of their school are ranked from highest to lowest, and so it represents a “typical” level of achievement in the school.

Table 5.19

CE School Ranking – 2016

School name	School type	Distance to Star Boys	Rank / 532	Scores of 40+ (%)	Median CE score	Student enrolled in CE
Star Boys	Independent	0km	88	11.4	31	125
I College	Independent	2.1km	117	7.3	29	96
R College	Public	6.4km	481	0.5	25	236
A College	Independent	9.8km	150	7.7	31	161
G College	Public	4.8km	228	5	29	320
P College	Catholic	3.5km	374	2.2	28	328
H College	Public	1.9km	423	1.5	24	174

Source: Better Education, (n.d).

Data presented in Table 5.17, Table 5.18, and Table 5.19 indicate that Star Boys is a successful school in CE scores in its region. There are many success criteria and different assessments of the schools' success in the state which are available online; however, to avoid a lengthy explanatory text, the researcher provided Table 5.17, Table 5.18, and Table 5.19 as evidence of success of the school from an independent public source.

The school staff strive for students' academic improvement through the implementation of the curriculum, study camps and after-school study activities. The CE examinations are one of the measurements that reflect the result of 13 years' academic education and the school uses these scores as strong indicators to prove its academic success. The school website, not identified for ethical reasons, provides the data about its CE success each year. Some examples over a number of years are given in the following list,

- Since its first graduates in 2002, the school has gained the reputation of being the top performing CE School in the Northern suburbs.
- In 2002, the first graduates' CE results placed the school in the top 10% of the state.

- The Government's 'On Track Survey Data' ranked the school in 2004 as the second–best school with 94% university enrolments.
- In 2006, the girls' campus was ranked as the best school whereas the boys' campus was ranked as the third best in the state.
- In 2008, the boys' campus was ranked as the second–best school in the state with 89% university enrolments; the girls' campus ranked as the fourth best with 86% university enrolments.
- In 2011, 93% of students enrolled in universities.
- In 2013, five students received 99+ score, 11 students received 95+ score, 18 students received 90+ score, and 38 students received 80+ score.
- In 2016, five students received 97+ score, 15 students received 90+ score, and 35 students received 80+ score.

This growth in achievement suggests that the school is committed to the academic improvement of students as one of the major components of a balanced education.

The Department of Education and Training's (2017c) Socio–Economic Status (SES) Scores provide data about SES scores for approximately 2600 schools. In 2016, the lowest SES score in Australia was 73 and the highest was 131. The 2016 SES scores are indicative of the social economic level of the community during the period of data collection. Star Boys SES score was 90 which is a relatively low score indicative of a marginally disadvantaged school. That implies Star Boys school community was a relatively low–income community. The establishment of an academically oriented school by a moderate SES score community shows significant success of the school. The success of a school in achieving academically

oriented outcomes is a significant indicator of its reputation and it is also one of the school's distinguishing aspects.

The researcher asked all interview participants whether in their view the school was successful. If they responded in the affirmative, they were then asked in what aspects it was successful and their responses are summarised in Table 5.20.

Table 5.20

The Areas of Success

	Success areas	Data sources
1	Academic education	A2, A3, T2, N1, N3, S3, P1 & P4
2	CE scores and results	A1, A2, A3, T2, T3, T5, N2, N3, S1, S3, S4 & S5
	Continuing to university & finish their course	S1
3	Their level of teaching is very good quality	N2
	Subject teaching: mathematics, science, computing	T4, T5 & S5
4	Higher achieving students	S2
	Students' quality of work	N2
5	Delivering values education	A2, A3, T3, T4, N1, N3, S3 & P1
6	Discipline	S2
7	Accountability	P4
8	Social self-trust is given by the school	P3
9	It empowers children to become adults	P2
10	Treats everyone as a special valuable member	P2
11	Teaching the community that education is important	T5
12	Multiculturalism	T5

All but one (P3) of the participants stated that the school was successful. Mr Hasan (P3)'s response was not affirmative when he stated that "There is always a room for

improvement, no one is perfect.” He also said, “I do have some issues that I can criticise but if you look from the positive side I can say I’m happy with what I’ve got from the school.” His answers indicate that although he did not find the school successful enough, he was satisfied with the education provided to his children by the school.

In Table 5.20, rows one to four are related to academic fields, thus 17 participants said that the school was academically successful. Eight participants commented that the school was generally successful in academic fields, 13 participants said that the school was successful in university enrolments. Four participants found the school successful in subject teaching, specifically in mathematics, science and computing. For Harun (S2) and Mr Erhan (N2), high achieving students and their quality of work pointed to the success of the school. For example, Harun (S2) found the school successful in two areas; “higher achieving students and discipline”. Hence, the school was strongly identified as being academically successful.

All the responses dealt with the quality of the subject teaching, high achieving students and their ability to achieve good scores in competitions and CE examinations. The majority of participants focussed on success in the CE examinations, and this was seen as a strong indicator of school success after a long educational journey.

The responses shown in rows five to ten of Table 5.20 are related to values education and 12 participants stated that the school was successful in delivering values education. Success can be seen in different ways. The responses of participants indicate their satisfaction about the moral development of the students, however, the assessment of how the values were embedded in the school curriculum and how they were being achieved by students needs further analysis. Eight of these participants’ responses were concerned with the general values education of the school, while some other participants mentioned specific areas of values education such as discipline, accountability and self-confidence of students. The responses

suggest that the participants identified the school as being successful in two main areas; academic achievement and delivery of values education.

Mr Ahmet (P2) and the Year 10 Coordinator (T5) had different opinions from other participants about the success areas of the school. According to Mr Ahmet (P2), the school was successful because it treated everyone as a valuable member of the school community, and for the Year 10 Coordinator (T5), it was successful because it taught the importance of education to the community. The school achieved very good results in CE scores. This indicated that the school contributed to helping students to transform their academic dedication into university enrolments, and raised the importance of university education among the Australian–Turkish community. Multiculturalism was another area of school success (T5) which is examined in Section 5.2.

The areas of success are summarised in Table 5.20 which shows that the school was successful mainly in CE scores—11 participants, in academic field—8 participants, and in delivering values education—8 participants. “What was the reason for the success of the school?” The researcher asked this question to participants and they provided a variety of opinions about the reasons behind the success of the school and these are summarised in Table 5.21. According to all participants, teachers were the primary reason behind the school’s success. The terminology used in defining some of the essential characteristics of the teachers varied: “committed” (A2); “dedicated” (A3, P1, T1& N1); “devoted” (A3 & S4); “enthusiastic” (A2 & N2); “hard–working” (A3 & T4); “highly motivated” (N3); “friendly” (S3); “determined” (T2); “role models” (T3); “teachers are genuine in wanting to educate and shape the future generations” (P4); and “they try to teach everyone really well” (S5). The words: committed; dedicated; and devoted are synonyms. Thus, in comparison to other signified qualities, participants generally emphasised the dedication of teachers.

Table 5.21

The Reasons for Success

Theme	Theme sources
Teachers	A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, N1, N2, N3, P1, P2, P3, P4, S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 & D4
Camps, study camps	A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, N3, S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 & D1
Extra activities, classes and after-school activities	A3, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, N1, N2, N3, P3, S1
Mentors and teachers	A1, A3 & P1
Pastoral Care	A1 & T5
Moral values	P3
Leadership team	A2, T3, N1 & N3
Staff	A2, N3 & P3
Parents	A2 & T5
Love of learning	A2, T3, P2 & S3
Students	A2, N3 & S2
Environment	A2, N3, S2 & S5
Other reasons:	
Interactive classes	T5
Role model, successful guests	A3, D1–4 & D1–9
Never giving up	T2
Backed up by the community	N3
Very focussed set of objectives to achieve its goals	N3
Entrance examinations (N3), homework (S3)	N3 & S3

The second most common opinion, that of 17 participants, regarding the school's success was about the pastoral care department and its varied range of activities which is examined earlier in the school climate section. Three participants associated the success with the 'staff', whilst four participants indicated the leadership team. The contribution of the

leadership team and staff is evident as continuing success cannot be achieved through poor management, a factor which is also examined in school climate section. The deputy principal (A2) and Year 10 Coordinator (T5) claimed that parents also contribute to the success of the school, as in most cases parents make the decision about the school that their children would attend, and this decision deeply influences the students' primary and secondary education (see Section 5.3).

Four participants (A2, T3, P2, & S3) related school success to the students' love for learning. Motivated students are willing to receive the education provided through the school curriculum. It was suggested by these participants that students who attend after-school study sessions and study camps show signs of motivation and love for learning. Furthermore, these students displayed a behaviour which suggests that they were willing to work to the limits of their abilities. For four participants (A2, N3, S2, & S5), the school environment, discussed in school climate section, was another factor that contributed to the success of the school.

There were some other reasons mentioned by participants in relation to the school success and these are listed above in Table 5.21, row eight. The school enrolment is processed through entrance examinations as the demand was greater than the capacity of the school. Entrance examinations enabled the school to select students who possess an academic aptitude and this was a contributing factor to the overall success of the school. In addition, community support also played an important role in the establishment and improvement of the school. When the elements listed in Table 5.21 come together in this Gülen-inspired school, the full benefits are evident.

The researcher examined the participants' interviews to find out what they considered were the outcomes of success. Their opinions are summarised in Table 5.22.

Table 5.22

Outcomes of the Achievements

Theme	Theme sources
Good, productive member of society	A3, T1 & T2
The school's achievement attracts more students	N3, S5 & P1
High number of university entrance	A3 & S3
Success of the students make school and staff proud	A2
Good future life	T3
Contribution to peace and stability	P3

According to three participants (A3, T1 & T2) success achieved by the school means a contribution to Australian society by educating a generation who would become beneficial members of society. Mr Adil (N3), Mr Gurol (P1) and Ugur (S5) said that the academic success of the school with a high level of university entrance enhanced its reputation resulting in the attraction of more students each year. Two participants related the success of the school to the high number of university enrolments. Most of its Year 12 students were successful in being accepted into various universities.

According to the Deputy Principal (A2), the school staff also showed great pride in the success of their students. For the CE Coordinator (T3), the success would bring students better life standards. Finally, Mr Hasan (P3) argued that education was the key for peace and stability thus, the success of the school must contribute to peace, stability and national cohesion. The participants' perspectives identify the school with its achievements in providing a balanced education that addresses moral values and academic achievement. The school's academic success stories published in the media suggest that the school is perceived by the broader community as academically successful. Examples of media reports about academic successes of the school include: the school was at the top of the state after

outstanding CE results (Star Weekly, 2014); the school was leading the state with outstanding CE scores (Turkish Journal, 2016); the school had 14 students score above 95 and 20 students above 90, when the highest possible score is 99.95 (Herald Sun, 2016).²⁵

5.4.2 Curriculum Orientation of the School

The curriculum of the school was developed in accordance with the Australian Curriculum and the school embedded its mission and values within the Australian curriculum standards. The Staff Handbook stated (D2) that “The National Curriculum identifies three Cross Curriculum Priorities one national, one regional and one global - namely, Indigenous perspectives, Asia and Sustainability” (p. 7). According to D2, these areas are not taught as separate learning areas. Teachers address them by allocating the relevant knowledge and activities in the scope and sequence of the learning areas.

The school offers various subjects according to each year level, for instance in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Health & PE, Arts, Languages (Turkish, Arabic, French), Religion and Values, and Electives (dance, drama, food technology, robotics...), and in Year 10 Arts and Languages were replaced with CE subjects (D6). The school curriculum also embraced Gülen’s philosophies where possible, for example, in the provisions of holistic education. The school curriculum aimed to: develop successful learners; empower students to become critical thinkers; nurture resilient individuals with the wide range of skills; interests and attributes; develop academic, artistic, musical and sport skills of students; equip students with digital technology skills to prepare them for the 21st century workforce;²⁶ instil moral values and a belief in tolerance, diversity and harmony (D6).

²⁵ To protect the schools’ anonymity in this thesis, these three references have not been provided in the reference list.

²⁶ Social Efficiency Curriculum Ideology (discussed in Chapter Three).

The school considered the statement about “General Capabilities that underpin flexible and critical thinking, a capacity to work with others and an ability to move across subject disciplines to develop new expertise” (D2, p. 7) during curriculum development. Three main areas, indigenous perspectives, Asia and Sustainability, were integrated with subject teachings. The Staff Handbook (D2) statement emphasised that the goal of the school is: to “provide a diverse and challenging curriculum that will meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students” (p. 4) and “to offer a curriculum which promotes the growth and development of the whole person.” Special programs were prepared by modifying or extending the curriculum to assist individual learning where necessary (D2). This indicates a Learner–Centred Curriculum Ideology (Section 3.3.2.1).

Wardekker’s and Miedema’s (2001) analysis of curriculum orientations, preclusion or equality, were discussed in Section 3.3. Implementing a preclusion strategy would limit all experiences to those in accordance with school’s ideological convictions whereas in adopting an equality strategy schools emphasise diversity in the content of the curriculum. Star College implements the Australian Curriculum and teaching approaches. In this regard, it adopts an equality strategy.

5.4.3 Being a Community School and Gülen’s Inspirations

The Australian–Turkish community arrived in Australia in the late 1960s and early 1970s. For the Deputy Principal (A2), to open a school was the dream of Australian Turkish community. The Turkish community who were familiar with Gülen’s thoughts established the Fatih Foundation (pseudonym) in 1992 and was able to open Star College in 1997 (Section 1.3). Thus, the school was a community school and being a community school was part of school’s identity.

Participants referred to the issue of being a community school directly and indirectly. The Deputy Principal (A2) and the Religion and Values teacher (T4) indicated that Star Boys

was a community school. A sense of belonging existed in the school environment (A2) and the school reinforced a “sense of community” among the students. Mr Adil (N3) suggested one of the reasons contributing to school success was because it was “backed up by the community at large.” The Pastoral Care Deputy (A3) emphasised the level of financial support provided by the community to the school when he said, “They are [community] going and finding sponsors for our needs, ... parents coming and helping us whatever they can do, some of them fixing the roof, some of them helping with gardening” The school supported “students cultural, social and religious values” (T4) and “community values” (P4) along with academic developments. The Religion and Values teacher (T4) stated that the school was different from others because of “the strong support of parents and the Turkish community”. The Year 10 Coordinator (T5) chose the school as a workplace to serve the Turkish community. He explained his commitment was to provide support to the community, saying “The major problems of the Turkish community [are that] they do have adaptation problems within Australia” and education was best way to address this problem.

The researcher presented a challenge to the participants, which was how they would describe the school to a visitor. Figure 5.3 presents main responses of participants.

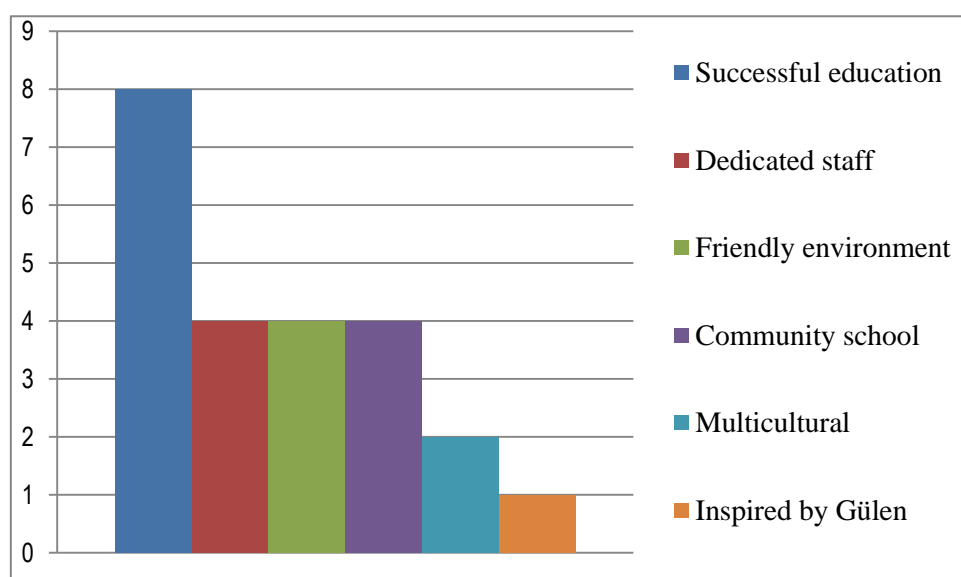


Figure 5.3: Descriptions of the school by participants.

Eight participants mentioned the success of the school, four participants mentioned the dedicated staff of the school, four participants mentioned the warm school environment, and four participants mentioned the schools being a community school.

School staff and school environment were discussed in School Climate in Section 5.3.4 and 5.3.5, and school success in School Identity in Section 5.4.1. Four participants (A2, T3, A1, T1) said that the school was a community school and for the deputy principal (A2), the Turkish community had been longing to open their own school since the early days of migration to Australia. According to the CE coordinator (T3), the school was part of a big family, and the members of the family mostly worked voluntarily for the wellbeing of the community. The students were very comfortable (A1) in the home-like atmosphere of the school and their families were contented (T1) because the school accommodated the community culture in the school environment.

The researcher asked participants the reason they choose the school. The main reasons given in response were: education, environment, community, and the philosophy of the school. Four participants said that the community and cultural backgrounds were essential when they made their decision. The Deputy Principal (A2) supported the school because it contributed to the community. The main reason for the Year 10 Coordinator (T5) to select the school was that the school was a good place to develop an Australian identity within the student's cultural background. Mr Erhan (N2) was comfortable in the school for cultural and religious reasons and Mr Hasan (P3) wanted his children to grow up with the awareness of their own culture. The Deputy Principal (A2) considered the relationship with Gülen as a very important aspect identifying the school:

Star Colleges are inspired by very well-known figure in the Islamic world, Turkish world, also in the international arena, and I'm talking about Mr. Fethullah Gülen. He is an educator himself, a spiritual leader to many people, and through his work, through his books, through his inspiration the Turkish community, in particular, has been inspired by this great scholar, opened up schools not only in Turkey but all over the world.

Only the Deputy Principal (A2) spontaneously identified the connection between Gülen and the school; however, his opinion is significant as a leadership member. While the school did not promote itself as Gülen-inspired or Hizmet school in its documents, anecdotal evidence based on the researcher's experiences suggests it was known among the Australian-Turkish community as a Hizmet school. This study indicates that Star Boys accommodates many of Gülen's inspirations in its philosophy and practices. Thus, being a Hizmet school or Gülen-inspired school was part of its identity. This section examined two aspects of Star Boys' identity; being a community school and being a Gülen-inspired school.

5.4.4 Summary of School Identity

The academic improvement of students was one of the major components of the school's balanced education, and aiming for academic excellence was a crucial element of school identity. The school advertises its academic achievements mostly, and the reputation of the school was built mainly on academic achievements, specifically in its CE scores. The school was aware that academic success was not the only outcome of the schooling. Thus, the ultimate aim of the school was to provide the best possible education to the students to raise good citizens according to their personal abilities and interests.

Teachers, study camps, extra classes—pastoral care activities, the leadership team, students' interest in learning, and the environment were the main reasons for the success of the school. This success served to raise productive members for the wider society, attracted more students, and enrolled more students in universities.

To be a community school was part of the school's identity. Participants have identified the school as a community school where community and school supported each other. The community established the school and the school served the community in different ways such as increasing the number of educated people in the community, contributing to the integration of the community with the wider Australian community and by building an Australian–Turkish or Australian–Muslim identity. Community members were content to see some of their values, culture and cuisine (A2) reflected in the curriculum and school environment. The school was opened by Gülen's followers and, anecdotally, is identified among the Australian Turkish community as being aligned with his beliefs. This interpretation is also consistent with the work of Polat (2012).

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the findings in Star Boys under three main dimensions that characterise the nature of a school; school culture, school climate, and school identity.

Star Boys culture was characterised by four components: a balanced education; values education; school behaviour management; and multiculturalism. The school implemented a balanced education as part of its culture, and dedicated itself to serve both the academic development and moral wellbeing of its students. Values education was an important part of school culture, and school documents, the school environment, and staff role modelling promoted school and community values, thus establishing a value-centred educational approach. The school culture emphasised behaviour management to provide a safe and orderly school life. The school's behaviour management system encouraged good conduct and corrected misbehaviour. It contributed to the overall quality of the school by providing a safe and fair teaching/learning/working environment for the school community. The school was non-denominational and welcoming of all, regardless of their cultural background, and this resulted in the enrolment of Australian Muslims from numerous ethnic backgrounds. The

school promoted the notion of accepting everybody as they are and respecting others' beliefs and cultures. Although the school was open to all religions, because of the significant interest shown in the school by Muslim community, religious education was influenced by Islamic culture only.

The climate of Star Boys was influenced by several aspects: the quality of relationships developed by pastoral care programs among the school community; school–parent relationships; supportive leadership; dedicated school staff; and a positive school environment. Pastoral care services contributed to academic services however they were aimed mainly at the moral development of the students. The pastoral care activities created a warm atmosphere within the school community as shown above in the discussion of the students' perceptions. The school prioritised school–parent communication and intended to increase parents' participation in school matters. The school staff contended that positive school–parent relationships assisted the development of the students both academically and behaviourally. Although parents were not involved in classroom teaching, they were encouraged to collaborate with the school and apply a similar education philosophy and discipline at home. The supportive leadership in the school assisted teachers and students to reach their objectives and established a positive school climate. The contribution of dedicated school staff to the positive school climate was also crucial as important school objectives were implemented through their professional contribution. The school created a warm and comfortable environment for the school community. The environment accommodated different communities' cultures and this contributed to the general quality of the school. The school community—staff, mentors, students, and parents—were the main actors in forming the school climate. The school required staff members to be positive role models to students. All crucial educational objectives such as academic excellence and delivering values education were undertaken by school staff.

The aspects that were mentioned in school culture and climate, such as balanced education, pastoral care programs, quality staff, and school environment, were somehow connected to school identity as well. A further three aspects formed the Star Boys identity: aiming for academic excellence; the curriculum orientation; and being a community and Gülen–inspired school. Although the school was aware that the success of the school should encompass a variety of fields, it was dedicated to the provision of academic excellence and recognition in the wider community for its high university enrolment ratios. The school’s curriculum focussed on CE subjects and advertised its CE successes and consequently was identified in the community as an academically– oriented school. The school embedded its values and mission into the Australian curriculum and developed its own curriculum on this basis. Thus, the school was an Australian school with Turkish–Islamic culture orientation.

Being an Islamic–Turkish community school was another aspect of school identity. The school was established and supported by the community and the school served the educational needs of the community. The philosophy and practices of the school accommodated Gülen’s inspirations. The following chapter presents and analyses the data that were collected through the case study completed in Castle College.

CHAPTER 6: CASTLE COLLEGE

This chapter presents findings from the second of two case study schools namely Castle College. The characteristics of Star Boys were presented in Chapter Five. These findings address the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? The history and context of Castle College has been reported in Section 4.2.1.

As described in Chapter Four, the researcher collected data through interviews, participant observation, and analysis of school documents. In the process of collecting data, the researcher interviewed two leadership team members (A4 & A5), three teachers (T6, T7 & T8), two non-teaching staff (N4 & N5) and three parents (P5, P6 & P7). He also observed the school environment and analysed school documents: newsletters, handbooks, and the school's website. The framework developed in Chapter Three was used to organise and structure the reporting of these findings. Thus, the findings are examined under three main dimensions: school culture in Section 6.1; school climate in Section 6.2; and school identity in Section 6.3. Sources of the data in this chapter are referred to by codes as explained in Table 4.1 in Section 4.2.3.1 and Appendix J. The extension number next to the document number indicates different issues of the document, for instance D11-19 means the 19th issue of the school newsletter and D14-1 means the first document that was retrieved from the school website. The chapter is summarised in Section 6.4.

6.1 School Culture of Castle College

This section reports findings describing the school culture of Castle College. As discussed in Chapter Three, school culture refers to the shared and espoused values, norms of practice, and general assumptions held by staff and administrators about the purpose of

education. These shared orientations hold the school community together. This section addresses the four aspects that emerge from the data and define school culture: balanced education, in Section 6.1.1, moral developments and values education, in Section 6.1.2, the school's approach to behaviour management, in Section 6.1.3, and multiculturalism, in Section 6.1.4.

6.1.1 Balanced Education

Information from the school documents and participants' perceptions suggested that school culture accommodated the school's educational philosophy to provide a balanced education. Academic excellence is one side of the balanced education and an analysis of school documents identified eight attributes forms the other part of the balanced education, namely: developing the social (1), emotional (2), and physical (3) capacities of the students; providing a safe, caring and disciplined environment (4); assisting students to reach their full potential (5); helping students to develop a sense of responsibility (6); promoting students' understanding of different cultures (7); and guiding behavioural and moral development (8).

The school website (D14-6) stated that: "Castle College is a school devoted to the development of the students' intellectual, social, emotional and physical capacities" (para. 1). According to the Staff Handbook (D12), the school was established to meet the demands of "concerned parents who desire a high standard of education for their children in a caring, disciplined environment, where multicultural values and principles are actively supported and nurtured" (p. 6). Information extracted from the website (D14-5) indicated that the school wanted "to establish and maintain a safe and nurturing environment, so that every student may reach their full potential and achieve a high level of academic excellence" (para 1). The school's website (D14-2) stated that to love the school and to be treated with love by the school assist students to reach their full potential. Document D14-1 reports that one of the primary aims of the school "has been to provide a base that would help students to recognise

their potential (5) and become the leaders of tomorrow” (para. 1). A page from the website (D14–5) also confirmed that the school aimed to develop responsibility, understanding of diverse cultures, and good behaviour, along with academic excellence.

In an effort to achieve these aims of a balanced education, the school has established a curriculum, maintained a wide range of practices, and employed a commendation scheme in order to acknowledge and encourage excellence in both academic achievement and exemplary behaviour (D14–8). High achieving students were also recognised in school assemblies (D12) and in the award corner of school newsletters.

The balanced education culture of the school is evident from the perceptions of participants. One part of the balanced education approach was academic excellence, and participants indicated a further five different elements of the other part of a balanced education, namely: values education (1); to enlighten students’ hearts (2); Islamic values (3); sport (4); and education about behaviour (5). The principal (A1) asserted that academic excellence was not the only objective of the school; the school also worked to provide a balanced education. For him, this meant that the school was to equip the students with values and to enlighten their hearts and minds through education (D14–1). The Religion and Values teacher (T6) commented in an interview that although the school mainly targeted academic excellence, teaching moral values was an important component of an ideal education.

The extent to which the school achieved a balanced education was evident in interviews with the parents and non-teaching staff. For example, Mrs Rabia (P7) asserted that “Their academic level is very good. Their Islamic value (sic) are presented in a good simple way.” Mrs Nida (P6) expected the school to provide the best academic, religious and behavioural education to her child. Parents (P5, P6 & P7) supported the school’s goals to ensure a balanced education when they were asked if their child’s academic or moral improvement were more important to them, they all responded that they are both equally important. Mrs

Handan (N4) stated that the school was a role model because it fostered high achievement in every aspect, not only academically but also in terms of sport and behaviour. The school documents and opinions of participants suggest that providing a balanced education to assist students to reach their full potential, academically and morally, was an important element of school culture.

6.1.2 Moral Development and Values Education

The second aspect of school culture was moral development and values education. Four themes emerged from the collected data: the vision of the school on values education; values education in the school; the values taught in the school; and the best model of student that the school is trying to form.

Delivering values education was considered to be a crucial part of a complete and balanced education in school culture. According to the Staff Handbook (D12), the school values were based on a mission statement, and staff and students were engaged in curricular and extra-curricular programs based on learning and delivering values education in order to provide comprehensive education. Part of the school's vision expressed in D12 was "to help develop a strong sense of moral values and a code of ethics" (p. 7).

Other documents such as school newsletters (D11), the school website (D14), and welfare policies (D15) also emphasised the goal of equipping students with values. Delivering academic and values education was considered one of the important responsibilities of the school towards the new generation (D14-1). The school newsletter (D11-22) observed that if the school was not concerned about the moral development of students and merely focussed on teaching content knowledge, the outcome of this type of schooling would be a skilled yet problematic generation. According to D15, a document dealing with welfare policies, to "work with the Principal to develop, implement and review the student code of conduct" (p. 5) was among the responsibilities of classroom teachers.

The school developed its values based on its educational philosophy. The parents' religious and cultural values were also addressed in formation of the school environment. The school's culture accommodated cultural values, religious values, moral values and core Australian values. Australian core values were introduced by the Department of Education, Science and Training in a document titled *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (2005). The core Australian values—care and compassion, doing your best, fair go, freedom, honesty and trustworthiness, integrity, respect, responsibility, understanding, tolerance and inclusion—were stated in the Staff Handbook (D12).

Values education was strongly supported by the school to the extent that each school newsletters dedicated a page to teach moral values (see Appendix H). The school environment, curricular and extra-curricular activities, and role modelling of staff contributed to values education. A subject called Religion and Values provided values education in a well-structured and formal way. The subject was taught two periods in a week by specialised teachers (A4) and the curriculum of this subject was developed during their curriculum meetings (A5).

In response to a question on what values taught in the school, the participants articulated religious (Islamic) values (A4, A5, T7, T8, P6 & P7), moral values (A5, T8 & P7), and Australian values (N5 & D12). The cultural and ethical values were also embedded in the school (P6) culture. Along with these general values, the participants mentioned some specific values. "Respect" was mentioned by seven participants (A4, T6, T8, P5, P6, P7, N4 & D15), "respect yourself and others" (P6 & D15), "respect the elders and parents" (P7), and "respect all religions and differences" (P6). "Caring" was mentioned by three participants (A4, T8, N5 & D15), "love" and "helping others" was mentioned by two participants (T6, N5 & D15).

The following values were mentioned by one participant only: "integrity", "responsibility", "justice" (A4); "neighbourliness", "kindness" (T6); "love" (D14–11);

“tolerance” (T8 & D14–1); “sharing” (T8); “understanding” (N5 & D14–1); “being a contributing member of society”, “connectedness” (P5); and “doing your best” (N4). Other values mentioned in school documents were: “extending courtesy to all visitors and displaying good manners” (D15); “to be polite”, “to be truthful”, “to be honest”, “practise kindness and fairness” (D15); “co–operation and friendship” (D12).

The researcher asked the 10 participants “What is the best model of the student that Star Boys is trying to form?” The intention was to obtain their opinion on the ideal model of a student that might reflect Gülen’s vision of a member of the Golden Generation. Three distinct themes emerged and this analysis is presented in Figure 6.1.

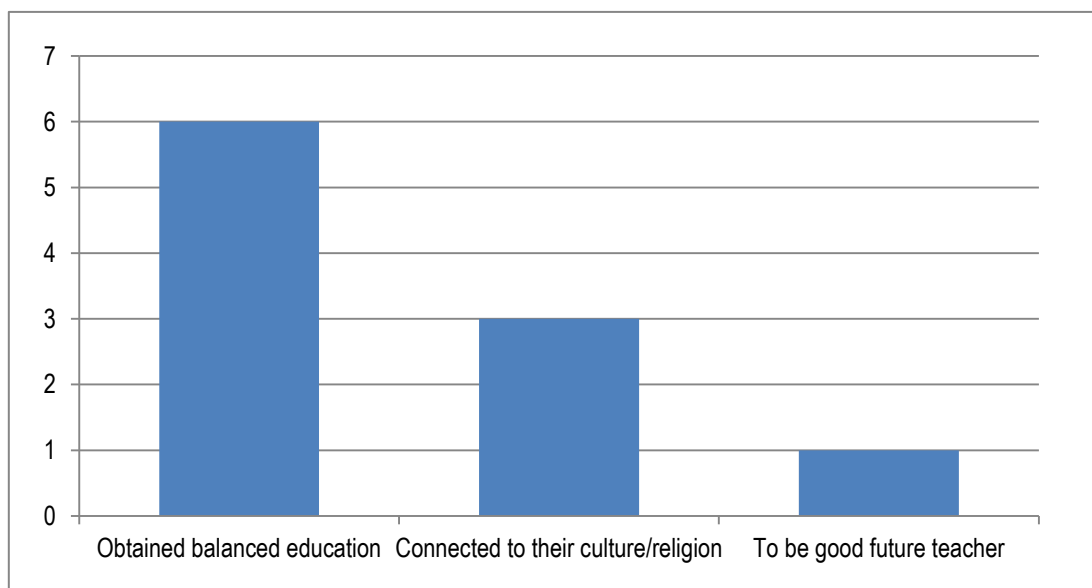


Figure 6.1. Best model of a student.

The majority of participants expressed their view that the best student was the student who received a balanced education. One component of balanced education was the best possible academic education for all participants and the other component of balanced education was defined according to participants’ priorities such as sport, behaviour and values education.

For Mrs Rabia (P7), beside the best possible education, the best model of student has moral values. Mrs Handan (N4) explained that students should have Islamic moral values such as respect for others, contributing positively to society, and fear of God as these values prevents a person from any wrong doing. Obviously, these values are not unique to Islam, other religions may have this set of values also. Parents mentioned Islamic values because almost all students in the school were Muslim. For example, Mrs Nida (P6) said that her expectation from the school was that it would “give to my children the best in regards of education, religion and behaviour” and Mrs Rabia (P7) said “I expect a good education and great Islamic and religious values.”

For the Religion and Values teacher (T6), the school welcomed multiculturalism and students were happy to demonstrate their own culture on various occasions. Thus, an ideal student should be proud of their background and culture. To glean a diversity of opinion, general staff members and the parents were interviewed. Mrs Ayla (N5) and Mrs Cicek’s (P5) views agreed with those of the Religion and Values teacher (T6) that an ideal student should have a connection with their religion, culture and identity. The student should also be aware of other cultures and develop tolerance, understanding and love for one another (N5).

The researcher asked participants about success of the school in raising the ideal student. Participants (T6, N5 & P7) were confident about the school’s being successful in forming the ideal student. For Mrs Ayla (N5), modelling the values by staff instead of talking about them was an effective strategy to form the best student. Other participants said “yes” with some conditions. The LOTE teacher (T8) indicated “Yes, sometimes”, and the Arabic language teacher (T7) indicated “Yes, with time” which means that the school would be more successful in time as it developed. An ideal student has moral values. Participants mentioned different aspects of moral character when they discussed their perceptions of an ideal student. For the Principal (A4), the student should love and be beneficial for their country, and for the

Arabic language teacher (T7), the student should be their best in every aspect and become a responsible individual. The Deputy Principal (A5) described the ideal student as “A student who displays good manners all the time and shows respect to everyone and cares about every living creature. Besides, s/he also tries his/her best under any condition without being selfish.”

For two participants, the school was new (A4) and in its infancy stages (P5). The school will progress further over time (P5) and needed some more time to produce the best model students (A4). Mrs Nida (P6) found the school successful in caring for the students’ cultural identity and educating them as mindful and good Australian Muslims.

According to the Deputy Principal (A5), forming the ideal student is a challenging task and the school had made progress in this field when he said “It is a very challenging target in nowadays world. But we are making progress on this matter. So, one cannot say that Castle College is not successful about this issue. Though, there is much more for improvement.” For Mrs Handan (N4), the current success of the school was small and would improve further by employing quality staff and by focusing more on pastoral care services. Mrs Handan (N4) also stated that the students received moral and values education from the school more than from their parents, and she observed positive behavioural changes in the students at school. According to Mrs Ayla (N5), the school taught values, and students from different backgrounds learned to respect and understand others as well as living harmoniously with one another. The LOTE teacher (T8) emphasised in her response the importance of having “good teachers.”

6.1.3 Castle College’s Approach to Behaviour Management

The third aspect of the school’s culture was its approach to behaviour management and the data related to this section are examined under the following topics:

1. The school's approach to and understanding of behaviour management;
2. Establishment of behaviour management in the school; and
3. The role of behaviour management in running the school.

The researcher explored the school's philosophy on behaviour management with the leadership team because of their firsthand experience and knowledge about the topic. For the Deputy Principal (A5), behaviour management was one of the priorities that the school tried to preserve. From his perspective, a successful education would not be attained if there was no behaviour management in the school. The school's disciplinary plan consisted of the following elements: a student code of conduct consisting of specific rules that had to be followed; an award system for students who followed the rules; and a corresponding punishment system for those who broke them (D12). The Principal (A4) and Mrs Nida (P6) indicated that this plan was implemented not in an autocratic way but in a balanced way, with a caring attitude of the staff; the Principal (A4) preferred "commendation strategy" over "penalising students." His opinion as a leadership team member is important. Mrs Nida (P6) stated that "The principal and the staff are acting as parents for every child."

Discipline was defined in the Staff Handbook (D12) as "A system of agreed rules consisting of rewards and consequences, designed to ensure that the school is a safe and happy place that allows all children to learn in a secure and non-threatening environment" (p. 57). It is written in the Staff Handbook (D12) that to develop discipline and socially acceptable behaviour was the responsibility of the school community: parents, students and teachers. The document also indicates in the Code of Conduct section that to teach is the right of the teacher and to learn is the right of the learner. The school prepares a good environment, establishes a behaviour management system and teaches students the school rules and consequences, then expects them to make "the right choices and accepting (sic) the consequences for their behaviour" (D12, p. 63). The component of "the good school

environment” is discussed in Social and Learning Environment of the School (Section 6.2.4). According to the contents of the school website (D14–9), parents were expected to apply discipline and values education at home. When families were “unable to meet their responsibilities in relation to their child's behaviour, the school will seek to link the children and the family to appropriate support agencies that provide special programs” (D12, p. 60). The school document did not specify any agency to whom such cases would be referred.

The school's basic attitude to behaviour management was that the students have the rights and responsibilities outlined in the Parent–Student Handbook. Students were required to follow the staff's instructions in accordance with this framework (A5). The Principal (A4) described the disciplined student when he said, “A disciplined student is one that can control himself and is capable of differentiating between good and bad.” Thus, the school should assist students to develop a sense of self–responsibility. The Principal (A4) related having good manners to complying with behaviour management rules. There is a relationship between behaviour management, good morality, and academic education.

Recurrent episodes of misbehaviour resulted in different consequences as set down in the Staff Handbook (D12). These consequences were: (1) warning and recording name; (2) one cross after the student's name; (3) two crosses after name; (4) loss of privileges; (5) conduct/homework contract; (6) detention; (7) isolation in an appropriate area; (8) after–school detention/half day internal suspension; (9) internal suspension; (10) suspension; and (11) expulsion. For the principal (A4), the school philosophy not to expel any student was expressed when he said that “The general philosophy of our school is try our best not to expel students already part of our school”. Thus, the behaviour management plan aimed to correct misbehaviour of students rather than move to expulsion. Although data on expulsion was not collected for the years 2012–2013, the success of the behaviour management system

of the school, which had not changed significantly, is indicated by the lack of expulsions in 2015 and 2016 (H. Yigit, personal communication, April 14, 2017).

The researcher raised the issue of the establishment of a behaviour management system with the leadership team and teachers. The Principal (A4) and the Deputy Principal (A5) commented that the school established its behaviour management through team work. Teachers, discipline coordinators and management are the members of this team and they worked together and applied the behaviour management policy in the school. In the Staff Handbook (D12) it is stated that the Discipline Committee dealt with serious offences.

According to the Deputy Principal (A5) and the Religion and Values teacher (T6), a clear explanation about the rules and expectations is given to students. For instance, the Religion and Values teacher (T6) explained her expectations to students and wrote the discipline rules on the board during the first week of the school year. Information was given to the students about the consequences of their bad behaviour (A5) and well-behaved students were awarded with certificates in the school assembly (T6). The school website (D14–8), stated that in most cases, the commendation strategy was more successful in bringing about better behaviour than penalising the students.

The Arabic language teacher (T7) used a zero-tolerance method to establish behaviour management, whereas the LOTE teacher (T8) followed the school behaviour management policy. Parents were occasionally involved with some behaviour management problems (A4 & T7). Teachers attended professional development programs to improve their skills in behaviour management issues (T7). The Staff Handbook (D12) provided general guidance to staff about ways of dealing with behaviour management issues: “quiet discussion, warnings, timeout, extra duties, diary entry, removal of privileges, discussing issue with another staff/coordinator and parent interview” (p. 69). All of these efforts were made to correct student behaviour and keep it at an acceptable level (A4).

A teacher and the relevant section of the Staff Handbook indicated the positive contribution of behaviour management to the school. The Religion and Values teacher (T6) considered behaviour management as part of the education at Castle College. The role of behaviour management system was not to punish students but rather, to educate them and prepare them for both school and social life. The school's adopted behaviour management program aimed for students to develop self-discipline, self-esteem and conflict resolution skills (D12) and expected them to contribute to a positive school environment (D12). The behaviour management program was intended also to promote the notion of respect in the school environment (D12). Respect was an important element of the school's values education (see Section 6.1.2), and in this way, establishing the behaviour management program in an effective way was related to providing a balanced education.

6.1.4 Multiculturalism in the School

The city where the school is established is home to people from more than 200 diverse backgrounds. Thus, the social structure of the city provided opportunities for the school to create a multicultural environment. As a result, the students were drawn from a vast variety of national and cultural backgrounds. An example of this diversity was that 11 students from seven different ethnic backgrounds took part in the after-school program that the researcher observed. Figure 6.2 was constructed from data from Castle College in 2016. It indicates the languages spoken at home and the range of diverse ethnic backgrounds of the students in both campuses. The Parent and Student Handbook (D13) states that "With so many students and parents coming from a range of different languages and cultures, the school community continues to benefit from its unique level of diversity" (p. 3).

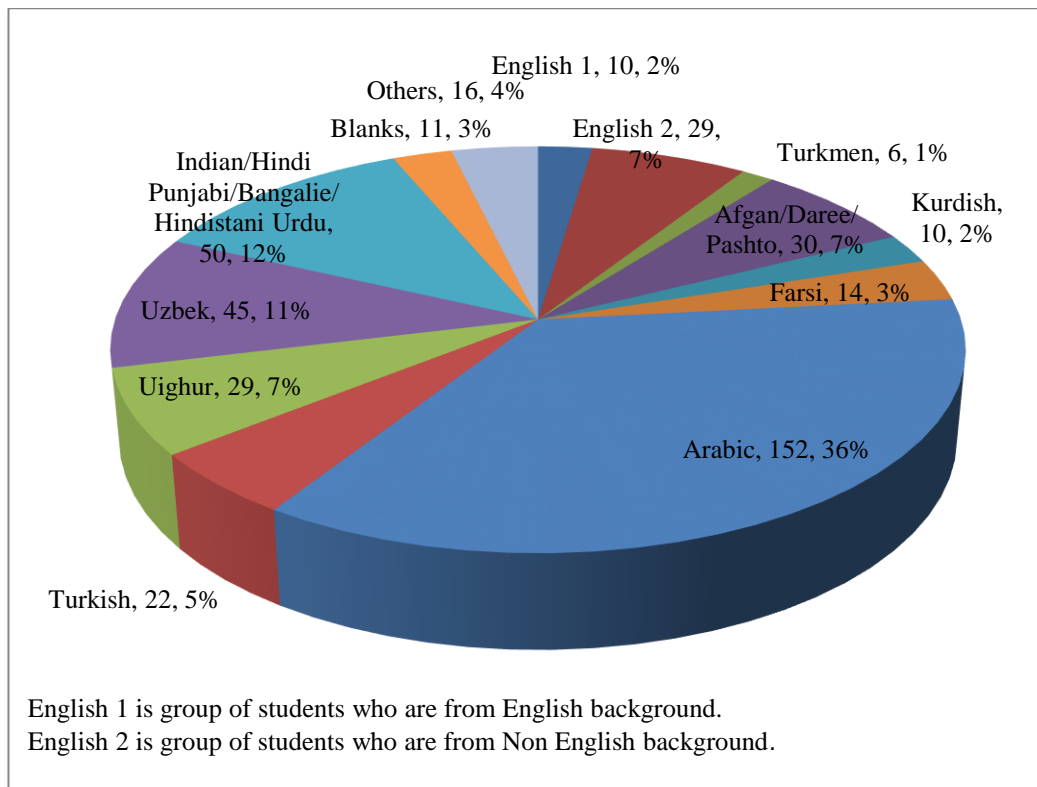


Figure 6.2. Languages spoken at home at Castle College.

The school was seen to be multicultural by teachers (T6, T7 & T8), Mrs Cicek (P5), and Mrs Ayla (N5). Establishing and recognising multiculturalism were articulated explicitly in the Staff Handbook (D12). Multiculturalism was evident in the school environment in the promotion of tolerance, understanding, and harmony in the school community; and the celebration of Harmony Day. The school also celebrated Islamic festivals and offered Religion and Values subjects, including the teaching of the Qur’an, to address parents’ interest in cultural values. The school website (D14–5) was explicit in stating that, when “studying in a diverse multicultural community, students have the opportunity to widen their view of the world, [and] this enables students to help each other and be productive both now and in the future” (para. 2). The approach to multiculturalism in the school was designed to promote an understanding of and respect for various cultures.

The school’s approach to multiculturalism discussed here was not to have a certain number of students from different religions, teach different religious or cultural practices and

promote harmony among them, but to teach students to respect diverse cultures. Jupp's definition of multiculturalism (1996) as "the recognition in public policy that a society is composed of varied elements, especially those based on language, nationality or religion" (p. vi) was provided in Chapter Five. Multiculturalism encourages social harmony and recognises the existence of diverse cultures in the society. The school accommodated multiculturalism as it promotes the acceptance of diverse cultures and harmony in the social life of its multicultural student body. This is also the case in many other Australian schools. The school's student body is mostly Muslim from various ethnic backgrounds but this situation does not make the school a single cultural school as all ethnic groups in the school (see Figure 6.2) have their own cultures. The school promoted understanding and harmony among its students in specific ways and among the wider society in general, which is consistent with a multicultural approach.

6.1.5 Summary

Four dominant aspects that highlight the school culture emerged from the data. First, providing a balanced education was a crucial element of the school culture. The school aimed to educate students to their full potential through emphasising academic excellence and developing social and emotional wellbeing. The second aspect of school culture was values education which was emphasised in the school vision statement and is seen as a responsibility of the school. The values taught in the school were comprised of values of the school community, such as respect, caring, love, and helping others, and core Australian values, such as care and compassion, doing your best, fair go, and freedom. The school considered it had achieved its goals if students acquired a balanced education and retained their individual cultural identities.

The third aspect of school culture was the school's approach to behaviour management. Well-established behaviour management was one of the priorities of the school to provide a

safe and happy learning environment. The school expected parents to practise school values at home to assist the establishment of correct behavioural patterns. The participants mentioned three aspects that were helpful in establishing this behaviour management: to explain the expectations clearly; to prioritise commendation rather penalising; and to work as a team. Finally, multiculturalism was another aspect of school culture. The school promoted having a harmonious life together with cultural diversity, and it was open to everyone regardless of religious or cultural background. This approach assisted the understanding of different cultures and the establishment of a harmonious social life. The following section examined the important aspects of the climate of Castle College.

6.2 School Climate

This section reports findings about Castle College’s climate which refers to the enacted beliefs, practices, interactions, relationships and processes that are present within the school among staff, students and community, and which contributes to students’ development. The section addresses the five aspects that define school climate: pastoral care programs and catering for individual needs, in Section 6.2.1; school–parent relationships, in Section 6.2.2; contribution of staff to the school, in Section 6.2.3; and school environment, in Section 6.2.4.

6.2.1 Pastoral Care Programs

The first aspect of school climate was pastoral care programs and the data related to this category were examined under the following topics: the school vision on pastoral care; the pastoral care department; the pastoral care services and their outcomes; implementation of values; the role of pastoral care services in education; and catering for individual needs.

The school established the pastoral care department to provide services to the school community. According to the Staff Handbook (D12), “The pastoral care programs aim to develop an appreciation of cultural and spiritual wellbeing” (p. 31). The data provided in the

Parent and Student Handbook (D13) suggest that the school offered the pastoral care services “to meet the personal, social and learning needs of students” to create “a safe, caring school environment,” to provide “ongoing educational services to support students,” to recognise the “diversity within the school community” and to “promote harmony” (p. 25).

Services were “conducted on a weekly basis at lunch times or [in] after-school hours” (D14–12, para. 1). Although the school held all staff responsible for the welfare of students in their care (D15), the school allocated a pastoral care coordinator to develop, organise and facilitate the pastoral care programs in the school community, and it also allocated (D12) “a pastoral care teacher who works closely with the classroom teacher to improve student welfare” (p. 48).

The pastoral care department in Castle College was still being established when the case study was conducted in 2012. For the Deputy Principal (A5), the school was very young and improvement in the structure was continuing, therefore the school’s pastoral care team was small in number. This team consisted of the principal, the deputy principal and two teachers. Pastoral care programs were not run by all the teaching staff; two staff contributed voluntarily to the services in 2012 (A4 & A5). Pastoral care services were offered only to students in Year 5 and above (D12).

According to the principal (A4), loneliness was one of the major problems experienced by the students, and pastoral care services were quite helpful in solving this problem. One of the reasons for students’ loneliness was settling into the community after immigration. The majority of students came from migrant families and they often did not have relatives in their new home environment. Thus, for immigrant families, it took some time to be part of the wider Australian community. School staff approached students in a friendly manner (P6) and with a parent-like caring attitude (N4), “they act like the father and mother of our students and sometimes as their friends”). This warm approach and pastoral care activities were

helping in reducing loneliness, the principal (A4) said when he stated that “This (sic) pastoral care activities run during school times and after–school times is (sic) helping and contributing greatly” to the solution of loneliness.

The pastoral care department organised various activities to serve its objectives, and, as shown in school documents, there were 10 outcomes of the pastoral care services. Special classes, Saturday school programs, literacy and mathematics support, term break camps, holiday schools (D11–33), iftar [breaking fast] dinners (D11–30), interstate trips, parent visits and fundraising activities for various purposes were the activities organised by the pastoral care department, according to A4 and A5. The school newsletters throughout 2012 reported a variety of fundraising activities for different purposes such as: helping the poor in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea (D11–30); supporting the Cancer Council; and supplying sports equipment for the classrooms (D11–31). The school website (D14) stated that “all programs are supervised and based upon parental consent” (para. 1). For D11–33—school newsletters, the activities helped students to: use their time effectively; establish good communication with other students; understand students’ needs; and get to know the students’ personalities more closely.

Several camps and excursions were reported in the school newsletters and their contribution to the relevant spheres of school life were evaluated. According to the school newsletters (D11–24), the camp activities contributed to the development of the students in many ways, namely, students established better relationships with their friends, developed social skills, improved athletic and outdoor abilities, and learnt to work as a team. The pastoral care services assist to establish positive relationship between staff and students that contributed positively to the students’ education.

The researcher asked participants how the school implemented values, and their answers are presented in Figure 6.3 and analysed in this section.

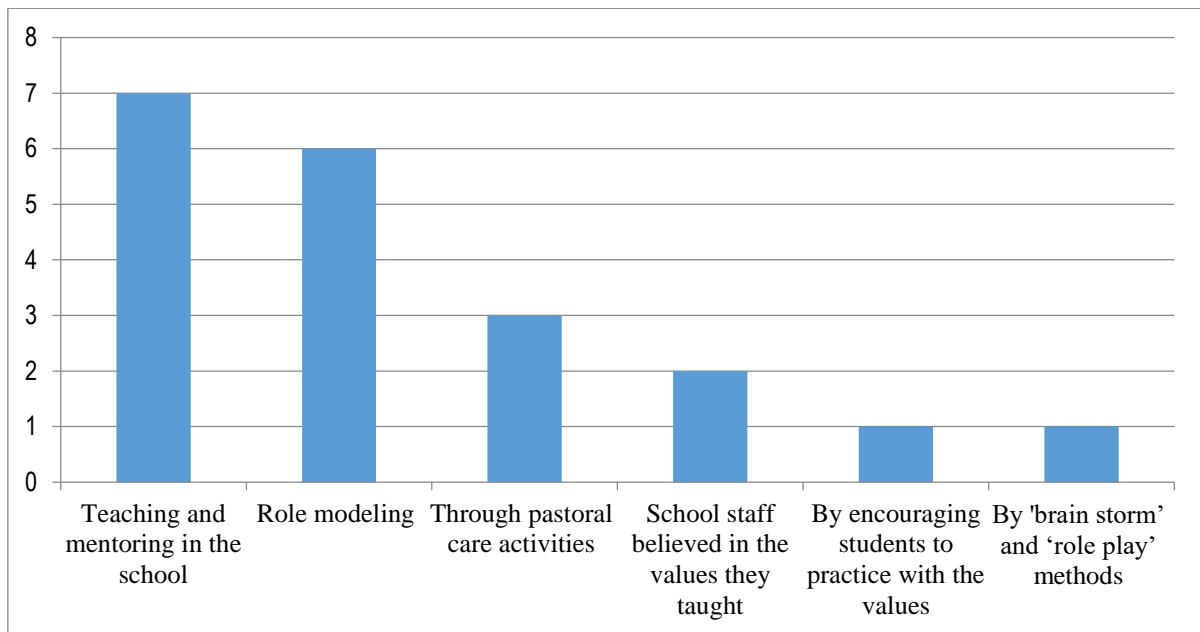


Figure 6.3. How were the values put into practice in Castle College?

The left axis of the figure presents the number of participants (total 10 participants) who share the specified opinion on the y axis. All participants did not share any specific opinion. The majority of participants stated that the school implemented the values mainly by teaching and mentoring in the school (T6, T7 & N4). The school called attention to the values when the curriculum was developed (T7). The values were taught during lessons (A5) where it was permitted by the curriculum and the school allocated a special subject called “Religion and Values” to teach the values (T8, P7 & N5).

Six participants articulated that the school put values education into practice through role modelling. The school website encouraged staff to foster values both by explaining and representing them to the students (D14–10). In the school newsletter (D11–22), parents were both urged to set good examples for their children and reminded that children learned much by observing the behaviour of those in their proximity. As reported by the Deputy Principal (A5) the staff represented the values and by four participants the staff were role models for the students (T6, T7, P6 & N5). This perception is consistent with the documented aims of the school: “They aim to act as role models engaging in what is right, being considerate and

consistently showing understanding, patience, compassion and enthusiasm” (D14–10, para. 3).

For Mrs Handan (N4), leading by example was the most effective method for values education. The staff needed to model a desired character in the school, and their actions should support their teachings. For her, the students contributed more to school events because of the exemplary leadership of the staff. Mrs Ayla (N5) indicated that the students should be able to observe values that they heard from teachers through their conduct.

Two teachers (T6 & T8) and Mrs Cicek (P5) in response to a question “How were values put into practice?” expressed the view that the school implemented values education during welfare activities (e.g., after-school programs and camps) and regular events. Mrs Cicek (P5) argued that the students were able to work collaboratively for a good cause and apply the values they learnt during these regular events. The LOTE teacher (T8) used the *brain storm* and *role-play* methods to contribute to students’ values education. For Mrs Ayla (N5) and Mrs Nida (P6), the school staff believed in the values they taught. According to the LOTE teacher (T8), the school encouraged the students to practise the values that they have been taught.

In response to questions about the role of camps and trips in students’ academic and moral progress, participants also discussed the role of pastoral care services in education. Three teachers who were interviewed by the researcher organised activities such as camps and interstate trips. Teachers (T6 & T8) argued that these activities improved students’ wellbeing, self-reliance, and socialising (T6). Also, students who studied at the camp were engaged; they interacted and learnt to tolerate each other (T8).

Two parents (P6 & P7) mentioned soccer events that were organised by the school in after-school times. They stated that PE is part of the curriculum (P7) and “They [soccer

activities] taught the team work and the fair play” (P6). Thus, participants stated that the after-school activities contribute to students’ physical, social, and academic education.

The second aspect of school climate was about catering for individual needs of students. The school acknowledged that understanding students and identifying their needs were crucial in providing a good education (D11–33) as well as in establishing a positive school climate. The school newsletter (D11–23) stated that “here in Castle College, we give special importance to satisfy students’ needs and utilise their time effectively” (p. 8). Individual learning needs was also a focus of Professional Development, with the Staff Handbook (D12) indicating that “professional development is centred around: Identified school needs / Individual learning needs” (p. 31). The curriculum was also reviewed on a regular basis and “further developed to meet student needs” (D12, p. 18).

Although the school applies a teaching program for students of the same age group and applied a curriculum according to their age level, the students had different academic potentials. The Principal (A4) emphasised in the school newsletters (D11–23) the importance of catering for individual differences as there was a variety of abilities in the same classes. The school aimed to educate students to their full potential by discovering and developing individual potential and by preparing a good school environment that fosters individual differences.

Based on the data provided in the school website (D14–6), the school held itself responsible for identifying “the best learning mode in the individual child and to teach that mode” (para. 4). The school has established a variety of clubs designed to improve the different skills of the students (D11–29). In a school newsletter (D11–23), Castle College announced the establishment of a Mathematics Team to operate in after-school times to extend students who have mathematics skills. However, Mrs Cicek’s (P5) expectation about education suggests that the school should do more to support students who have learning

difficulties. She stated that “We would like to see additional support for our children with slow/learning difficulties” Information in the school website (D14–6) shows that it was the teachers’ responsibility to assess and modify the timeline program and materials to meet the students’ individual needs. Further, in (D14–11), the school website stated that “Personalised strategies are established to enable students to work through their concerns or difficulties and to support parents and teachers in achieving a better outcome for the student’s social and academic life” (para. 3). When participants were asked, “What do you like most about the school”? Mrs Handan (N4) and Mrs Rabia (P7) mentioned the caring attitude of the school; they liked “the way it cares about its students” (N4) and “great care for the student’s future” (P7). The data provided by school documents and participants suggest that the school is keen to assist the development of its students by addressing individual needs through personalised programs.

6.2.2 School–Parent Relationships

The third aspect related to the school climate was the school’s approach to school–parent relationships. This section examined the school–parent relationships under the following subthemes: the vision of the school for school–parent relationships, the way school–parent communication works in the school, and the contribution of parents to the school.

The researcher reviewed the school documents about school–parents’ communication and the findings are examined below. According to the school website (D14–9), the school paid attention to effective school–parent communication as this was an important part of providing quality education, supported co–operative decision–making, and encouraged parental participation in the students’ education as parents were considered an essential part of the school community.

Parental participation was welcomed by the school; the school volunteer policy (D16) states that “Positive partnerships with parents are seen to play a significant role in the overall effectiveness of the education and care process” (p. 8). For Parent and Student Handbook (D13) asserts that “close communication with parents is sought for the best learning outcomes for students” (p. 23).

The school expected parents to attend all designated parents–teacher interviews to monitor children’s behavioural (D14–9) and academic progress, and to be involved in school activities to the greatest degree possible (D14–7). As stated in school newsletters (e.g., D11–35), when a student was enrolled in the school, parents were considered enrolled as well and assessment reports of the student reflected both student’s and parents’ effort. If parents support their children’s education at home and cooperate with the teachers, a student’s results will improve. Thus, for the school, the achievement of the students in academic and values education also reflects the achievement of parents in supporting and valuing their children’s education. The deputy principal (A5) expressed the view that the school tried to maintain a connection with parents as he considered parents to be an important partner in education. How the school achieved the establishment of good school–parent relationships is examined in the next section.

The school website (D14–9) reported the way school–parent communication works in the school. Formal contact between the school and home included the followings: two interim reports (term one & term three); two semester assessment reports; parent–teacher interviews (A4, T6, P5 & P7); parent and teacher information nights; parent–teacher seminars; student diary (T7 & P5); special performances; camps; excursions; newsletters; orientation day for new students and their parents; and the CoolSIS (Cool School Information System) student management system. These different forms of communication gave parents various opportunities to communicate with the school and establish good relations with the school.

Mrs Nida (P6) identified school parent relations as being “Very good. Any parent can see, and talk to any staff member any time if necessary” and Mrs Rabia (P7) stated that “The principal and coordinators are very open to talk to parents at any times, and there is an interview that takes place every term.” These statements suggest that good relationships exist between school and parents and these contributes to a positive school climate.

According to a majority of participants, the school encouraged parents to communicate with the school about their child’s achievements and needs. Parents or teachers were able to arrange private meetings at any time if the need arose (A4, T6, T7, T8, P6 & P7). For the Deputy Principal (A5), the school communicated with parents through parent visits and activities in which parents participate (D14–9). Emails, letters and phone calls (T7 & D14–9) were used for school–parent communication. The Parents and Friends Club also contributed to good relationships within the school community and increased involvement of parents in school life (D13).

Parents were keen to contribute to the school. The school acknowledged the support provided by parents and appreciated their contributions since the establishment of the school (D14–1). The school “has grown beyond expectations to meet the demand of the community, [and] this was made possible by the full support of the community...” (D12, p. 6). For the leadership team (A4 & A5), parents contributed to the school through voluntary work. Parents trusted the school and thus attended school programs and helped in the development of the school (A4). Parents also promoted the school in different communities (A5), for instance, all interviewed parents enrolled their children because of the encouragement of other people, for example a friend, a doctor.

Teachers and parents shared their perceptions of how parents contributed to the academic and moral improvement of the students. Teachers (T6 & T8) stated that the parents contributed to the school by following up with their children and encouraging them to achieve

their best. The structure of the school has enabled parents to instantly follow up with their children online (T8) and take necessary actions immediately. The data suggest that parents contributed usually to the extra-curricular activities of the school rather than the curricular activities.

Parent-school consultation also contributed to the school's development. Parents raised any issues that they were concerned about with the school and the students (T7). Parents commented on the usefulness of these relationship as follows: "This allows for both parents and Castle College to make changes where necessary" (P6); "It's very important for me to be able to talk about any of my children with his teacher or the principal. The kids know that and try to always do their best in order to be in the good side of their teacher and principal, and the parents" (P7) and "It's always very affective (sic) that parents and school works together" (P7). Thus, for parents, these forms of communication allowed both sides to understand each other correctly and to make the necessary changes (P5), they contributed to better performance of the children at school (P6), and both sides benefitted from the effective and positive results of communication (P7). The evidence presented by a range of participants supports the assertion that the school climate encouraged interaction between staff and parents.

6.2.3 Contribution of School Staff to the School

A positive school climate would be indicated by the extent to which staff were committed to achieving its goals. Contribution of staff to the school is examined with the assistance of data provided by participants and quotations from their responses are presented in Table 6.1 and discussed in this section. The leadership team has an important influence in all school-related matters and the team's positive contribution to the school climate was mentioned by a diversity of participants. They mentioned the crucial role of the principal (N5 & P6) and the leadership team (T6, N4& N5) in the success of the school. A common

response related to the influence of key staff to the school's success is illustrated by Mrs Handan (N4) when she commented about the reasons for the school's success that "the main reason is again the hard-working management team."

Table 6.1

Contribution of Staff to the School

Themes	Theme sources
Principal (N5 & P6) and leadership team (T6, N4 & N5) have important role in the success of the school.	T6, N4, N5, & P6
"Teachers contribute greatly from (sic) the educational, the nurturing and caring aspects of teaching."	N5
"I would like to see incorporation of children's emotional wellbeing put first."	P5
"The teachers are very concerned and give the best of what they can for the education and the academic results of the children."	P6
"Very good role models... very hard-working... provide better education."	A5
"I believe teachers play a great role in children's education ... the school has very effective teachers, it influences in a great way the school's education."	P7
"According to their capacity and capabilities each teacher contributes differently."	A4
Greatest contribution is dedication (A4), well-educated & dedicated teachers (T6).	A4 & T6
"Teachers are given more time and focus on the need of the students and parents."	T7
"They constantly research for new ideas of how to improve the school... Through professional development, teachers learn many new things and apply these in school."	T8
"The teachers do a great job. I do believe with the years as the school grows we will attract even better teachers."	N4

As shown in Table 6.1, the Deputy Principal (A5) highlighted the contribution of school staff to the school climate and positive learning environment, and Mrs Rabia (P7) admired the

team spirit of the school staff. Teaching staff played an important role in delivering the curriculum and facilitating the students' education. For the Principal (A4), each teacher contributed to the school differently in accordance with their diverse abilities. Teachers were dedicated (A4 & T6), well-educated (T6), they guided and corrected students with a parent-like caring attitude (N4), and they spent considerable time addressing the needs of parents and students (T7) (see Table 6.1).

According to the quotations in Table 6.1, the teachers were committed and did their best to contribute to the academic improvement and wellbeing of the students (A5, N5 & P6). The staff were the main reason for the school's success (A4, T6, T7, P6, P7, N4 & N5); represented the values (A5); they were good role models (T6, T7, P6 & N5); they "practise what they preach" (D12, p. 27); they believed in the values they taught (N5 & P6); and their daily interaction with students had a positive impact on education (P7). One aspect that Mrs Nida (P6) liked most about the school was "the relationship between the staff and the students." Mrs Cicek (P5) stated that the teachers should give priority to the emotional wellbeing of the students as well, rather than focusing solely on the academic aspects of education.

According to the LOTE teacher (T8), teachers developed new ideas through personal development programs and research. The new ideas were discussed and shared with the management and staff to improve the school. Mrs Handan (N4) was satisfied with the performance of the current teachers, however she stated that the school would employ better teachers as it developed into a bigger educational institution. For her, teachers should give priority to education rather than earning a salary. Mrs Handan's (N4) opinion suggests some teachers were not fully committed to the school achieving its objectives.

6.2.4 Social and Learning Environment of the School

The activities of the school, interaction among members of the school community, and the physical arrangement of the school create a certain environment which is part of school climate. One of the responsibilities of the principal was “to ensure that Castle College provides a safe and harmonious work environment for all students and staff” (D12, p. 59). The Staff Handbook (D12) stated that “the college aims to provide a caring and nurturing environment which encourages self-discipline and self-worth, respects the rights of others and take responsibility of one’s own actions” (p. 9) and it “developed a school environment that is conducive to learning in all aspects of life” (D14–1, para. 3). One of the objectives of pastoral care services was also to create a safe and caring school environment (D13).

The school documents reflected efforts to form an environment to assist the development of students to their highest potential (D14–6). The Staff Handbook (D12) stated that “The students are offered quality teaching and learning environment to support individual, social and academic success and development” (p. 24). The deputy principal’s (A5) belief supports the Staff Handbook’s (D12) statement. For him, the positive school environment contributed to the success of the school, students were happy and respected their teachers because of the good atmosphere, a safe and clean environment created by the leadership team and teaching staff. Parents were also generally happy with the school as reflected in Mrs Nida’s (P6) statement “I am happy with Castle College” and her comment that “The principal and the staff are acting as parents for every child. And that why I feel my kids are happy and giving the best of themselves.” Mrs Rabia (P7) shared an opinion similar to Mrs Nida’s (P6) when she said, “It’s better than other schools.”

The reflections of participants regarding school environment are presented in Table 6.2 and the key words they used to describe school environment are bolded. The environment of the school was admired by all participants except the principal (A4) who was not asked a

direct question about the school environment in interviews. Participants mentioned different aspects of the school environment, defining the school environment as welcoming regardless of race or cultural background (A5, T8 & P5); safe (A5, N4, P6 & P7); clean (A5); friendly (P6), home-like (T6 & P7); where religious values are taught (P7); multicultural (T6, T7 & P5); socially and physically good (N5); and Islamic (N4).

Table 6.2

Quotations from Participants about the School Environment

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“ Welcoming for everyone... good atmosphere, clean and safe environment have got huge impact on this happiness .”	A5
“ Welcoming everyone without looking at people belief.”	T8
“ Warm, welcoming environment for anyone regardless of race, religion.”	P5
“The best place to take the children if we are after a safe and good school.”	P6
“Castle College is the big home that would protect your children while teaching them educational and religious values .”	P7
“ Islamic and safe environment.”	N4
“It is multicultural school.”	T7
“It is the only school in the region that offers a multicultural environment.”	P5
“It is a very multicultural school and it is a home rather than school for me.”	T6
“The friendly environment for parents.”	P6
“ Good environment both geographically and personal wise.”	N5

6.2.5 Summary

Pastoral care services were examined in this section as the major contribution to the school climate. The school established the pastoral care department to enhance the moral development—cultural and spiritual wellbeing—of the students and to contribute to their learning. The responsibilities of the pastoral care department were to plan and implement the pastoral care services. Various pastoral care activities helped students to develop better friendship, learn social skills, team spirit and to establish warm relations among members of the school community. The values education was put into practice through teaching, role modelling, and pastoral care services. Pastoral care activities contributed to the academic improvement and wellbeing of the students.

Catering for individual needs was a feature of the school. The data suggested that the school emphasised the importance of identifying individual needs and meeting these as a part of good education. Staff were supported to achieve these through curriculum developments and the development of individual learning programs. Staff were seen as role models and their role modelling contributed to the positive school climate. The school established pastoral care services, extra-curricular activities, and individual teaching programs to assist in meeting the individual needs of the students.

Parent-school relations were another aspect of school climate. The school has seen parents as educational partners and encouraged them to participate in school activities. Their participation contributed to the quality of the education. The school established various ways to communicate with parents and to involve them in school life as an essential part of the school community. Parents contributed to the establishment and development of the school.

The school aimed to create a safe and harmonious environment as a part of the positive school climate that encompasses respect, self-discipline and self-worth. The interaction among members of the school community created a warm school environment which was

described by participants as welcoming, clean, safe, caring, warm, and multicultural. The next section examines the essential elements of Castle College's school identity.

6.3 School Identity

This section reports findings about Castle College's identity which refers to the public profile, promotional perspectives, qualities and roles of the school as an educational facility, and what the school wants to be seen as by the wider community. The researcher examined the data and three aspects emerged from the data about school identity: Castle College's academic achievement, discussed in Section 6.3.1, Castle College's curriculum orientation, considered in Section 6.3.2, and being a community school, reflected in Section 6.3.3.

6.3.1 Castle College's Academic Achievement

The first aspect that emerged from data about the school identity was academic achievement and the data related to this section was examined under the following headings: academic excellence, academic success of the school, the areas of success, and outcomes of the academic achievements.

Castle College is known for its emphasis on striving for academic excellence and delivering values education. The Staff Handbook (D12) indicated that the school aimed to provide academic excellence and that "to achieve academic excellence was seen as the school's mission" (p. 7). Providing opportunities for academic excellence has been one of the school's priorities ever since it was established. The school newsletter (D11–19) stated that the school was established in 2005 "to provide good quality education" (p. 1) and another school newsletter (D11–22) noted the school's educational priority thus: "the whole purpose of schooling is delivering quality education" (p. 1). Although all schools have this goal, the school community of Castle College anticipated that to achieve this goal, working hard

through extra-curricular and pastoral care activities would be necessary, along with the delivery of the standard curriculum.

The Staff Handbook (D12) stated that the school “plays a leading role in educating young generations with its academic excellence and disciplined education” (p. 6) in the area. The Arabic language teacher (T7) expressed the view that, despite being a very young school it was nevertheless successful in competing with schools that had 90 years of experience in the city. He said, “The school is getting bigger in terms of students and competing with schools with 70 to 90 years old in terms of academic affairs.” The LOTE teacher (T8) in her interview considered that the academic status of the students was kept as a top priority. The 2012 school newspapers (D11) reported many incursions and excursions that were organised by the school to support students’ academic improvement.

The school participated in educational programs in order to improve its students’ academic skills, and encouraged students to participate in such programs such as Mathletics, Spellodrome (D11–21), the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) (D11–23), Compass; Australian Mathematics Competition (AMC) (D11–24) and the Premier’s Reading Challenge (D11–36). Mathletics and Spellodrome are educational programs on websites that help improve students’ mathematics and spelling skills. The ICAS are independent skills-based assessments with a competition element and are comprised of tests in the following areas: Computer Skills, English, Mathematics, Science, Spelling and Writing (About ICAS, 2014). “Compass is a computer based assessment of core literacy and numeracy skills specifically designed for disengaged and educationally marginalised young people and adults” (Compass, 2017, para. 1).

The Australian Mathematics Trust coordinates the AMC “to highlight the importance of mathematics as a curriculum subject” and “to give students an opportunity to discover talent in mathematics” (Australian Mathematics Trust, 2007, para. 3). The school has established a

mathematics team comprising its high-achieving students to develop their talents further and to prepare them for the AMC (D11–23). “The Premier’s Reading Challenge is a literacy engagement program that was introduced by the Premier in 2004 to encourage students to read more books and enjoy reading and improve literacy levels” (Premier’s Reading Challenge, 2017). These data suggest that the school focussed on improving the students’ knowledge in English, Mathematics and Science subjects, and to take part in academic opportunities offered in the wider community.

The participants discussed their perceptions of the school’s success in response to the question: Is Castle College a successful school in your opinion? Eight participants described it as being very successful (A4, A5, T6, T7, N4, N5, P6 & P7), and their perception about areas of school success is presented in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3
Perceptions of Participants about the Areas of Success

Quotations from Participants	Data sources
“It is successful in the educational part and in the religion and values part.”	P7
“Mainly academic and moral values.”	T6
“Both educationally and morally.”	N5
“All the national and local tests done by the departments of education, show that it is one of the best schools in state.”	P6
“In many aspects, especially in the level of education and the school results.”	P6
“The school is able to provide a better education academically.”	A5
“Competing with schools 70 to 90 years old in terms of academic affairs.”	T7
“Academic wise and structure wise.”	N4
“New technological developments are constantly being made at the school.”	T8

The Arabic language teacher (T7) noted the school's academic program provided educational outcomes comparable with schools that had existed for a long time. The Deputy Principal (A5), Mrs Handan (N4), and Mrs Nida (P6) emphasised the school's academic performance as a success area (see Table 6.3). Three other participants asserted that the school was generally successful in academic activities and delivering values—moral—education (T6, N5 & P7). The school's success in NAPLAN (National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy)²⁷ and CE examinations are discussed below.

Mrs Nida (P6) was pleased with student results and the State Department of Education's test results. NAPLAN results indicate the school's achievements in five areas: reading, persuasive writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. The curriculum coordinator's analysis of the NAPLAN test results is in D11–34. From her perspective, Year 3 students performed well in reading, writing and numeracy, Year 5 students achieved the national minimum standards for writing, Year 7 students made improvements in reading, and Year 9 students achieved the national minimum standards in all areas. The Curriculum Coordinator stated that “despite the good results in some areas, there is still room for improvement” (p. 1).

Figure 6.4, Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6 present the 2011, 2013, and 2015 NAPLAN results for Castle College. The meaning of the codes and colours in the figures are: SIM – schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds; ALL – Australian schools' average; dark green – substantially above; green – above; orange – below; and red – substantially below.

²⁷ NAPLAN is an assessment for students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in Australia. Students are assessed on reading, writing, language and numeracy.

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar & Punctuation		Numeracy	
Year 3	390 _{361 - 419}		441 _{418 - 464}		435 _{409 - 461}		429 _{399 - 459}		403 _{379 - 427}	
	SIM429 420-438	ALL416	SIM423 414-431	ALL416	SIM415 406-424	ALL406	SIM434 424-444	ALL421	SIM409 401-418	ALL398
Year 5	455 _{429 - 481}		478 _{453 - 503}		510 _{486 - 534}		473 _{445 - 501}		455 _{433 - 477}	
	SIM500 491-508	ALL488	SIM489 481-497	ALL483	SIM490 482-498	ALL484	SIM511 502-520	ALL499	SIM497 489 - 505	ALL488
Year 7	490 _{463 - 517}		490 _{459 - 521}		529 _{501 - 557}		489 _{458 - 520}		522 _{496 - 548}	
	SIM551 544-558	ALL540	SIM540 532-549	ALL529	SIM543 535-551	ALL538	SIM543 535-552	ALL532	SIM556 548-563	ALL545
Year 9	-		-		-		-		-	
	SIM590 583-597	ALL580	SIM583 573-593	ALL566	SIM589 581-597	ALL581	SIM585 576-593	ALL572	SIM594 587-601	ALL583

Figure 6.4. Castle College 2011 NAPLAN results.

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar & Punctuation		Numeracy	
Year 3	390 _{367 - 414}		405 _{386 - 425}		426 _{405 - 447}		398 _{374 - 423}		383 _{363 - 403}	
	SIM412 403-421	ALL419	SIM409 401-417	ALL416	SIM402 393-411	ALL411	SIM421 411-431	ALL428	SIM391 383-400	ALL397
Year 5	490 _{466 - 513}		495 _{473 - 517}		509 _{487 - 530}		498 _{473 - 524}		504 _{484 - 524}	
	SIM496 488-505	ALL502	SIM471 463-480	ALL478	SIM486 478-494	ALL494	SIM493 483-502	ALL501	SIM478 470-486	ALL486
Year 7	521 _{502 - 541}		506 _{484 - 528}		564 _{544 - 584}		523 _{501 - 546}		531 _{513 - 550}	
	SIM533 526-541	ALL541	SIM511 502-519	ALL517	SIM540 533-548	ALL549	SIM528 519-536	ALL535	SIM533 526-541	ALL542
Year 9	555 _{528 - 582}		559 _{524 - 595}		562 _{532 - 592}		535 _{504 - 565}		551 _{527 - 575}	
	SIM576 568-583	ALL580	SIM544 535-554	ALL554	SIM577 569-585	ALL583	SIM567 558-575	ALL573	SIM573 566-580	ALL584

Figure 6.5. Castle College 2013 NAPLAN results.

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar & Punctuation		Numeracy	
Year 3	419 _{400 - 438}		430 _{414 - 446}		448 _{431 - 466}		450 _{430 - 470}		400 _{384 - 417}	
	SIM 420 411-429	ALL 426	SIM 412 404-420	ALL 416	SIM 405 396-413	ALL 409	SIM 424 414-434	ALL 433	SIM 392 384-401	ALL 398
Year 5	450 _{430 - 470}		469 _{451 - 488}		514 _{495 - 532}		482 _{460 - 504}		470 _{453 - 488}	
	SIM 492 483-500	ALL 499	SIM 473 464-481	ALL 478	SIM 489 481-497	ALL 498	SIM 490 481-500	ALL 503	SIM 487 478-495	ALL 493
Year 7	542 _{518 - 566}		540 _{513 - 566}		559 _{534 - 583}		557 _{530 - 584}		571 _{549 - 593}	
	SIM 545 538-553	ALL 546	SIM 512 504-521	ALL 511	SIM 550 542-558	ALL 547	SIM 545 536-553	ALL 541	SIM 541 534-549	ALL 543
Year 9	587 _{568 - 606}		547 _{522 - 572}		614 _{593 - 635}		581 _{560 - 603}		594 _{575 - 612}	
	SIM 576 569-583	ALL 580	SIM 541 532-551	ALL 547	SIM 580 572-588	ALL 583	SIM 561 553-570	ALL 568	SIM 589 582-596	ALL 592

Figure 6.6. Castle College 2015 NAPLAN results.

In 2011, Year 3 students' SIM and ALL results in reading were below the average and they improved in 2013 and 2015. Year 3 students achieved close to or above the average in the rest of the fields for 2011, 2013 and 2015. In 2011, Year 5 students' SIM and ALL results were below or substantially below the average in reading, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. These results improved to close to the average (other than the reading result in the ALL section) in 2013. Year 5 students achieved close to or above the average for the rest of the fields in 2011 and 2013, and close to or above the average in all fields in 2015. In 2011, Year 7 students' SIM and ALL results were substantially below the average in reading, writing, and grammar and punctuation, and below the average in numeracy. Their spelling results declined from close to, to below the average in 2013. Their results improved from substantially below to below the average in reading, and grammar and punctuation, and from substantially below to close to the average in writing in 2013.

In 2013, Year 3 students' results were below the average in reading (SIM and ALL), grammar and punctuation (SIM and ALL), and numeracy (ALL). Their results declined in 2015 from below to substantially below the average in reading (SIM and ALL); from close to, to below the average in numeracy (SIM). However, their results improved from close to, to

above the average in spelling (ALL); from below to close to the average in grammar and punctuation (SIM). In 2015, Year 3 students achieved close to or above the average in all fields. Castle College achieved below the average in reading, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy in 2011. These results improved in 2013 and 2015. The school achieved mostly close to or above average results in writing and spelling in 2011, 2013, and 2015, except for Year 7's writing in 2011 and Year 9's spelling in 2013.

Castle College's NAPLAN performance improved gradually: 2013 results were better than 2011 results and 2015 results were better than 2013 results. These results cover the same students' progress: therefore, the results suggest students' academic levels improved as a result of their studies. In 2011, Castle College had five assessment areas substantially below, three areas below, nine areas close to, and three areas above the average in the SIM category. In 2013, the five substantially below average areas from 2011 were eliminated and the school achieved six areas below, nine areas close to, and five areas above the average in the SIM category. In 2015, the school achieved one area substantially below, one area below, 10 areas close to, seven areas above, and one area substantially above the average in the SIM category. The school's achievements in the ALL category were very similar to the SIM category: three areas substantially below the average in 2011 were reduced to one area in 2015; five areas below the average in 2011 were reduced to two areas in 2015; and three areas above the average in 2011 were increased to seven areas in 2015. The data suggest the school improved students' academic results steadily between 2011 and 2015 – it eliminated nearly all below average areas and increased above average areas for both SIM and ALL categories.

CE results were another criterion to measure the school's academic success, as Mrs Nida (P6) communicated, although the school was academically successful, a more accurate opinion about the academic success of the school is obtained through the Year 12 students' CE achievements. The participants did not comment on CE scores, as interviews were

conducted in 2012 and the school did not have its first graduates until 2014. Castle College had seven graduates in 2014, seven graduates in 2015, and 14 graduates in 2016. The percentage of students who achieved 90+ in CE scores was 14% in 2014, 28% in 2015, and 43% in 2016. Data suggest the school constantly improved its 90+ scores in CE results. The school promoted its success using a flyer which suggests the school and its community were satisfied with the CE successes and that the school was noted for its academic achievements.

Two participants (N4 & T8) stated that the school is well-resourced, modern and technologically oriented. For the LOTE teacher (T8), the school invests in technological equipment, as it supplies iPads, all classes are equipped with smart boards and online English and Math learning systems are used (D14-1). CoolSIS was introduced in 2012, which has helped with faster online communications between students, parents and teachers. Moreover, it assists teachers to provide information instantly about students' improvements (D14-1). The school also implemented an e-school project in 2012, which was expected "to increase the quality level of education and to have an outstanding performance and success" (D11-19, p. 1). Hence, the school projects a strong perception of being technologically oriented.

Table 6.4 contains the collected data from school documents about outcomes of the school's academic achievements. The school documents suggested that the main outcome of the school's achievements was to generate well informed, well-mannered, responsible, active, and successful citizens who will contribute to the future of Australia and the Australian society.

Table 6.4

Outcomes of Academic Achievements

Theme	Theme source
Students who will make great contributions to Australian society	D14–3 & D14–1
“Prepare students to participate in the Australian and international community as informed, responsible and active citizens.”	D12
“Generation with highly developed ethical and academic abilities.”	D14–3
“Equip our students with such values through education and the enlightenment of the hearts and minds.”	D14–1
“To develop the ability for our students to think, learn and as a result to succeed in life.”	D13
“Help students to recognise their potential and become the leaders of tomorrow.”	D14–1
“A love of learning and reading.”	D12

In summary, the school promoted the belief that this new generation would develop an ability to think, learn and succeed. Furthermore, the students were expected to recognise and utilise their potential to the maximum level, and to become the leaders of tomorrow. The students were also expected to be individuals who love learning and reading, and to be lifelong learners. The academic education provided by the school was expected to give the students success in their individual and social lives.

6.3.2 Castle College’s Curriculum Orientation

Perceptions of the curriculum orientation of the school contribute to its identity. Castle College follows the guidelines of relevant authorities in developing and implementing its

curriculum. For the Staff Handbook (D12), the school followed the Department of Education Guidelines “to provide a curriculum, as diverse and challenging as possible, that will meet the needs, interests and abilities of every student” (p. 7). To develop students’ skills and knowledge, the school curriculum offered various subjects in the primary school, such as English, Mathematics, History and Social Sciences, Health, Science, Technology, Art, Music, Religion and Values, Arabic or Turkish, and Physical Education (PE, D14–14); and in secondary school subjects such as English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics (2017), Child Studies, Business and Enterprise, and Personal Learning Plan (PLP, D14–15). The school also offered extra-curricular programs such as “Drama, Arts & Crafts, Folkdance, Music, Book Club, Computer Club and Mathematics Club etc.” (p. 24).

The school values were mentioned in the school mission statement (D12) and the school curriculum supported these values (T6 & T7). The school welfare policies (D15) emphasised that “Programs which enhance student’s wellbeing and provide students with strategies for developing positive life skills should be an important part of the school's curriculum” (p. 3). The curriculum also addressed students as a whole, and aimed to raise good citizens as stated in the Staff Handbook (D12): “Staff and students engage in daily practices which develop an approach whereby the child is a whole [person], based on inquiry learning, character building and citizenship²⁸, all supported by curricular and extra-curricular programs” (p. 37).

The curriculum aims to cater individual abilities of the students as stated in the Parent and Student Handbook (D13) “The curriculum is structured while also providing flexibility to cater for the wide range of abilities within a class group” (p. 17). Special programs were developed by modifying the curriculum to address the individual learning needs of the students (D12).²⁹ The school website stated that “The curriculum must be adapted to the child’s development level” (D14–6, para. 2). Briefly, the school curriculum aims to meet the

²⁸ Social Efficiency Curriculum Ideology (Section 3.3.2.1)

²⁹ Learner-Centred Curriculum Ideology (Section 3.3.2.1)

needs and abilities of students, to develop students' skills and knowledge, to implement school values, to enhance students' wellbeing, to develop positive life skills, and to assist character building and citizenship of the students. In conclusion, the school identifies with an academically oriented curriculum that accommodates values. The curriculum is also designed to meet the diverse needs of students and aligned to main stream Australian Curriculum priorities.

6.3.3 Identity within the Community

The Hizmet community played an important role in the establishment and growth of the school. Not only the regional Hizmet community supported the school but also a wider Hizmet community from other parts of Australia provided support. After establishment, the school was further supported by school community. The word, community, refers to both the school community and the local Hizmet community in this section, rather than the general community. As stated in the Staff Handbook (D12), the school “has grown beyond expectations to meet the demand of the community, [and] this was made possible by the full support of the community...” (p. 6). The school also catered to the needs of the community and strived to satisfy the community by preparing a school environment which would address their needs and values. The principal's (A4) statement that related the success of the school to the satisfaction of the community is evidence of this claim when he said: “I believe that school success is satisfaction. If the community and its people you serve are satisfied, then you are one of the most successful schools.”

The school established good relationships with the community and, according to two participants (A4 & P5), these relationships played a role in the success of the school. The school was connected to the community (P5) and gained their trust (A4). The Parent and Student Handbook (D13) supported the participants' opinions, it stated that “the secret to our success comes from an ongoing collaboration between our teachers, parents and students, as

well as the community” (p. 3). Moreover, the school encouraged teachers to serve the school community as part of their profession (D14–10).

According to the leadership team (A4 & A5), community satisfaction was another area in which the school was successful. An increase in the number of students since 2005 and the participants’ positive comments on the success of the school in delivering academic and values education were an indication of community satisfaction. Three interviewed parents enrolled their children because of the recommendations of the community; the school was recommended to Mrs Cicek (P5) by the Turkish community, Mrs Nida (P6) was encouraged by other parents and Mrs Rabia (P7) by her doctor. This could be considered another indication of community satisfaction. The school documents and participants’ perception indicated that the school is a community school and that being community school is part of school identity.

6.3.4 Summary

Castle College appears to have developed an identity that contains three features: academic success; curriculum orientation; and being a community school. Aiming for academic excellence was a crucial aspect of the school’s identity. The school was established to provide quality education (D11–22) and one of its missions was to achieve academic excellence (D12). The majority of participants found the school academically successful and the community was satisfied with the success of the school (A4 & A5). For participants, the main reason for the success of the school was the combination of the leadership team, the teaching staff, and good school–community relations. As an outcome of academic success, raising a generation with knowledge, skills, and ethics that will contribute to the wider society was expected. The relationship between the school culture, climate, identity and Gülen’s teaching is examined in the next chapter.

The curriculum approach of the school was another element of school identity. The school curriculum was developed by the curriculum coordinator with the contributions of teaching staff. The curriculum followed the guidelines of the Department of Education and embedded its values into the curriculum to meet the students' learning needs, to develop their skills and knowledge, and to raise them as good moral citizens. Thus, it contained the learner-centred ideology and the social efficiency ideology, both of which were discussed in Section 3.3.2.2.

Being a community school was also one of the aspects of school identity. The school was established and supported by the Australian Hizmet community. Some members of the community promoted the school and all interviewed parents enrolled their children with the encouragement of community members. The school also worked to satisfy the community and considered community satisfaction as one success criterion.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter examined the collected data through a case study in Castle College to identify school culture, school climate, and school identity. The school valued an education balanced between an emphasis on values and academic achievement and was intended to develop students morally and academically. Values education that contained the values of the school, the school community and Australian core values and behaviour management in order to promote accepted behaviour, and to provide safe and positive learning environment were also major parts of the school's culture. School culture also promoted multiculturalism to welcome and respect all cultures in the school.

A harmonious school climate was achieved through the pastoral care programs, catering to individual needs, good parent-school relations, the contribution of school staff, and a good school environment. Pastoral care programs aimed to enhance the moral development of the students and to contribute to their learning; catering for students' individual needs was

intended to identify and meet the educational needs of each students; parent–school relations encouraged parents to cooperate with the school and participate in school activities to improve students’ educational results; the school staff planned, developed and implemented all educational and pastoral care activities; and the school established safe, harmonious, and positive school environment.

School identity reflected the following major features: academic achievements, the curriculum orientation of the school, and being a community school. The school was established for the purpose of providing quality education. The curriculum of the school developed students to their best capacity and raised them to be contributing members of society. The school was a community school, established by community, and served the schooling needs of the community.

Chapter Five provided an analysis of Star Boys as case one, and this Chapter has provided an analysis of Castle College as case two. The next Chapter will examine convergent and contrasting evidence from these cases regarding the alignment with Gülen’s philosophy of education.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

This chapter summarises the similarities and differences between the two schools in Sections 7.1 and 7.2; establishes connections between the literature review and analysed data in Sections 7.3 and 7.4; and provides a response to the research question in Sections 7.5, 7.6, and 7.7. The presentation of the schools' general and distinguishing characteristics and identification of aspects of Gülen's philosophy that were not implemented are discussed in Section 7.9. The research question was: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? The chapter concludes with an assessment of the fidelity of the implementation of Gülen's ideas and what distinguished contributions his philosophy makes to education in a multicultural society such as Australia.

7.1 Similarities Between the Two Schools

This section examines Star Boys and Castle College in terms of their similarities regarding school culture in Section 7.1.1, school climate in Section.7.1.2, and school identity in Section 7.1.3. Table 7.1 presents the main similarities between Star Boys and Castle College and they are organised under the three dimensions of school characteristics shown in Table 3.1.

Table 7.1

Similarities between Star Boys and Castle College

School Culture	School Climate	School Identity
Balanced education	Pastoral care	Academic orientation
Golden generation	School–parent relationship	Curriculum approaches
Values—moral—education	School staff	Community relations
Behaviour management	School environment	
Multiculturalism		

7.1.1 Similarities in School Culture

The numerous similarities between the schools in relation to culture, climate and identity suggest a common guiding philosophy. The two schools have similar cultures, characterised by a balanced educational program that emphasises, as a foundation to the raising of a Golden Generation: values education and academic achievement; behaviour management; and multiculturalism (see Table 7.1). Through a balanced educational program, the schools emphasise the importance of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of students. The mission of both schools is to provide the best possible education, to care for individual students' needs and to educate students to develop their potential to the fullest.

The schools see values education as one of their primary responsibilities and a significant component of a balanced education. Values education is delivered through the Religion and Values subject, pastoral care activities and role modelling. Role modelling is a major strategy used by both schools in values education. Values education is also delivered through the Religion and Values subject in both schools. Religious education covers topics such as Islamic belief, for example, believing in One God, and practices, for example, how to perform five daily prayers, whereas values education covers Islamic values, for example, compassion, and manners, for example, eating etiquette. Appendix F has an outline of the content of three modules taught in Year 9 Religion and Values lessons. The moral values taught in the Religion and Values lessons and pastoral care services are Islamic, as the school communities in both schools are overwhelmingly Muslim. Both schools provide a very similar religious and values education (see Table 5.9 & Section 6.1.2). Gülen's inspirations, the cultural background of the school community, and regulations of relevant departments, such as those in the document, National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, are the main factors in developing the school values.

There are similarities in the behaviour management approach of both schools. Establishing a strong behaviour management system is one of the primary objectives of the schools. Both schools' behaviour management system sanctions awards for good behaviour or achievements, and consequences for disruptive behaviour. While establishing behaviour management in the school environment, the schools display a caring attitude towards students. Emphasis is placed on the development of self-discipline that underpins an effective, fair and safe learning environment.

The schools promote Australia's multicultural philosophy and have developed policies that welcome cultural diversity. They have opened their doors to everybody regardless of religion, nationality or culture. However, students and parents are overwhelmingly Muslim from various Islamic cultures.

7.1.2 Similarities in School Climate

The school climate is influenced by a shared emphasis on the positive consequences of pastoral care services, positive school-parent relationships, supportive staff and a positive school environment as shown in Table 7.1.

Pastoral care services are emphasised in both schools and their purpose is to improve the academic, spiritual, and social wellbeing of students. The schools organise similar educational and recreational pastoral care activities. These activities are standard practices that can be found in most schools. Thus, Gülen's educational aim is not to invent a different way of schooling, but to implement the current schooling system in an effective way to raise the Golden Generation. The pastoral care programs contribute to a strong sense of belonging among students, better relationships with parents and a warm school environment.

Parents are considered an integral part of the broader school community and play a role in establishing strong school-parent relationships. Parents' involvement is welcomed in

school matters, and there is strong support among parents for quality school–parent relationships (Section 5.3.2 and Section 6.2.2). School–parent co–operation is considered a contributing factor in the success of the schools. There is consensus across both school communities that a strong and sound school–parent relationship contributes to better schooling in every aspect. Six out of seven parents in both schools were satisfied with the positive school–parent relationships. The parents of both schools contribute to the school in supporting their children’s education at home and provide general support to the school by way of, for example, promotion and maintenance.

There is an alignment between Gülen’s and the two schools’ approaches to the status of teachers in following aspects: emphasis on the important role of teachers in education; showing passion for the success of students and demonstrating care and commitment; teaching students about every aspect of life (Gülen, 1993); developing students positively to their best potential; and the requirement that teachers possess an adequate level of training and spirituality in order to perform their roles perfectly. There are other aspects of Gülen’s approach such as an expectation that teachers connect students with the universe through the enlightenment of their soul (Gülen, 2000a); establishing a connection between life and conscience (Gülen, 2000a); and actively engaging in the teaching and learning process (Hattie, 2012) that could not be identified in the data.

Pastoral care teachers act as a role model to other teachers about commitment to the wellbeing of students and they provide some voluntary services for the academic and moral development of the students. The schools also employ staff who are expected to teach in other Gülen–inspired schools if needed there. The positive school environment is one of the major issues emphasised by participants from both schools. The school communities find the schools’ social environment to be welcoming, friendly, respectful, warm and educational.

7.1.3 Similarities in School Identity

Star Boys and Castle College possess similar school identities. The schools are recognised as having high academic orientations, broad curriculum approaches, and positive community relations (Table 7.1). The schools aim to achieve academic excellence as part of their mission. Star Boys advertises its academic achievements mainly, specifically in CE results, and, in its region, has built a reputation on academic achievements. Castle College had seven students graduate in 2014, seven in 2015 and 14 in 2016. The proportion of students who achieved 90+ (on a 100 scale) in CE scores was 14% in 2014, 28% in 2015 and 43% in 2016. The school and its community are satisfied with the academic outcomes being achieved. Both schools recognise that academic successes are not the only outcome of their schooling. They try to provide the best possible education to students according to their individual educational needs. Both schools are academically oriented, value-based schools that pursue excellence in academic achievement and values education. The curriculum approaches of the two schools are also similar. They follow the Education Department's guidelines and embed school values in the curriculum with the objective of raising knowledgeable, skilful, and moral citizens.

Both schools were established by the Australian Turkish community and they gradually attracted the attention of parents from various ethnicities. However, the schools retain an identity as Australian Turkish community schools. The school communities appreciate and support the schools through voluntary work and donations. The school communities are overwhelmingly drawn from the Muslim community and are concerned about protecting their Islamic and cultural identities in their new home, Australia. The schools also meet the religious and cultural educational needs of the Australian Turkish/Muslim community.

7.2 Differences Between the Two Schools

Each school was established in a different state with its own local community. In Australia, education is a state responsibility and each state has different education regulations. Therefore, the schools have some differences, which are presented in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2

Differences Between the Two Schools

Star Boys	Castle College
Values education emphasised by parents	Religious education emphasised by parents
Well established pastoral care department	Establishing pastoral care department
Strong pastoral care team and rich pastoral care activities	Moderate pastoral care team and moderate pastoral care activities
Extensive advertisement of CE results	Moderate advertisement of CE results
Strong community support	Moderate community support
Over 2000 students and majority of students from Turkish and Arabic background	Over 400 students and majority of students from Arabic and Uzbek background
Relatively well established	Still establishing

The school culture at both schools accommodates a balanced educational approach. However, Castle College's parents emphasise religious education as a component of a balanced education because it was established next to the mosque. On the other hand, Star Boys' parents emphasise values education along with academic excellence. This suggests Castle College's parents appear to expect more religious education. The school has responded to that expectation by providing Qur'an lessons in one of the three Religion and Values

lessons. In contrast, Star Boys does not include teaching Qur'an in Religion and Values lessons.

Pastoral care services are well-established in Star Boys compared to Castle College. The activities organised by the pastoral care department at Castle College are not as comprehensive as those provided by Star Boys. Thus, the contribution of school-parent relationships and school staff to the school climate is greater than the contribution of pastoral care at Castle College. The participants emphasise pastoral care services as the second major reason for Star Boys' success. In Castle College, the contribution of pastoral care services to the success of the school was not mentioned by participants. According to school newsletters, the PFA is more organised and more active at Star Boys. In 10 newsletters of the schools, Star Boys PFA activities are mentioned 16 times, whereas Castle College PFA contributions are mentioned only twice. Consequently, perceptions of pastoral care services and PFA contributions to the positive school climate are greater for Star Boys than their contribution to the positive climate of Castle College.

Both schools are academically orientated, with Star Boys advertising its CE success intensively on its school website and in local newspapers. This suggests Star Boys achieves better CE results than Castle College. Castle College's community is satisfied with its current successes, believing the school will be more successful in the future. The establishment of Castle College's first campus next to the mosque adds the notion of religious education to the school's identity, even though it is not advertised as an Islamic school.

It is useful to clarify the term, community, for the discussions about community support. There are two communities that provide significant support to the schools: school and Hizmet communities. The school community consists of staff, students, parents and friends who appreciate and support the school. The Hizmet community is comprised of staff, students, parents and friends who are familiar with Gülen's philosophy. The Hizmet

community provides regular support for Hizmet services, adopts Hizmet issues as their own, discusses feasible services in certain areas and endeavours to disseminate Hizmet's philosophy on specific matters, for example, education and dialogue. The Hizmet community provides more support than the school community as it instigated the setting-up of the schools.

To be a community school was part of both schools' identity. The Turkish community in Star Boys' region is strong, and supplied significant support to find students and provide volunteer work and donations. However, the Turkish community in Castle College's region is small; thus, its community support was moderate, resulting in moderate development of the school. The size of the Turkish community also affects student demography. The major languages spoken at home at Star Boys are Arabic (37%), Turkish (33%), Somali (11%) and Urdu (10%), while at Castle College, it is Arabic (36%), Turkic (24%), Uzbek (11%), Uighur (7%), Turkish (5%), Turkmen (1%) and Indian/Hindi Punjabi/Bengali/Hindustani Urdu (12%). In 2016, the number of students at Star Boys was approximately 400—secondary boys only, whereas there are over 400—primary and secondary boys and girls at Castle College. An online Muslim directory reports that there are seven Islamic schools in the city in which Star Boys is located and one Islamic school in the city where Castle College is located. Star Boys and Castle College are not identified as Islamic schools by this website. Thus, the term, community school, better identifies the schools than the term, Islamic school. Both schools, self-identify as non-denominational.

Star Boys was founded earlier than Castle College, thus it has well-established facilities and services. Castle College is still in the establishment phase. Thus, it appears the main differences between the two schools are mostly due to the fact Star Boys was established earlier and its community support is stronger.

7.3 Educational Approach and Attributes of Knowledge

Gülen’s educational philosophy aims to provide education for youth in which values and practices are taught in unison with contemporary knowledge to develop individuals to their best capacity and in harmony with society and nature. Gülen’s definition of education, as discussed in Section 2.1, contains four main elements: education should be in harmony with the nature of the human being, natural laws and God (Qur’anic teachings); education is the progress of each existence within their natural limits in harmony with nature; education is developing something to its ultimate level; and education is a process to reach the summit in truthfulness. The data suggest the schools adopt Gülen’s definitions of “progress of each existence within their natural limits” and “developing something to its ultimate level” (Gülen, 2011h), as they aim for “excellence in both academic and values education” (D6) and “to develop students to their best potential” (D14–6, T2 & S4). However, the schools do not address the elements, “education should be in harmony with the nature of the human being, natural laws and God” and “education is a process to reach the summit in truthfulness” of Gülen’s definition of education. Sources of the data in this chapter are referred to by codes as explained in Table 4.1, Section 4.2.3.1 and Appendix J.

Gülen is described as an Islamic scholar who promotes peace, dialogue and tolerance, and considers education as the best way to serve humanity (see Section 2.2.4). He emphasises the need for a new generation, the Golden Generation, that engages in and prioritises service to the community—to live for the wellbeing of others. The schools’ practice of serving the community is discussed in Section 7.7. Gülen’s educational philosophy aligns well with two educational approaches: education is to teach knowledge and skills; and education addresses moral values (Wood, 2011). The education provided by both schools is in alignment with these two approaches as they emphasise academic excellence and values education. Terms such as “academic excellence” (D4 & D12) and “developing individuals to their best capacity” (D2 & D14–2) used by the schools, indicate that the schools have adopted Gülen’s

philosophy that seeks “perfection for each individual within their own capacity,” rather than Dewey’s thought that considers “competency” as an outcome of education. Thus, the schools adopt Gülen’s educational philosophy by aiming for higher academic excellence and incorporating values education to develop students to their best capacity. However, there are no data suggesting the schools adopt Gülen’s educational philosophy of providing harmonious education that integrates humanity, the natural world and God or aiming to reach truthfulness as an ultimate outcome of education, as described in Section 2.1.1.

The data do not reveal to any extent any philosophical discussions occurring in the schools about: the definition of knowledge; Gülen’s opinions about knowledge; internalist and externalist approaches of knowledge; and transformation from scientific knowledge to knowledge, and from knowledge to spiritual knowledge. For example, the data do not discuss any of Gülen’s nine attributes of knowledge as shown in Figure 2.1. The knowledge content for both schools is mostly shaped by the state’s Education Department and textbooks printed by companies in alignment with government educational policies. Gülen’s and internalists’ epistemological approach to knowledge regard justified true belief as knowledge, as discussed in Section 2.1.2. Only the knowledge taught in both schools in the Religion and Values subject aligns to this dimension of knowledge.

7.4 Educational Aims of Star Boys and Castle College

Gülen’s educational philosophy and its alignment with the purpose of education as envisaged by other philosophers and scholars were presented earlier (see Section 2.2). Gingell and Winch (1999) proposed six main educational aims of schools: (1) to give the individual a secure cultural background; (2) to give an individual the ability to take part in society through an occupation; (3) to preserve the society’s culture; (4) to produce good citizens (5) to promote autonomy; and (6) to promote economic development. The data suggest the two schools sought to achieve the first four aims. Participants in both schools revealed that the

schools accommodate community values and implement practices that assist students to secure their cultural background (see Figure 5.3 and Section 6.1.2). Both schools document the intention to prepare students to be “informed, responsible, active, caring, and contributing citizens” (D5, p. 4) and raise students as good Australians (D12, D13, & D14.3) while retaining their own cultural values and identity. In relation to aims five and six, the data suggest the schools aimed to develop students to their best potential, and establish self-confidence and self-worth. However, it does not suggest the existence of autonomy, in the sense that students are not involved in school governance and do not manage their subject learning. At Star Boys and Castle College, students have choice only in their selection of elective subjects and participation in clubs and pastoral care programs. They do not have a choice regarding compulsory subjects. The data also suggest the schools do not promote economic development explicitly as an educational aim.

There are five main educational aims of Gülen’s educational philosophy: holistic education; raising the Golden Generation; service to humanity; promoting dialogue and peace; and disseminating Turkish Anatolian culture emphasising shared values. The concept of shared values refers to Islamic Anatolian values and local values where the school is established. According to Carrol (2007), Gülen emphasises the goal of developing a person as a whole to achieve their best through education. Darken (2009) also emphasises holistic education. Star Boys and Castle College adopt this holistic educational approach as balanced education. Gülen’s holistic education aims to address the minds, hearts and feelings (Unal, 2002) of a person to enable them to interact harmoniously with society and the wider environment (Gülen, 2011h). The schools also aimed to develop the intellectual, social, emotional and physical capacities of the students (D14–6) by providing a balanced education that encompasses academic excellence and moral values (D4).

Gülen's educational philosophy emphasises the importance of raising the ideal—Golden—generation (see Section 2.2.2). Endeavours to achieve this goal are explicitly expressed in school documents and on school emblems, which use the term Golden Generation (D4, D12 & D13). Gülen's philosophy (2004a) promotes education as the best way, along with dialogue, to serve humanity. Thus, the schools serve humanity and it is anticipated that the schools raise youth with the intention to serve humanity. 'Serving humanity' is not mentioned at Castle College, whereas participants (A1, A2, T3, N1, P1, & S4) at Star Boys raised the issue. However, the students at both schools are involved in fundraising activities (D1–8, D1–11, D11–30, D11–31) to help the needy. These activities are intended to raise awareness of serving humanity.

Gülen's philosophy aims to promote dialogue in schools to contribute to the peace of the wider community (Williams, 2008). For Williams (2007), the educational and dialogue services of the Movement "lessen the gaps between people" and contribute to "the common good and peace" (para. 21). The dialogue topic is not emphasised strongly at either school, rather both schools emphasise multiculturalism (D5, D12, D14–5). The schools have tried to establish an Australian Muslim identity, have opened their doors to all parents who are interested and endeavoured to develop students to their best potential regardless of their cultural background. These attributes are well-aligned with the three dimensions of the Commonwealth Government's multicultural policy, as demonstrated in Section 3.1.4. Therefore, Gülen's dialogue approach is not emphasised at these schools. Both schools consider themselves to be multicultural and emphasise respect for other cultures. Figure 7.1 shows a student's work from Star Boys illustrating the recognition of a multicultural society in Australia.



Figure 7.1. A student work about recognition of a multicultural society in Australia.

Gülen's philosophy encourages schools to teach different cultures and practices (see Section 2.2.4). Introducing Turkish Anatolian culture and establishing shared values are also among the aims of the schools in Gülen's philosophy (Aksiyon, 1998). Turkish Anatolian culture is promoted through both the hidden and formal curriculum. For example, pictures similar to Figure 7.2 are displayed in school corridors and the Turkish language is taught as a LOTE subject. The Australian curriculum also requires the development of understanding about other cultures such as Indigenous and Asian cultures along with the study of the Australian identity (see Section 5.4.2). Thus, both schools teach about Indigenous, Asian and Anatolian cultures.



Figure 7.2. Example of introducing Anatolian culture through a cultural map.

The schools also use posters to promote Australian–Muslim shared values in the school environment. Figure 7.3 illustrates one example of shared values through the establishment of

a Gallipoli corner in the school with Atatürk’s inspiring words about Australian soldiers involved in the conflict: “After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.”



Figure 7.3. Example of establishing shared values – Gallipoli corner at Star Boys.

The schools address the five main educational aims of Gülen’s philosophy (see Section 2.2): to provide a holistic—balanced—education; to raise the Golden Generation; to raise awareness in serving humanity; to promote understanding and peace among diverse cultures; and to introduce the Turkish Anatolian culture. These aspects are parts of the school culture as well as elements of school characteristics. However, two aims are prioritised: holistic education and raising the Golden Generation. The following three sections examine the relationships between culture, climate and identity.

7.5 Culture and Characteristics of the Schools

Gülen’s philosophy suggests that the core culture of schools incorporates elements such as values education; behaviour management—orderly life; physical environment; accepting everyone as they are—multiculturalism; single–sex education; emphasis on morality rather than religion; and positive role modelling in the school environment. This section examines

the relationship among these elements to identify the characteristics of Star Boys and Castle College.

Gülen's writings contain rich discussions about values, morality and virtue. His beliefs are similar to Sutrop's (2005) and Etherington's (2013) that schools should teach values. Star Boys and Castle College have adopted values education as a major part of their balanced education philosophy. They have introduced the Religion and Values subject to teach Islam and values. Other than subject teaching, the data do not reveal whether the schools have developed structured methods to teach values such as those in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools or LVEP (see Section 3.1.1.1). The schools also employ pastoral care programs and flexible methods, for example, role modelling and the hidden curriculum, to instil values.

Gülen's philosophy does not promote a specific behaviour management theory; however, his philosophy contains similar elements to Skinner's (1953) behaviourist and Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980) interventionists' approaches (see Section 3.1.2). He encourages parents to modify the behaviour of a child in order to achieve orderliness in life and to develop self-discipline by establishing an orderly family life. The school further develops the orderly life of a student in cooperation with parents. . Strategies of holistic education (intellectual, behavioural and spiritual); balanced compassion (dealing with misbehaviour without dishonouring the individual); rewarding mostly and punishing, but not physically, are employed to modify behaviour positively.

Behaviour management is an important aspect in the culture of both schools. Behaviour management is mentioned by participants as one of the strongest areas (A1) and priorities of Star Boys. The school is seen as renowned for its effective behaviour management approach (A2), and the school tries to establish self-responsibility and self-discipline in its students. (Table 5.4). Many participants (see Table 5.7) stated that behaviour management contributes

to the success of the school. Gülen's vision of discipline can be gleaned by his reference to the madrasah [school of natural sciences], tekke [school of Sufism and the dervish lodges] and the army as the main components of a complete education. Madrasah means "an educational institution, particularly for Islamic religious instruction" (Madrasah, n.d.). "In many Sufi traditions, the Tekke is the place of devotion and worship for dervishes of a particular Sufi Order" (Tekke, n.d.). Gülen criticises the separation of the madrasah and tekke. Separation has caused incomplete education as the madrasah focuses on mostly sciences and tekke focuses on spirituality. For Gülen (2012d), the madrasah and tekke are institutions where a perfect person is educated, and the madrasah worked as a tekke at the same time and offered spirituality together with knowledge—scientific, social and religious. In Gülen's philosophy, madrasah refers to the mind and academic achievements, tekke refers to the heart and morality and values, and the army refers to an orderly life and compliance (1996b).

Section 3.1.2 summarised four behaviour management approaches: Wolfgang and Glickman (1980); French and Raven (1960); Skinner (1953) and Rogers (1953); and Lewis (2004). The data in Sections 5.2.3 and 6.1.3 suggest that the schools' behaviour management strategies contain some similarities through three behaviour management approaches. Wolfgang and Glickman' (1980) interventionist approach considers modifying children's behaviour as a teacher's duty (A1, A2, T2, T4 and see Table 5.6). French and Raven (1960) argue that educators influence students by using five social powers: coercive (dictating behaviour) (A2), reward (Star Boys' level system), legitimate where the teacher prescribes behaviour (A1 and A2), referent where a student is personally influenced by the teacher (A3), and expert power where the student is influenced by knowledge of the teacher (T2). Data suggest that the schools use all five powers; however, they use the first three powers more than the last two powers, as school documents introduce accepted behaviour, and reward and punishment procedures. In Skinner's (1953) behaviourist approach, the teacher influences the students' behaviour by setting a certain environment, and using more reward and less

punishment (Star Boys' level system). In Rogers' (1953) approach to classroom management, teachers help students to help themselves achieve self-discipline (A2 and see Table 5.4). Data suggest the schools' behaviour management approach is generally similar to Skinner's (1953) approach. For Lewis (2004), students' responsibility has to be increased in order to establish and improve classroom discipline by involving students in decision-making and not by implementing a punishment-oriented approach. Data from both schools do not reveal students' involvement in decision-making in both schools. The schools did not specifically acknowledge that they adopted a particular theoretical model for classroom management or that the approach was directly influenced by Gülen's beliefs. The schools established their own behaviour management system in accordance with their school communities.

Star Boys and Castle College apply reward and corrective strategies to establish behaviour management and evidence suggests, in most cases, that the commendation strategy is more effective than penalising students. Rewards and correcting strategies are in tune with Gülen's writings. For Gülen (2002), rewarding achievements is the ethic of God and he is against physical punishments or threatening children, as the displeased expression on a parents' face should be enough to stop and correct misbehaviour. Thus, establishing an effective behaviour management system that promotes students' self-discipline is one of the characteristics of Star Boys and Castle College.

Gülen (2011b), in alignment with Dewey (1916), believes that social environment has an influence on the development of individuals, as discussed in see Section 3.1.3. His philosophy does not suggest any particular features of the physical school environment. However, Gülen-inspired schools usually accommodate a dormitory, dining room facilities, a multipurpose room, and symbols that promote academic and values education. No explicitly religious symbols or affiliations are encouraged. Star Boys and Castle College do not have a dining room, only Star Boys has a dormitory, and only Castle College has an explicit religious symbol of affiliation through its location adjacent to a mosque. Although the mosque belongs

to and is operated by a different body, being located on the same site implies a religious affiliation. Both schools have multipurpose or pastoral care rooms and symbols that promote academic achievements, for example, a wall of fame, and values education, for example, values posters and a dedicated notice board for values. Both schools are keen to improve their physical facilities. The data suggest that the school culture is not entirely manifested through the schools' physical attributes which are determined in accordance with feasibility and pragmatism.

Providing an education for everybody regardless of their cultural background is one of the priorities of Gülen–inspired schools (Ebaugh, 2010; Gülen, 1996a; Michel, 2003). Gülen's (2012b) philosophy promotes tolerance and describes it as “accepting everyone within their status, embracing everyone as they are and in the words of Yunus:³⁰ Loving the created because of the Creator” (p. 215). The policies of Star Boys' and Castle College's reflect Gülen's philosophy. The schools welcome staff and students regardless of their cultural background (D5, D12 & D14–5). Although the schools adopt a multicultural policy, both schools' student bodies are Muslims.

Teaching religion was not seen as a primary goal of Gülen–inspired schools, instead they emphasised morality (Agai, 2003). Both schools emphasised values education (See Table 5.2 & Section 6.1.2) as a major part of balanced education, and introduced the Religion and Values subject to teach basic principles of Islam and Islamic values as almost all students were Muslims. Therefore, Star Boys and Castle College were not Islamic schools as both emphasised values education instead of intensive Islamic teachings. In both schools, values are emphasised by pastoral care activities, role modelling, and the Religion and Values subject.

³⁰ Yunus Emre (1240-1321) – a Turkish poet and Sufi mystic.

Gülen claims segregated education better serves the provision of quality education (Aksiyon, 1998 & Section 2.3.3). Star Boys and Castle College prefer co-education in primary school and segregated education in high school. Star College has one campus dedicated for boys and another campus for girls. In other campuses, high school boys and girls receive education in separate classrooms or buildings. Castle College does not have segregated classes as this was not feasible because of the small number of students. Thus, segregated education is not a main part of that school's culture. It might be assumed that segregated classes are preferred when conditions allow.

An important element of Gülen's educational philosophy is to teach through role modelling. As reported in Chapter Three, Ozdalga (2003) and Yücel (2011) remark that the positive impact of *temsil* [performance, role modelling] is greater than *tabligh* [oral teaching] in Gülen's approach, specifically in delivering values education. *Tabligh* refers, in the school context, to common teaching methods such as questioning, dialogue and class discussions, whereas *temsil* refers to experimental learning, demonstrations and investigations. *Temsil*, in Gülen's philosophy, emphasises positive role modelling in order to deliver desired moral values. Thus, behaviours exhibiting appropriate values and morality are adopted as an educational method in Gülen's philosophy. The school newsletters (D1-4 & D1-9), website (D14-10), Staff Handbook (D2) and the majority of participants emphasise that the schools employ role modelling as a method to accomplish values education. Thus, the school staff's setting positive role models is one of the characteristics of the schools.

In Star Boys and Castle College, appropriate role modelling attributes are explained in the Staff Handbooks. For instance, Star Boys' Staff Handbook outlines the professional conduct expected of staff. Teachers are required to present themselves as positive role models to students and staff "through appropriate use of language, courtesy, dress, respect and care" (p. 15) and to embrace values that are mentioned in the school's mission statement. The

professional conduct section in the Staff Handbook does not contain any statement that requires staff to be familiar with Gülen’s educational philosophy. Gülen–inspired values are mostly presented in the school environment of Star Boys and Castle College with the role modelling of pastoral care staff, as these staff are assumed to be familiar with the Gülen’s educational philosophy.

This section has examined the relationship between school culture according to Gülen’s philosophy and the culture at Star Boys and Castle College. This investigation identified the following aspects of the schools’ characters:

1. Values education is a crucial part of education and it is provided with various flexible methods, such as role modelling and discussion sessions.
2. The schools have established and developed their physical environments in accordance with feasibility.
3. The schools welcome all students regardless of their cultural background.
4. An emphasis is placed on morality rather than religion and segregated education is preferred where possible.
5. Setting positive role models is employed as an educational method.

7.6 Climate and Characteristics of Schools

This section examines the relationship between the literature and data about the school climate and how school climate contributes to the characteristics of Star Boys and Castle College. The term, school climate, refers to the enacted beliefs, practices, interactions, relationships and processes that occur within the school among staff, students and community, as discussed in Section 3.2. The term, environment, has been used interchangeably with climate, but it can also reflect the physical condition of the school, that is, the resources,

layout and buildings. The participants' perceptions discussed and presented in Table 5.14 (Star Boys) and Table 6.2 (Castle College) suggested that the major elements of school climate in the two schools are warmth and positivity. Pastoral care, strong school–parent relationships, school staff and the social environment contribute to the formation of a positive climate.

Hammond and Kirkland (2012) consider pastoral care as a system of welfare and guidance for all people in school life and includes the “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils” (p. 42). Gülen’s philosophy encourages pastoral care services and, for him, these services should be provided by trusted, well–educated and experienced guides in alignment with the cultural background of the people who are the recipients of these services. Gülen’s philosophy does not provide structured guidelines for pastoral care services. Star Boys and Castle College have established a pastoral care department, similar to Hammond and Kirkland’s description and in alignment with Gülen’s encouragement, to maintain the social, cultural, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of students (D1–2 & D12). The pastoral care department has the responsibility of values education in the school and the department works to raise model students through building a character that accommodates Australian and Turkish/Islamic values. The pastoral care department offers a combination of educational, social, recreational and sporting activities (see Table 5.10). Participants perceive pastoral care as a second major reason in actualising moral values (see Table 5.9) at Star Boys and the third reason at Castle College (see Figure 6.3). Pastoral care employs mainly role modelling and discussion sessions (see Table 5.9) to teach values during a variety of activities.

The schools have established and developed pastoral care services where feasible and in response to their community’s needs. Star College provides pastoral care services for students from Year 4 to Year 12 and Castle College for students from Year 5 to Year 12; pastoral care services are not provided to lower primary students. For Gülen (2002), the education of a

child should be planned according to their age and through expert advice, just as nutrition is planned through expert advice that takes the age of the child into consideration (p. 76). Thus, according to Gülen's educational philosophy, the school's values education through pastoral care should cover students of all ages. According to D1–2, Star Boys allocates 14 pastoral care teachers and 20 mentors to 21 home groups, whereas over 40 teaching staff work for students' academic progress (2010) and Castle College allocates two pastoral care teachers, but no mentors (2012). Moreover, as values education is regarded as more complicated than academic education, it deserves more experienced staff. Gülen (1997a) points out the difficulty of values education with the statement: "Teaching and educating are different things. Many people can be teachers but not everyone can be an educator" (p. 44). Data about the importance of pastoral care suggest it is one of the distinguishing characteristics at Star Boys and Castle College. The school documents do not suggest the criteria for the success of pastoral care services, such as the reducing levels of anxiety, stress and worry in the school climate. However, participants are satisfied with the pastoral care programs at the schools. There is one pastoral care teacher per 30 students at Star Boys and one pastoral care teacher for over 100 students at Castle College. Thus, the schools could be considered successful in their pastoral care programs with their ratio of number of students per pastoral care teacher. However, they do not reach the expected level of success in accordance with Gülen's philosophy.

Gülen's educational philosophy places special emphasis on the role of parents as educators. They are the first educators of a child (Gülen, 2002) and their role is as important as the school's (Gülen, 1997b) in educating the Golden Generation (Gülen, 2002). For him, home—the parent—is the first element for excellent education of children. The school is second. The circle of friends is third and study-mates are fourth (Gülen, 2002). In his (2002) opinion, an "ideal family is needed to raise an ideal generation" (p. 92). In other words, "the Golden Generation" could be raised from "the Golden Parents." Gülen argues that when a

child reaches school age, the responsibility of parents doubles as they must care for the child at home and observe their progress at school (Unal, 2002). For Gülen (2002), parenting to raise a Golden Generation requires significant knowledge and training in the same way that beekeeping requires much knowledge and training. Parents must certainly learn the methodology of raising a good generation from which the society will benefit.

The schools respond to Gülen's philosophy by emphasising the school–parent relationship. The schools are proud of maintaining close partnerships with families (D3) and these relationships have a positive effect on learning outcomes (D16). The data suggest that participants (A1, A3, A4, T5, N4, P1, P5 & P6) are generally content with the school–parent relationships at Star Boys and Castle College and some participants (P1, P3 & P4) expect a better establishment of school–parent relationships at Star Boys. There was little evidence that the parents participate in decision making as educational partners at either school. Thus, the success of the schools in establishing good relationships with parents should be extended to involving them more in education as educational partners. In Gülen's (2002) view, parents should always be active and seek better ways of educating children; thus, they should not rely solely on the school, teachers or mosque. Maintaining good relationships with parents and involving them in school activities is one of the characteristics of Star Boys and Castle College.

Bush and Glover (2014) reviewed major leadership models in their study. Gülen's educational philosophy does not advocate any specific leadership model; instead, he focuses on the qualities of a leader. According to the data, the schools do not promote particular leadership models. Documents and participants provide some qualities for the leadership team, such as being supportive (T9 & T10), hardworking (N4) and caring (P6).

Hattie (2012) and Gülen (2000a) emphasise the exceptional role played by teachers in education, and Bush and Glover (2014) claim that classroom teaching is the most important

aspect in students' learning, and leadership is second. Gülen (2010e) remarks that genuine educators are the most crucial servants of a nation, as they build the nation, community and family. Gülen focuses on the qualities and attributes of teachers, rather than advocating for a certain model of teacher. Gülen (2000a) emphasises the importance of ideal staff in order to process tasks and projects successfully. He argues that projects and initiatives will fail without ideal staff and a passionate team. In the school context, ideal staff are dedicated, professional and effective, like those described in the Star Boys' Staff Handbook (D2); "Our dedicated and professional team of staff enjoy providing exciting, rewarding and challenging experiences for students" (p. 3).

Star Boys and Castle College, in congruence with Hattie and Gülen, emphasise the unique role of teachers. For participants, the main reason for Star Boys' success is the quality of the teachers (see Table 5.21), and for Castle College, the reason is claimed to be the leadership team and teaching staff (see Table 6.1). The contribution of staff to a positive school climate is evident in participants' opinions. They mentioned different qualities of teachers, such as being approachable (S1), friendly (S3), dedicated (A4, P4 & N1), helpful (S5), determined and enthusiastic (A1), hard-working (S5), supportive (A3), devoted (A4), well-educated (T6) and good role models (T6, T7, P6 & N5). One of the distinguishing qualities of the staff who are familiar with Gülen's philosophy was their willingness to transfer to other schools if they were needed elsewhere.

The qualities of teachers mentioned by Gülen (see Table 3.4) are mostly different from the qualities mentioned by participants. The similarity is that participants found teachers to be the main reason for their children's success and so focussed on the qualities of the teachers rather than a specific model of teaching. Data suggest that employing a leadership team and teachers who have certain qualities, such as dedication, enthusiasm and being hardworking, is one of the characteristics of the school.

In 1916, Dewey emphasised the effect of social environment on the education of an individual. Gülen also acknowledges the importance of the school environment or climate. For Gülen (2011b), the right environment assists the development of a person's potential. For Dewey, belief and attitude of an individual are formed unconsciously by an environment. Gülen shares similar beliefs, for example, Gülen (1993) states that "every member of society that forms a nation will some way be influenced or affected by the next person" (p. 118). Gülen (2002) asserts, "In order to raise our children perfectly, the environment also needs to be perfect. Indeed, every child develops according to the environment and thus in a sense becomes the child of that particular environment" (p. 83). For the Learner-Centred Curriculum Ideology, as analysed by Schiro (2013), learning occurs with the interaction of an individual with their physical and social environment, and the result of learning is unique for each individual.

Star Boys and Castle College attend to their physical and social environment, and create positive learning environments in accordance with their students' abilities. Star Boys' environment is the second major reason for participants to choose the school; it is one of the distinctive (A1, A2, A3, S3 & S5) and most appreciated features of the school. Participants (A2, N3, S2 & S5) believe that the Star Boys environment contributes positively to the success of the school. At Castle College, "the students are offered a quality teaching and learning environment to support individual, social and academic success and development" (D12, p. 24).

Participants are contented with the school's social environment and express their positive opinion about the school environment with adjectives such as welcoming (A5, T8 & P5), clean (A5), safe (A5, N4, P3, P6 & P7), caring (S1, S3 & S5), friendly (P6, S3), home-like (T6, P7 & S1), value-based (P7), multicultural (T7 & P5), disciplined (D12, P2, P3, S2 & S4), and Islamic (N4). Almost all students at Star Boys and Castle College are Muslims, thus

the schools have successfully established comfortable environments for Muslim families and students, such as providing prayer rooms, Religion and Values lessons, Arabic classes, iftar programs and Eid celebrations. The Religion and Values subject is delivered to the entire student body from Preparation to Year 10, regardless of the Islamic sect to which the students belong. One of the characteristics of both schools is to establish a physical and social environment that is supportive of the objectives of the school and in harmony with the culture and values of the community.

7.7 Identity and Characteristics of the Schools

Gülen's educational philosophy emphasises the following main aims of schooling: to educate each person as a whole (Gülen, 2000a); to teach everything related to this life and the next (Gülen, 2000a); to teach religious and national matters along with all disciplines of science (Gülen, 1997b & 2000a); to provide vocational education and training (Gülen, 1997c); to contribute to the stability and wellbeing of the country (Gülen, 1993); and to promote the betterment of social life (Gülen, 2009). These aims are not unique to Gülen's beliefs and are in alignment with the purposes of schooling proposed by Wood (2011).

This section examines how Gülen's and Wood's beliefs about the aims of schooling were addressed by Star Boys and Castle College by providing evidence from data analysed in Chapters Five and Six. "Educating each person as a whole" is practised by schools as "balanced education" (see Table 5.2 and Section 6.1.1). The schools are recognised for their endeavours to obtain academic excellence (see Table 5.1, Table 5.20 & Section 6.3.1) and they are academically oriented. To work to achieve excellent results is congruent with Gülen's educational philosophy as it accommodates progression and seeks constant improvement. For him (1997), progression means overcoming obstacles to produce more disciplined and superior work; thus, being content with what is available is a form of idleness. In the context of the schools, academic excellence is discussed in terms of academic

performance benchmarked against other schools in the district and state. The data show that Star Boys performs highly in this respect (see Table 5.17), and Castle College and its community are satisfied with their current achievements.

Academic development and achievement are expected from every educational institution. However, Gülen's educational philosophy encourages schools to be competitive in ensuring academic excellence, and if the school fails in moral and academic achievement, it "can only be a trap on the path of humanity" (Unal, 2002, p. 204). The schools may use the students' implementation of the school rules as one of the measurements to assess achievement in values education. However, a student who fails to implement school rules may become a respected and contributing member of society in their adulthood as the character development process is not completed in high school. The school community's perception about success of the values education of the school may be another way of assessment. The communities of both schools perceived the schools as successful in delivering values education (see Table 5.20 and Table 6.3).

The phrase "to teach everything related to this life and the next" refers to all possible knowledge to teach in schools, such as literacy, numeracy, science—physical and social, technological, vocational and religious. Obviously, to teach everything in schools is not achievable; thus, the term should be interpreted as to teach what is the most important and necessary. The schools teach subjects under the guidance of the Australian curriculum (D6) with an offering that includes literacy, numeracy, physical and social sciences, and technology. The schools allocate elective subjects (D6) and clubs (D12) to improve the knowledge and skills of students in accordance with their interests and ability. Subjects like English, Mathematics and Science are given high priority, since they play a significant role in NAPLAN and CE. The results of these national assessments inform the wider community about the schools' academic achievement from an independent source. Thus, the schools are

recognised for their focus to achieve in NAPLAN and CE examinations and Star Boys advertises its CE achievements on its websites; it was one of the best performing schools in CE examinations among the surrounding CE schools (see Table 5.17). At Castle College, the proportion of students who achieved 90+ scores has constantly increased—14% in 2014, 28% in 2015 and 43% in 2016. Both schools are known for teaching Religion and Values (D3 & D6).

According to the data, neither Star Boys nor Castle College offer vocational education, although many schools in their respective catchments do so. The schools appear to implement an academic program that encourages participation in higher education. This seems to be consistent with the schools' philosophy of providing a high quality academic program and their belief that students in a low SES environment are capable of pursuing higher education. This is one of the distinctive aspects of the schools and their identity. In summary, the schools have built an identity where high academic achievements are seen as integral to its focus.

Star Boys and Castle College have implemented the Australian curriculum and syllabi as any Australian school has. Gülen–inspired schools follow the official curriculum and syllabi of the country in which they are established (Aksiyon, 1998; Williams 2008; Cetin, 2014; Ebaugh, 2010). Although there is no common curriculum or subject matter developed in line with Gülen's philosophy for use in Gülen–inspired schools, Gülen shares his thoughts about curriculum (see Table 3.6) and subject matter (see Table 3.7).

The Hizmet community plays an important role in the establishment and growth of Star Boys and Castle College, and local communities also contribute significantly to the growth of both schools. In return, the schools provide services for the needs of the Hizmet and local communities, thus establishing a strong reciprocal relationship. In summary, Star Boys and Castle College are seen to:

- Provide holistic education by teaching academic disciplines, religion and morality to prepare students for life;
- Emphasise academic excellence;
- Implement the curriculum and syllabi in accordance with the Australian curriculum; and
- Be community schools.

7.8 Summary

The similarities between the two schools were balanced education, raising the Golden Generation, behaviour management and pastoral care (see Table 7.1). These similarities indicate the existence of a common guiding philosophy. However, there are differences between the schools, such as the establishment of pastoral care services, the level of community support, and the number and demography of the students (see Table 7.2). Star Boys was established earlier, thus has better pastoral care services, more students enrolled and greater community support. Differences appear mainly based on the time and environment in which the schools were established, the number of the students and level of community support.

Table 7.3 summarises data about main characteristics of Star Boys and Castle Colleges in culture, climate, and identity categories.

Table 7.3

Characteristics of Two Schools

School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a balanced education that combines contemporary sciences and values education in order to educate the Golden Generation.
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has established an effective behaviour management system promoting student self-discipline. • Is open to providing education for everybody regardless of their cultural background and promotes understanding among diverse cultures. • Introduces Turkish Anatolian culture where possible and accommodates a shared—Anatolian and local—culture. • Emphasises morality and sets positive role models rather than intensive Islamic teachings. • Prefers segregated education in secondary school where possible.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides pastoral care services.
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains good relationships with parents and involves them in school activities. • Employs staff that have qualities such as dedication, competence and enthusiasm instead of adopting particular leadership or teacher models. • Establishes a physical and social environment that is supportive of the school's objectives and in harmony with the culture of the community.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on high academic achievements.
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements syllabi in accordance with the Australian curriculum. • Has relationships with the local community.

The two schools are distinguished by the following characteristics:

- Both provide a balanced education that emphasises contemporary sciences and an Islamic values education in order to raise the Golden Generation.

- Both emphasise pastoral care services.
- Both consider themselves to be community schools servicing a broad community with Turkish and Islamic affiliations.

The schools can be distinguished from many other schools, such as government, Islamic and Catholic, by their focus on a balanced education—academic excellence and Islamic values education. They differ from Islamic schools by their emphasis on morality rather than intensive Islamic education, and government schools are usually secular and have less emphasis on religious education. For example, the SRI policy introduced by the Victorian State Government mentions that education in government schools must be secular and not promote any particular religious practice (see Section 3.1.5). The schools also differ from Catholic and other Christian schools as these must teach faith-based philosophy, but possibly also teach formal studies in other faiths. The schools also are distinguished by their dedication to raise the Golden Generation. Both schools used the term Golden Generation and endeavour to educate their students as valuable members of the society, ethically and academically. This ideal has led the schools to follow up their students after graduation to ensure their wellbeing in the wider society. The schools are also eager to employ their graduates as staff members after they obtain relevant qualifications.

The schools are distinguished by their pastoral care services. Both schools have established a voluntary pastoral care department to contribute to the academic and moral development of the students through various activities. Pastoral care services are provided by other schools as well, such as Catholic schools. According to the NSW Catholic Education Commission (2003), pastoral care services were initiated and encouraged by “St. John Baptist De La Salle, the Patron Saint of Teachers” (p. 3) in Catholic schools 300 years ago. However, there are major differences in pastoral care approaches between the Catholic schools and Star Boys and Castle College when examined closely. For instance, the Catholic Education

Commission states “An explicit feature of a Catholic school is that its purpose must be aligned with the educational mission of the Catholic Church” (p. 3). Thus, Catholic schools’ pastoral care emphasises the church and its values, and presents them overtly in the school environment. Whereas Star Boys’ and Castle College’s pastoral care is not based on any particular mosque’s values, and Islamic symbols are not overtly presented in the school environment. Catholic schools’ pastoral care is well-established in Australia and endorsed by higher authorities such as the NSW Catholic Education Commission, whereas Star Boys’ and Castle College’s pastoral care is semi-formal, flexible and not endorsed by an external higher authority.

Another example of a school that provides pastoral care is Geelong Grammar School. The school was opened as a private Anglican school in 1855 and the school’s website states “Our purpose is to inspire our students and community to flourish and make a positive difference through our unique and transformational education adventures” (Geelong Grammar School, 2013). The school’s pastoral policies provided on the website cover: kindness; forgiveness and reparation; pastoral principles; relationship management; action plan; the school’s policy on drugs; duty of care; eating disorders; grievance; self-harm; sexual assault; student medications and remedies; anaphylaxis; pornography; and cyber safety and use agreement. The policies focus mostly on the spiritual and physical wellbeing of students. These issues are addressed by separate policies at Star Boys and Castle College, not by the pastoral care programs. Both schools’ pastoral care programs support the academic and moral development of participating students through various after-school activities.

The schools are also distinguished by being community schools. The schools were founded by local communities, which continue to support their growth. Some community members support the schools even though they do not have any children or grandchildren attending and sometimes they support a school that is established in another city (e.g.,

members of two foundations, Light and Fatih, supported the establishment of Castle College in another city). Thus, the community plays a distinguished role in the establishment and growth of both schools.

7.9 Missing Aspects of Gülen's Philosophy

Eight aspects of Gülen's philosophy were not evident in the data collected from schools:

- Emphasis on establishing harmony between human, nature and God;
- Nature of knowledge;
- Mind and heart union;
- Providing vocational education;
- Providing pastoral care services to all year levels;
- Establishing partnership with parents to raise Golden Generation;
- Completing primary and secondary school education within five years; and
- Female leadership.

Gülen's educational philosophy emphasises the need for harmony among humans, nature and God or aiming to reach truthfulness as an ultimate outcome of education and this is not stated overtly at both schools. The nature of knowledge according to Gülen (see Figure 2.1) is also a missing aspect as the schools are mostly shaped by the state's Education Department. Star Boys and Castle College do not provide vocational education, which is encouraged by Gülen's philosophy. Gülen's philosophy also advocates the union of mind—scholarship, and heart—spirituality. Although the schools focus on providing academic excellence and delivering values education, for example, the Religion and Values subject, Gülen's vision requires the union of heart and mind in the syllabus of each subject. To achieve this, a dedicated syllabus would need to be developed.

The schools provide pastoral care education from Year 4, while Gülen's philosophy encourages education for all children according to their age. Similarly, pastoral care activities cover only approximately 30% of the student body, while Gülen's educational philosophy requires broader coverage as it is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the school.

Gülen prioritises the parents' role in the education of the next generation, without which it is difficult to raise the Golden Generation. The parents' role is just as important as the school in the education of children. Thus, Gülen's philosophy expects schools to establish good relationships and partnerships with parents to educate the young generation. His philosophy also encourages parents to develop their skills and knowledge in children's education. Thus, the schools should consider educational programs for parents to assist them to support the education of their children at home parallel with the school. Gülen's philosophy extends the establishment of good relationships between school and parent to the development of partnerships. However, the two schools emphasise only the establishment of good relationships with parents. The schools could develop strategies to engage parents in curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Gülen's argument that primary and secondary school could be completed by an eight-year-old student in four or five years also is not addressed by the schools, as the data did not suggest implementation of any accelerated teaching programs. Gülen's philosophy could be implemented by offering accelerated classes or grade skipping for gifted students to cater for their individual needs. However, Gülen's philosophy is not implemented by either school in the Australian educational context.

Gülen's leadership discussions focus on qualities rather than a gender. The leadership positions were dominated in both schools by male leaders during the time of study. The schools should consider providing more leadership positions for women. For example, Gülen's inspirations could be better implemented under the management of female principals

in girls' campuses. Thus, the schools adopt only some elements of Gülen's educational philosophy in accordance with possibilities and pragmatism.

7.10 Conclusion

This chapter examined the similarities and differences between Star Boys and Castle College. The chapter investigated the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? by identifying the characteristics of the schools according to their culture, climate and identity. Three characteristics were distinguished among others: to provide a balanced education, to provide pastoral care services, and to be community school. The study has also shown these schools pursue Gülen's beliefs about education specifically in terms of holistic education with an emphasis on values education and the schools' intention to raise Golden Generation.

There are two issues regarding faithfulness in implementation: the extent to which Star Boys and Castle College have been faithful to Australian schooling; and the extent to which they have been faithful to Gülen's philosophy. Both schools were opened as Australian schools by Australian citizens and according to Australian rules and regulations. They were not opened by foreign educational companies, thus the schools must be aligned to the Australian school system.

The Australian education system draws on and synthesises the views of many educational philosophers. Principles such as play-based learning in early primary levels, active learning, and promoting students' participation in Australian democracy are implemented in schools. The Australian education system is also diverse, with many schools adopting specific educational philosophies such as those of: Steiner; Montessori; and the International Baccalaureate. However, Star Boys and Castle College were established as mainstream Australian schools, rather than as Gülen schools similar to Steiner or Montessori.

This approach aligns with Gülen's vision as he does not aim to establish alternative schooling, rather, he endeavours to use current methods efficiently. Second, both schools are faithful to Gülen's educational philosophy, which mainly advocates holistic education with a strong emphasis on values and harmony between science and belief. It also aims to raise an exemplary generation, coined the Golden Generation by Gülen, in the Australian context. The existence of these main elements of Gülen's philosophy in both schools is a strong indication of their fidelity to the Gülen's philosophy.

Star Boys is academically one of the best performing schools in its region despite its establishment in a lower social economic area. Castle College has earned the trust of its community by its academic success rate. However, assessing the success of values education is a complex issue. If students' compliance to behaviour management rules or satisfaction of the school community are employed as measurement criteria, both schools are successful in values education. Although pastoral care programs were found to be successful by participants, they are not successful enough according to Gülen's philosophy, as Gülen's philosophy requires participation at all levels and all students to the pastoral care programs. There are many reasons for the low student participation rate in pastoral care programs, such as: pastoral care services are not yet fully established; there are insufficient numbers of pastoral care teachers and mentors; participation is voluntary; pastoral care programs are held during after-school hours, which requires altered travel arrangements; and students may already have other commitments. The schools should carefully identify the reasons for the low rate of student participation and produce solutions to promote a higher level of involvement.

Both schools are successful as community schools. Both attract the Australian-Muslim community by creating a sense of belonging in the community through addressing their values in the school environment. The communities have provided great support in the

establishment and growth processes of both schools. Both schools have also aided in the smooth settlement of migrant families by providing quality education and a comfortable school environment. Thus, both schools provide choice in the Australian education system that is in the national interest for two reasons. First, both schools aim to raise informed, responsible and active Australian citizens. Second, they assist with the educational needs of migrant families, contribute positively to their settlement process, and prepare the children of migrant families to participate in the wider Australian community as contributing members. Consequently, the schools offer an educational experience that contains the following main elements: academic excellence that includes values—a combination of universal, Islamic and Australian—education; pastoral care services that reinforce the academic, social and moral development of the student; and contribution to the establishment of the Australian Muslim identity of the students. One unique feature of both schools is that they fundamentally offer education to a community with an Islamic heritage; however, they have established values-based and academically oriented identity rather than a faith-based identity.

The final chapter will present the distinguishing characteristics of Gülen's philosophy, Star Boys and Castle College, limitations of the research, recommendations from these findings, significance of the study, and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research study was to explore the key elements of Gülen's educational philosophy and specific educational characteristics of the two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy. Chapter One presented a brief biography of Gülen and introduced the aims of the research and research question. Chapter Two revealed the key elements of Gülen's educational philosophy to provide background data for the research question: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? Chapter Three developed an analytic framework to examine the alignment of Gülen-inspired schools with his philosophy of education. Chapter Four provided a description and justification of the research design that was used to answer the research question. Chapter Five presented the findings from Star Boys and Chapter Six from Castle College from three dimensions: school culture, school climate and school identity. Chapter Seven summarised the similarities and differences between the two schools; established connections between the literature review and analysed data; and provided a response to the research question.

This final chapter commences with discussions of the importance of the study in discovering the distinguishing characteristics of Gülen's educational philosophy and the two Australian Gülen-inspired schools, and their contribution to education in the Australian context in Section 8.1. The discussion is followed by the contribution of the research in Section 8.2; suggestions for further research in Section 8.3; recommendations from the research findings in Section 8.4; quality and limitations of the research in Section 8.5; and a brief conclusion in Section 8.6.

8.1 Characters of Gülen's Philosophy and Contributions of the Two Schools

Although education is a main activity of the Hizmet Movement and the Movement has opened hundreds of schools all around the world, there is no comprehensive study of Gülen's educational philosophy, specifically in the schooling context, reported in the literature. This study identified the main characteristics of Gülen's philosophy by examining his writings and commentaries about his educational philosophy and contrasting his ideas with those of other significant philosophers to provide background data for the research question. His philosophy was further examined in Chapter Three by establishing a framework to examine the alignment of Gülen-inspired schools with his philosophy of education. This section summarises the distinguishing characteristics of Gülen's educational philosophy and their contribution to the Australian context of education under five main ideas:

1. Contribution of Gülen's personality to Hizmet's educational services and his emphasis on opening schools all around the world to teach contemporary scholarship together with values—combination of universal, Islamic and local values;
2. Use of the energy created by religious consciousness in opening schools and providing scholarship to the students;
3. Emphasis on contemporary education rather than just Islamic education;
4. Gülen's unique interpretations of traditional Islamic practices and Islamic terms in educational context; and
5. Effective employment of the available educational system rather than the establishment of an alternative system.

8.1.1 Distinguishing Characteristics of Gülen's Philosophy

The discussions on Gülen's philosophy prompted the question of what his philosophy and the schools founded on his philosophy could contribute to the wider educational field. There are three main types of high schools in Turkey: secular, vocational and religious. Gülen argues that schools should provide a complete education through the re-marriage of the long-divorced science and religion. He appears to reject both the secular educational system and the faith-based traditional system that prioritises divine revelation and spiritual experience. His approach is an amalgam of contemporary scholarly scientific knowledge, vocational education and traditional values of Anatolian Islam. It is difficult to claim that Gülen's educational philosophy is unique, as it reflects the educational issues discussed by philosophers for centuries. However, Gülen's philosophy has certain characteristics and, based on the findings from the two schools, contributes positively to the wider educational field in Australia.

Gülen is an eminent individual and his charismatic personality is an effective factor, along with his philosophy, in motivating the Hizmet community to provide educational services. Hizmet would not exist without Gülen and his philosophy. He is an autodidact, having completed only primary school education, yet he is one of the most well-known scholars in Turkey. He never married and has dedicated his life to humanitarian and educational services. Despite being an Islamic scholar, he encouraged value-based academic-oriented schooling rather than the opening of mosques or Islamic schools. He supported a secular approach to education within an Islamic society, whereas other Islamic clerics closely aligned education to principles of Islamic scholarship. This was not to disregard the principles of the Islamic faith, but to instil the essences of faith—values—in a non-Muslim environment, and support an educational experience that is grounded in contemporary scholarship around science, modern disciplines and moral development. He also encouraged opening schools not only in Turkey or Islamic countries, but everywhere possible. Over time,

his encouragement has resulted in the establishment of hundreds of schools all over the world, without providing any material benefit to Gülen. On this point, he and his philosophy are unique, as no other Islamic scholars encouraged modern/secular education in Islamic countries, nor were they interested in opening schools in non-Muslim countries for non-Muslim students, or opening hundreds of schools all around the world. Star Boys and Castle College were two examples of these schools; they both teach contemporary sciences, namely, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Sciences and Religion (Islam) and Values subjects.

Gülen's philosophy is unique in adopting modern education to specifically serve the Muslim community and humanity in general. Muslim communities are mainly focussed on opening mosques, implementing Qur'an School, and establishing Islamic schools, whereas Gülen encouraged the community to open modern schools that emphasise values, but also teach science and contemporary knowledge. For instance, the Turkish community has been opening mosques in Australia since 1973, when the Erskineville mosque in Sydney was established. The Turkish Golden Business Directory, 2017, listed 17 mosques that were founded by the Turkish community across Australia between 1973 and 2017. The Turkish community also opened schools: two in Melbourne in 1995 and 2000, one in Sydney in 2013, and one in Adelaide in 2015, to the best knowledge of the researcher; however, all these schools are identified as Islamic schools. Following Gülen's visit to Australia in 1992, the Hizmet community opened schools in the major cities of Australia. Polat (2012) reported that 16 Gülen-inspired schools were established in Australia between 1996 and 2009. These numbers indicate the influence of Gülen's philosophy on opening schools in Australia.

Star Boys and Castle College are neither Islamic schools nor members of the Islamic Schools Association of Australia. Saeed (2004), a scholar of Islamic studies, reported that there were 24 Islamic schools in Australia, where students learnt the same subjects as in public schools, with the only differences being that Islamic religious education; Arabic

language; students were expected to follow Islamic rules in food and dress code; and the schools offered an environment to enrich students' understanding of Islam. Star Boys and Castle College are different from Islamic schools. For instance, they neither implemented an Islamic dress code nor established an overt Islamic environment to enrich students' understanding of Islam. Further information about the nature of Islamic schools and similarities and differences between Islamic and Gülen–inspired schools are beyond the scope of this study.

Gülen's philosophy is unique for its interpretation of traditional Islamic practices and Islamic terms in an educational context. For instance, Muslim communities are accustomed to donating to the mosque and the needy. Gülen expanded this tradition to donating to schools and providing scholarships to students. He introduced the school as a holy place like a mosque and encouraged the community to donate (Gülen, 2014b). His interpretation of *taqwa* is another example. Traditionally, *taqwa* is defined as “God consciousness... piety, fear of God, love for God, and self-restraint” (Taqwa, n.d.), whereas Gülen (2004c) expanded the meaning of *taqwa* to observing physical laws and studying physical sciences and saw reading the book of the universe—physical sciences—as an important factor in benefitting from the Qur'an. Gülen's unique approach contributed significantly to the educational field by transforming the religious consciousness of Muslims into the study of physical sciences. This philosophy assisted the development of modern education specifically for Muslim communities, where religious sciences were preferred over physical sciences. Thus, the Hizmet community contributed to the establishment of many schools that are academically oriented and also provided scholarships to students.

Gülen's philosophy does not seek to establish an alternative educational system, rather, it prefers value-based, academically oriented schooling and uses the current system and curriculum effectively to achieve better educational outcomes. Consequently, Star College

and Castle College are not different from most of the schools in Australia; they are dedicated to raising academically and spiritually excellent students, the Golden Generation, within the Australian educational system.

Gülen's educational philosophy contributed to the wider educational field by implementing the following educational practices:

1. Promoting contemporary scholarship together with Islamic scholarship, where science and religion support each other as different dimensions of same truth;
2. Transforming religious motivation into educational activities; and
3. Using the current education system effectively through focus and dedication.

Star College and Castle College could also be considered as contribution of Gülen's educational philosophy to the wider educational field as they were opened through his inspiration. Star College has been contributing to the education of Australian youth since 1997 and Castle College since 2005. The discussion turns now to how these two schools founded on Gülen's philosophy, contribute to the educational field in Australia.

8.1.2 Contribution of the Two Schools to Australian Education

This study identified the contribution of Star Boys and Castle College to the wider educational field in Australia under three main ideas:

1. The schools contributed positively to the educational needs of families in disadvantaged suburbs.
2. The schools provided an education option to Australian Muslim communities with the intention of developing modern Muslims through the notion of the Golden Generation.
3. The schools contributed to the establishment of Australian Muslim identity.

According to socio-economic indices revealed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the suburbs in which Star Boys (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2013a) and one campus of Castle College (ABS, 2013b) were established are disadvantaged, and education was one of the inputs that affected socio-economic indices. Star Boys' consistent successes in CE examinations and Castle College's satisfactory success are significant. Their successes are also important when the language spoken at home is considered. English is, in effect, in almost all learning areas in Australian schools, thus competency in English is a significant factor in achieving success in all learning areas. English is spoken at home by only 3% of students at Star Boys and 9% of students (2% English background and 7% non-English background) at Castle College, and the rest of the students speak other languages at home. Thus, the schools' successes are important as they succeeded despite their students coming from low socio-economic suburbs where the majority of their parents speak English as a second language.

The schools serve the educational needs of Australian Muslim communities. The schools aim to raise modern Australian Muslims and for all students to be eligible to enrol at universities. They became an option for Australian Muslim families who wanted to have their children enrol in higher education while preserving their cultural identity.

The schools are important institutions to establish students' identity and prepare them for social life. Star Boys and Castle College assist in the establishment of an Australian Muslim identity and smooth students' transition to social life. This is significant as Australia is the second home of most of the parents of Star Boys and Castle College and they need support until they integrate into the broader community. The students have unique educational experiences at Star Boys and Castle College, which contain the following distinguishing elements:

- Affordable quality education in a disadvantaged suburb and for a community where English is mostly their second language;
- Education that harmoniously combines Gülen's educational philosophy, the multicultural objectives of Australian education and the general aspirations of parents;
- Education that focuses on students' participation in social life as contributing members and university enrolments to facilitate the obtaining of degrees;
- An environment that encourages and motivates completion of high school and enrolment in higher education; and
- Establishment of Australian Muslim identity.

Therefore, the study helped in the understanding of the distinguishing characteristics of the schools and the identification of what the schools offer to students as a distinctive educational experience.

8.2 Contribution of the Research

First, the study has contributed to an understanding of Gülen, the key elements of his educational vision and how his educational philosophy is implemented in two schools. There are many articles and conference proceedings explaining some elements of Gülen's educational vision; however, there is no comprehensive study of his educational philosophy. While it profiles Gülen's philosophy, this thesis examined how it is implemented in two schools operating within the context of the Australian education system, which provides broad choice in schooling options. This is the only comprehensive study that combines Gülen's educational philosophy and an empirical study focussed on the interpretation of Gülen's educational vision in a school environment. Thus, this thesis provides information

about two areas that are not studied broadly: Gülen's educational philosophy and characteristics of two Australian Gülen-inspired schools.

Second, the study is significant for educators as it provides a different point of view of educational issues, such as delivering academic and values education together; school-community relations; transferrable teaching positions; and school leadership. Gülen-inspired schools stand between religious and secular schools, and display a capacity for the reconciliation of both systems as values-based education. They combine the academic emphasis of secular schools and the values emphasis of religious schools. Gülen's educational vision is practised on an international level, evidence that this model is successful. For instance, Star Boys has become one of the most successful schools in the northern suburbs over a short period of time despite being established in a low socio-economic and most disadvantaged district. In the Australian context, values education features strongly in recent curriculum documents (see, e.g., Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011b).

8.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This research was concerned with providing background data about Gülen's educational philosophy, its implementation in two Australian Gülen-inspired schools, and the characteristics of these two schools. The research could be extended by considering several other questions.

The first question is: "What is Gülen's educational methodology in his own teaching?" Gülen has never stopped teaching despite his busy schedule. For example, he continues to teach groups of male students aged 20–25 years who have completed higher education, usually theology. He is not paid for teaching and there is no tutoring fee for students. He provides a high level of divinity education; however, the students who complete this course receive no officially recognised certificate. In fact, they receive no certificate at all. There is

no set length of education. Also, the average five years of education duration may differ from one student to another. He has a unique method of teaching. For instance, he taught Qur'anic exegesis by comparing approximately 20 traditional Qur'anic exegeses. A study about what he teaches —curriculum, how he teaches, how he assesses success, and how a student can join his study group and graduate would explore his educational philosophy further. The question is significant in the identification of the teaching methodology of a scholar who has dedicated his life to educational services.

The second and third questions are: What are Gülen–inspired educational services and their characteristics? and What are the student experiences and classroom education practices in these institutions? Gülen's educational vision is not limited to primary and secondary schooling. His wider educational vision should be explored by examining various educational institutions and services that are based on his philosophy. Gülen's educational vision has resulted in many kinds of educational activities, such as sohbet [public discussion sessions], childcare, reading halls, tutoring centres, universities, publications, establishment of dormitories, and so on. Studying student experiences in these institutions and their learning practices is also significant in order to understand the effects of Gülen's philosophy on students' learning. Further research could explore the structure, objectives and methods of these Gülen–inspired educational institutions, their relationship to Gülen's educational vision, and the learning experiences of the students in these institutions.

The fourth question is: Does the Hizmet Movement have a hidden agenda? The Hizmet Movement has raised doubts and nervousness in the minds of some individuals and groups in Turkey. For instance, there has been conflict between the ruling governing party of Turkey and the Hizmet Movement since late 2013. The nature of these concerns and conflicts should be studied to clarify the Movement's motivations and whether the Movement has any hidden agenda that warrants concern. This is significant for the many governments of countries

where the Movement provides services, as well as for the staff and parents of Gülen–inspired schools.

8.4 Recommendations for Practice from the Research Findings

This section presents seven recommendations for changes in practices at the two schools based on the research findings.

First, the study suggests there is a need for a research and development project regarding schooling according to Gülen’s educational vision, as his educational vision provides mostly general principles and objectives. This research could identify Gülen’s educational vision and develop it in a form ready to be practised in classrooms. It could study how Gülen’s educational vision can be implemented from kindergarten to Year 12. It could receive regular feedback from the schools to improve and keep Gülen–inspired schooling up to date.

Second, diverse educational practices are available in Australia. A study of different contemporary successful schooling practices, for example, Montessori, Steiner, Catholic and Islamic, and their affiliation with Gülen’s philosophy may inspire more rich practices for Star Boys, Castle College and other schools. This will help the development of the two schools in different learning areas and practices. Thus, Gülen–inspired schools can benefit from the diverse educational practices that are available in Australia

Third, Star College and Castle College should consider developing women’s involvement further by giving women more leadership positions, as the core leadership positions are mostly taken by men. For instance, all the principals at Star College and Castle College campuses were males when this research study was being conducted.

Fourth, some areas in the schools need both attention and more emphasis for further improvement. For example, two major aims of schooling out of six mentioned by Gingell and

Winch (1999) are; promoting students' autonomy; and promoting economic developments. These two aspects align with Gülen's philosophy. Students and parents' participation in school leadership would also contribute to further improvement for Star Boys and Castle College.

Fifth, Star Boys and Castle College are focussed on the reaching of CE subject and they scored significant achievements in this area. However, the schools should extend their focus and hard work to all year levels and areas, such as literature, art, sport and music. This approach will create many more success stories along with the CE successes.

Sixth, most staff should be familiar with Gülen's educational philosophy for the best possible performance as a Gülen-inspired school. At Star Boys and Castle College, approximately 30% of the staff were assumed to be familiar with Gülen's educational philosophy when the data were collected and, with this percentage, only some of Gülen's views were practicable in the school environment. Thus, despite the obvious achievements, both schools need to increase the number of staff who are familiar with Gülen's philosophy. The best way to achieve this result is to provide professional development sessions for both new and current staff about Gülen's educational philosophy and Gülen-inspired schooling.

Seventh, pastoral care services and values education at Star Boys and Castle College are carried out by a small proportion of Hizmet staff with certain year levels and to approximately 30% of students. The school's entire teaching staff should contribute to pastoral care services for better results in values education, and these crucial services should be provided to all year levels. The barriers that prevent other staff members' contribution to pastoral care services should be identified and removed. The reasons some students are not participating in pastoral care services should be studied and then necessary actions taken to improve student attendance.

8.5 Quality and Limitations of the Research

Triangulation, member-checking, spending prolonged time in the field, and peer debriefing were employed to ensure the credibility of the case study findings in this research study, as explained in Chapter Four. A triangulation strategy was employed as data were collected from various sources: school documents, interviews and observations provided rich insight into beliefs and practices. Interpretations and justifications were based on data collected from various sources, rather than depending on a single source. The researcher spent an extended period of time at Star Boys collecting data, analysing them and establishing the case study structure. This enabled the researcher to collect the necessary data quickly from Castle College as the structure was already established. These findings of the case studies were checked by a process of member-checking; one participant from each school examined the findings and their interpretations. An independent Islamic scholar familiar with Gülen's philosophy also examined the case study findings. Member-checking and peer debriefing contribute to the credibility of the research by preventing possible misinterpretation and bias that can affect the accuracy of results. Although the researcher used methods to ensure the validity of the research, this study has limitations.

There are four limitations to this research. First, its scope is limited to two Gülen-inspired schools in Australia. The researcher observed and examined these schools to discover how Gülen's inspiration was implemented in two school environments. Star College was the second Gülen-inspired school to be established in Australia in 1997 in a suburb where the Turkish community is very strong. Star College grew to six campuses by 2017, suggesting it provided an appealing choice to a sector of the population. The study focussed on only one campus. Castle College was established in 2005 in a region where the Turkish community is small. The school expanded to open a second campus in 2010. The case study was conducted at both campuses of Castle College; however, for logistical reasons, extended engagement was not possible.

Second, the study was limited to interviews conducted with staff and parent participants who understood Gülen's vision and with students who regularly attended pastoral care programs at Star Boys. These participants were selected to address the research question, which was: What are the specific educational characteristics of two Australian schools founded on Gülen's philosophy? The selected participants had experience in the schools' academic and pastoral care programs. Their broader knowledge and experience about the schools were used to answer the research question. At Star Boys, five teachers out of the 12 who participated in pastoral care programs were interviewed. Although the schools employ staff from many backgrounds, participants at Star Boys were limited for three reasons mostly to staff, parents and students who have a Turkish background: first, these participants are familiar with Gülen's thoughts as he is a famous Turkish scholar and his writings and sermons are mainly in Turkish; second, 80% of the students at Star Boys had a Turkish background when the interviews were conducted; and third, they had experience in pastoral care programs at the school.

At Castle College, participants were selected using the same approach which was selecting participants who had experience in the schools' academic and pastoral care programs. Two leadership team members and three teachers were interviewed in Castle College. Only two teachers offered pastoral care programs in 2012. Three parents who have experience in pastoral care programs were selected. However, their experience of pastoral care programs was limited, compared to that of participants from Star Boys. Students were not interviewed at Castle College as the pastoral care services were not fully established and the school did not have some streams namely, Year 11 and Year 12, when the case study took place.

Third, the time spent at Castle College to collect data was limited. The researcher had the opportunity to spend more time at Star Boys as he lived in same city. Because Castle

College was in another state, the researcher did not have the opportunity to travel frequently, and, as a result, spent less time at Castle College. However, his experience from the first case study at Star Boys assisted him to collect efficiently the necessary data in relation to the research question. The school secretary kindly prepared school documents for the researcher and helped to distribute interview questions and collect participant's responses; responses were received in written format to use time effectively. The limited time was used well as the case study structure was established during the Star Boys case study.

Fourth, as a case study, the findings are limited to the characteristics of two schools. A case study provides in-depth analysis of a contained system and this enables the researcher to examine the phenomenon of interest in context. Case studies seek explanations for how and why phenomena occur, but do not attempt to generalise to wider populations or contexts. There are 16 Gülen-inspired schools in Australia and hundreds internationally, but it is not the researcher's intention to claim that what emerged in the findings in relation to Star College and Castle College will necessarily be replicated in these other schools. However, the approach used in this study could be used to investigate other schools.

8.6 Conclusion

This research study examined Fethullah Gülen's educational philosophy through his works and commentaries, and added Gülen's voice to the educational discussions and practices. Gülen's educational philosophy, based on moral values, has played a pivotal role in the establishment of educational institutions all over the globe and its universal acceptance is an indication of its practicality. His philosophy and vision could be considered a source of inspiration for academics who wish to examine modern educational issues from a different perspective, specifically Islamic.

The characteristics of two Australian schools established through Gülen's inspirations were explored in this study. These schools have combined Australian experiences with Gülen's educational philosophy to educate their students to be exemplary citizens who are knowledgeable, virtuous and open to dialogue. The schools have the potential to make positive contributions to the wider educational societies where they would also have the opportunity to benefit from the experiences and practices of other educational institutions.

The researcher increased his knowledge in educational philosophy, along with the never-ending struggle to find the best way to educate individuals to improve society. Contemporary educational philosophers are continually searching for ways to develop further the educational experiences of the human race.

The researcher also enriched his knowledge and experience by exploring Gülen's educational philosophy and examining its implementation in two schools. The study found that some of Gülen's philosophy is not fully practised by the two schools. However, the demand for the two schools was evident as they present themselves as an option and educational opportunity to the Australian Muslim community. Thus, Gülen's philosophy and its implementation in two schools contribute to the education of the Australian Muslim community.

The researcher developed the belief that Gülen's philosophy is not static and that it contains broad meaning that allows interpretation in diverse conditions. Thus, it can adapt and update to a different and diverse educational environment through examination and interpretation. This investigation awakened an enthusiasm in the researcher to do more research in general educational philosophy and, specifically, in the comparison of Gülen's philosophy with other educational philosophers and implementations of these philosophies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

ACU Human Research Ethics Committee Approval



Human Research Ethics Committee

Committee Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: KAENGBRETSON Melbourne Campus
Co-Investigators: Ismail Albayrak Melbourne Campus
Student Researcher: Muhsin Canbolat Melbourne Campus

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:
The Educational Visions of Fetullah Gulen

for the period: 04.05.10 - 30.04.11

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: V2010 11

The following standard conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (2007) apply:

- (i) that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
 - security of records
 - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
 - compliance with special conditions, and
- (ii) that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
 - proposed changes to the protocol
 - unforeseen circumstances or events
 - adverse effects on participants

The HREC will conduct an audit each year of all projects deemed to be of more than low risk. There will also be random audits of a sample of projects considered to be of negligible risk and low risk on all campuses each year.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

Signed:  Date:04.05.2010.....
(Research Services Officer, Melbourne Campus)

Appendix B
Information Letter to The Principal of Star Boys



Australian Catholic University Limited
ABN 15 050 192 660
Melbourne Campus (St Patrick's)
115 Victoria Parade Fitzroy VIC 3065
Australia Locked Bag 4115 Fitzroy MDC

INFORMATION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL
10/05/2010

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Educational Vision of Fethullah Gülen
PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Assoc Prof Kath Engebretson
SECONDARY SUPERVISOR: Prof. Ismail Albayrak
STUDENT RESEARCHER: Muhsin Canbolat

Dear Principal,

Your school is invited to participate in a research project about the educational vision of Fethullah Gülen and its reflections on the education of high schools that are inspired from his vision. I would like to carry out this project in Boys Campus. The project will use participant observation in various activities (such as student camps, staff meetings) and audio taped interviews with administrative staff, teachers, parents and students. The details of participant observation and interview questions will be given to you and relevant participants for your reflection beforehand. All these activities will be organized at a time suitable to participants. This research aims firstly to illuminate the personality of Fethullah Gülen and the key elements of his educational philosophy. This issue will be addressed in a comprehensive literature review. Secondly specific educational characteristics of the school that inspired by Gülen's educational philosophy will be studied through the case study of Boys Campus. Lastly a comprehensive report will be prepared on what Gülen's educational philosophy has to offer to the wider educational field.

The benefit of the research is that the educational community will be familiarized with the educational vision of Fethullah Gülen and its implementation in the educational field.

I would like to make it clear that you are free to refuse consent altogether without having to justify that decision. In addition, if you do agree, you are free to withdraw and discontinue participation in the study at any time without giving a reason. Your identity will only be known to the researcher, confidentiality will be maintained at all times and your name will not be used in any report or publication. Since only two schools are involved in this research project there may be a possibility of identification by deduction. Every possible means will be used to protect confidentiality of the school and the participants. Other than that there will be no risks to you beyond day- to-day living associated with your participation in this project.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the principal supervisor:

Assoc Professor Kath Engebretson

Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Campus

115 Victoria Parade

Fitzroy, VIC, 3065, Australia

Ph: +613 9953 3292

e-mail: kath.engebretson@acu.edu.au

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australia 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 any of investigators have not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee, care of the Research Services Office below:

VIC: Chair, HREC

C/-Research Services

Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Campus

Locked Bag 4115

FITZROY VIC 3065

Tel: 03 9953 3158

Fax: 03 9953 3315

At the completion of the research project in December 2010, a report on the findings will be submitted to you, to the participant teachers and other staff and to the students who took part and their parents.

If you agree to participate please complete a consent form, keep one copy for yourself and return the other to me (researcher), then phone or email me to arrange a day and time for your interview.

With kind regards and thanks for your valued contribution.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:



DATE:

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:



DATE:

PHONE NUMBER OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: +613 408493962

EMAIL OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: muhsincan@yahoo.com

Appendix C
Information Letter to Participants



Australian Catholic University Limited
ABN 15 050 192 660
Melbourne Campus (St Patrick's)
115 Victoria Parade Fitzroy VIC 3065 Australia
Locked Bag 4115 Fitzroy MDC VIC 3065
Telephone 613 9953 3000
Facsimile 613 9953 3005
www.acu.edu.au

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

(Interviews: Teachers, Parents and Other Staff)

10/05/2010

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Educational Vision of Fethullah Gülen

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Assoc Prof Kath Engebretson

SECONDARY SUPERVISOR: Prof. Ismail Albayrak

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Muhsin Canbolat

Dear

You are invited to participate in a research project concerned with the educational vision of Fethullah Gülen and its application in high schools that are inspired by his vision. I would like to carry out this project in Star College Boys Campus (pseudonym). I ask you to take part in one interview of 45 minutes to one hour that will be taped. The interview questions will be given to you for your reflection beforehand and it will be at a time suitable to you.

This research aims firstly to illuminate the personality of Fethullah Gülen and the key elements of his educational philosophy. This issue will be addressed in a comprehensive literature review. Secondly the specific educational characteristics of the school that are inspired by Gülen's educational philosophy will be studied through a case study. Lastly a comprehensive report will be prepared on what Gülen's educational philosophy has to offer the wider educational field.

The benefit of the research is that the educational community will be familiarized with the educational vision of Fethullah Gülen and its implementation in the educational field.

I would like to make it clear that you are free to refuse consent altogether without having to justify that decision. In addition, if you do agree, you are free to withdraw and discontinue participation in the study at any time without giving a reason.

Your identity will only be known to the researcher and principal-supervisor, confidentiality will be maintained at all times and your name will not be used in any report or publication. There will be no risks to you beyond day-to-day living associated with your participation in this project.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the principal supervisor:

Assoc Professor Kath Engebretson

Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Campus

115 Victoria Parade

Fitzroy, VIC, 3065, Australia

Ph: +613 9953 3292

E-mail: kath.engebretson@acu.edu.au

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University. In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the any of investigators have not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee, care of the Research Services Office below:

VIC: Chair, HREC

C/-Research Services

Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Campus

Locked Bag 4115

FITZROY VIC 3065

Tel: 03 9953 3158

Fax: 03 9953 3315

At the completion of the research project in December 2010, a report on the findings will be submitted to you.

If you agree to participate please complete a consent form, keep one copy for yourself and return the other to me (researcher), then phone or email me to arrange a day and time for your interview.

With kind regards and thanks for your valued contribution.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:  DATE:

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:  DATE:

PHONE NUMBER OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: +613 408493962

EMAIL OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: muhsincan@yahoo.com

Appendix D
Participants' Consent Form



Australian Catholic University Limited
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PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM
(Teachers, Parents and Other Staff)

Copy for Researcher / Copy for Participant to Keep

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Educational Vision of Fethullah Gülen

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Assoc Prof Kath Engebretson

SECONDARY SUPERVISOR: Prof. Ismail Albayrak

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Muhsin Canbolat

I (*the participant*) have read and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I had initially have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research project and attend a 45 minutes to one hour interview that will be taped, realizing that I can withdraw my consent at any time without comment and without affecting my future care and employment. 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.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

SIGNATURE: DATE:/...../.....

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: DATE:/...../.....

K. Engebretson

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: DATE:/...../.....

M. Canbolat

Appendix E
Sample of Interview Analysis with Coding

Name of participant: M [REDACTED]

Interview Date: 5/ 12/ 2012

Title of Project: The Educational Vision of Fethullah Gülen and its application in high schools that are inspired by his vision.

CASTLE COLLEGE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF INTERVIEW

- 1. For how long have you worked as an educator?**
10 years.
- 2. For how long have you worked as an administrator?**
5 years.
- 3. Is there any specific reason for your working in Castle College?**
Yes, the way Castle College sees education and I see education is very similar.
- 4. How many staff and students are there in Castle College?**
[REDACTED] staff members and [REDACTED] students.
- 5. Briefly how would you like to introduce Castle College?**
A school which is aiming for raising a generation with academic excellence (I.1) and good manners (Cu.1).
- 6. Is Castle College a successful school in your opinion?**
Yes it is (I.1).
- 7. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?**
Compared to the schools in its league Castle College is able to provide a better education academically (I.1). The parents are happy with their children progress (Cl.2).
- 8. What are the main reasons behind this success?**
Good atmosphere which is created by admin and staff (Cl.3). It is much easier to make student successful when they are happy (Cl.4&6). Good atmosphere, clean and safe environment have got huge impact on this happiness (Cl.4). The students in the school love their teachers and their school (Cl.6).
Children feel the sense of ownership towards this school (Cl.6).
- 9. What are the main factors that form Castle College's identity?**
To be welcoming for everyone from any back ground.
To insist on high level of discipline standard (Cu.3).
To emphasize the importance of mutual respect (Cu.2 & Cl.4).
To give importance to parental involvement (Cl.2).
To push students for exploring their academic limits (I.1).
- 10. What is the teachers' contribution to Castle College?**
First of all, they are very good role models (Cl.5).
Secondly, most of them are very hard working to be able to provide better education Cl.5).
- 11. Is there a pastoral care department in Castle College?**
Castle College is a very young school. Therefore, structure and settlement is still continuing (I). That is why there is a small sized pastoral team in Castle College (Cl.1).
- 12. If yes, could you give brief information on how pastoral care departments work?**
Pastoral care department has regular meeting weekly (Cl.1).
During the meetings pastoral care meeting members are given duty to fulfil (Cl.1).
Pastoral care activities was undertaken by 2 pastoral teachers and supported by the Deputy Principal and the Principal himself. Through pastoral care activities Castle College is trying to develop its students moral and social aspects. Pastoral care department also takes active

part in ongoing educational counselling. In 2012 due to the inefficiency of number of pastoral care teachers we were not able deal with the individuals and their issues deeply. Therefore we focused on group activities which allow us to socialize the students and create a good school atmosphere in which they can feel happy and safe (Cl.4). Some of the activities were organised by the pastoral care department were Saturday classes, weekend soccer tournaments, holiday camps and trips (Cl.1).

13. What kind of pastoral care activities run by this department?

Saturday school programs including literacy and mathematics support (Cl.1).
Term break camps (Cl.1).
Interstate trips (Cl.1).
Fundraising activities for various purposes (Cl.1).
Parents visits (Cl.1&2).

14. Do all teachers take part in pastoral care activities?

No, just the volunteer ones (Cl.5).

15. What is the best model of the student that Castle College is trying to form?

A student who displays good manners all the time and shows respect to everyone and cares about every living creature. Besides, s/he also tries his/her best under any condition without being selfish (Cu.2).

16. Is Castle College successful in this aspect?

It is a very challenging target in nowadays world. But we are making progress on this matter. So, one cannot say that Castle College is not successful about this issue. Though, there is much more for improvement (Cu.2).

17. Could you give brief information about values education in Castle College?

In school, there are timetabled religion and values classes. The curriculum of these classes is designed by the teachers from different back grounds during the curriculum meetings before school opens (Cu.2).

18. What values are taught at Castle College?

Values coming from general moral values and Islamic values (Cu.2).

19. How is Castle College implementing these values?

Apart from lessons during school hours, school also gives importance to represent these values on it teachers (Cu.2 & Cl.5).

20. What is the Castle College approach and understanding of discipline?

High level of discipline is one of the foremost items that the school tries to preserve (Cu.3).

Simply the approach is no discipline no education (Cu.3).

The basic understanding from discipline notion is that Students have rights and responsibilities (Cu.3 & Cl.6).

Without letting anyone take their rights students are required to follow staff's instructions in a proper way as it is described in the parent-student hand book (Cl.6).

21. How do you establish discipline in the school?

With the establishment of discipline, all teachers are working together so that students do not get confused about school rules and regulations (Cu.3 & Cl.5). Students are given enough and clear explanations by the teachers in order to make them realise their mistakes (Cu.3 & Cl.6). Also, they are told that the consequences of their bad manners and where that will lead them to in their future life (Cu.3).

22. How does school & parents communication work in Castle College?

Parents are always tried to be kept in the loop. Because school sees that in a child's education parent and parent communication is one of the most important legs of the table (Cl.2).

Pastoral care department through visit tries to strengthen the relationship between the school and the parents (Cl.1 & Cl.2). Organizing parents' dinners and sport activities are some of the other activities that the school is trying to use to get the parents involved in (Cl.2).

23. What is the contribution of parents to Castle College?

There are many parents who do various volunteer works for the school. Also, they are helping us with promoting our school in different communities (Cl.2 & I.3).

24. Are there any activities for graduate students?

There are no graduates at the moment.

25. What else could be done to make Castle College better in every aspect?

As a young school Castle College is struggling from having good facilities (Cl.4). The reason for that is the number of student and income coming from that. School can overcome this issue with trying to broaden its scope and open the doors to more backgrounds (Cu.4).

26. Is Castle College different from other schools? In what aspects?

Yes, Castle College cares about its students sincerely (Cl.6). School tries, as much as possible, to guide the student in the way of becoming a good person (Cu.2). For that, staff members take heavy and important roles to explain the importance of being a good person by utilising any opportunity such as after school activities which is in a form of pastoral care activities (Cl.1 & Cl.5).

27. In which aspects can Castle College be a role model to other schools?

I think all school should copy these pastoral care activities (Cl.1) into their systems and try to look good after their student (Cl.6).

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

M [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

05/12/2012

Appendix F

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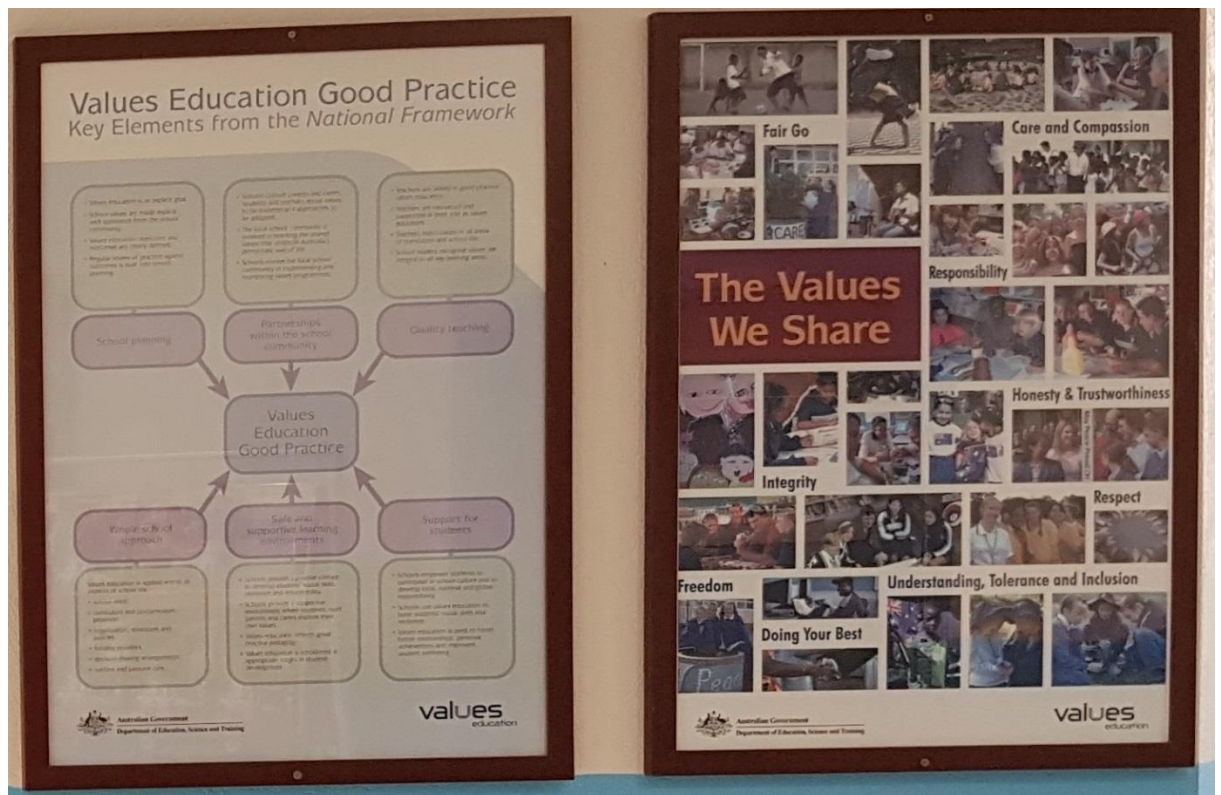
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Appendix G

Photographs from Star Boys Showing Aspects of Values Education and Classroom Set-up



Emphasis on values adopted by the school.



Examples of classroom set up at Star Boys.

PREACHER'S CORNER

FRIENDSHIP

Those who hold their friends in good esteem and treat them with respect gain many defenders and supporters against their enemies.

Having faithful friends is just as important as satisfying the vital necessities of life. Being among a secure and peaceful circle of friends means finding safety against many hazards and dangers.

Wise people, upon seeing that a friendship has become damaged, immediately remove the cause of discontent and restore good relations. Even wiser are those who strive to avoid or prevent disagreement with their friends in the first place.

"We are loyal and faithful to our friends to the extent we share their troubles as well as their joys..."

Love and good relations between friends continue as long as they understand each other, practice self-denial, and make sacrifices within permissible limits. Friendship between those who cannot renounce their interests and preferences for the sake of their friends cannot endure.

We are loyal and faithful to our friends to the extent we share their troubles as well as their joys. If we cannot weep when our friends weep and rejoice when they rejoice, we cannot be regarded as faithful friends.

Those who maintain a friendship with one who has fallen on hard times are true, loyal friends. Those who do not support their friends during their misfortune have nothing to do with friendship. Those who tend to disagree and struggle with their friends have few friends. One who desires to have faithful and numerous friends should not disagree with them on trivial matters.

Friendship pertains to one's heart and its sincerity. Those who think they can gain another's friendship through deception and hypocrisy only deceive themselves. Even if some simple-minded people are taken in by their hypocrisy and flattery, they will not be able to sustain a long-lasting friendship.

Preferring the sacred cause over all worldly and animal desires; being steadfast in truth, once it has been discovered, to the degree that you sacrifice all mundane attachments for its sake; enduring all hardships so that future generations will be happy; seeking happiness, not in material or even spiritual pleasures, but in the happiness and well-being of others; never seeking to obtain any posts or positions; and preferring oneself to others in taking on work but preferring others to oneself in receiving wages—these are the essentials of this sacred way of serving the truth.

Those who lead the way must set a good example for their followers. Just as they are imitated in their virtues and good morals, so do their bad and improper actions and attitudes leave indelible marks upon those who follow them.

One who represents any stage of the truth must try to embody it with honesty, trustworthiness, consciousness of duty, a high degree of perception,

"...Those who lead the way must set a good example for their followers. Just as they are imitated in their virtues and good morals, so do their bad and improper actions ..."

awareness of circumstances, far-sightedness, and absolute chastity. People who hold high office but lack one or more of these virtues must be seen as having one or more serious defects. This is a clear misfortune for those who follow them.



SCHOOLS NEWS

SCHOOLS NEWS

SCHOOLS NEWS

Appendix I

Star College Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Administrators

1. For how long have you worked as an educator?
2. For how long have you worked as an administrator?
3. Is there any specific reason for your working in Star College?
4. Briefly how would you like to introduce Star College?
5. Is Star College a successful school in your opinion?
6. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?
7. What are the main reasons behind this success?
8. What are the main factors that formed STAR COLLEGE identity?
9. What is the teachers' contribution to Star College?
10. What else could be done to make Star College better in every aspect?
11. What is the best model of the student that Star College is trying to form?
12. Is Star College successful in this aspect?
13. What values are taught at Star College?
14. How is Star College implementing these values?
15. How do you motivate staff and students in their educational activities?
16. What is the Star College approach and understanding of discipline?
17. How do you establish discipline in the school?
18. How does school & parents' communication work in Star College?
19. What is the contribution of parents to Star College?
20. Are there any activities for graduate students?
21. Is Star College different from other schools? In what aspects?
22. In which aspects, can Star College can be a role model to other schools?

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. Which subjects do you teach?
3. Is there any specific reason for your choosing to teach at Star College?
4. What do you do in terms of professional development?
5. Briefly how would you like to introduce Star College?
6. Is Star College a successful school in your opinion?
7. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?
8. What are the main reasons behind this success?
9. What is the teachers' contribution to the education given at Star College?
10. How do you help students in their academic achievements?
11. What else could be done to make Star College better in every aspect?
12. In Star College is academic achievement or moral development more important?
13. What is the best model of the student that Star College is trying to form?
14. Is Star College successful in this aspect?
15. What values are taught in Star College?
16. How is Star College implementing these values?
17. How do you help students in their moral development?
18. Do you organise camps and trips for students?
19. What role do camps and trips play in students' academic and moral progress?
20. What is the role of discipline in running the school?
21. How do you establish discipline in the classroom and the school?
22. How does school & parents' communication work?
23. How parents contribute to the students' academic and moral improvement?
24. Is Star College different from other schools? In what aspects?
25. In which aspects, can Star College can be a role model to other schools?

Interview Questions for Non-Teaching Staff

1. For how long have you been employed by Star College?
2. Is there any specific reason for your choosing to work in Star College?
3. Briefly how would you like to introduce Star College?
4. Is Star College a successful school in your opinion?
5. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?
6. What are the main reasons behind this success?
7. What is the teachers' contribution to Star College's education?
8. How does your position contribute to the school in your opinion?
9. What are your thoughts about the academic side of Star College's education?
10. What are your thoughts about moral and values side of Star College's education?
11. What do you like most about Star College? (Please mention first 3)
12. What else could be done to make Star College better in every aspect?
13. What is the best model of the student that Star College is trying to form?
14. Is Star College successful in this aspect?
15. What values are taught in Star College?
16. How is Star College implementing these values?
17. What do you think about the behavior of Star College students?
18. What is effective in Star College students' character building in your opinion?
19. Is Star College different from other schools? In what aspects?
20. In which aspects, can Star College be a role model to other schools?

Interview Questions for Parents

1. For how many years have you been a Star College's parent?
2. How did you come to know about Star College?
3. Is there any specific reason for choosing Star College for your child's education?
4. What are your expectations from Star College?
5. What do you like most about Star College? (Please mention first 3)
6. Did you observe any changes in your child's education and behavior after enrolment in Star College?
7. Briefly how would you like to introduce Star College?
8. Is Star College a successful school in your opinion?
9. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?
10. What are the main reasons behind this success?
11. What is the teachers' contribution to Star College's education?
12. What else could be done to make Star College better in every aspect?
13. Is Star College helping your child's academic improvement or moral improvement? Which one is more important?
14. What is the best model of the student that Star College is trying to form?
15. Is Star College successful in this aspect?
16. What values are taught in Star College?
17. How is Star College implementing these values?
18. Does your child receive education only from Star College or do you have some extra arrangements to support your child's education?
19. Are there any after school activities in Star College that appeal to you?
20. How do these activities affect your child's education?
21. How does school & parents' communication work?
22. How does this communication affect Star College achievements and your child's education?
23. Is Star College different from other schools? In what aspects?
24. In which aspects, can Star College can be a role model to other schools?

Interview Questions for Students

1. For how long have you been a Star College student?
2. Why have you chosen Star College?
3. What aspects do you like most about Star College?
4. In what educational aspects do you think Star College is best?
5. What is your expectation from your school?
6. What do you like most about Star College? (Please mention first 3)
7. What profession would you like to be in your future? Why?
8. How much time do you spend on homework?
9. Briefly how would you like to introduce Star College?
10. Is Star College a successful school in your opinion?
11. If yes, in which aspects is it successful?
12. What are the main reasons behind this success?
13. What is the teachers' contribution in Star College's education?
14. What else could be done to make Star College better in every aspect?
15. What is the best model of the student that Star College is trying to form?
16. Is Star College successful in this aspect?
17. What values are taught in Star College?
18. How is Star College implementing these values?
19. What kind of activities is arranged by your school for after school hours?
20. What kind of welfare programs do you participate in? Who is helping you in welfare programs?
21. Why do you participate in welfare programs?
22. What do you like most about welfare programs?
23. Does your school organise camps & trips, how often, and what role do they play in your academic and moral development?
24. What is the contribution of your parents towards your education?
25. Is Star College different from other schools? In what aspects?
26. In which aspects, Star College can be a role model to other schools?

Appendix J

Interview and Participant Observation Schedules for Star Boys and Castle College

Interview Schedule for Star Boys

Respondent	Code	Referred in text as	Interview Date
School Leader 1	A1	Principal	09/07/2010
School Leader 2	A2	Deputy principal	30/07/2010
School Leader 3	A3	Pastoral care deputy	15/07/2010
Teacher 1	T1	Chemistry teacher	12/11/2010
Teacher 2	T2	Maths teacher	13/10/2010
Teacher 3	T3	CE coordinator	29/08/2010
Teacher 4	T4	Religion and Values teacher	23/08/2010
Teacher 5	T5	Year-10 coordinator	13/11/2010
Non-Teaching Staff 1	N1	Mrs Hilal	10/08/2010
Non-Teaching Staff 2	N2	Mr Erhan	04/08/2010
Non-Teaching Staff 3	N3	Mr Adil	05/08/2010
Parent 1	P1	Mr Gurol	27/07/2010
Parent 2	P2	Mr Ahmet	21/12/2010
Parent 3	P3	Mr Hasan	23/07/2010
Parent 4	P4	Mr Mustafa	15/07/2010
Student 1	S1	Ali	25/10/2010
Student 2	S2	Harun	14/11/2010
Student 3	S3	Burhan	05/06/2010
Student 4	S4	Huseyin	07/07/2010
Student 5	S5	Ugur	02/08/2010

Interview Schedule for Castle College

Respondent	Code	Referred in text as	Interview Date
School Leader 1	A4	Principal	14/12/2012
School Leader 2	A5	Deputy principal	05/12/2012
Teacher 1	T6	Religion and Values teacher	05/12/2012
Teacher 2	T7	Arabic language teacher	05/12/2012
Teacher 3	T8	LOTE teacher	14/12/2012
Non-Teaching Staff 1	N4	Mrs Handan	5/12/2012
Non-Teaching Staff 2	N5	Mrs Ayla	4/12/2012
Parent 1	P5	Mrs Cicek	05/12/2012
Parent 2	P6	Mrs Nida	03/12/2012
Parent 3	P7	Mrs Rabia	04/12/2012

Participant Observation Schedule (Star Boys)

Name of participant observation	Date
Pastoral care departmental meeting 1	17/11/2010
Pastoral care departmental meeting 2	24/11/2010
Pastoral care departmental meeting 3	01/12/2010
After school activities 1	02/03/2011
After school activities 2	09/03/2011
After school activities 3	16/03/2011
Students' camp	09-10/04/2011