# AN EXPLORATION OF THE CONCEPT OF VALUES-LED PRINCIPALSHIP

Submitted by

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# STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES

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# ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was to understand better and reconstruct the concept of values-led principalship. In recent times, in response to constant change and uncertainty, there has been a consistent call for a new form of principalship: values-led principalship. Principals are now being urged to allow values to shape their principalship behaviour. In short, values-led behaviour is said to afford the principal the means of providing appropriate school leadership in unpredictable, and even ambiguous, times.

However, the assertion that values can play a positive role in a principal's performance needs to be substantiated. Despite their innate appeal, the nature and function of values in human endeavours remains somewhat unclear. This research study seeks to redress this lack of understanding by investigating how knowing personal values might help the principal to be led by these values and, thereby, be able to act more effectively as an educational leader.

To this end, this research study is situated within the research paradigm of pragmatic constructivism and informed by the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. The orchestrating perspective was case study with the boundaries of the case defined in terms of the system of secondary schools operating under the auspices of the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. This case study included an open-ended questionnaire, two closed questionnaires, and a series of three semi-structured interviews with five principals.

This research study began with a comprehensive review of literature from psychology, ethics and values theory to establish the relationship between values and behaviour. This review highlighted five important insights in respect to personal values. First, personal values are formed during the general experiences of life. Second, these personal values influence behaviour. Third, personal values are subjective inner-world phenomena that are more likely to be tacit and subliminal influences upon one's behaviour. Fourth, having knowledge of one's own personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence and the gaining of this particular form of self-knowledge is difficult and requires effort and appropriate processes. Finally, the appropriate process for gaining self-knowledge of one's personal values is through self-reflection and introspection.

Based on these insights, the researcher identified four research questions.

1. How knowledgeable are the principals of their own personal values?

2. How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

3. Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

4. Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values bring about values-led principalship?

In general, the findings of this research study suggest that values-led principalship is a simplistic conceptualisation that does not reflect the complex relationships between the inner Self and behaviour. The concept of values-led principalship assumes self-knowledge of personal values and the deliberate application of this knowledge to influence personal

behaviour. By not considering the formation of personal values and the inner antecedents of personal values within the Self, any self-knowledge of one's personal values remains notional. Notional self-knowledge maintains the tacit, subliminal influence of personal values on behaviour. Thus, personal values are directing or driving behaviour resulting in values-driven rather than values-led principalship.

From an instrumental perspective, this finding raises a number of issues in respect to the professional development of principals. As a consequence, the following propositions are advanced:

1.  The professional development of principals should prepare them to incorporate regular self-reflective and introspective practices;

2.  The professional development of principals should challenge them to develop a rich knowledge of their inner Self;

3.  The professional development of principals should assist them to appreciate how their whole life experience is woven into their leadership behaviour; and

4.  Contemporary principals require formal professional mentoring programmes to assist them to more truly clarify and understand the antecedents of their leadership behaviours.

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# CHAPTER 1

## SETTING THE SCENE

### 1.1    INTRODUCTION

The impetus for this study was a pragmatic concern for effectiveness in principalship. I came to this study as a newly appointed principal[1], keen to demonstrate effectiveness in the position. Committed to learning more about the role of principal, I reflected on my experience of principalship. As a teacher, subject coordinator, pastoral coordinator, deputy principal, and school consultant, I had observed principals in action and had noticed different priorities and approaches to the role. Although these principals were aware of the developments in leadership theory, it was my experience that these theories did not appear to dominate their practice. Rather these theories were used in an eclectic fashion as principals made professional judgements about what aspects of leadership theories were pertinent to any given situation. For the most part, this approach seemed to work.

However, experienced and successful principals are now reporting that their job is getting harder. New demands from parents, policy-makers and the wider community seems to be restricting their professional judgement and leading to job dissatisfaction and levels of stress. In changing and uncertain times, principals are reporting new feelings of uncertainty, inadequacy and vulnerability. As a consequence, many are searching for new ways to understand their educational leadership role so as to rebuild their confidence, re-establish their purposefulness, and re-direct their principalship behaviours.

> Educational administration is not work for the faint-hearted. It requires both brains and heart: brains because the problems of schooling … present 'wicked problems' of enormous complexity requiring levels of understanding and analysis honed both by years of study and years of experience; heart because the key to responding to the challenges of the work is all about caring relationships. … The work also requires courage and a tough skin because school leaders are attacked on all sides (Starratt, 2003, p. 242).

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[1] The researcher was appointed to the position of principal of a co-educational secondary college administered by Brisbane Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane to take effect as from 1st January 1997.

## 1.2    RESEARCH PROBLEM

Beyond my immediate experience of the principalship, I was also aware that leaders and managers, in general, were experiencing difficulty in changing and uncertain times. In 1992, The Commonwealth Government established the Karpin Task Force to investigate the ability of Australian industrial leaders to meet the challenges of the new century.  In its final submission, *Report of the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills* (1995), the Karpin Task Force concentrated on analysing the Australian situation, comparing Australia with international best practice, identifying trends and challenges that needed to be considered, and developing strategies for change.  This report identified the global drivers of change as being: changing values and attitudes, the globalisation of markets, the customisation of products and services, new technology, and the importance of knowledge. In the light of these conclusions, it was the view of the Task Force that Australian industry needed to change its leadership paradigm.

Taking up this challenge, organizational theorists support the establishment of "developmental organizations" and "developmental leadership" (Gilley & Matycunich, 2000). This organizational form is built on the realization that corporate and individual goals are inextricably linked and that the best way to thrive in an uncertain environment is to ensure that every person in the organization is able to perform at their full potential. Thus, personal growth and development are given highest priority. To this end, developmental leaders need to engage the principle of "organizational consistency" through a process of "values alignment". Here, the leaders' guiding values are not only integrated with those of the organization but are also allied with a concern for employee growth and development. The developmental leader identifies personal values and beliefs, considers how these values and beliefs compare with the organizational goals, reflects on the impact of these values and beliefs upon employee growth and development, and makes adjustments so as to align personal values and beliefs with those of the organization and the needs of the employees. "Conducting a values alignment helps developmental leaders identify what is considered important – an essential element in making decisions that impact upon the well-being of the organization" (p. 81).

This notion of a developmental organization and developmental leadership has been accepted within the theory and practice of educational administration. Schools as

developmental organizations are said to require a new type of principal (Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002). Amongst other things, this new type of principal would be "values-led" (Day, 2000). In line with the principle of organizational consistency, and the process of values alignment, the values-led principal would be knowledgeable in respect to personal values and have a commitment to align these values with their behaviours. Here it is claimed that knowledge of personal values would help the principal to be led by these values and, thereby, be able to act more effectively as a principal. Exploring the accuracy of this perception became the focus of this study.

An initial review of the literature however, found that the concept of values-led principalship had been poorly researched. A review of the Educational Research Information Clearinghouse (ERIC) database revealed 9033 documents associated with the study of the role of the school principal. Of these, 3761 were written between 1990 and 2002 but only 70 focussed on values and principalship. Moreover, of these 70 studies only 3 studies (Campbell-Evans, 1991; Laible & Harrington, 1998; Moorhead & Nediger, 1991) document attempts to synthesize the array of personal values that influence a principal's behaviour. This paucity of research in respect to the influence of personal values on principalship behaviour has been described as a "blank spot" (Heck & Hallinger, 1996; 1999) in educational leadership research. Elsewhere, this blank spot within educational leadership research has been considered undesirable and there has been a call to redress this omission through further research (Begley, 1996, 2000; Crowther, Hann, & Andrews, 2002; Strachan, 1999).

## 1.3    PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research study was to understand and reconstruct the concept of values-led principalship; how the knowing of personal values might help the principal to be led by these values and, thereby, be able to act more effectively. In particular, this research study investigated values-led principalship from the perspective of five secondary principals working in the system of schools under the auspices of the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. By exploring each participating principal's self-knowledge of their personal values and inspecting how these personal values influence his or her particular principalship behaviour, this research study has investigated a hitherto blank spot in educational leadership research.

## 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that guided this study were developed following a comprehensive review of literature in respect to values-led principalship, and focussed on the nature of personal values and their association with personal behaviour. Five important insights in respect to personal values were identified. First, personal values are formed during the general experiences of life. Second, these personal values influence behaviour. Third, personal values are subjective inner-world phenomena that are more likely to be tacit and subliminal influences upon one's behaviour. Fourth, having knowledge of one's own personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence and the gaining of this particular form of self-knowledge is difficult and requires effort and appropriate processes. Finally, it is proposed that self-reflection and introspection are appropriate processes for gaining self-knowledge of personal values.

Based on these insights, the researcher identified the following research questions:

**Research Question 1:** How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

This research question investigates the proposition in the literature that personal values are subliminal inner-world phenomena and as such, having self-knowledge of one's personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence (McGraw, 2001). A concern for the level of self-knowledge of personal values recognizes that the concept of values-led principalship is dependent upon the principal having self-knowledge of personal values and deliberately applying these values in their role. Thus, this research question is addressed by an examination of the principal's level of self-knowledge of personal values.

**Research Question 2:** How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

This research question investigates the claims in the literature that personal values are formed during the general experiences of life and become the most influential source of values that impact upon any individual (Hodgkinson, 1996). Although the importance of personal values is assumed, the literature proposes that there is little general understanding of their nature and their formation (Zimmerman, 2001). The research methods associated with this question assisted the participating principals in determining how their personal values were acquired. Beyond this outcome for the participants, it was

thought that this research question would illumine the values formation process and, thereby, informs future plans for personal and professional development in support of values-led principalship.

**Research Question 3:** Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

The literature posits the understanding that personal values are often tacit, subliminal, intangible, inner influences on behaviour (Sarros, Densten, & Santora, 1999). Usually, people are unaware of many of their values, and when they endeavour to openly clarify them, there is a strong possibility that they may unintentionally or intentionally state false values (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001). This means that knowledge of personal values is an achievement and not a given (Nerlich, 1989). People have to purposely strive towards coming to know their personal values. Moreover, the best process for coming to know personal values is through introspection based on reflective self-inquiry and reflective self-evaluation (Hall, Lindzey, & Campbell, 1998). This research question asks whether it is possible to develop a 'tool' that facilitates such reflective self-inquiry and reflective self-evaluation.

**Research Question 4:** Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

This research question responds to the longstanding claim in the literature (Hodgkinson, 1996; Hogarth, 1987) that there is no tangible link between a personal value and a preferred behaviour, as individuals tend to justify their behaviour on expected beneficial outcomes, rather than on a conscious commitment to any inherent values. Hence, this research question focused directly on the potential impact that the gaining of self-knowledge of personal values had on principalship behaviour. It allowed the researcher to gather data pertinent to exploring the extent to which the gaining of self-knowledge of personal values could bring about values-led principalship in order to positively influence principalship behaviour.

## 1.5   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research study is situated within the research paradigm of pragmatic constructivism. The initial philosophical choice of constructivism followed a review by Heck and

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Hallinger (1999) of new generation research methodologies in educational leadership and school improvement. This review highlights constructivist approaches to research that "reveal how leadership unfolds within the school setting as a shared, constructed phenomenon", and "forces us to accept that our educational organizations are constructed realities, as opposed to systems or structures that operate more independently of the individuals in them" (p. 148). This review also notes that several researchers used constructivist approaches to investigate "the relationship of social cognition and values to school leaders' problem solving and decision making" (p. 147).

In short, constructivism strives to understand and reconstruct that which is unknown through using a distinctive research paradigm with its own ontological, epistemological and methodological claims (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 111-112). From an ontological perspective, "constructivism's relativism … assumes multiple, apprehendable, and somewhat conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects, but that may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated". From an epistemological perspective, constructivism accepts a "transactional/objectivist assumption that sees knowledge as created in interaction between the investigator and the respondents". Constructivism relies on a hermeneutic/dialectical methodology aimed at understanding and reconstructing the previously held problematic constructions.

However, while situating this research study within the research paradigm of constructivism, the researcher was aware of the polarized positions within the constructivist research community as theorists argue as to whether knowledge is constructed by individuals or within societies (Bowe & Berv, 2000; Phillips, 2000). Faced with these polarized positions, Schwandt (1994) and Burbules (2000) recommend that we put aside these epistemological debates and adopt a more pragmatic constructivist perspective. This understanding of constructivism operates within a problem-based framework that focuses on real-life problems and gives priority to 'doing' rather than 'knowing'. Such research begins with exploration of problematic human activity from the perspective of the individual's conscious thoughts or awareness. Here, the researcher comes to know the person's perceptions, meanings, understandings, and interpretations so as to be able to reconstruct how these influenced the person to act as they did. Regardless of whether or not these perceptions, meanings, understandings, and interpretations were derived from either a social or psychological basis, the insights gained about why the

person acted as they did are considered to be valid and informative forms of knowledge. In this way, pragmatic constructivist research uses these perceptions, meanings, understandings, and interpretations to help construct knowledge about the phenomenon being studied and, thereby, further the clarification of its nature.

Convinced of this argument, the researcher accepted advice from Denzin and Lincoln (1994) that pragmatic constructivism research be positioned within the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism comes from the field of social psychology that subscribes to a deterministic view of human behaviour in which the reasons, or causes, of human behaviour are said to arise from the social situations that individuals encounter (Charon, 1998). In particular, symbolic interactionism is influenced by four key beliefs. First, that what is real for human beings always depends on their own active intervention, their own interpretation or definition. Second, the worthiness of knowledge is judged by how practical, applicable, and useful it is in helping to understand a given social situation. Third, the elements within the particular social situation are defined in terms of their specific usefulness in that situation. Finally, the initial focus of social research should be on the actions and behaviours that are occurring, which are then used to guide further exploration.

In line with these beliefs, the researcher accepted the view of Merriam (1998) and others (Sarantakos, 1998; Yin, 1994) that case study methodology offered an appropriate orchestrating perspective for this pragmatic constructivist study. Conventionally, case study has been associated with the methodological choice of using qualitative rather than quantitative methods (Merriam, 1998). However, in this research study, case study is not a methodological choice but rather an orchestrating perspective or a choice of what is to be studied. Case study, as an orchestrating perspective, draws boundaries around the human activity to be studied and provides the link between the basic assumptions of the theoretical perspective with the selection of appropriate and relevant research methods by describing the intended strategy or plan of action (Glesne, 1999). A key prerequisite for choosing an appropriate orchestrating perspective is that it must be closely suited to the issue being investigated, so that it can not only help the researcher to understand and explain the meaning of the particular phenomena, but also cause as little disruption to the participant and his or her environment as possible (Merriam, 1998).

## 1.6    DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Within this case study, the boundaries of the case were defined in terms of secondary school principals working in the system of Catholic schools conducted under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The five principals in this research study represented a "non-probabilistic" (Merriam, 1998) and "purposeful" (Patton, 1990) sample of principals from the 26 secondary colleges. In order to form this sample, this research study applied the "daisy chaining" (Gordon, 1994, p. 6) properties associated with using the Delphi Method whereby a selection of five principals was non-probabilistically chosen from the total "universe" (Sutherland, 1975, p. 471) of potential participating principals. Briefly, this process collated the respective recommendations from three different, but relevant, sources: the Director of Schools within Brisbane Catholic Education, the eight Area Supervisors who oversee the performance of the systemic Catholic secondary school principals, and the 26 systemic Catholic secondary principals. Each of these sources was asked to nominate the 5 principals they perceived to be the most suitable for this research study and the results of these three sources of nominations were tallied to determine the final participants. As a result of this selection process, two female and three male principals were chosen to participate in this research study. The level of principalship experience varied from only one year to almost twenty years. Two principals were in single sex schools and all of the principals were in charge of a standard year 8 to 12 school. The principals ranged from 40-50 years of age.

This case study involved two stages of research: a "stage of exploration" and a "stage of inspection" (Charon, 1998). Through exploration, the researcher is attempting to describe in detail what is happening in the particular complex social situation. The purpose is to become holistically acquainted with the particular area of social life and to develop some focus of interest for the second stage of inspection. This exploratory stage involves isolating important elements within the explored situation and describing the situation in relation to those elements. Inspection also involves forming descriptive statements about each important element in the situation, then applying that description to other interactive situations.

The exploration stage of this research study commenced with an open-ended questionnaire, the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* (appendix 1). Essentially, this

questionnaire was a sheet of paper with many blank rectangles and participants were asked to reflect on their personal values and to record these values by writing a value in a rectangle. This exploration stage continued with two closed questionnaires. The *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) (appendix 2) created by Kouzes and Posner (2001) was used as a starting point for developing a synthesis of the key educational leadership behaviours for each of the participating principals. The *Values Selection Questionnaire* (appendix 3) required each principal to simply select his or her values from a comprehensive list of value words. The list provided to each principal included 170 potential values, which were compiled from the literature (McGraw, 2001; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994).

The inspection stage of the research study utilised a series of semi-structured interviews in order to investigate issues raised in the exploration stage. These semi-structured interviews complemented the pragmatic constructivist nature of this research study (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). The advantage of using a semi-structured interview is that it is open and natural in its approach while also ensuring that the direction of the conversation is controlled and focused (Burns, 1995). This style of interview limited the researcher's biases and preconceptions in directing the line of the interview (Burns, 1997), and allowed the research study to explore interesting thoughts as they emerged from the interview (Stake, 1995).

## 1.7    SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

This research study is deemed significant for a number of reasons.

First, this research study addresses the blank spot within research in respect to the influence of personal values on principalship behaviour. Despite long-held assertions within the academic literature (Day, 2000; England & Lee, 1974) that personal values are important influences on leadership behaviour, there has been a lack of corroborative research in support of these assertions (Begley, 1996; Sarros et al., 1999).

Secondly, this research study developed an instrument to visually display the subliminal relationship between personal values and principalship behaviour. This research study acknowledges that the relationship between personal values and principalship behaviour

was more often assumed than understood (Zimmerman, 2001). By developing a clear and effective way to visually display this relationship between the principal's personal values and leadership behaviour, this research study provides a process for reflective self-inquiry and reflective self-evaluation.

Finally, this research study provides new insights into professional development. The findings in this research study identify the need for professional development opportunities for principals to move beyond a dominant focus on professional behaviour and challenge principals to engage in self-reflection. It supports the view that principals need help and guidance in the essential area of making explicit their inner Self so that they can begin to critique the relationship between behaviour, beliefs, values, motivations, and purposes. This research study also suggests that the professional development of principals should focus on reviewing the formation of their inner Self over a lifetime, and challenges them to achieve greater congruence among their inner Self, their personal values, and their leadership behaviour.

## 1.8     THE LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Notwithstanding the significance of this research study, the following limitations are acknowledged. This study was limited in its scope, as it focused on only principals within the systemic Catholic secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Furthermore, it concentrated its attention on only five of these principals in its search for a more informed and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between personal values and educational leadership behaviour. Hence, the findings presented are specific to the situations described herein and do not claim to represent the whole population. Therefore, this research seeks its important response from within those who read it. Its external validity will rely upon the "reader user generalizability" (Merriam, 1998, p. 211) through "case to case transfer" (Firestone, 1993, p. 16).

In addition, this research study recognises the inherent limitations of a constructivist research paradigm and the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This research study aimed to understand values-led principalship in order to achieve a more informed and sophisticated reconstruction of this phenomenon. The 'product' of this research was judged according to quality criteria of authenticity and

trustworthiness. Thus this study is positioned to avoid a "positivist approach" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and does not seek to explain reality through the accumulation of objective knowledge and produce verified hypotheses established as facts or laws. There is no attempt to discern what was generally true about the leadership behaviour of the principal, and a deliberate decision was made not to collect data to validate the accuracy of the participant's perceptions. In addition, the conventional, positivist benchmarks of rigour such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity have not been applied. Likewise this research study avoids taking a critical stance; it does not seek to critique and transform oppressive structures through the accumulation of structural and historical insights. This study did not set out to judge the nature of the principal's leadership but rather to richly describe it. It was more relevant within the purpose of this research to focus on explicating the principal's way of knowing about his or her leadership behaviour (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Groundswater-Smith, 1998) without fear of judgement and contradiction. Thus the emphasis was on the principal's thinking behind their leadership behaviour and not on specifically observing, categorizing, and judging the behaviour itself.

Finally, this research study was somewhat constrained by the self-interest of the researcher. In this sense, this research has a self-indulgent (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992) quality as the topic and methodology were selected in response to the researcher's own professional biases, experiences, perceptions, and working context. More particularly, this study did involve principal participants who were colleagues and professional friends. While this research into the concept of values-led principalship occurred within this relatively intimate and small group, the achievement of a mutual benefit for both the researcher and the participating principal was always the paramount feature of this study.

## 1.9    OUTLINE OF THIS THESIS

While this chapter provided a succinct overview of the important aspects of this particular research study, the following chapters present a more detailed and comprehensive perspective.

Chapter 2 explores the current contextual influences upon the role of a principal in order to further clarify the research problem. In particular, an initial review of the literature

alerted the researcher to a new understanding of organizational leadership (Sarros, 2002; Terry, 1993) in the context of social transformation, and a new emphasis on values (Blackmore, 1999; Greenfield, 1995; Hodgkinson, 1991) as well as a call for a new type of principal, who is "values-led" (Day, 2000). However, this chapter also highlights the paucity of contemporary research focusing on values-led principalship. Hence, this initial literature review guided this research study to focus directly on exploring the concept of values-led principalship.

Chapter 3 reviews literature in respect to psychology, ethics, and values theory so as to develop a comprehensive understanding of the concept of values-led principalship. First, it develops a conceptual map of the Self, which includes the phenomenon of self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and behaviours. A description is provided of each of these respective parts of the Self, particularly values, and, moreover, how each is related to, and influences, the other parts of the Self. Another essential inclusion within this literature-guided discussion is an exploration of the level of self-knowledge that one has about each of these parts of his or her Self. This chapter concludes by identifying the research questions that were to guide the research study.

Chapter 4 identifies the theoretical framework that was considered to best support this study. It examines the epistemological landscape in order to identify an appropriate research paradigm and to clarify the most suitable theoretical perspective for this exploration of the concept of values-led principalship. This chapter argues the case for a research paradigm of pragmatic constructivism and a theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism with a case study approach as the orchestrating perspective.

Chapter 5 outlines how this case study approach is to be practically implemented. This chapter presents an argument for the implementation of multiple research methods through the use of questionnaires and interviews as essential to understanding and reconstructing the concept of values-led principalship. This was achieved through the two research stages of exploration and inspection as appropriate for research informed by the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism (Charon, 2001).

Chapter 6 displays the data gathered by the multiple research methods used in this study. The format of this display of the data follows the design of this study outlined in the

previous chapter. In particular, the display of the data is subdivided into two sections representing the two stages of exploration and the inspection. Within these two sections, the display of the data is further subdivided so as to mirror the respective steps of data collection outlined in the previous chapter.

Chapter 7 uses the research questions to further analyse and discuss the data. This analysis and discussion provides a better understanding of the nature of the relationship between a principal's personal values and his or her leadership behaviour. The resulting interpretation of the data suggests the principals could not be considered to be values-led principals. The data show that, although personal values do influence the principal's behaviour, he or she was not really aware of what these values were, or how they were affecting their behaviour. In this sense, the participating principals were being values-directed or values-driven, rather than values-led in their approach to principalship.

Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the knowledge gained from this exploration of the concept of values-led principalship. Based on the knowledge gained from this research study it is argued that the concept of values-led principalship is a simplistic conceptualisation that does not reflect the complexity of the whole Self. It not only overlooks the complexity of the processes associated with personal values formation, but it also assumes a simplistic relationship between personal values and the principal's leadership behaviour. This research study concludes by offering four propositions in respect to the professional development of principals. Also, areas for further research are identified.

# CHAPTER 2

## CLARIFYING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:
## THE CONTEXT OF PRINCIPALSHIP

### 2.1    INTRODUCTION

As noted in Chapter 1, the impetus for this study was a pragmatic concern for the role of the principal in an era of constant change and uncertainty.  However, this was a broad focus with a number of interrelated problems that were difficult to isolate or clearly identify.  A local research study (Spry & Duignan, 2003) had identified the dimensions of principal leadership in terms of five interrelated dimensions: inner leadership, interpersonal leadership, organizational leadership, faith leadership, educative leadership, and community leadership. Each of these dimensions had been recommended as an area for further study. With this recommendation in mind, my first step in this research study was to clarify the research problem.

Following the recommendation of system's analyst David Patching (1990), this study sought to clarify the research problem by developing a "rich picture" of the context of principalship. To this end, this research study was initially influenced by the lead in the literature (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997; Evers & Lakomski, 1996) that situate principalship within the discipline of educational administration and the widespread agenda of educational reform and restructuring that is said to be endemic in western educational systems. Explaining this development, commentators (Blackmore, 1999; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999) further situates educational reform and restructuring within a discourse of economic rationalism and societal change as well as emergent organizational and leadership theories. Figure 2.1 diagrammatically represents this understanding of the context of principalship.

Figure 2.1 Significant variables in the context of principalship.

Figure 2.1 situates principalship within the micro-context of economic rationalism, educational reform and contemporary theories of educational administration. These contextual variables are, in turn, situated within the wider macro-context of society and emergent theories of organization and leadership. This suggests that principalship, as a human activity, is equally influenced by impulses within the wider society and especially by theoretical developments within the disciplines of organizational theory and leadership theory. These disciplines act as "disciplinary technologies", or "processes of normalisation", that are characterised by politics (Foucault, 1977, pp. 131-133). Subsequently, the principalship is also influenced by the political discourses of economic rationalism and educational reform. Hence, Figure 2.1 shows these various contextual elements as being interrelated such that any significant change in one of these elements automatically induces changes in the other elements and eventually impacts on the principalship. In this form, this figure suggests a logical structure for clarifying the research problem through painting a rich picture of each of these significant contextual elements for principalship.

## 2.2 SOCIETAL CHANGE

Writing in respect to contemporary society helps to explain the reality of constant change and uncertainty faced by principals. Here it is claimed that society is in a state of flux and "sharp transformation".

> Every few years in Western society there occurs a sharp transformation. Within a few short decades, society rearranges itself - its worldview; its arts; its key institutions. Fifty years later, there is a new world. We are currently living through such a transformation (Drucker, 1993, p. 1).

Moreover, it is suggested that:

> Few reasonable people would contest that we are living through a period of most profoundly turbulent change and astonishing technological advancement, yet experienced by the human race. This change challenges all our preconceptions, creating uncertainty and ambiguity (Harmes, 1994, p. 8).

This social flux and transformation is variously described as a movement from a Capitalist to a "Post-Capitalist Society" (Drucker, 1993), from "modernity" to "postmodernity" (Thornhill, 2000), from order to the "Chaordic Age" (Hock, 1999), and from the "Industrial Age" to and the post-industrial, "Information Age" (Jensen, 1999). Sociologists explain such times of social flux and transformation as periods of significant breakdown in the dominant worldview, "a mythical cultural consensus" (Arbuckle, 1993, pp. 45-58) that guides how people view their reality. As a consequence of this cultural breakdown "the pivotal identity symbols and mythology are undermined or swept aside by powerful internal and/or external cultural forces". Before a new cultural consensus emerges, society passes through a period of "adjustment prior to achieving a new level of integration". Typically, as internal and external forces threaten to break up society's mythical consensus, a period of perceived chaos is experienced. This perception of chaos is characterized by confusion and uncertainty as new possibilities and challenges present themselves and value conflicts abound. While chaos can be the catalyst for important personal and group growth, not everyone uses chaos as a catalyst for growth; some remain overwhelmed and paralysed by its confusion of values. Others see that a different future can be forged through forms of cultural agency or leadership involving an on-going struggle in respect to values clarification and the development of a new cultural consensus.

Extending this thought, Eckersley (1998) describes the cultural values of Western Society in terms of "economism, consumerism, postmodernism, pessimism and individualism". It is argued that these cultural values do not act in isolation but, rather, are inter-related to a greater or lesser degree, and interact with the structural changes in society. Furthermore, these cultural values have both positive and negative dimensions such that:

> … in recent times, we have reached the point where the cultural negatives are reinforcing each other, and we now lack the necessary cultural balances. Even so, we still see a mix of benefits and costs, gains and losses. In some respect we have improved as a society: we have become better educated, more tolerant and aware, less sexist and racist. There is no single current of social change or progress, and different streams can flow at different speeds. Some of the contemporary improvements may be the result of social and political processes that began long ago and reflected different values. And, it may be that we are yet to experience the full costs of what is happening today: the creation of society in which growing numbers of individuals are being alienated and social institutions are increasingly failing to meet people's deepest needs (p. 9).

In accepting this understanding of our current society, Eckersley (1998) concludes that:

> …the evidence suggests the need for profound change, for a new view of ourselves in the world. The decades ahead promise 'tectonic' shifts in global civilisations – possibly cataclysmic, maybe drawn out, so that their true significance will only become apparent from a future, historical perspective. To borrow from chaos theory, how we respond in little ways today could have big outcomes tomorrow (p. 11).

Thus, Australia is at a significant "turning point" as it is considered to be in the midst of a cultural breakdown characterised by "crosscurrents of confusion and undercurrents of hope" (Mackay, 1993, pp. viii-xxxv). As Australians, we are finding ourselves in a new society where "nothing is certain, nothing is simple" (p. xix). Hence:

> …the social, cultural, political and economic landmarks which we have traditionally used as reference have either vanished, eroded or shifted. … The Australian way of life is now challenged to such an extent that growing numbers of Australians feel as if their personal identities are under threat as well. [This period of] values confusion and an elusiveness of personal, professional and organizational identity are both unsettling and difficult to deal with (Mackay, 1993, pp. 17-19).

As a way forward, Eckersley (1998) recommends shaping the future to meet human needs. In particular, we need to pose questions in respect to purpose and values as well as strategies: What do we want from life? How do we best get what we want? What values

will promote what we want, and discourage what we don't want? "We will have to work out answers to these questions ourselves, personally and as a society…ultimately, how effectively we address many of these issues currently dominating public and political debate hangs on our answers to these questions" (p. 10-11).

In a similar vein, Mackay (1993) claims that:

> One of the painful lessons we have learned from living in the age of re-definition is that reference points which depend on previously stable social conventions and political or economic institutions can become notoriously unreliable and that values that focus on the material and the external are unlikely to endure… Australians are deciding that it is time to build up the personal resources which are required if we are going to do better than merely cope with contemporary life, and do more than simply react to events as they unfold. They are on the look out for some set of principles, some ideas, some values, some beliefs, which will imbue them with a renewed sense of confidence and purpose. (pp. 236-240) [Sooner or later] we shall have to recognise that all the talk about the ideal of shared values, shared purpose and shared sense of identity comes down to the need for each of us to explore and clarify our own individual values, purpose and sense of identity (p. 306).

## 2.3    ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

Given that "organizations are microcosms of the larger society" (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 17) it is hardly surprising that organizational theory has embraced new understandings that are similar to those that reflect contemporary societal change. This new understanding posits that organizations, too, are being transformed. In short, the old organizational culture and values of the bureaucracy are disappearing and being replaced by an emerging adhocracy (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1    The current transformation in organizational culture
(Source: Shriberg, Shriberg, & Lloyd, 2002, p. 212).

| OLD ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE (Disappearing Bureaucracy) | NEW ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE (Emerging Adhocracy) |
|---|---|
| Hierarchical and specialization of labour | Transient units |
| Division of labour | Reorganization |
| Slow to change | Fast moving |
| Roles sharply defined | Roles flexible and temporary |
| Chain of command | Fluid participative roles and structures |
| Self-interested outlook | Social responsibility |
| Stable, predictable environment | Accelerating change and the need for innovation |
| Vertical power | Horizontal power |
| Communication slow and only as needed | Communication fast and lateral |
| Simple problem solving | Complex problem solving |
| Staff/line distinctions | Team approach |
| Emphasis on efficiency | Emphasis on people |

This emerging theory of organizational adhocracy proposes that the bureaucratic organizations developed in the Industrial Era are now considered to be too systematized and orderly to successfully cope with the paradoxes created by a society in flux and transformation. Such organizations focussed upon a management strategy that preferred, sought, and even expected, certainty. Motivated by a desire to establish order over disorder, there was a tendency to "rush to a solution" to "fix on one preferred outcome" (Morgan, 1996, p. 78). While this thinking may have served the Industrial Era well, its legacy is believed to be creating a disservice for the 21st Century.

> Quite suddenly a different set of circumstances is forcing us to confront alternative futures for which we are ill-equipped. The process of dysfunctional change has been autocatalytic; it is reproducing itself at an increasing rapid rate. Each successive paradigm shift implies the need to synthesise our experience and move into entirely different worldviews. To achieve that we need to develop a highly sophisticated tolerance of ambiguity: constantly challenging and undermining the mindlessness that currently prevents organizations from learning from mistakes and from focusing their energy on collaborative creativity (Harmes, 1994, p. 273).

The world has changed such that paradox and uncertainty, rather than order and predictability, are now thought to be endemic in the 21st Century (Duignan, 1998). To be successful today, organizations need to:

> Live with paradox…They have to be planned and yet be flexible, be differentiated and integrated at the same time; be mass-marketers while caring for many niches; they must introduce new technology but allow for workers to be masters of their own destiny; they must find ways to get variety and quality and fashion, and all at low-cost; they have, in short, to find a way to reconcile what used to be opposites, instead of choosing between them (Handy, 1994, p. 38).

It is suggested that the success of today's organizations depends on each individual organization being "liberated" (Limerick & Cunnington, 1993) from centralized management expectations, so that teams or individuals within each organization can appropriately and uniquely address its specific needs. This view assumes that each organization is unique so that generic management practices are not likely to address its specific needs. Just as society is now viewed as being unpredictable and non-uniform, modern organizations are also considered to be unpredictable and non-uniform (Beare, Caldwell, & Millikan, 1989).

Furthermore, a key function of this unique organization is to be continuously learning so that it is able to address its specific needs (Senge et al, 1994). Here it is argued that the organization needs to be continuously learning in order to master the new knowledge that will enable it to motivate, innovate, evaluate, solve problems and maintain productivity. With constant change deemed to be endemic in the post-industrial society, the only way to survive is as a learning organization: "To continually adapt, learn, to be change-responsive, to reinvent the reality and the future, to transform" (Rolls, 1995, p. 102).

Extending this thought, theorists now recommend a model of organization that is the embodiment of a community by being based on a shared purpose that calls on the higher aspirations of all involved (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The formation of such an organization requires shifts in deeply held beliefs and values, which, in turn, alters behaviours and results. This process begins with an "intensive search for *Purpose*, then proceeds to *Principles, People,* and *Concept*, and only then to *Structure* and *Practice* (Hock, 1999, p. 7)". Here there is a warning that:

> If we do not develop new and better concepts of organization and leadership, wherein persuasion prevails over power, reason over emotion, trust over suspicion, hope over fear, cooperation over coercion, and liberty over tyranny, we shall never harness science or technology in the service of humanity, let alone in the service of all

other creatures and the living earth on which we depend. (p. 309)

To this end, the literature advances the establishment of "developmental organizations" (Gilley & Matycunich, 2000). This organizational form is built on the realization that corporate and individual goals are inextricably linked, and that the best way to thrive in an uncertain environment is to ensure that every person in the organization is able to perform at their full potential. Thus, personal growth and development are given high priority. To foster personal growth and development, leaders of developmental organizations need to engage the principle of "organizational consistency" through a process of "values alignment" (p. 81). Here, the leaders' guiding values are not only integrated with those of the organization but are also allied with a concern for employee growth and development. It is argued that the leaders of developmental organizations must model the values that all are encouraged to adopt, so as to build the trust and collaboration that is necessary for the development of unique solutions to the modern complex problems faced by the organization (Wilson & Barnacoat, 1995). The people within such an organization collaborate with the leader because they agree with their values, and the joint mission, and not because of a commitment to the organization (Limerick & Cunnington, 1993).

## 2.4   LEADERSHIP THEORY

Aware of the current moment of flux and transformation within society, and new theories in regard to organizations, theorists advance new forms of leadership (Shriberg, Shriberg, & Lloyd, 2002). During the twentieth century, leadership became a regular subject for study. Over ninety years of accumulated research findings shaped and guided much of the conventional wisdom underpinning the "industrial paradigm of leadership" (p. 10). In short, this paradigm:

- Saw leadership as the property of the individual;

- Considered leadership primarily in the context of formal groups and organizations; and

- Equated concepts of management and leadership (p. 203)

However, since the 1970s this understanding of leadership was challenged as theorists became aware that the reality of leadership did not readily relate to these assertions.

Greenleaf (1977) questioned the abuse of power and authority in the modern organization and recommended "servant leadership" based on the hallmarks of cooperation and support. Following this thought, Burns (1978) recommended "transformational leadership" that is both relational and deals directly with producing real change. Later, Foster (1986) refined the theory of transformational leadership by advocating leadership centred on social reconciliation based on the belief that "leadership is and must be socially critical, it does not reside in an individual but in the relationships between individuals, and it is oriented towards social vision and change, not simply organizational goals (p. 46).

By 1991, Rost offered a new definition of leadership, which he labelled a "post-industrial paradigm of leadership" (p. 181). This new perspective perceives leadership as "an influencing relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 7). Thus leadership is based on influence rather than positional authority, and is characterised by collaboration and service rather than individualism and self-interest. The emphasis is on substantive attempts to transform people's attitudes, behaviours and values rather than a narrow focus on goals. Such leadership promotes the view that goals must represent the desires of both the leader and their collaborators and not just the wishes of the leader. Rational, linear and quantitative methods are replaced with fluid, participatory roles and structures, fast and lateral communication, and a respect for subjectivity and qualitative methods (Limerick, Cunnington, & Crowther, 1998).

Extending this thought in respect to post-industrial leadership, Aktouf (1992) affirms the need to develop a more 'human' organization that meets the needs of the people in the organization by paying attention to their sense of self. In particular, leaders need to restore the meaning of work by involving workers collaboratively in decisions that affect them personally and professionally. Wheatley (1992) compares leadership and the new science of quantum physics and chaos theory. In the new science she finds the grounding for participatory leadership: "the quantum realm speaks emphatically to the role of participation, even to its impact on creating reality" (p. 143). Bensimon and Neumann (1993) advance "collaborative leadership" in response to the information-rich and complex environment of the twentieth-first century. Drath and Palus (1994) ground leadership in a theory of constructivism that emphasizes an individualism and personal

uniqueness. Zohar (1997) links leadership with new understandings of spirituality. Framing the world holistically, Zohar identifies the need for leaders to create connected organizations and take into account people's emotional and spiritual dimensions as well as cognitive competencies. When read together these scholars emphasize principles of collaboration, wholeness, consensus, service, virtue, and freedom of expression.

Of particular note is that within these post-industrial approaches to leadership, there is a strong emphasis on personal values. "Capable leaders tend to be people with character shaped by a value-set finetuned through the warp and weft of life's experiences" (Duignan, 2003, p. 22). It is said that they often have "spiritual scars and calluses on their characters" from having battled with the complex and perplexing dilemmas of life and work (Bogue, 1994). Such leaders are described as being morally courageous and unafraid to question unfair and unjust processes and practices when conformity would be the easier path (Terry, 1993). They are transformed leaders with an enhanced understanding of their personal values and a passionate conviction that they are able to make a difference in the lives of all who are connected with them. Most recently, Sarros (2002) argues that the soul or essence of leadership relies on knowing personal values and includes the articulation and building of credibility through ethical and socially responsible behaviour.

Collectively these authors recognize that leadership is founded on personal values, self-understanding and self-mastery. An ability to articulate and project a vision embedded in personal values is deemed to be essential to influencing relationships. As Segal and Horne (1997) comment:

> The pursuit of self-knowledge is the work of a developed personality and a characteristic of an enlightened leader. Self-understanding is the most secure bed-rock on which to shape one's life. Nothing is more important in conditions of turbulence and change than a secure sense of self. Self-understanding also provides a basis for understanding others – it is difficult to be conscious of another's need, motivation and processes without having awareness of one's own (p. 56).

Similarly, Barker (2002) suggests that:

> It is critically important, therefore, that leaders with soul come to terms with their own core values. Values determine how we interpret things, establish priorities, make choices and reach decisions…Values guide action through orientating us in particular ways towards social and political problems; predisposing us towards certain beliefs; guiding our evaluations of others

and ourselves; and offering the means by which we rationalize our behaviour  (pp. 9, 18-19).

Furthermore, in keeping with the concept of developmental organizations, developmental leaders strive for organizational consistency through a process of values alignment (Gilley & Matycunich, 2000). To achieve values alignment, the developmental leader identifies personal values and beliefs, considers how these values and beliefs compare with the organizational goals, reflects on the impact of these values and beliefs upon employee growth and development, and makes adjustments so as to align personal values and beliefs with those of the organization and the needs of employees. "Conducting a values alignment helps developmental leaders identify what is considered important – an essential element in making decisions that impacts upon the well-being of the organization" (p. 81). Thus defined, post-industrial leadership recognizes the changeable nature of the contemporary work place and emphasises the relational, rather than the functional, aspects of the leader's role (Shriberg et al, 2002). It is "centred around inter-relationships and community, mutual respect, and the utilization of diverse expertise amongst individuals with different power, status and authority" (Blackmore, 1999, p. 207). Moreover, post-industrial leadership acknowledges the integral role that values play in influencing leadership behaviour.

## 2.5    ECONOMIC RATIONALISM

Within the wider context of social flux and transformation, the discourse of economic rationalism appears to have gained hegemonic status. In short, economic rationalism is "the doctrine that the primary role of government should be to ensure that economic efficiency within a country is maximised" (J. Wright, 2003; Pusey, 1991). Within this discourse of economic rationalism, economic considerations are believed to be most important and the free market is considered an appropriate mechanism for making economic decisions and national policy. People are reconstructed as human resources and consumers.  It is assumed that wealth would be distributed by the market, rather than by the state, and should favour deserving, hardworking, and entrepreneurial individuals rather than disadvantaged groups. The concerns of the disadvantaged, it is argued, would ultimately be addressed by the general social prosperity generated by the vibrant economic activity created by the free market. The purpose of governments within this perspective is primarily concerned with micro-economic reform to deregulate the market

rather than intervening in the economy on the basis of a supposed common good.

The ideology of economic rationalism first gained support, during the 1980s, as leaders of governments around the world struggled to deal with their ailing economies (Dwyer, 1993). The tough economic times influenced political leaders to adopt a very pragmatic approach "characterised by a no-nonsense, utilitarian attitude which drew its inspiration from a market ideology" (p. 40). In Australia, economic rationalism replaced an earlier concern for equality of opportunity. The economic recession, commencing in 1974, "reduced the means of achieving the vision of equality of opportunity. So the Commonwealth government changed its vision to *restructuring the Australian economy* to make it competitive in a hostile commercial world dominated by self-interested trading giants" (Haynes, 2002, p. 113). The sense of urgency in respect to economic restructuring was heightened between 1985 and 1987 with the depreciation of the Australian Dollar, increasing foreign debt, and a failure to balance the national deficit. In 1987, economic rationalism, with its unquestioning belief in the social benefits of 'the free market', became the dominant framework of all public policy (Dudley & Vidovich, 1995; Forsyth, 1992; Pusey, 1991). This was followed by significant macro and micro reforms, including deregulation of the financial sector, changes to the taxation policy and a general concern for implementing the philosophies of "small government"[2] and "managerialism"[3].

Since the early 1990s, critics of this economic reform agenda, such as Pusey (2003a), have voiced concerns in respect to the unethical nature of economic rationalism.

> A generation ago, economic development used to mean industrialisation. Now it means eating yourself, your culture and your social ties to intimates and strangers alike. Australians have always had a healthy regard for self-reliance, but that does not mean that they are willing to redefine themselves only as strategic actors who face each other only as competitors for scarce resources – so that the big end of town can have from them always more! Despite saturating propaganda from the marketees and the advertising industry, they also seem to know what the best international evidence has been saying about happiness and quality of life. Personal fulfilment and happiness is always a struggle, and in the end a personal accomplishment.

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[2] In the article, "Howard provides a leaner Public Service", Field (2001) reports that since the 1996 election the Federal government had cut 106,900 public service jobs through a combination of sector cutbacks and outsourcing.

[3] Managerialism "uses the concepts of the commercial world of rules and regulations that focus on work-force accountability, efficiency and effectiveness" (Haynes & Melville Jones, 1999, p. 71)

Neither government nor business can give it to us ready made. But they certainly make it harder to achieve (Pusey, 2003b, p. 1).

Countering these claims, proponents of economic rationalism (Coleman & Hagger, 2001) describe its critics as "economic irrationalists" (p. 21) who are "positively reactionary" (p. 294) and engaged in "an act of belligerence" (p. 289) by presenting "ludicrous falsehoods" (p. 290). Unfortunately, while these arguments may have some merit, "they often appear to degenerate into an erratic and inconsistent tirade that tend to be sarcastic, if not sneery, in tone. An unfortunate effect is to gradually dampen the reader's enthusiasm for the viewpoint" (Petridis, 2002, p. 110). However, this conversation between the critics and the proponents of economic rationalism does raise the possibility of ethical contradictions in public administration. Consequently, there is a renewed interest in public service ethics as evidenced in the many public sector ethics programmes across Australia (Preston, 1999). Beyond these ethics programmes, commentators (Giddens, 1998) promote the emergence of a "third way" based upon the core values of responsibility and mutuality.

## 2.6    EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The influence of economic rationalism in Australian public policy is also very evident in contemporary concerns for micro-economic reform within the education sector (Kelly, 1992). With the rise of economic rationalism, political leaders became:

> … increasingly impatient with existing notions that schools should be homelike places, partners in a broad alliance of like-minded agencies that would seek to create a more caring, open and equitable society. Such noble sentiments would not breathe life into ailing economies and help balance the budget. (Dwyer, 1993, p. 40)

Previously, schools were seen as specially favoured organizations as it was believed that they were being insulated from criticism and scrutiny (Jones, 1989). Governments were seen to be blindly funding a failing educational organization that lacked the competition required to improve. It was posited that:

> … the educational consequences of intrinsically unaccountable monopoly control were many and varied. Operating on an assured income, schools were complacent about existing practices; they failed to innovate in any constructive sense. … Not needing to be receptive to consumer influence, schools had developed an educational bias against

the business community, while themselves being, in economic terms, highly inefficient institutions. Top heavy with administrators, overstaffed with teachers, the school system had failed to respond effectively to the new market conditions created by falling rolls. It could not be regenerated itself, since with the best will in the world, teachers still could not escape the pressures of a monopoly situation. … The solution to this set of chronic problems lay, of course, in the market (Jones, 1989, p. 47).

Schools were now considered to be instruments of economic utility whereby they would be made to serve industry, the economy, and the nation as a whole (N. Wright, 2001). More specifically, educational systems were restructured so that "each school would be self-governing and, presumably, be more responsive and competitive – pressed onward to excellence by local markets." (Cooper, 1988, p. 291)

The sentiment amongst many western governments was that more money would not provide better education, but better school systems and school leadership would (Jones, 1989). It was felt that if schools were given sufficient autonomy and resources, and staff and community were involved in management, educational improvement would follow (Caldwell, 1992). However, strongly linked to this autonomy was accountability. At the local level, the school was to be accountable to its own community. While on a national level, the school was to be accountable to the government through its ministerial department. This structure was considered to be the best way for ensuring that the school not only produced and maintained an appropriate educational programme, as determined by the students and their parents, but also that the school addressed and abided by national standards and expectations of quality, excellence, and specificity in its curriculum.

As a result of the influence of economic rationalism on education, educational systems worldwide have experienced a sweeping and widespread process of educational reform or restructuring (Hughes, 2000; Leithwood et al., 1999; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998). Moreover, as a consequence of this reform agenda there have been attempts to introduce new governance structures, to open schools to greater community influence, to force schools to become more accountable, to encourage schools to justify curriculum content, to monitor teacher performance, and to introduce related changes in teaching and learning.

These comprehensive educational reforms have not only resulted in new challenges for principals, but also the multi-dimensional and inconclusive nature of these reforms has "accelerated the form and pace" (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997, p. 15) of the natural evolution of principalship. As recent research found, in the context of educational reform:

> The world of the principal is uncertain, constantly changing, and entails having to judge continuously the significance of and respond successfully to a relentless influx of local events and broad external forces. Principals work in a context that is exceedingly complex, in which human, technical, policy, organisational and pedagogical factors are constantly intertwined. As principals try to negotiate the swampy realities of this daily practice they must paradoxically be able to give both clear direction yet be responsive and flexible, be able to both listen and lead, and be deft at using both top-down and bottom-up strategies. They need to have moral purpose and vision yet be pragmatic and politically adroit. (Scott, 2003)

Principals now report being faced with new dilemmas. These are unresolvable situations that:

> … defy management in terms of securing a successful conclusion from all points of view. In meeting one set of expectations, it is more difficult to meet others. Dilemmas cannot therefore, be resolved. They can only be handled and coped with. Choices, compromises, sacrifices, trade-offs and opportunity costs are usually some ways in which dilemmas are conceived by principals. (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997, p. 18)

There are no simple either/or solutions to such dilemmas. Often choices in such situations necessitate the consideration of seeming opposites in a both/and approach to decision making (Duignan, 2003). That is to say, in most dilemma situations there are no obvious 'right' and 'wrong' choices but, rather, there are degrees of 'right' in each alternative choice. Such dilemmas require judgements that potentially involve compromises, sacrifices, trade-offs and opportunity costs in the face of "controversies in educational policy" (Haynes, 2002, p. 212)

In response to such dilemmas, there has been a new concern to bring order out of disorder. As a result, whole-school planning and "moving on to specific policies in a detailed and collaborative way" has become a feature of schools in the last 15 years (Haynes, 2002, p. 235). Modern theorists argue (Crowther, Hann, & Andrews, 2002; Gronn, 1999; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997) that positioning the principal at the centre of educational leadership and

strategic processes is ill-directed and occurs at the expense of the professional image and self esteem of teachers and, ultimately, of school reform. Rather, they recommend new roles for school principals founded on the idea of shared leadership. As a way forward, others recommend a model of school that connects people, purpose and practice (Donaldson, 2001). Again, the emphasis is on community formation as evidenced in "a relationship that mobilizes people for a moral purpose" (p. 41). This requires "relationships of mutual openness, trust, and affirmation sufficient for the players to influence and be influenced willingly by one another, and the communication of deep purposes – purposes that educators and citizens regard as morally good; and a shared belief that together the group or school can accomplish their purposes better than individuals can" (p.45). Yet again, this formation of authentic school communities requires shifts in deeply held beliefs and values, which, in turn, it is claimed, alters behaviours and results.

As a result of the influence of the educational reform agenda, there is a growing emphasis on the role of values in forming appropriate leadership behaviours. This emphasis is built upon the understanding that:

> … the image of leader as centre of power and authority is being replaced by the image of leader as servant and steward. This imagery seems especially appropriate as … schools around the world move from a state of dependency on others toward greater responsibility through self management and self government, while remaining part of a system of … education. More than ever before, the principal is steward of those values, which underpin … education (Pring, 1996, p. 89).

## 2.7 EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Developments in organizational and leadership theories are reflected in writing on educational administration. In the period from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, the theories for the improvement of educational practice were dominated by a concern for the science of educational administration (Evers & Lakomski, 1996; Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Starratt, 2003).

> The rise of science within educational administration was the result of an organized intellectual movement to replace 'naïve empiricism' with rigorous theorizing. Known as the Theory Movement, and including scholars of the calibre of Andrew Halpin and Daniel Griffiths…it sought to develop knowledge for the improvement of educational

> practice. However, by 'knowledge' was meant claims structured into theories, and by 'theory' was meant a hypothetico-deductive structure of the kind championed by the self-proclaimed logical empiricist philosopher, Herbert Feigel. (Evers & Lakomski, 1996, p. 1)

One obvious limitation of this theoretical approach is that it excludes values, since "values are not empirically testable or desirably operational" (Evers & Lakomski, 1996, p. 4). Reacting to this limitation, since the 1970s, scholars have offered alternative theories of educational administration offering a values perspective.

> The first of these [theories] was developed by the Canadian scholar, Christopher Hodgkinson (1978, 1983, 1991), and declares administration not to be a science at all, but rather, a humanism. This is because, for Hodgkinson, science deals with factual matters whereas administration is values-ladened. Hodgkinson also maintains that decision-making is central to administration. Because knowledge of logic and value constitute the essentials of decisions, administrators' training will involve some training in philosophy where these matters can be dealt with systematically. (Evers & Lakomski, 1996, p. 5)

Later the argument for "values-ladened administration" found support in critical theory (Bates, 1995; Foster, 1986).

Theorists are now focusing their writing on the application of values and ethics within educational administration. The relationship between individuals and organizations has changed so that the old controlling, hierarchical style of educational administration has given over to a more collaborative approach (Wilson & Barnacoat, 1995). School personnel and educational administrators are seeking to collaborate on the basis of shared purpose, values, and vision (Donaldson, 2001; Starrat, 2003). It is felt that the future of schooling rests on the autonomy, maturity, and confidence of the people working together in each school. This requires people to clarify their personal purpose, values, and vision. Furthermore, as each school community goes through these fundamental changes, it needs to be supported by an administrative style that builds personal autonomy, independence, and a new kind of security built upon confidence and purpose.

In a similar vein, Reitzung and Reeves (1992) recommend cultural leadership involving defining, strengthening and articulating values based upon providing a service to their school community. Duignan and Macpherson (1992) advance "educative leadership" and argue that leadership is primarily concerned with helping others to choose between right

and wrong, and not with attitudes, style or behaviours. Bogue (1994) suggests that school leadership is a venture in moral philosophy incorporating the values of honour, dignity, curiosity, candour, compassion, courage, excellence, and service. Greenfield (1995) maintains that leadership entails five "role demands" or situational imperatives: moral, instructional, political, managerial, and social/interpersonal. Lees (1995) argues that leadership in a democratic society involves a moral imperative to "promote democratic empowerment, and social justice". Blackmore (1999) describes leadership "as a social practice, not just an intellectual matter, and, as a social practice, it is also a moral and emotional matter". Finally, Starratt (2003) portrays the work of the educational leader in terms of "cultivating meaning, cultivating community and cultivating responsibility".

Extending these thoughts, Dimmock & O'Donoghue (1997) argue that value awareness is a key attribute of a contemporary principal. For Ramsey (1999) today's school principal is very values dependent since, without a values base, principalship can become "self-gratifying and personal aggrandizement in action". Day (2000) offers an approach to principalship that is "people centred, achievement oriented and values-led". Finally, Duignan (2003) calls for principals to be "capable leaders" who have the capability to make sensible and wise judgements when faced with new and changing situations, often involving dilemmas and value conflicts. The nature of their principalship is seen as an outcome of their philosophy of life, which provides them with an influential set of values that informs their work. Through the principal's values, acceptable expectations are placed on others within the school community and a more effective educational organization is created. Both Ford, Hobby and Lees (2000) and the Hay Group (2001) comment on research by McBer for the National College of School Leadership (NCSL), which reports that at the heart of their Model of Excellence is a core of strongly held and enacted values. These sentiments are supported in the findings from a recent Australian study of the challenges faced by leaders of contemporary frontline service organizations such as health and education, which indicated that the most difficult challenges to such leaders present themselves as dilemmas, paradoxes, or tensions that are, usually, people-centred and involve a contestation of values and/or an ethical contradiction (Duignan, 2003).

## 2.8    CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH

Given this interest in values within the context of principalship, it is surprising that there seems to be little empirical research in respect to the place of values in leadership (Sarros et al., 1999) and educational administration (Begley, 2000). A review of the Educational Research Information Clearinghouse (ERIC) database revealed 9033 documents associated with the study of the role of the school principal. Of these, 3761 were written between 1990 and 2002. Within these 3761 documents, only 70 focussed on values and principalship. This relatively small number of studies exploring the influence of values on the role of the principal is mirrored within research documents stored in the Digital Dissertations database. Here, 782 research dissertations were aligned to the role of the school principal during the years of 1990 to 2002, and only 23 focussed on the topic of values within this role.

A further analysis of the area of inquiry for each of the 70 ERIC research documents that linked the study of values with that of the role of the principal, suggests that there are possibly 5 categories of such studies. It may be argued that each of the studies focuses attention on one of the following influences on principalship behaviour:

1. External cultural values
2. External predetermined values
3. Conflicts between values
4. Internal predetermined values
5. Internal personal values

Studies that fall into the first, and by far the largest, category of external cultural values explore the role of the principal in dealing with issues caused by various cultural values. Many of the studies (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, & Capper, 1999; Maxcy, 1998; Stolp, 1994; Wong, 1998) take a generalist perspective by reviewing the influence of non-specific cultural values in determining a number of important leadership responsibilities for the principal. Other studies narrow the focus onto such specific cultural values as those associated with the Catholic Church (Arthur, 1998) or Mexican American communities (T. A. Campbell, 1996). However, the largest number of studies within this category concentrates on how principals ensure that their practices enhance the

development of democratic values within the school community (Heller, 1996; Hoyle, 1994; Oakes, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 2000; Wesson & Kudlacz, 2000).

The second category of studies evaluates principal performance against a finite, specific and predetermined set of values. These studies aim either to see whether or not the participating principals were achieving the predetermined value within their leadership practice, or to determine the most suitable ways that principals could accommodate predetermined values. Some of the predetermined values that were explored in either of these ways included that of collaboration and shared power (Wraga, 2001), partnering (Davies, 2000), character (Schuttloffel, 1999), valuing differences (Walker & Quong, 1998), and ethical behaviour (Greenfield, 1990).

Studies in the third category investigate the impact of conflicting values on the role performance of the principal. Three of these studies deal with a value conflict situation in which one source of values within the conflict was external to the principal, such as economic rationalist values (Dempster, Freakley, & Parry, 2001), school goals values (Craig, 1993), or community values (Yatvin, 1992). Complementing this research effort, the study by Walker (1995) explores the ethical problems of conflicting personal values confronting a principal. This particular study highlights an understanding that every situation confronting a principal is a complex mixture of diverse stimuli and possible outcomes. This means that many different personal values come into play, activated by the different elements of the stimuli or the various perceived outcomes from all possible responses. In most cases, there is value conflict rather than value alignment.

The fourth category of studies moves the focus of attention on values away from those associated with the achievement of certain prerequisite external behaviours of the principal to more of an internal focus. These studies explore the influence that certain general affective values have on the effectiveness of the principal's leadership. For instance, Kropiewnicki and Shapiro (2001) and Brubaker (1995) investigated the effectiveness of the ethic of care in enhancing the leadership role of the participating principals within their respective studies. Sergiovanni (1994; 1995) explored the concepts of virtue and shared values within the practice of principal leadership. Meanwhile, Murphy (1998) explored the principal's role from the perspective of a social architect and endeavoured to determine what values within the principal aided the achievement of this outcome. Finally, Petersen (1997) sought to explain the principal's aim of achieving

commitment to a shared purpose with their followers through a values-based style of leadership.

The fifth and final category of research focuses on the personal values that influence the principal's behaviour within their respective studies. In this case, the values sought within the behaviour of the principal are not predetermined. Research (Ovard, 1990) shows that the increased demands of accountability and expectancy in educational leadership meant that the contemporary school principal is called upon to rely more heavily upon personal value judgements in decision-making processes. Complimenting this finding, research by Buell (1992) found that new principals, who did not know their own personal values, were vulnerable and uncertain in their decision-making processes.

However, despite these findings in respect to personal values and the principal's behaviour, there appears to be an area of omission or a "blank spot" (Heck & Hallinger, 1999) in respect to studies that directly focus on the influence of personal values on the principal's behaviour. Of the 70 studies identified in ERIC under the topic of values and principalship, only 3 studies (Campbell-Evans, 1991; Laible & Harrington, 1998; Moorhead & Nediger, 1991) document attempts to synthesize the array of values that influence a principal's behaviour. Elsewhere, this *blank spot* within empirical research has been considered problematic and there has been a call to redress this omission through further research (Begley, 2000; Strachan, 1999).

## 2.9    CONCLUSION

This initial review of the literature situates contemporary principalship within the micro-context of educational reform and educational administration. Beyond this immediate context, the influence of economic rationalism and emergent theories of organization and leadership is acknowledged. Also, the influence of the current moment of flux and social transformation during this time of cultural breakdown is noted. People have a universal sense of constant change and uncertainty. Consequently, they have come to expect paradoxes, dilemmas and seemingly unresolvable situations in organizational life. This is due to a clash of values and/or the existence of ethical contradictions as society moves to a new cultural consensus. To this end, theorists recommend that leaders facilitate values

clarification and values alignment exercises to ensure the ongoing development towards this new cultural consensus.

Thus there is a call for a new type of principal, one who is "people centred, achievement oriented and values-led" (Day, 2000). In the expression, "values-led", the use of the word "led" is considered to be significant and informative. In a general sense, to be led is to be provided with purpose and direction for one's action (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2000). However, within a contemporary understanding of leadership, what it means to be led also includes a belief that the purpose and direction has to be acceptable to the person being led. Leadership is now thought to involve "an influencing relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1991, p. 7). Being led implies that one is willingly directed towards a foreseeable aim or purpose. People will only allow themselves to be led if they sense they are being led towards where they want to go.

When this understanding is applied to the expression 'values-led principalship', it suggests that the principal consciously adopts certain values because they are seen as providing desired purpose and direction. In other words, the principal is consciously and deliberately allowing particular values to influence behaviour in order to achieve desired outcomes. In this sense, the concept of a values-led principal assumes that:

1. The principal can come to know what are the most suitable values to provide purpose and direction to his or her behaviour; and that
2. These values can be readily inculcated into the principal's natural valuations in order to positively influence his or her behaviour.

Inherent in this assumption is an understanding that the principal also can come to know what values would be unsuitable for guiding his or her behaviour, and can discard or suppress the influence of these particular values. In sum, the concept of values-led principalship suggests that, in some way, the principal can consciously, deliberately and eclectically choose certain values to positively influence his or her educational leadership.

Intrigued by these thoughts, the researcher looked for contemporary research to support the notion of values-led principalship and the influence of values on the principal's

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behaviour.  This review revealed a paucity of contemporary research focusing on values-led principalship. Moreover, less than a handful of studies investigated the role that personal values play in influencing the behaviour of principals. I also noted an acknowledgement of this omission or 'blank spot' within contemporary research and that this situation was considered undesirable (Begley, 2000; Buell, 1992; Strachan, 1999). Consequently, this research study's initial concern for exploring effectiveness within principalship was narrowed to a research focused directly on the role that personal values play in influencing the behaviour of principals.  The purpose of this research study was to address the current blank spot in values-led principalship research. The next step in the learning journey involved a more in-depth review of the literature in respect to values and behaviour. This review is based on the assumption that the notion of values-led principalship implies a link between the principal's personal values and educational leadership behaviour.

# CHAPTER 3

## TOWARDS THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS: UNDERSTANDING VALUES-LED BEHAVIOUR

### 3.1    INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, it was argued that in an era of flux and social transformation, as evidenced in the current concern for educational reform, a new form of principal is required, one who is values-led. Hence, Chapter 3 presents a more in-depth review of the literature specific to values and behaviour. This choice of literature is based on the assumption that the notion of values-led principalship necessitates a relationship between the principal's values and his or her behaviour. In particular, this review of the literature explores the nature of values, the link between personal values and behaviour, and the process for attaining self-knowledge. This exploration leads to a comprehensive description of values. As such, it not only highlights the nature of values but also examines the level of consciousness people have of their values and explores how it is possible for values to influence behaviour. Here, the intention is to 'unpack' the notion of "values-led behaviour" leading to developing a conceptual framework that illustrates the link between personal values and behaviour. This conceptual framework then informs the research questions that, in turn, guide the methodological choices within this study.

### 3.2    DESCRIBING VALUES

Within the literature, it is acknowledged that the word 'values' is a commonly used but rarely defined concept. Here, it is claimed that:

> People regularly make impassioned appeals to some value or values for a variety of noble-sounding but nebulous purpose. Such pleas are full of emotive allure but, more often than not, devoid of any specific cognitive content. This cognitive deficiency hardly advances the cause of understanding. (Zimmerman, 2001, p. 2)

As a first step towards overcoming this lack of clarity about the concept of values, it is noted that values are thought to be in every person's feelings, cognitions, experiences, and emotions (Xiaohe, 1999). Although this insight situates values as being an integral part of

the person, it does not help to specify their nature or function. To this end, scientists propose that while animals act on instinct and are pre-programmed how to respond to stimuli by nature, people act on free will and choose for themselves how to respond to any given stimuli in accordance with their values (Gaus, 1990). Thus, human values are important determinants of personal choices (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002).

In order to understand how values are able to help determine personal choices it is necessary to explore further the presumed nature of values. The literature presents the view that values represent the importance or worth that an individual attaches to particular activities or objects or an outcome (Gellermann, Frankel, & Ladenson, 1990; Graeber, 2001; Zimmerman, 2001). Values are the person's personal yardstick for judging objects and events as being desirable (Kiros, 1998) and, thereby, influence the selection of certain behaviours (Barberio, 1997). In other words, values are personal cognitive standards as to what should be desired, what is important and cherished, and what standards of conduct or existence are personally or socially acceptable (Westwood & Posner, 1997). In the seminal work of Rokeach (1973, p. 5), a value is defined as:

> … an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.

These insights present the view that values are a uniquely internal human concept that affects much of what a person chooses to do in response to external factors.

Although the value is an internal phenomenon, the motivating force to adopt the value is seen as emanating from a diverse range of external sources. Individuals are the constant recipients of value-determining forces beyond their control or even beyond their awareness (Collier, 1999; Hodgkinson, 1996). Individuals are continually influenced by external forces to adopt particular values as their own. Thus, these forces are said to be sources of values.

Extending this thought, Hodgkinson (1996) proposed the following analytical model as a means of diagrammatically representing the different sources of values that have the potential to influence a person to adopt certain values as their own at any given time (Figure 3.1).
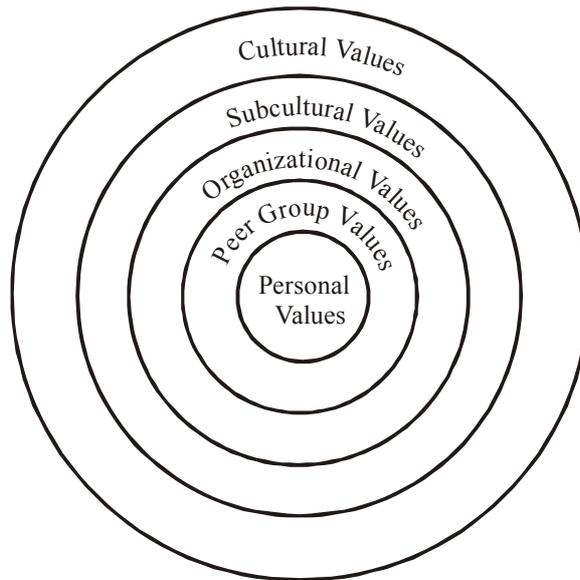
Figure 3.1    A diagrammatical representation of the different sources
of values (Source: Hodgkinson, 1996).

In this representation, the outer cultural values are those aligned with the more general environment and include those associated with the implicit and explicit values of the overall culture as presented and promoted by the mainstream political and social systems. Below these values are the sub-cultural and cultural values, which are the values of the environment within which the person lives and works. The sub-cultural values are associated with the person's immediate environment and would be those raised by relevant components of the person's total social contacts. These sub-cultural values modify and modulate the overall downward impress of the culture upon the individual person. The next pair of values, the peer group values and the organizational values, is associated with the person having to live and work with other people. Immediately impacting on the sub-cultural values are the formal values of the person's working environment as expressed in the overt and covert goals, policies, procedures and purposes of the organization. Next, the peer group values are those that are promoted by the other people with whom the person has some formal association. This is the group value orientation of the immediate work or social group that the person belongs to. The final, inner core represents the personal value orientations that have already been inculcated into the person's being. Through personal observations, experiences, and influences people are placed in a position of regularly creating preferences about what is best for their Self. Within this process they form their personal values.

Interestingly, it is argued (Hodgkinson, 1996; Hultman & Gellermann, 2002) that since everyone seeks to maximize their own welfare, it is these personal values that provide the strongest influence upon the individual. In today's pluralistic society, people are less likely to be influenced by cultural, sub-cultural, organisational, or peer group values. The adoption of values is very much a personal choice where personal values are the dominant values. Hence, this source of values is positioned at the centre of this model and, thereby shows that personal values are antecedent to all other sources of values.

The existence of these various sources of values raises a potential problem for this study into how values can lead a person. Arguably, it would be complicated, if not confusing, to examine the nature of each of these sources of values and the relative degree to which each of these values can influence a person's behaviour. A holistic exploration considering all of these sources of values would necessitate devising some complex means of not only being able to filter out the dominant source of each value, but also of being able to accurately align certain value sources with particular values and specific behaviours. Such a multifaceted exploration might well result in misrepresentations and misunderstandings. At the same time, focusing on only one source of values would greatly reduce its complexity while enhancing its clarity and accuracy. Given, as has already been mentioned, that personal values are considered to have the strongest influence upon the individual (Hodgkinson, 1996), it would seem prudent to concentrate this study upon this particular source of values. Hence, the remainder of this literature review will be confined to further exploring personal values.

## 3.3    HOW PERSONAL VALUES INFLUENCE BEHAVIOUR

Personal values and behaviour are not isolated phenomenon, but are two components of a single entity, the Self. It is commonly suggested that the Self is constituted from the integration of one's self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and behaviours (Hodgkinson, 1996; Hultman & Gellerman, 2002; Osborne, 1996). The integration of all of these components of the Self influences the manner in which the individual thinks about, perceives, and responds to his or her world.  These components come together to form the core of the Self, and the complexity of the Self evolves from these through the addition of other cognitive, psychological, social and kinesthetic processes.

These components are discussed more fully in literature from psychology, behavioural psychology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, and values theory.

### 3.3.1    Self-Concept

Self-concept is described as the composite of ideas, feelings and attitudes that people have about themselves (Woolfolk, 1995). This composite of ideas forms one's self-description profile; the individual as understood by the individual. The self-description profile is based on the multitude of roles and attributes that one considers combine together in one's total Self (Fox, 1997). One's self-concept is not merely what one knows about one's Self, it also involves knowing the relationships between all that one knows. It is the image, the belief, the picture that one has of one's Self. It enables the person to be able to differentiate themselves from others, and to distinguish their own individuality with respect to what they see in others. The self-concept represents a relatively stable but flexible integration of self-images that articulate 'who' individuals believe they are and 'who' they believe they are not.

Self-conceptions are cognitive appraisals of attributes about one's Self (Hattie, 1992). People continually search for sensory feedback on which to base personal appraisals about their Self. These appraisals are continually examined, and if the concepts are not confirmed, they are either changed or the evidence is disregarded. Confirmation usually tells the person little about whether or not his or her self-concept is correct, but it can serve as a reinforcer and make acceptance of disconfirmation more difficult. While disconfirmatory information is more likely to cause a person to change his or her behaviour, the tendency is for humans to disregard such information and to seek only positive reinforcement. People generally have a conservative self-perception that tends to preserve reactions and patterns of behaviours, which are already established, and to maintain pre-existing knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and hypotheses (Aronson, 1995).

This conservative tendency in people is derived from a strong desire for a predictable, achievable, and safe purpose in their lives and it is through his or her self-concept that this purpose is achieved (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). Purpose represents one's reason for living. Affirming one's purpose is said to celebrate one's personhood and evokes a sense of deep happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment. On the other hand, denying one's purpose

can cause frustration, pain, and a sense of loss. At the core of their being, each person has a desire to be all that they can be as a person by seeking wholeness and completeness. The self-concept, as a source of purpose, represents some futuristic personal state; a future vision rather than a current reality. The link between one's present reality and one's self-concept is represented by one's personal vision. One's vision is in service to one's purpose, which is to realize one's self-concept. A clear sense of purpose is needed before one can effectively pursue a vision. The vision produces optimism and hope, shielding the person against uncertainty and disappointment, and enabling the person to implement behaviours that appear to make the achievement of their purpose more likely.

Hence, people's behaviour is said to be agential in that it has a specific purpose (Bandura, 1997). People's behaviour is not aimless and accidental but, rather, it is initiated in order to achieve desired outcomes. The person's behaviour seeks to progressively bring about the realization of his or her self-concept. This means that the very core of one's Self, the self-concept, is connected to one's behaviour. It also means that one is always heading towards a more complete realization of one's self-concept. The closer one comes to one's vision, the closer one comes to realizing one's self-concept, the greater one's sense of agency and worth, and the greater is one's sense of self-esteem, the next component of the Self to be explored.

### 3.3.2   Self-Esteem

The link between the self-concept and self-esteem has been developed in the literature. When the person regards certain aspects of his or her own self-concept as being important then there will be consequential effects on their self-esteem (Hattie, 1992). In other words, a person's self-esteem is his or her personal evaluation of how closely one is realizing their own self-concept (Woolfolk, 1995) and the awareness of all the good possessed by the Self (R. N. Campbell, 1984). It is a global construct that provides an overall impression of the degree to which the individual perceives him- or herself to be a good person based on the criteria used to determine good, which has been established within their self-concept (Fox, 1997).

Self-esteem is a relatively permanent positive or negative feeling about one's Self that may become more or less positive or negative as individuals encounter and interpret

successes and failures in their daily lives (Osborne, 1996). Such an understanding encompasses the view that self-esteem undergoes periodic review or revision in the face of new information. Although self-esteem is a self-perpetuating construct, this does not mean that it cannot be revised, but only that such a revision is very difficult to achieve. This raises the awareness that self-esteem can fluctuate based on the successes and failures that one encounters over the short and long term (Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harloe, 1993). Self-esteem is not something that one either does or does not have; it is more like a continuum along which one's level ebbs and flows. Individuals experience differences in quantity and quality of self-esteem. Whereas, some individuals can seem to have an abundance of high self-esteem, others can appear to have consistently low self-esteem and are vulnerable to the slightest challenge to their feelings of agency.

Another important observation about self-esteem is that it is a source of motivation to the self. The Self can respond defensively or non-defensively to one's perceived feeling of self-esteem. This is in keeping with the aforementioned understanding that human behaviour is agential, it is purposeful and intentional, it sets out to achieve a desired outcome, it is self-motivated behaviour (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002; Hodgkinson, 1996). In this way, the next aspect of the Self is considered to be that of motives.

### 3.3.3 Motives

The literature describes a motive as a mental function that is cause and director of behaviour and, at the same time, a seeker of information to direct and confirm behaviour to ensure it has achieved the desired outcome (Cavalier, 2000; Wagner, 1999). The Self is not just a reactive entity but, rather, the Self directs action as well as seeks information (Osborne, 1996). People act in order to achieve a motive even though they may be fully aware, partially aware, or totally unaware of their motive (Hodgkinson, 1996). Motives can be generally viewed as conscious reasons or non-cognitive drives for action. There is a duality to motives in that they not only initiate behaviour but they also direct behaviour.

In general, the motives that may happen to influence the behaviour of a person are not constant. A search of the literature on the Self reveals that at any moment an individual can be influenced by an extensive list of potential motives depending upon the conditions and circumstances of the situation (Griseri, 1998; Hormuth, 1990). However, a consistent

and universal motive within every person is said to be that of self-enhancement (Osborne, 1996). The motive of self-enhancement illustrates how the individual strives for a stable Self so as to get positive reinforcement of their Self in order to enhance their self-esteem and to move closer to achieving their self-concept.

One's motives influence all subsequent components of one's Self, but are themselves directly linked to one's self-esteem and, in turn, to one's self-concept. The manner by which one's motives influence all of the subsequent components of one's Self is that they make certain outcomes far more personally desirable and important than others (Hodgkinson, 1996). Motives assign a particular value to all perceived possible behaviours. The Self then initiates behaviours to achieve those outcomes that are considered to have the highest value for the person. Motives are a source of values since they raise the importance of particular values at the expense of other values. Therefore, the next component to be considered is that of values

### 3.3.4 Personal Values

The personal choices humans make in life are dependent upon their personal values (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). Once motives assign preference to certain choices, because they are deemed to ultimately achieve outcomes that will enhance one's self-esteem and bring the person closer to their self-concept, those choices have an increased value to the person. Personal values are seen as the importance or worth that an individual attaches to particular activities, objects, or outcomes (Gellermann et al., 1990). These are principles and standards that are considered worthwhile and intrinsically desirable (Kiros, 1998) and, therefore, are conceptions of what is ultimately good, proper, or desirable in human life (Graeber, 2001). Moreover, personal values are individually selected preferences for achieving success (Sacks, 1997) and influence the behaviour of the individual in every aspect of their daily activities (Sarros et al., 1999).

Personal values are said to arise in the everyday experiences of self-formation and self-transcendence (Joas, 2000) and are derived from the particular person's education, life experience, circumstance, biology, genealogy, and culture (Hodgkinson, 1996). These personal values are thought to be introjected, or chosen non-reflectively and uncritically, into the person's subliminal processes (Kiros, 1998) rather than being consciously

selected by the individual. People are not born with a preference for particular values, nor do they knowingly adopt new values. Rather, people unknowingly acquire particular values since they are non-consciously calculated as enabling the person to accomplish preferred outcomes (Sarros et al., 1999).

Although they are unknowingly adopted and reside within the subliminal processes of the person, values are dependent upon the consciousness of the person for their existence (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). The perceived personal benefit of a potential value has to be registered in the consciousness of the person prior to the natural non-conscious values adoption processes being initiated. It is, therefore, argued that the way a person acquires values is dependent upon, and limited by, his or her consciousness (Brandt, 1996). As the human person develops from infancy to maturity, there is a corresponding development of consciousness, and as consciousness develops, the person becomes aware of an increasingly wide range of value options. As a person's consciousness perceives that a value will produce personally beneficial outcomes, it will stimulate the non-conscious value adoption processes in order to inculcate the particular value into the their being. In this way, one's developing consciousness is said to guide one's non-conscious value adoption process.

Since a person's values are dependent upon his or her consciousness, this means that these values are unique to the person (Hodgkinson, 1996). People's consciousness is the way things seem to them in contrast to the way they really are. While all people have similar kinds of experience, the difference is in how they consciously perceive their level of satisfaction. Each person sees a unique and specific view of their world due to the influence of his or her conscious perceptions. Similarly, within each unique and specific view of the world, each person attributes different values to the same experience or the same value to different experiences (Brandt, 1996).

Thus, the person's consciousness creates a unique set of values within each person such that his or her personal values can be said to define them to Self and others (Hodgkinson, 1996). Personal values become a personal standard that guides actions, influences attitudes towards objects, and affects perceptions of reality. A person's values underpins their ideology, their presentations of Self to others, their evaluations, justifications, and judgements, their comparisons of Self with others, and their attempts to influence others.

Once embraced, one's values become a part of one's identity (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). It is difficult for a person to think of themselves apart from their values despite often being unaware of their actual values. Every decision a person makes is based on values, whether they are consciously aware of it or not (Malphurs, 1996).

In addition, personal values can be said to define the person to the Self and others because personal values are continuous variables (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). Personal values are not discrete either/or choices between two opposite values. Rather, there exists a continuum of progressively changing valuations in between the two opposing extreme values, and each person who chooses to adopt this value, will have an individually selected valuation that lies somewhere along this continuum. Thus, people can vary in the strength of their commitment to a particular value, and this is reflected in where they would place their level of emphasis for this value along the continuum between the value and its opposite. Two people may share the same value but the strength of their commitment to the value is likely to be quite different. This means that not only will every individual have their own particular values that they embrace because of the uniqueness of their consciousness, but also they will have their own level of emphasis along the value continuum for each of their chosen values. Hence each person has a very individualistic set of personal values that contains quite a range and diversity of personal values.

However, attempting to implement all of one's range and diversity of personal values can cause conflict within the person. It has been estimated that a person can be influenced by between thirty and forty values in his or her value system (Rokeach, 1973). Hence, it is quite possible for two or more personal values to conflict with each other in any given situation that he or she might face. When such value conflicts arise, the person has to make a choice about the order of priority amongst their personal values. Such personal choices result in the person automatically forming an internal value system (Gaus, 1990): an organization of values in terms of their relative importance (Unger, 1990). This understanding raises questions regarding the nature of a personal values system.

Addressing this question, Hodgkinson (1996) proposed the following analytical model for understanding how a person develops a personal value system. This model subdivides personal values into three separate categories: rational, sub-rational, and trans-rational

values, with the rational values being further divided into the categories of values based on consensus and those based on consequences. Figure 3.2 endeavours to diagrammatically represent Hodgkinson's analytical model of personal values.
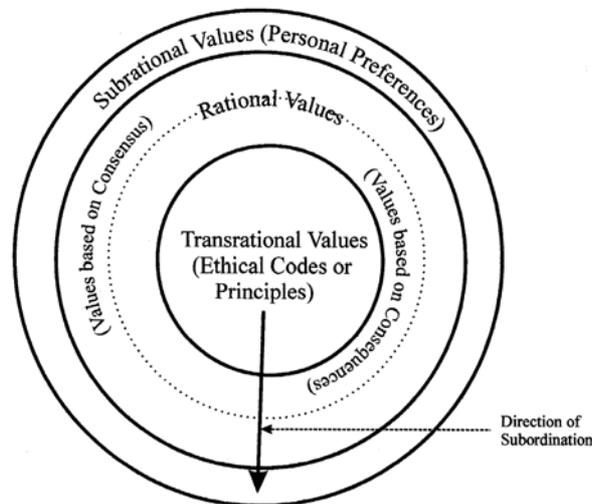


Figure 3.2    A diagrammatical representation of Hodgkinson's analytical model of personal values

The most basic values are those within the sub-rational category, which includes values related to personal preference or self-interest. These are values that are thought to be good for the person. Knowing what is good is said to come from impulse, instinct, or introspection and is a natural preference. Often what is good is aligned with what is desired by the person and can include outcomes that are pleasurable, enjoyable, and likable. These values are called sub-rational as they are grounded in the person's affective preferential processes such that they are self-justified rather than rationally justified. What is good for the individual is not always what is good for others. Doing what one ought to do, rather than what is good to do, is doing what is right. A person, wanting to do what is right, aims to do what is best for all: a collective responsibility preference. Doing what is right means behaving in a proper, moral and duty bound way. Since it is believed that most adult people will choose to do what is right, rather than what is good only for their Self, it is argued that these sub-rational values are subordinate to all other personal value types.

The remaining three types of personal values, within Hodgkinson's model, are centred on what the person considers to be right rather than good. The first of these values, concerned with what is right, is that of consensus. These values are formed by expert

opinion, or the will of the majority within a collective determining what is right (Begley, 1999). On the other hand, if upon reasonable analysis of the consequences entailed within a particular behaviour, some future resultant state of affairs is held to be desirable, then this is deemed a consensus value judgement (Hodgkinson, 1991). Both consensus and consequence values enlist the human faculty of reason, whether it is to understand and accept an expert's opinion, or to determine a particular opinion to be that held by the majority of people, or to assess contingencies. In each of these cases the values are socially grounded for they depend on collective justification. This is quite obvious for consensus values as these are determined by the collective opinion. The analysis of consequences also presupposes a social context and a given scheme of social norms, expectations and standards. If the reasoning involved with a consequence value were used purely to determine the odds on an expedient basis in order to maximize individual hedonistic satisfaction then this would not be a consensus value judgement, but rather a preferential value judgement.

The final level of personal values, within Hodgkinson's model, is the trans-rational values. While the rational values of consensus and consequences normally subordinate sub-rational values, they are themselves subordinated by trans-rational values. Values adopted at this level are grounded in principle rather than rationality and take the form of ethical codes, injunctions or commandments (Begley, 1999). They are not scientifically verifiable and cannot be justified by logical, rational argument. Rather, they are based on will or faith, and not on reason. These values can be derived from a postulated moral insight, an asserted religious revelation, an aesthetic sense of individual drama, or an ethic of enlightened self-interest. Trans-rational values have a quality of absoluteness: their adoption implies some kind of act of loyal responsibility involving faith, belief, or commitment. They invoke a quality of self-sacrifice or self-transcendence, a willingness in the extreme to give one's all for the value at stake.

While all of these values come together to form the individual's personal values system, which, in turn plays a key role in guiding his or her actions, resolving conflicts, and giving direction and coherence to life, people are normally not aware, or only partially aware of their values (Hultman & Gellerman, 2002). Values are often tacit, subliminal, intangible, inner influences on one's behaviour (Sarros et al., 1999). Thus, being invited to determine one's values is not a simple and straightforward task. This means that not

only are people often unaware of many of their values, but also when they endeavour to openly clarify these, there is a strong possibility that they may unintentionally or intentionally state false values (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001). People can lay claim to values that, in reality, are not the values that are truly impacting on their behaviour. This tendency for people to make false judgements about their personal values has resulted in the formation of three categories of personal values: espoused personal values that people say they value; actual personal values that truly guide behaviour; and desired personal values that people would like to have guiding their behaviour.

The likelihood of people making false judgements about their own true personal values raises the potential for the formation of inaccurate understandings when exploring personal values. Hultman and Gellermann (2002, p. 15) suggest that by using the objective criteria of balance, viability, alignment and authenticity, it is possible to assess more clearly the strength of one's personal values. A brief outline of each of these criteria follows.

(a) Balance

Balance is taken to mean the degree to which a value is given proper emphasis relative to that of other values (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). Inspecting the balance in one's values can help to determine the relative importance of a particular value and the type of values that are likely to be influencing the behaviour of a person. Since values are continuous variables, and the degree to which a person is committed to a particular value can exist anywhere in between its two opposites, they often appear as dichotomous. Hence, when a person stands up for something they are often opposed to its opposite. Also, people are often more able to acknowledge their values by stating the opposing dimension of the value. It seems easier to state what one does not like or hold important, than what one does like or hold important. In this way, the balance, or relative difference, between one's value and one's avoidance of its opposite gives guidance as to the importance of the value. The greater this difference, the more important is the value to the person.

(b)   Viability

Viability is the degree to which the value is workable within the given circumstances (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). People's values are not necessarily aligned with what the person says are their values but, rather, by the values that are inherent in what the person does. As has been previously noted, values are introjected phenomena within the person, and are formed from personal motives based on one's level of self-esteem in relation to one's self-concept. When considering the viability of the person's stated values, it is argued that well-founded and authentic personal values allow the person to use and develop their abilities and make a contribution within an atmosphere of self-respect and acceptance. Viable values must be based on realistic motives, be in tune with current realities, and must produce the most suitable behaviour. The degree to which a person's espoused values are in alignment with their actual values, as witnessed within their behaviours, provides some indication of their viability.

(c)   Alignment

Alignment is said to be the degree to which compatibility exists among an individual's values (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). At an intrapersonal level, the alignment of one's values is reflected in the congruence, consistency and integration between one's values and one's beliefs and behaviour. There is an understandable link between one's values and what one believes and does. At an interpersonal level, the degree of alignment is seen by the amount of conflict confronting the person. It is proposed that the misalignment between one's espoused personal values and one's beliefs and behaviours causes conflict.

(d)   Authenticity

Authenticity is defined as the degree to which values are used in a genuine and sincere manner (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). Authenticity means owning one's values, offering the real reasons for one's actions; inauthenticity means offering a plausible but false reason, of incorrectly claiming acceptable or

idealized values for what one does. Inauthentic values manifest themselves as defensive behaviours.

In sum, personal values are the manifestation of the person's motives. In its endeavour to reinforce one's sense of self-esteem, the Self constructs a specific system of motives that in turn place varying amounts of value and importance on certain beliefs (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002). These values play a key role in guiding action, resolving conflicts, and giving direction and coherence to life. They encourage the individual in their daily performance and in the formation of long-term goals. Personal values underpin the person's attitudes and perceptions about life goals and way of life (Kagan, 1998) by forming beliefs about their self, others, the environment, and the world, and it is upon these beliefs that the person chooses to act (Malphurs, 1996). This would suggest, then, that beliefs are the next component of the Self.

### 3.3.5 Beliefs

Values beget beliefs and it is due to one's beliefs that the person acts in certain ways (Malphurs, 1996). Beliefs present individuals with a mental picture about the causal route that will lead from where they are to a desired destination, and also on how probable it is that the desired destination will be achieved if they take that route (Brandt, 1996). A belief is a conviction or an opinion that one holds to be true, based on limited evidence or proof. It is something one trusts or has faith in, and can be applied to singular or collective phenomena. When a person is making a decision about how to react to a given situation, he or she is normally not reviewing the complete set of data about the immediate reality, or all of the possibilities for the future, or the full array of different alternative plans for responding. Rather, they activate a set of trusted and proven beliefs, a pre-existing collection of convictions and opinions, which allows for a faster analysis of all of the information and a more immediate response.

The literature also suggests that there are different forms of beliefs. Beliefs can include one's attitudes (Rokeach, 1973). An attitude is a special type of belief that describes the evaluative properties of an object (Aronson, 1995). An attitude is a stored evaluation whereby an object, person, behaviour or reality is predetermined as being good or bad. Beliefs can also include one's perceptions. One's perceptions are the beliefs that one has

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about what they see in themselves, others, their environment, and the world about them (Plous, 1993). Perception is a belief, and not a reality, because it is heavily influenced by what one expects to see. Even when the observed reality is immediate, concrete and, seemingly, incontestable, people view, analyse, and judge it through preconceived notions and biases. Thus, one's reality is a personal construction based on beliefs rather than a given imposed upon the mind of the person.

Once one's beliefs are firmly established, they resist change and become self-perpetuating (Maddux & Lewis, 1995). People often construct their social worlds through their relatively stable system of beliefs, in order to maximize the receipt of positive information about themselves and minimize or avoid negative information (Aronson, 1995). In this way, people endeavour to build and perpetuate a positive self-perception by associating with others who help to maintain one's preconceived beliefs. This helps the person to feel competent by comparison and puts them in situations that both increase opportunities for displays of competence and obscure areas of ineffectiveness (Duval, Silvia, & Lalwani, 2001).

Finally, beliefs are predispositions to act in response to countless issues of living and life-style (Hodgkinson, 1996). A person's beliefs cause him or her to not only behave, but to behave in a unique way. Behaviours, then, are the final component of the Self.

### 3.3.6   Behaviours

Human behaviour represents actions taking place in the observable public collective realm that are formed from personal values and motives, and influenced by beliefs (Gable & Wolf, 1993). As already mentioned, human behaviour is believed to be agential as it sets out to achieve a desired outcome (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002; Hodgkinson, 1996). People act in order to accomplish some personal benefit, which is derived from either the outcome of the act itself, or from the process of completing the act even though the outcome may not be pleasant or offer any personal gain.

Unlike all other components of the Self, normally the person is fully cognizant of all of their behaviours (Bandura, 1977). This does not mean that behaviours are rational and always achieve logical purposes. There is no absolute certainty or recipe to guide human

behaviour so that individuals must discover their own purpose (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). The person monitors and observes their own behaviour in order to give self-reflective feedback on whether or not it is achieving its desired purpose. However, this does not mean that the behaviour is predictable and consistent with others, who may be sharing in the same reality (Gable & Wolf, 1993).

Human behaviour is a window into understanding the human self (Osborne, 1996). It is the sole component of the Self that can be fully observed by others. Human behaviours occur as observable facts connected by inference through chains of cause and effect to underlying, inner world phenomena of, firstly, beliefs, then values, followed by motives, self-esteem, and ultimately one's self-concept (Hodgkinson, 1996). It is in how one sees their own behaviour that one determines whether or not their self-concept is being fully or partially realized, and whether or not any changes are necessary.

## 3.4    GAINING SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF PERSONAL VALUES

Given that the phenomenon of personal values has been described as an integral component of the Self, the process of gaining knowledge of personal values is about gaining knowledge of one's Self, of gaining self-knowledge. To appreciate how one can come to know one's personal values, it is necessary to realize the complexity and difficulty associated with knowing anything about one's Self. The gaining of self-knowledge is problematic. It is important to be aware that having self-knowledge is not a given, it is something that one has to deliberately strive to achieve with great effort. In coming to understand the encumbrances and arduousness of attaining self-knowledge, it is possible to comprehend also the potential complexities associated with coming to know one's personal values.

To claim that one has self-knowledge is not enough to establish that one, in fact, has clear knowledge of oneself. Self-knowledge, integral to the phrase to "know thyself", has been a popular maxim for moral conduct in everyday life since the time of Greek philosophy (Jopling, 2000). However, knowing one's Self is problematic because it is hard to understand clearly all of the factors that influence how one comes to know one's self. Benjamin Franklin has been quoted as saying, "There are three things that are extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know thyself" (Osborne, 1996). Authentic self-knowledge

depends upon an avoidance of being false to one's real Self and this requires deep personal honesty and arduous effort (Nerlich, 1989). This means that knowledge of one's personal values is an achievement and not a given. Such knowledge is not only something that one ought to work at; it is something that can only be had by working at it. This also implies that one must often be ignorant of one's personal values. That is to say, there are many situations in which it is easy not to know one's personal values, to be deceived about one's personal values, or to be misinformed about one's personal values, and thereby, be prevented from being able to truthfully articulate what values are influencing one's decisions and behaviours (Aronson, 1995; Maddux & Lewis, 1995).

It seems that a person's processes for developing self-knowledge are prone to inaccuracy and misjudgement and tend to lead to the validation of the dominant existing self-conception (Osborne, 1996; Starratt, 2003). Each person strives for clarity in their self-knowledge not because they want an irrefutably accurate understanding of their Self, but rather, because such clarity feeds the fundamental need for predictability and identity, which human beings value highly (Maddux & Lewis, 1995). In order to achieve personal predictability and identity, people implement subjective feedback processes motivated to reduce any perceived discrepancy in their self-conception. These processes are largely non-cognitive and reflective in nature, and it is unlikely that any of the assessment components used within these processes are validated or cross-referenced with other sources for correctness. This means that people adopt values uncritically based on subjective perceptions of particular realities. Usually there is no attempt to validate their perceptions or to confirm the accuracy of associating selected values with the outcomes observed. Therefore, it is possible for people to misappropriate particular values to certain behaviours so as to be misled into thinking that they are acting upon nominated values whilst their behaviours actually reflect alternative values. Their values appear to be more espoused or desired than actual.

A key consequence of one's self-knowledge processes is to verify who one is to one's Self and this mainly occurs through introspection based on reflective self-inquiry and reflective self-evaluation (Hall et al., 1998; Starratt, 2003). This commitment is not something people do naturally or accurately, or that it automatically influences their behaviour in the most appropriate way. While the human brain is a powerful and efficient analyser and interpreter, it is far from perfect: most people end up believing things about

their Self that are not true (Aronson, 1995). Comprehensive rational objectivity requires the thinker to have access to accurate and useful information, and have unlimited cognitive resources with which to process life's data. These conditions within an individual rarely hold true in everyday life. Gaining knowledge about one's personal values through introspection is often made on the basis of scant data, seemingly haphazardly combined, and influenced by pre-existing personal motives (Griseri, 1998; Plous, 1993). The human brain has a limited capacity and is capable of dealing with only a relatively small amount of data at a time (Taylor, 1993). The cause one attributes to a particular outcome or the perception one has of a given situation is very much influenced by personal motivations (Nisbett, Borgida, Crandall, & Reed, 1993). The subjective forces of personal motives, rather than objective data, seem to be the dominating influence within the processes of determining which values are actually influencing one's behaviours. Authentic knowledge of one's personal values can only be formed in people who have a strong motivation to know more about their own true inner Self, and who willingly embrace all of the information that is gained about their values.

Self-knowledge processes, and the manner in which individuals interpret self-relevant feedback, need not be accurate to be influential (Osborne, 1996). If the individual believes the data to be true then that is really what matters. The subjective reality that an individual uses to evaluate and make sense of the world, is more important in influencing what he or she will do than what may be a more accurate reality. This means that any existing knowledge about one's values is relatively intransigent. It manifests itself as the resistance most people show towards not divulging one's actual values if they differ from one's espoused values, or of changing one's values.

## 3.5    A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This literature review has promoted the understanding that one's own idealized self-concept is at the heart of how one behaves. The self-concept indirectly influences behaviour through the sequential dimensions of the Self of self-esteem, motives, values, and beliefs. However, the interconnectedness between self-concept and behaviours is made more complex by the decreasing degree of cognitive self-knowledge that one has of one's beliefs, values, motives, self-esteem and self-concept. These aspects of the Self appear to be ever-increasingly subliminal dimensions and are little influenced by sensory

feedback from one's reality. They are inner, tacit, and increasingly intangible behaviour-governing dimensions of one's being. Importantly though, they influence how one understands and interacts with all of one's reality and are not limited to just one aspect of one's life. One's beliefs, values, motives, self-esteem, and self-concept are relatively consistent and impact in a similar way on all aspects of one's life.

The following conceptual framework (Figure 3.3) has been designed to illustrate the understanding provided by the literature of how a person's behaviour is influenced by the various dimensions of the Self.
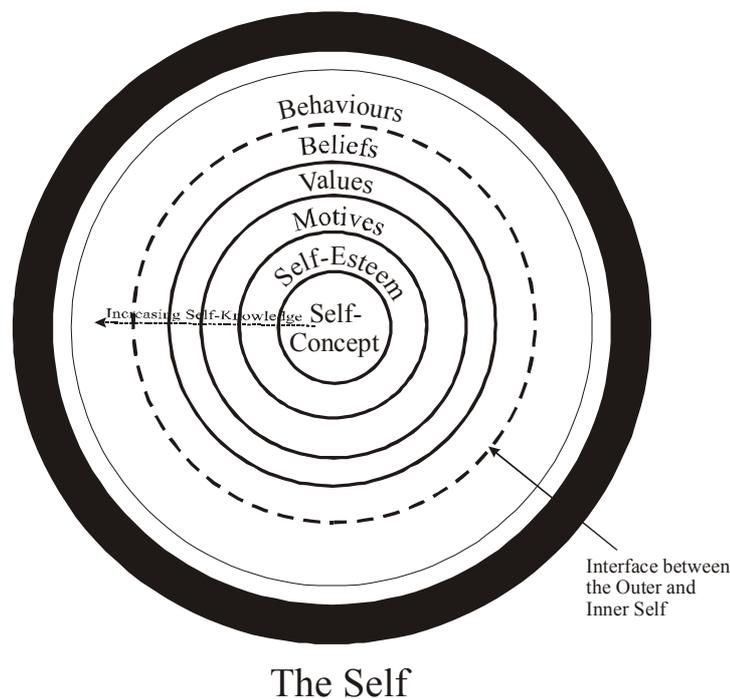


The Self

Figure 3.3    A diagrammatical representation of the various dimension of the Self as presented by the literature, which shows how these dimensions are able to interact in order to influence a person's behaviour

This conceptual framework not only highlights that one's self-concept is at the heart of one's Self by placing it at the core of the framework, but it also illustrates the sequential order of the components as one moves from self-concept to behaviours. Also highlighted is the understanding that one's level of consciousness, or degree of knowledge about each component, increases as one moves out from the centre of the framework. People have little or no knowledge about their own self-concept, whereas they have considerable knowledge about their behaviours. The final understanding conveyed by this conceptual framework is that each component is not a discrete entity but rather, they are inter-related and inter-active. The inner components are each antecedents of their adjacent outer

component but they, in turn, depend on feedback from their outer neighbouring component to maintain relevance. In this way, each component helps to create the united Self.

Although it is possible to view these common components as forming a united Self, it must be realized that each Self is unique to the individual person (Elliott, 2001). The manner by which these components interact is very idiosyncratic because each person's subliminal interactive processes are unique and distinctive. A similar act evinced by two different people, even in apparently identical circumstances, is likely to reflect quite unique ways of blending their own Self components.

The key understanding promoted by this conceptual framework is that the real power behind what causes human behaviour is the self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values and beliefs held within the person (Griseri, 1998; Hodgkinson, 1991). More importantly, from the perspective of this particular study is the acknowledgement that personal values do, indeed, influence behaviour. The physiological components of the Self, such as the sensory, motor and cerebral systems, that are often associated with causing human behaviour, are deemed to be only the tools people use to accomplish the tasks and goals that have been determined by these inner components of the Self (Bandura, 1997b). In addition, this conceptual framework offers other important insights pertinent to this study.

The first of these insights is that personal values are a largely subliminal component of the Self (Westwood & Posner, 1997). Personal values, along with behaviours, beliefs, motives, self-esteem and self-concept, comprise the Self (Griseri, 1998; Hodgkinson, 1991). Values are the next primary influence on behaviours after beliefs (Hultman & Gellerman, 2002). However, while behaviours are observable and beliefs knowable, the other components of the Self are progressively more subliminal and difficult to come to know (Hodgkinson, 1996). Arguably, values, as the most outer of these subliminal components, needs to be clarified before one is able to move on to the more subliminal components of motives, self-esteem, and self-concept. This suggests that it is necessary to explore the role played by personal values before it is possible to move on to exploring the other subliminal components of the Self. What is needed in order to be able to clarify one's subliminal personal values is a pathway that enables the person to progress from the known to the unknown components of the Self.

The second insight presented by this conceptual framework addresses the issue of clarifying subliminal personal values. It suggests that in order to explore the relationship between a person's personal values and behaviour it is necessary to include an examination of his or her beliefs (Smith, 2000). Beliefs can be discerned, classified, and organized so as to make conceptual sense and thus lend some element of probabilistic predictability to human behaviour (Hodgkinson, 1996). Beliefs are knowable, measurable, and observable phenomena whereas values may be invisible and motives unknown to the person. People are more able to align their beliefs with their behaviours. By moving from the clearly observable behaviours to the knowable beliefs it is likely that a clear and incontestable understanding of one's beliefs can be gleaned. Then, based on the awareness that the more basic component of the Self, personal values, underpins beliefs, it is possible to use one's knowledge of one's beliefs as an avenue to discerning one's personal values. What this means is that if one can tap into one's beliefs then it might be possible to get in touch with one's personal values. Combining these two sources of knowledge, one's personal values can be aligned to one's behaviours through one's beliefs.

The final insight gained from this conceptual framework is that determining a person's personal values is not a natural task (McGraw, 2001). Personal values are part of the inner Self and, as such, are either unknown or only partially known by the person (Sarros et al., 1999). Even though one's personal values are the antecedents of one's behaviour, clarifying these values is not a natural process and requires a deliberate undertaking. In order to be able to effectively clarify their personal values people require guidance in knowing what to look for in their Self, and they need to learn self-reflective ways (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001). What is keenly evident, though, is that often people have limited self-knowledge of their personal values.

With these insights in mind, this study identified the research questions that served to guide this study.

## 3.6    IDENTIFYING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

*Research Question 1:* How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

This research question investigates the proposition in the literature that personal values are subliminal inner-world phenomena so that having self-knowledge of one's personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence (McGraw, 2001). A concern for the level of self-knowledge of personal values recognizes that the concept of values-led principalship is dependent upon the principal having self-knowledge of personal values before deliberately applying these in their role. Thus, this research question addresses this concern by exploring the principal's level of self-knowledge of personal values.

*Research Question 2:* How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

This research question investigates the claims in the literature that personal values are formed during the general experiences of life and become the most influential source of values that impact upon any individual (Hodgkinson, 1996). Although the importance of personal values is assumed, the literature proposes that there is little general understanding of their nature and their formation (Zimmerman, 2001). This second research question assisted the participating principals in determining how they acquired their personal values. Beyond this outcome, it was thought that this research question would illumine the values formation process and thereby, inform future plans for personal and professional development in support of values-led principalship.

*Research Question 3:* Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

The literature posits the understanding that personal values are often tacit, subliminal, intangible, inner influences on behaviour (Sarros et al., 1999). Usually, people are unaware of many of their values and when they endeavour to openly clarify these, there is a strong possibility that they may unintentionally or intentionally state false values (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001). This means that knowledge of personal values is an achievement and not a given (Nerlich, 1989) so that people have to purposely strive towards coming to know their personal values. Arguably, the best process for coming to know personal values is through introspection based on reflective self-inquiry and reflective self-evaluation (Hall et al., 1998). This research question asks whether it is possible to develop an instrument that facilitates such reflective self-inquiry and reflective

self-evaluation. Moreover, this research question sought to ensure that the clarity and informative aspects of this instrument were investigated.

***Research Question 4:*** Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

This research question is in response to the longstanding claim in the literature that there is no tangible link between a personal value and a preferred behaviour, as the individual tends to justify behaviour on its expected beneficial outcome rather than on any conscious commitment to its inherent values (Hodgkinson, 1996; Hogarth, 1987). Hence, this research question focused directly on the potential impact that gaining of self-knowledge of personal values had on principalship behaviour. It allowed the researcher to gather data pertinent to determining whether or not gaining of self-knowledge of personal values could bring about values-led principalship in order to positively influence principalship behaviour. Also, this research question enabled the researcher to record feedback from each of the participants as to the perception of the worth of this research study.

## 3.7    CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the literature relevant to this study's focus on values-led principalship.   This review of the literature highlighted five important insights in respect to personal values. First, personal values are formed during the general experiences of life to become the most influential source of values that impact upon any individual. Second, personal values do, indeed, influence behaviour. Third, personal values are subjective, inner world phenomena that are often tacit, subliminal influences upon one's behaviour. Fourth, having knowledge of one's own personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence, and gaining this particular form of self-knowledge is difficult and requires effort and appropriate processes. Finally, the appropriate process for gaining self-knowledge of one's personal values is through self-reflection and introspection.

Guided by this review, it was possible to develop a conceptual framework that illustrated the relationship between values, behaviours, and self-knowledge. This conceptual framework offers a number of insights. In particular, it illustrates the relationship between personal values, behaviour, beliefs and motives as inter-related components of the Self.

Moreover, values clarification is not a natural process such that it requires a personal introspection process that progresses reflectively from a person's clearly observable behaviour to their discernible beliefs, and finally, to their unknown values (Hodgkinson, 1996). These insights informed the development of the research questions, which were later used in the choice of a theoretical framework to guide this research study. An account of this choice follows in Chapter 4.

# CHAPTER 4

# IDENTIFYING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 4.1    INTRODUCTION

Within research, the theoretical framework forms the philosophical lynchpin between the theoretical and practical aspects of the learning journey. According to Crotty (1998), the choice of theoretical framework is best made in light of the focus of the research and the specific research questions. The focus of this research was exploring the concept of values-led principalship. In particular, this study asked four questions:

Research question 1:    How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

Research question 2:    How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

Research question 3:    Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

Research question 4:    Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

Given the nature of the focus of this research problem and the subsequent research questions, it was deemed appropriate to situate this research study in the epistemology of pragmatic constructivism. In line with this philosophical choice, this research study was positioned within a theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism with the orchestrating perspective of a case study informing the research design. This chapter provides a description of, and a rationale for, each of these theoretical choices.

## 4.2    PRAGMATIC CONSTRUCTIVISM

The repertoire of inquiry methods being employed in the field of educational leadership has greatly expanded over the last thirty years (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). The historically dominant positivist tradition now competes with a range of alternative, systematically different research methods that reflect different philosophical traditions (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Ribbins & Gunter, 2002). Each of these traditions has its unique set of basic beliefs,

or metaphysical principles that, in turn, provide criteria upon which construct validity is judged.

Constructivism represents one such philosophical tradition. In short, constructivism offers a distinctive research paradigm with its own ontological, epistemological and methodological claims (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 111-112). From an ontological perspective, "constructivism's relativism … assumes multiple, apprehendable, and somewhat conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects, but that may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated". From an epistemological perspective it accepts a "transactional/ objectivist assumption that sees knowledge as created in interaction among the investigator and the respondents". Constructivism relies on a "hermeneutic/dialectical methodology" aimed at understanding and reconstructing previously held problematic constructions.

In accepting these philosophical claims, constructivism has set itself apart from other research paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 111-112). Constructivism rejects "positivism's position of naïve realism, assuming an objective reality upon which inquiry can converge" and its "dualist, objectivist assumption that enables the investigator to determine 'how things really are' and 'how things really work'". Constructivism also rejects "postpositivism's critical realism, which still assumes an objective reality but grants that it can be apprehended only imperfectly and probablistically" and its "modified dualist/objectivist assumption that it is possible to approximate (but never really know) reality". Hence, constructivism is somewhat similar to, but broader than "critical theory's historical realism, which assumes an apprehendable reality consisting of historically situated structures that are, in the absence of insight" and its "transactional/objectivist assumption that knowledge is value mediated and hence value dependent".

By setting itself apart from other research paradigms constructivism has been subject to strong anti-constructivist criticism.  In particular, this criticism has clustered around three issues: the problem of quality or goodness criteria, the lack of critical purchase, and the problem of authority (Schwandt, 1994). In short, critics point to the absence of conventional benchmarks of scientific rigor such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. Critics also note constructivism's propensity for description over critical prescription, for privileging the views of participants, and for vesting

authority and control in the researcher as interpreter. Underlying these criticisms is the epistemological issue of whether "knowledge is shaped by external nature versus the view that knowledge, and perhaps 'nature' itself, is shaped by human activity" (Bredo, 2000). Constructivism, by seeing knowledge as "individual reconstructions coalescing around consensus" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), quite naturally draws criticism from the anti-constructivist's camp that sees the "world as having an existence outside of human experience" that can "be approached only through the utilization of methods that prevent human contamination of its apprehension or comprehension" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

In addition to this anti-constructivist criticism, constructivism itself is in "blooming, buzzing confusion" (Phillips, 2000). Within the pro-constructivist camp there are a number of polarised positions. For example, Bredo (2000) identifies four such positions: "Individual Idealist Constructivism, Individual Realist Constructivism, Social Idealist Constructivism, and Social Realist Constructivism". Each of these positions offers a different view on the origin of human knowledge and reality. An initial point of difference occurs as to whether knowledge and reality are constructed by individuals or within society. Is knowledge of reality within the individual derived through a cognitive process or acquired from society through a process of socialisation? There are also different understandings of the constraints or influences affecting knowledge and reality construction. Are the principal influences ideal (eg cultural or linguistic norms) or realist (genetic determined brain structures, power structures)[4]?

Faced with anti-constructivist criticism as well as polarised positions within constructivism itself, scholars such as Schwandt (1994) and Burbules (2000) have advocated reframing the debate away from the ontological, epistemological and methodological debates that tend to divide pro- and anti-constructivists alike, by moving

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[4] Other scholars Woolfolk (1998), Phillips (2000) and Schwandt (2000) have identified similar positions. Woolfolk (1998, p. 279) has identified three types of constructivism: "exogenous", "endogenous" and "dialectical". Likewise Phillips (2000) distinguishes between "social constuctivism or constructionism", "psychological constructivism", and "radical constructivism". These types are aligned to Bredo's "social idealist constructivism", "individual idealist constructivism", and "social realist constructivism". Similarly Schwandt (2000, pp. 198-200) divides social constructionism into two categories: "weak" and "strong" constructionism. Again these categories equate to Bredo's "social idealist constructivism" and his "social realist constructivism".

to a more pragmatic [5] perspective.

> To be sure, the future of interpretivist and constructivist persuasions rests on the acceptance of the implications of dissolving long-standing dichotomies such as subject/object, knower/known, fact/value.  It rests with individuals being comfortable with the blurring of lines between the science and the art of interpretation, the social scientific and literary account. … We can reject dichotomous thinking on pragmatic grounds: Such distinctions are simply not very useful anymore. (Schwandt, 1994, p. 132)

Extending this thought, Burbules (2000) advances a pragmatic approach designed to take constructivism "beyond the impasse". Here it is suggested that, in order to overcome the limitations of a polarized or dichotomised perspective, it is beneficial to use a pragmatic constructivist understanding. Rather than each perspective being viewed as being the authentic source of knowledge and, therefore, fundamentally opposed to each other, it is suggested that they should be viewed only as models, patterns, or schema used to study different dimensions of the topic (Gage, 1989). This understanding argues that different perspectives alert researchers to different phenomena of interest, different conceptions of the problem, and different aspects of events likely to be ignored within a single perspective (Shulman, 1986). This is to say that each perspective is thought to compliment the other.

In support of this thought, Burbules (2000) offers a pragmatic approach founded on five propositions, which he argues, "most participants to the debate pro- or anti-constructivism can subscribe". These propositions include:

1. All understandings of the world evince a social environment even when individuals alone formulate them.

2. Language provides the conditions for both understanding and misunderstanding.

3. Our efforts for understanding the world always occurs within a distinct time and place and under a set of circumstances that motivate and influence our choice of questions, methods, and reference groups for cross-checking our understandings.

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[5] Pragmatism is a label for a doctrine about meaning that was first made a philosophical term in 1878 by C.S. Peirce. "Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have.  Then our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (Flew, 1979, p. 284). This doctrine was further developed by William James who "claimed that all metaphysical disputes could be either resolved or trivialized by examining the practical consequences of alternative answers…Ideas must have 'cash-value'; an ideas must be right or true if it has fruitful consequences" (Flew, 1979, p. 184).

4. The underlying issue that divides the anti- and pro-constructivists is their attitude to difference and disagreement.

5. Constructivism operates within a problem-based framework, in which one's potential problem is always the status of one's constructions themselves.

This pragmatic approach attempts to avoid the inside-versus-outside dichotomy by giving priority to doing rather than knowing. If the focus within constructivism is on knowledge, then there is a tendency to think in dichotomised terms about how the subject knows the object, or how the subject invents the object. For Burbules, the remedy is to begin with the exploration of the practical conflicts associated with human activity from the perspective of the individual's conscious thoughts or awareness. Understanding the person's thoughts or awareness was said to be the means for understanding how the person was influenced to reorganize their cognitive processes in order to successfully address the demands of the activity. Regardless of whether or not such thoughts or awareness were derived from either a social or psychological basis, the insights gained about why the person acted as they did were considered to be valid and informative forms of knowledge.

Given the focus of this research study and the specific research questions identified previously, it is argued that pragmatic constructivism is the most suitable epistemological basis for this study. This choice follows the proposal by Heck and Hallinger (1999) who, from a pragmatic perspective, argue that the strength of the constructivist approach is in its ability to illuminate that about which little is known or is hidden from view. In order to overcome this little known or hidden nature of certain phenomenon, pragmatic constructivism enables a particular understanding to be formed from the point of view of the lived reality of those people who are intimately associated with the phenomenon (Schwandt, 1994). The perceptions, meanings, understandings, and interpretations of those intimately associated help to construct new knowledge about the phenomenon and thereby, further the clarification of its nature. As noted in Chapter 2, values-led principalship is one such little known, or hidden from view, concept.

Pragmatic constructivism is an appropriate epistemological choice for this particular study as it allows for a relationship between personal values and behaviour. The conceptual framework previously developed in Figure 3.3 illustrates the relationship between values and behaviour. This thought is further developed by advocates of constructivist leadership

who propose that personal values play a vital role within the cognitive processes of knowledge construction through preserving meaning (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner, & Ford Slack, 1995). As individuals encounter new experiences and events, they seek to assimilate these into existing cognitive structures or to adjust the structures to accommodate the new information. At this point, they decide to repeat past behaviours or to modify them in order to address a new situation. The selected behaviour satisfies their valuations and this in turn, ensures that the chosen behaviour is deemed to be personally meaningful. Thus, individuals not only assign meaning to the behaviour but also construct knowledge about the world and the behaviour, in order to determine whether or not his or her cognitive structures need refining and reconstructing. This thought is consistent with the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3.

The general direction provided by pragmatic constructivism also presents insights into the overall nature of the style of research to be followed. Pragmatic constructivism points out the unique experience and perceptions of individuals engaged in research (Crotty, 1998). It suggests that the individual's perceptions are as valid and as worthy of respect as any other perception of reality. Hence, this style of research avoids critical analysis of personal perceptions and concentrates on assisting individuals towards exploring and inspecting these perceptions. Instead of searching for truthfulness this style of research will search for the rightness of the individual's perception (Goodman & Elgin, 1988). In this sense, rightness means that the researcher's interpretation of the individual's perception is acknowledged by the participant as being an accurate reflection of his or her own perceptions. Furthermore, this style of research allows for the possibility that an appropriately comprehensive investigative process can end up with an explicit awareness of reality that the individual participant would have been unable to initially articulate (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 1994). It follows then, that the pragmatic constructivist researcher cannot be disengaged from the participant in the activity of inquiring (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher and the participant will be interactively linked so that the findings into perceptions are explicitly recreated in partnership as the investigation proceeds. Such intimate involvement by the researcher renders this form of research as value-laden as well as pragmatic in nature. Not only will the focus of the research be on clarifying participant perceptions of personal values and behaviours, but also the interpretive role of the researcher will be filtered through his system of values.

With this thought in mind, the researcher accepted advice from Denzin and Lincoln (1994) that value-laden, pragmatic constructivism research be positioned within the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism

## 4.3     SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism comes from the field of social psychology that subscribes to a deterministic view of human behaviour whereby the reasons, or causes, of human behaviour are said to arise from the social situations that individuals encounter (Charon, 1998). It explores how people have made sense of their world in a dynamic process of social interaction, and offers an approach to social inquiry that fits the doctrine of pragmatism first advanced by C.S. Peirce. More specifically, symbolic interactionism is considered to be a value-laden, pragmatic approach to social research influenced by four key beliefs.  First, that what is real for human beings always depends on their own active intervention, their own interpretation or definition. The world does not tell people what it is; they actively reach out and understand it and decide what to do with it. Second, the worthiness of knowledge is judged by how practical, applicable, and useful it is in helping to understand a given social situation. Third, the elements within the particular social situation are defined in terms according to their specific usefulness in that situation. Finally, the initial focus of social research should be on the actions and behaviours that are occurring and then these are used to guide further exploration.

Thus defined, the promotion of symbolic interactionism as a legitimate theoretical perspective for social inquiry is usually attributed to the work of George Herbert Mead and the developments by John Dewey, William James, William Thomas, Charles Cooley and others (Charon, 1998). Blumer integrated many of the ideas of this early work in his writings primarily in the 1950s and 1960s and proposed that:

> The term "symbolic interaction" refers … to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning, which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation

between the stimulus and response in the case of human behaviour (Blumer, 1969, p. 180).

Furthermore, symbolic interactionism research rests on four basic premises:

> (1) that human worlds are symbolic, material, and objective, and hence the primary aim is to understand how human beings go about the task of assembling meaning through interaction with others; (2) that process characterizes lives, situations, and societies -these things are always evolving, adjusting, emerging, becoming; hence there is great interest in "strategies for acquiring a sense of self, developing a biography, adjusting to others, organizing a sense of time, negotiating order, constructing civilizations; (3) that neither the individual nor society is primary in understanding meaning; rather the starting point is the joint act of people doing things together; (4) that interaction means engagement with the empirical world, and only in the grounded, empirical world open to observation can self, encounter, social object, and meaning be investigated (McCarthy & Schwandt, 2000, p. 60).

The theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism sees meaning as variable and emergent (Hewitt, 1997). Meaning is thought to arise and is transformed as people define and act in social situations. As such, meaning is not just handed down by culture but is shaped by people and thus shapes culture. Meaning-making depends on the ability humans have to interpret a society's symbols. The term 'symbolic' refers to some form of significant meaning or belief that is developed within a person through interaction with others (Craib, 1984). These symbols are the shared meanings that people have come to associate with worldly objects and activities. Consequently people engage in symbolic interaction (Charon, 1998). Symbols can include objects, the environment, hand gestures, or facial expressions, but human language is understood as constituting the most powerful set of symbols. The same sound of words can name different things in different languages or, conversely, different sounds of words can name the same thing in different languages. Individuals have to learn to associate the sound of words with the same thing, relationship or event, if they are to communicate with each other, understand each other, and socialize with each other. The human ability to respond to symbols, especially language, opens up behavioural possibilities that are not open to other organisms.

What this means is that a central task within symbolic interactionist research is the need to develop an interpretive account of how the individual person and his or her social environment mutually define and shape each other through symbolic communication (Candy, 1989). Such research is concerned with the role of symbolic expression in

processes of social affiliation and conflict, and of providing explanations for the relationships among understanding, motive and internal cognitive processes (Tsourvakas, 1997). It posits that inviolable laws do not govern human interactions but rather, they are governed by agreed symbolic rules, which are consensually validated by the person and by the people that they associate with. The function of the researcher within this particular symbolic interactionism research will be to understand the reality from the perspective of the principal; to come to know the personal meanings, interpretations, and beliefs that are used to describe the world in the mind of the principal.

In order to understand the reality from the perspective of the principal, and according to Charon (1998), Blumer proposes that the research must involve two key modes of inquiry: exploration and inspection. Exploration is using any ethical procedure that aids in understanding what is going on. Ideas, concepts, understandings, beliefs, and so on, are actively modified and adjusted during the research based on the most recent data that has been gathered. Through exploration, the researcher is attempting to describe in detail what is happening in the particular complex social situation. The purpose is to become holistically acquainted with the particular area of social life and to develop some focus of interest. Inspection is considered to be the second step. It involves isolating important elements within the explored situation and describing the situation in relation to those elements. Inspection also involves forming descriptive statements about each important element in the situation, then applying that description to other interaction situations. This procedure of inspection must be "flexible, imaginative, creative, and unroutinized" (Stryker, 1980, p.10)

Yet again, symbolic interactionism requires that the research design is built upon the three fundamental principles of the centrality of meaning, the social production of reality, and the importance of subjectivity (Charon, 1998). These three fundamental principles propose that people act on the basis of the meaning they themselves ascribe to objects and situations; that one's meanings arise out of the social interaction of the individual with others; and that one's meanings are further subjectively transformed through a process of interpretation during interaction. In order to accommodate these three fundamental principles in a symbolic interactionist research design, it is proposed that the research should be characterized by the importance of:

1. Being conducted in its natural setting (Jacob, 1988; Merriam, 1998), because it is acknowledged that the setting significantly influences the behaviour. Meanings are not inherent in reality but are social products formed through the activities of people interacting. The symbolic interactionist researcher is interested in the meanings that have been attached to situations, to phenomena and to themselves;

2. Understanding the participant's perspective (Patton, 1990; Merriam, 1998), since the aim is to reconstruct the person's mental constructions. Meanings are not just situated within individuals; they are constructed and reconstructed in social interactions with others in a dynamic process. The symbolic interactionist researcher is interested in how meanings are developed, established and changed in social processes over time; and

3. Researchers subjectively and empathetically knowing the perspectives of the participants (Charon, 2001; Merriam, 1998), as they need to become familiar enough with the participant in order to be able to build a sophisticated construct from an array of verbal clues. The experiences of individuals and their interaction with others are central to an understanding of the social world. Meanings are arrived at and modified through the interpretive process of the person dealing with the experience or object. The symbolic interactionist researcher is interested in the subjective experience of the individual, especially as this individual interacts with others.

With these research characteristics in mind, the researcher accepted the view of Merriam (1998) and others (Sarantakos, 1998; Yin, 1994) that case study research offered an appropriate orchestrating perspective for this study. The orchestrating perspective provides the link between the basic assumptions of symbolic interactionism with the selection of appropriate and relevant research methods. It describes the intended strategy or plan of action and shapes the researcher's choice and use of particular research methods (Glesne, 1999). A key prerequisite for choosing an appropriate orchestrating perspective is that it must be closely suited to the issue being investigated, so that it can not only help the researcher to understand and explain the meaning of the particular phenomena, but also cause as little disruption to the participant and his or her environment as possible (Merriam, 1998).

## 4.4    CASE STUDY

An orchestrating perspective of case study describes an approach to research that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Sarantakos, 1998; Yin, 1994). This methodology is particularly useful when the researcher is endeavouring to discover a link between phenomena rather than seeking confirmation (Merriam, 1998).

While case studies are commonly used within research, there is some difference of opinion as to the nature and credibility of their role (Sarantakos, 1998). Many researchers have concerns about case studies and offer a number of criticisms to support their stance. These critics suggest that case studies produce long and wordy exploratory documents that cannot be used to describe or test propositions, because they lack investigative rigor and provide little basis for scientific generalizations (Hamel, 1993). In particular, it is thought that loose research techniques associated with implementing a case study, allows equivocal evidence and biased views to influence the direction of the findings and ultimately the conclusions. Others counter these criticisms in two ways. Firstly, it is argued that this view incorrectly confuses the case study as an orchestrating perspective with a case study as a specific method of data collection (Yin, 1994). More specifically, a case study can be incorrectly aligned with ethnographic or participant observation techniques that require a considerable length of time to complete and can produce extensive recorded data. Secondly, it is suggested that a case study is only generalizable to theoretical propositions rather than to populations or universes. As the case study does not represent a sample, the researcher's goal is to expand and generalize theories and not to enumerate frequencies.

In line with these latter arguments, Merriam (1998) and Sarantakos (1998) posit that the case study offers a comprehensive orchestrating perspective that is able to incorporate many different methods of research. The case study, as an orchestrating perspective, is seen as an all-encompassing methodology with the inherent logic of the research design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and analysis. As such, a case study can include a variety of research methods, which are quite manageable both in time demands and data production. Suitable research methods for a case study can include

open questionnaires, closed questionnaires, document analysis, unstructured or open-ended interviews, participant and non-participant observation, and artefact analysis (Burns, 1995).

The most important initial task of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case, as a single entity around which there are natural boundaries (Merriam, 1998). As defined, this particular study will be an "instrumental case study" (Stake, 2000, p. 437) as the case is mainly being examined to provide insight into an issue. In this sense, the case is of secondary interest. It plays a supportive role, whereas the learning gained from the case sheds new insight on the issue under investigation, which in this research study, was the concept of values-led principalship.

Once the initial task of a case study is delimited, it is then argued by Merriam (1998) that the research methodology must have the following distinguishing characteristics:

1. The case study is "particularistic" because it studies whole units in their totality and not aspects or variables of these units (Stake, 2000). Furthermore, they are problem centred, small scale, outcome-orientated endeavours.

2. The case study is "descriptive" since the outcome from the study is a rich, sophisticated description of the phenomenon under study. This is achieved through the employment of several methods of investigation to ensure completeness, and to avoid or prevent errors and distortions (Sarantakos, 1998).

3. The case study is "heuristic" as it illuminates the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study. It can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the researcher's experience, or confirm what is already known.

Within a case study the researcher does not seek to establish the authenticity and transferability of the data, but rather, the rightness and worthiness of the data (Goodman & Elgin, 1988). With respect to this research study, this meant that the description of each principal's self-knowledge of his or her values needed to be rich, comprehensive and accurate. It was not tested or justified, nor was it measured against that proposed by other principals. Rather, the insights and understandings gained from the reconstruction of the principal's self-knowledge were aligned with his or her principalship behaviour in order to ascertain the possible existence of any interdependency.

In regard to the specific role of the researcher in a case study, the advice of Yin (1994) was noted. Here it is claimed that the required skills for the researcher are that they:

1. Should be able to ask good questions and interpret the answers.
2. Should be good listeners and not be trapped by personal ideologies or preconceptions.
3. Should be adaptive and flexible, so that newly encountered situations can be seen as opportunities, not threats.
4. Must have a firm grasp of the issues being studied.
5. Should be unbiased by preconceived notions, including those derived from theory, [in order to] be sensitive and responsive to contradictory evidence (p. 56).

## 4.5    CONCLUSION

The theoretical framework developed in this chapter is summarized in Table 4.1 below, which displays the consistent alignment of the key research principles as the study moves from its philosophical perspective to its practical methodology.

Table 4.1    An overview of the theoretical framework for this exploration of the concept of values-led principalship as developed in this chapter.

| EPISTEMOLOGY | THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE | ORCHESTRATING PERSPECTIVE |
|---|---|---|
| PRAGMATIC CONSTRUCTIVISM | SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM | CASE STUDY |
| Strives to present an accurate interpretation of a particular situation rather than a universal truth | Conducted in the natural setting of the situation being researched | Is particularistic because it studies the whole situation in its totality rather than parts of it |
| Points out the unique experience of each participant so that the interpretation is based on the participant's understanding rather than the researcher's observations | Aimed at coming to understand the participant's perspective, mental constructions, and meanings | Is descriptive since the outcome from the study is a rich, sophisticated description of the particular situation being studied |
| The participant and researcher are actively engaged in partnership in interpreting the situation | Researcher needs to subjectively and empathetically know the perspectives of the participant in order to enhance the accuracy of the interpretation | Is heuristic as it illuminates the researcher's interpretation of the situation being studied |

This chapter has argued that the most appropriate theoretical framework for this study of values-led principalship is one that utilizes the epistemology of pragmatic constructivism,

the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism, and the orchestrating perspective of a case study approach. The difficulty associated with this particular study is that the key underlying meanings are not readily observable and measurable. They are not objective in nature but rather they are subjective, tacit, subliminal phenomena. Pragmatic constructivism authenticates this search for knowledge in the little known or hidden realm of the subjective, intangible phenomenon of personal values (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). The theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism is deemed appropriate to a research problem that is both values-laden and pragmatic in nature. This theoretical perspective also provides important general advice in how this research should be implemented, and the case study approach offers guidance towards the design of this research study by assisting in the selection of relevant and suitable research methods. An account of the design of this study is provided in Chapter 5.

# CHAPTER 5

# THE DESIGN OF THIS STUDY

## 5.1    INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature in Chapter 3 led to the development of a conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship between personal values, beliefs, and behaviour as components of the Self. This review also found that personal values are a largely subliminal component of the Self. Moreover, personal values clarification is not a natural process: it requires a determined commitment to a personal introspection process. This process progresses reflectively from a person's clearly observable behaviour to their discernible beliefs and, finally, to their unknown values (Hodgkinson, 1996). These insights contributed to the development of the research questions that guided the methodological choices of this study.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the demands of these research questions led to this research study being situated within an epistemology of pragmatic constructivism, a theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism, and an orchestrating perspective of case study. As a consequence of these decisions, the following design principles informed the design of this study.

1.  A starting point for understanding the relationship between personal values and the educational leadership behaviour is the personal perspectives, constructions, and meanings the principals bring to the problem situation (Charon, 1998).

2.  A meaningful understanding of the problem situation requires both the principals in the research study and the researcher to work in partnership at being actively engaged in interpreting the problem situation (Burbules, 2000).

3.  A two-stage case study involving an exploration stage and an inspection stage leads to a rich and sophisticated description of the problem situation with earlier interpretations being refined with new data (Charon, 1998).

4.  A case study is generalizable to theoretical propositions that can be put forward as being potentially applicable to other cases, and hence, they can be assessed for their applicability and transferability to other situations (K. Punch, 1998).

5.  The employment of a variety of data sources and multiple methods of study, or triangulation, will ensure completeness and help avoid or prevent errors and distortions (Sarantakos, 1998).

The description of how these principles informed the design of this study is discussed in this chapter. In particular, in line with the guidelines offered by K. Punch (1998, p. 156), this research design attempts to:

- Be clear on what the case is, including the identification of its boundaries.

- Be clear on the need for this study, and on the general purposes of this case study.

- Translate the general purpose into specific purposes and research questions.

- Identify the overall strategy of the case study, especially whether it is one case study or multiple cases.

- Show what data will be collected, from whom, and how.

- Show how the data will be analysed.

## 5.2    THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The focus of this study was values-led principalship or the role that personal values play in influencing the educational leadership behaviour of principals. The boundaries of the case were defined in terms of Catholic secondary school principals within the Brisbane Catholic Education system of schools. This was an "instrumental case study" (Stake, 1994) as the purpose of this research study was to address the current blank spot in respect to research in the area of values-led principalship. This purpose was translated into four specific research questions:

Research Question 1:    How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

Research Question 2:    How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

Research Question 3:    Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

Research Question 4:    Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

This study consisted of a variety of data sources with 26 principals of secondary Colleges within Brisbane Catholic Education being potential participants in the study. This study also employed multiple research methods including an open-ended questionnaire, two closed questionnaires, and a series of semi-structured interviews. These multiple methods

allowed an exploration of the case leading to a holistic appreciation of what was happening as well as an inspection of isolated elements within the case (Charon, 1998). An outline of the overall design of the study is provided in Table 5.1 and a detailed description of each of the constituent elements of this design follows.

Table 5.1        The research methodology showing the multiple data collection methods.

| RESEARCH STAGE | STEP IN RESEARCH | RESEARCH METHOD | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|---|
| Exploration | Step 1 | Open-ended Questionnaire | Introduction to nature of the study and completion of the Values Nomination Questionnaire |
| Exploration | Step 2 | Closed Questionnaire | Leadership Practices Inventory |
| Exploration | Step 3 | Closed Questionnaire | Values Selection Questionnaire |
| Exploration | Step 4 | Semi-structured Interviews | Initial part of the first individual interview with each participating principal to review feedback from initial questionnaires. |
| Inspection | Step 5 | Semi-structured Interviews | Latter part of the first individual interview with each participating principal to further examine, inspect, and interpret behaviours, beliefs, and values. |
| Inspection | Step 6 | Data analysis | Transcription of the interview data followed by a comprehensive cross referencing and analysis of the data in order to understand and describe each principal's values, beliefs, and behaviours and then to isolate important roles and inter-relationships amongst these elements. |
| Inspection | Step 7 | Semi-structured Interviews | A second interview with each participant to review the documents that evolved from the data previously gathered, to provide: an overview of the visual display; to present copies of the 2 specific visual displays for the particular participant; to answer any initial questions from the participant; and to request the participant to spend some time before the next interview to analyse the accuracy and benefits of the process and documentation. |
| Inspection | Step 8 | Semi-structured Interviews | A final interview with each participant to review the proposed outcomes from the data analysis and interpretation process, and to ascertain: <br> (i)   the clarity and intelligibility of the data analysis outcomes; <br> (ii)   the accuracy, rightness, and thoroughness of the data analysis outcomes;  and <br> (iii)   the worthiness and potential benefits of the process, and the subsequent knowledge gained, for the professional development of the participant. |

## 5.2.1   Open-ended Questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire contains items that simply supply a frame of reference for the participants' answers and are coupled with a minimum of restraint on their expression

(Burns, 1995). Other than the subject of the question, there are no other restrictions on either the content or the manner of the participant's response and, thereby, it is argued, facilitates a richness and intensity of data. The flexibility associated with such questioning may result in unexpected or unanticipated data, which may suggest hitherto unconsidered relationships or hypotheses. However, the inherent flexibility with such questions is also the source of their perceived major problem: the potential for producing irrelevant data. There is a need to carefully analyse and code the resultant data gained from open-ended questionnaires to ensure that it is applicable to the research situation.

As outlined in Table 5.1, this research study commenced with an open-ended questionnaire, the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* (appendix 1). Essentially, this questionnaire was a sheet of paper with many blank rectangles. The simple direction given to each principal was to reflect upon what they considered to be their personal values, and to record these values by writing a value in a rectangle. The principal was made aware that they did not have to place a value in each rectangle, nor did they have to limit themselves to the number of rectangles provided. They were able to record as many or as few personal values as they wished; the essential outcome was that they endeavoured to record as many of their personal values as possible. The option was also provided for the principal to ignore the rectangles all together and just to list their values on the back of the questionnaire form. The intention of this open-ended questionnaire was to provide some indication of the principal's initial level of self-knowledge of their personal values.

### 5.2.2   Closed Questionnaire

For a questionnaire to be categorized as closed, it usually only allows the respondent to choose from a very limited number of fixed alternatives (Burns, 1995). The perceived benefits from using closed questionnaires with research is said to be that they:

   (i)   achieve greater uniformity of measurement and, therefore, greater reliability of data;

   (ii)   make respondents answer in a manner that is most suitable to the research; and

   (iii)   assists in simplifying the coding process (p. 349).

However, there are known disadvantages and these are listed as being that closed questionnaires:

(i)     have a superficial quality;

(ii)    can cause annoyance within the participants as the item, itself, might not be considered suitable; and

(iii)   have the potential to encourage participants to list responses that are not appropriate  (p. 349).

Guided by these insights into the advantages and disadvantages of using closed questionnaires, this study used the following two closed questionnaires:

(a)  Leadership Practices Inventory  (appendix 2)

The *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI), created by Kouzes and Posner (2001), was used as a starting point for developing a synthesis of the key educational leadership behaviours for each of the participating principals. This inventory not only provided the means for determining what were the likely key leadership behaviours for each principal, but also overcame any initial subjective uncertainty, ambiguity and hesitancy by the principal in describing what were his or her key leadership behaviours.

The LPI was chosen given that it is soundly based in longitudinal research. It is argued that the output from the LPI is a statistically analysed appraisal of a person's performance in 30 predetermined leadership practices. These practices were selected based on data gained from analysing more than 4,000 cases and 200,000 surveys over 18 years. The LPI involves a "self" and "other" rating system on the 30 items within the questionnaire. This means that the participant rates their self on a 1 to 10 rating scale for each item, and a number of other people closely associated with the leader's work also provide an individual 1 to 10 rating of the leader on each of the 30 items. The "self" and "other" ratings are not collated but rather, are only used for comparative purposes to see if the leader has a similar perspective of their leadership practices as those they lead. This data is then statistically analysed in conjunction with all of the data gathered by Kouzes and Posner over their 18 years of research to produce a rating for the leader on what are considered to be the 5 key practices of leaders.

According to Kouzes and Posner (2001), all forms of leadership depend on the five patterns of behaviour: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision,

enabling others to act, modelling the way, and encouraging the heart. It is posited that every leader incorporates these behaviours into their leadership in varying degrees of proficiency. Every leader has their own preferred leadership behaviour and this is reflected in their varying level of commitment to each of these five prescribed behaviours. Furthermore, it is argued that this level of commitment can be ascertained by the LPI rating scale. A brief description of each of these five patterns of behaviours follows.

1. Challenging the process is said to involve the strategies of:
   - Searching out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve.
   - Experimenting, taking risks, and learning from the accompanying mistakes.

2. Inspiring a shared vision is said to involve the strategies of:
   - Envisioning an uplifting and ennobling future.
   - Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes, and dreams.

3. Enabling others to act is said to involve the strategies of:
   - Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
   - Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support.

4. Modelling the way is said to involve the strategies of:
   - Setting the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
   - Achieving small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment

5. Encouraging the heart is said to involve the strategies of:
   - Recognizing individual contributions to the success of every project.

- Celebrating team accomplishments regularly.

In order to determine the level of commitment to each of these patterns of behaviours, the individual is asked to complete the LPI Self evaluation questionnaire. Essentially, the individual is asked to rate themselves from 1 to 10 in answer to 30 statements, with 1 meaning that he or she "almost never" engages in the behaviour described in the particular statement, while a 10 would indicate that he or she "almost always" engages in that particular behaviour. As there are 30 statements in total, this means that there are 6 statements aligned with each of the 5 patterns of behaviour. Consequently, the maximum rating for any one of the patterns of behaviour is 60 and the minimum is 6. Also, the higher the rating the more dominant is that particular pattern of behaviour within the individual's overall style of leadership.

In this way, a starting point for a discussion about the participant's leadership behaviour was established. The LPI results provided an opportunity for the principal to begin reflecting upon their principalship. To provide confirmatory or refuting information about what they considered were their cornerstone behaviours within their educational leadership practices, initiated the required personal introspection process.

(b) Values Selection Questionnaire (appendix 3)

This *Values Selection Questionnaire* was designed using a similar format and process to that proposed by McGraw (2001) and Senge et al. (1994). The process required each principal to simply select his or her values from a comprehensive list of value words. The list provided to each principal included 170 potential values compiled from those provided by McGraw (2001) and Senge et al. (1994), but additional values were added from those proffered by Cashman (1998) and Hultman and Gellermann (2002).

The process of selecting values was slightly amended for this particular study as consideration was given to (a) the fact that each principal had already had the opportunity to name their personal values, and (b) the supplied list of 170

potential values was deemed to be a comprehensive rather than an exhaustive list. This meant that each principal had to have the opportunity to add other values to the supplied list, such as those from his or her original nominated list or any other personal value that did not appear. Hence, space was provided on the *Values Selection Questionnaire* for other values to be added. Values written in this available space are referred to as the *Added Values*.

While on face value this particular questionnaire may not appear to be a closed questionnaire, as there are many value choices for the principal to select from, the process of selection ensured that it met the criteria for determining this to be a closed questionnaire. As the principal looked at each value word, he or she had to decide whether or not this particular value was an influential value in their principalship. The principal was making a dichotomous yes/no decision for each value word. While the array of values offered diversity and a degree of freedom in choice, the basic decision was either yes, the particular value does influence his/her leadership behaviour, or no, the value does not influence his/her leadership behaviour.

### 5.2.3   Semi-Structured Interviews

The following interview schedule was used initially to familiarize each participating principal with the proposed study and its inherent demands, and then to gather the data:

Table 5.2    The schedule used for the semi-structured interviews

| PARTICIPANT | FIRST MEETING | FIRST INTERVIEW | SECOND INTERVIEW | THIRD INTERVIEW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Principal A | Friday 25 Oct '02 | Tuesday 29 Oct '02 | Monday 24 Mar '03 | Thursday 27 Mar '03 |
| Principal B | Thursday 24 Oct '02 | Wednesday 30 Oct '02 | Monday 31 Mar '03 | Wednesday 3 Apr '03 |
| Principal C | Wednesday 30 Oct '02 | Thursday 31 Oct '02 | Tuesday 25 Mar '03 | Monday 31 Mar '03 |
| Principal D | Tuesday 22 Oct '02 | Thursday 31 Oct '02 | Monday 31 Mar '03 | Wednesday 9 Apr '03 |
| Principal E | Tuesday 5 Nov '02 | Tuesday 12 Nov '02 | Tuesday 25 Mar '03 | Monday 31 Mar '03 |

The literature suggests that interviews are an important data gathering research method when it is difficult to observe the appropriate behaviour, or when endeavouring to understand implicit factors such as the participant's beliefs, feelings and interpretations of the world around them (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, within a semi-structured interview, the participant is more of an "informant" than a respondent as "they are proposing their own insights into certain occurrences" and these "propositions are used as the basis for further inquiry" (Yin, 1994, p. 84).

The use of semi-structured interviews within this research study complemented the pragmatic constructivist nature of this particular study (Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998). Rather than having a specific, standardised, pre-determined format of a structured interview, or no standardised format at all of an open-ended interview, the semi-structured interview utilizes a limited number of specific guiding questions for some parts of the interview (Burns, 1995). The limited number of guiding questions provides direction to the interview so that the content focuses on the crucial research issues, while the open-ended aspect of the interview facilitates a more personal and natural response from the participant (Patton, 1990). Guiding questions are not specific questions to be answered. Rather, they are those which suggest themselves at the commencement of the study as being the most productive guides to generate data pertinent to the central area of interest. They helped to facilitate the use of subjective perceptions and personal professional narratives as sources of essential data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In addition, this style of interview limited my biases and preconceptions in directing the line of the interview (Burns, 1997) and allowed me to explore interesting thoughts as they emerged within the interview (Stake, 1995).

The general advantage of using a semi-structured interview is that it is open and natural in its approach while also ensuring that the direction of the conversation is controlled to keep a relevant focus (Burns, 1995). More specifically, it is posited that the advantages associated with using semi-structured interviews include:

1) A greater length of time is spent with a participant than in structured interviews, which helps to build up trust and rapport with the researcher.
2) The participant's perspective is provided rather than the imposed perspective of the researcher.

3) The participant uses language they are comfortable with rather than trying to understand and accommodate the concepts of the study.

4) The participant has equal status with the researcher in the dialogue rather than feeling like a guinea pig. (Burns, 1995, p. 279)

Specifically, the use of semi-structured interviews provided a twofold benefit. First, the interviews assisted in addressing the perceived need to support the data gained from the questionnaires with additional sources of data, in order to enhance the appropriateness of the data. Secondly, the interviews enabled a closer investigation of the self-knowledge of particular principals so that each of the research questions could be examined from the more personalized and descriptive data obtained. The previously listed interview guide provided a framework for exploring, probing, and questioning that which elucidated and illuminated the self-knowledge of the principal (Patton, 1990). The important intention was to keep the interviews more conversational and situational so as to diminish any sense of personal and professional threat to the participating principal (Stake, 1995).

Informed by these understandings of the semi-structured interview, most of the interview questions in this research study were not pre-determined, although some guiding questions (appendix 4), informed by the literature review in Chapter 3, were developed in respect to the participating principal's likely existing level of self-knowledge of their personal values, beliefs, and leadership behaviours. Hence, the structured part of the interview ensured that, in broad terms, relevant and similar information was sought from all participating principals about their leadership behaviours, beliefs, and personal values. On the other hand, the unstructured component of the interview more readily facilitated the solicitation of each principal's individualistic and personal, often subliminal and hidden, self-knowledge of his or her beliefs and values. The approach to these interviews took the form of a conversation that combined the social interaction between the participating principal and me with the specificity of the guiding questions in order to more fully clarify the hidden, unknown, or taken-for-granted aspects of the research issue (Patton, 1990). This interview format allowed enough freedom for the participating principal to progressively explain his or her school situation from the principal's own perspective (Burns, 1997; Merriam, 1998). The semi-structured interview offered a data-gathering environment in which the principal and I were able to work together to build a

more complete understanding and explanation of the principal's self-knowledge of their own leadership behaviours, beliefs, and values.

In addition, recommendations in the literature were noted for the need for partially analysed and interpreted data from the interviews being presented back to the participants for reflection, feedback and endorsement (Kelchtermans, 1993). A single interview was not sufficient to unearth the full and complete reconstruction of the principal's self-knowledge construct. Rather, the act of inquiring into the personal construct of self-knowledge of a particular principal unfolded through a dialectic of iteration, analysis, critique, reiteration, and reanalysis (Schwandt, 1994) over three interviews. When providing this feedback, the participants were invited to engage in critical discussion and "reflective deliberation" (Bonser & Grundy, 1988). In this way, it was possible not only to re-negotiate the validity and accuracy of the self-knowledge construct, but also to provide the opportunity for enhanced understanding of the relative importance of this concept by both the principal and myself. This review process also allowed for the ethical needs of authenticating the research and making it more of a reciprocal learning process (Day, Calderhead & Denicolo, 1993). Eventually, this cyclical process of interviews led to a joint acceptance by both the principal and myself that what was recorded was an appropriate and rightful representation of the principal's subjective self-knowledge construct.

With reference to the manner of conducting these interviews, I again took note of literature that recommended audiotaping and transcribing each interview (Patton, 1990). Audiotaping the interviews allowed the participant and myself to assume a more relaxed mode, as the constant taking of notes would have been distracting (Hook, 1990). Moreover, audiotaping the interviews allowed for multiple replays of the tapes. Thus, I was able to re-live the data and to clarify any uncertainties within the process of transcription (Patton, 1990; Merriam, 1998). Interview data was edited during the transcription process in order to either explicate the main phenomena deemed to be significant, or to identify aspects that needed further discussion. This essential process could not have occurred without audiotaping each interview as it necessitated a constant interchange between the transcribed notes and sections of the recorded data on the tape, as well as the accurate noting of important quotations from the participating principal (Patton, 1990; Burns, 1997).

The next section of this chapter describes in more detail the specific characteristics of this study. It describes the context of this study, the data analysis and interpretation methods that were used, the issues of validity of this study, and the ethical issues that were considered.

## 5.3    SPECIFIC DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This particular section of Chapter 5 endeavours to achieve two general purposes. First, it examines the specific characteristics of this study. This includes the selection of the participating principals and the role of the researcher. Secondly, it describes the research characteristics of this study. This includes a description of the data analysis and interpretation procedures, a review of the validity issues, and an exploration of the ethical considerations associated with this particular study.

### 5.3.1   Participants

As discussed above, the boundaries within this case study were identified in terms of the Catholic secondary school principalship within the Brisbane Catholic Education system of schools. A "non-probabilistic" (Merriam, 1998) and "purposeful" (Patton, 1990) sample of principals from the 26 secondary colleges was invited to participate in the study. Sampling based on the assumption that most could be learned from carefully chosen individuals rather than a random selection, seemed most appropriate to a study seeking to discover, understand, and gain insight into the problem situation (Merriam, 1998). Given that a person's ability to gain self-knowledge of personal values is specific to their openness to being reflective and introspective about their Self and their behaviours, and not dependent upon other individual characteristics, there was no need for a representative sample (Hall et al., 1998). It was more informative to have a sample that would maximize the possibility of isolating distinctive self-knowledge phenomena.

Furthermore, although the intention was to limit the purposeful sample to only five principals within the research, ensuring that all principals were potential participants diminished the possibility of creating a bias within the participant selection process. A key benefit of this research study was that its practical analytical processes could be applied to all principals and not just to those who already possessed some predetermined quality. Hence, maximizing the diversity amongst the potential participants and then

implementing an appropriate process for selecting an un-biased sample of five participating principals for this study, was a vitally important factor.

To this end, a Delphi-based methodology was used to form a purposeful sample independent of my personal preferences. While the Delphi method has its origins in statistical analysis, it has been subsequently adapted to assist in "systemizing the process" for gathering "expert opinions" within social research (Helmer, 1975, pp. xix –xx). In particular, Dalkey (1975) noted that:

> There are two basic assumptions which underlie Delphi inquiries: (a) in situations of uncertainty [such as, with access to only non-objective data] expert judgement can be used as a surrogate for direct knowledge, [and] (b) in a wide variety of situations of uncertainty, a group judgement (amalgamating the judgements of a group of experts) is preferable to the judgement of a typical member of the group. … Using the expert as a surrogate for direct knowledge poses no problems as long as the expert can furnish a high-confidence opinion based on firm knowledge of his [sic] own (pp. 239-40).

It is in this light that the appropriateness of the Delphi method for this particular study was seen. Its basic assumptions supported the use of a group of participating principals, seen as possessing an expert opinion about their principalship, as the source for data in this study. Furthermore, the Delphi method offered a systematic process for selecting this group of experts so as to avoid bias affecting the selection process.

In particular, this research study used the "reduction" (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 385) or "daisy chaining" (Gordon, 1994, p. 6) properties associated with using the Delphi method, whereby a select few principals were non-probabilistically chosen from the total "universe" (Sutherland, 1975, p. 471) of potential participating principals. Within this process, the most suitable persons with expert opinions were identified through recommendations from a multiple number of independent, but informed sources (Adler & Ziglio, 1996). Hence, the final five participants were chosen on the outcome from the collation of three different, but relevant and informed, sources of recommendations. The relevant and informed sources chosen for this research were:

1. Each of the Catholic secondary school principals in the Archdiocese of Brisbane were asked to nominate five principals they thought most suitable for involvement in this study.

2.  Five principals recommended by the Area Supervisors, the direct supervisors of the systemic Catholic secondary school principals in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

3.  Five principals recommended by the Director of Schools within the Archdiocese of Brisbane, who has the responsibility for supervising the leadership and managerial performance of every Catholic school principal.

Following collation of the recommendations from these three sources, the five most strongly supported principals were then individually and confidentially invited by the researcher to participate in this particular study. This was to gauge their willingness to be involved in this research. Willingness to participate was seen as a key aspect of this selection process as the principals, even if unsure, needed to be ready to talk about their selves and their leadership behaviours without undue reluctance or embarrassment. The implicit personal characteristics of openness, honesty, and authenticity were seen as more important than the explicit characteristics of experience, size of school or formal qualifications.

Another dimension of the principal's willingness to participate was related to a tolerance of the research methodologies. In other words, the principal had to be seen by their Self, their professional peers, and their supervisors, as being able to take part in a semi-structured interview where there was no predetermined timeframe or endpoint. The time taken was that which was necessary to reach a mutually agreed level of better understanding about all of the personal constituent elements of the principal's self-knowledge. Within this concept of interview time was the understanding that there was a need for one or more follow-up meetings between the principal and myself. These follow-up, or feedback meetings were necessary to allow me to present the proposed visual display of the self-knowledge construct to the principal for critical reflection, adjustment and, ultimately, endorsement. This process required the principal to be confident, comfortable and articulate in speaking about his or her inner most feelings associated with their role as a principal in the presence of a professional colleague. Rather than feeling that they were being evaluated and judged, I needed to build a trusting, supportive, and collegial relationship (O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1998) to ensure that information supplied was as rich and fulsome as possible.

### 5.3.2 The Researcher

Within this research study, it was understood that I was principally responsible for the collection and analysis of data. It was also assumed that I would bring into the research process a series of attributes making my perception of data different from those of another researcher (Denzin, 1989). Therefore, there is a need to make explicit any of my background experience that might influence the research and its findings (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995).

As has already been noted, I am one of the twenty-seven systemic Catholic secondary school principals in the Archdiocese of Brisbane and I have held this position for the past six years. For the four years prior to being appointed to principalship, I held a supervisory, consultative role within the Brisbane Catholic Education Office. This meant that I had worked closely with all of the secondary school principals within this system. In addition, I had been elected secretary of the Principals' Association and was one of only four delegates that represented the interests of these principals at meetings with the Executive Director and his Assistant Directors. Hence, the relationship between the secondary school principals within this system and myself can be described as professional and friendly.

Consequently, the trusting and collegial relationship (Bonser & Grundy, 1988; Williams, 2003) based on a positive rapport (O'Donoghue & Dimmock; 1998) necessary to commence and develop the investigation into the self-knowledge of the principal, already existed. In this sense, the first step within the research process of getting to know the participants (Morse, 1994) had already occurred. My intention was to use this existing relationship to remove any initial form of resistance by the principals about participating in this research study.

However, it must be acknowledged that this friendly relationship between the full cohort of principals and myself could have caused problems. Friendship may bias data selection and minimise objectivity in three ways (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992):

(1)   By subjectively selecting principals who are more likely to support my personal views.

(2)    By ignoring the potential contribution to the data by principals whom I did not know as closely.

(3)    By not feeling free to delve too deeply into a principal's causal factors for fear of adversely affecting our friendship.

It must be re-emphasized that the nature of my relationship with each of these principals was professional and friendly. It was not a social relationship or a personal friendship. While this limited the potential validity and authenticity risks to some degree, further minimization of my possible bias was achieved through adhering to the previously explained Delphi selection process for determining which principals were invited to contribute data to this study. Moreover, the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, of data collection, not only maximized and enriched the data but also, minimized my influence on the data.

Furthermore, the use of semi-structured interviews as the key data source in this study limited the potential of personal bias and preconceptions (Burns, 1997). This meant that much of each interview centred on what had been previously raised by the participating principal, rather than on what I personally believed. The interviews were so structured that only questions essential to aspects of self-knowledge were examined. This greatly enhanced consistency between interviews. I was not free to avoid specific, important, but difficult questions because of the existence or otherwise of any reluctant subjectivity. This also assisted me in overcoming any subconscious apprehension the participating principal might have in talking about his or her own personal beliefs about their values and behaviours in front of a colleague. It was essential for each principal to realize that there was no generically correct level of self-knowledge but rather it was only important to ascertain the level of clarity about their own beliefs built upon their personal values, perceptions, and experiences. Moreover, it was important for the participating principal to understand that what I believed was only relevant to me, and the only data relevant to the participating principal was what he or she believed about their Self. Also, the participating principals were encouraged to realize that any comparisons between data gained from the interviews only related to the self-knowledge phenomenon, and had no reflection upon them or their behaviour. In this way it was anticipated that the participating principal was more comfortable with the interview and more open about their inner thoughts and understandings.

### 5.3.3 The Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation Procedures

While it was presumed that the combined questionnaire and interview processes were well suited to overcoming the problem of exploring the inner, subliminal world of the principal's self-knowledge, it was also recognized that these methods would produce large amounts of data. It was essential that the participating principal accepted that I had not unduly influenced the data-gathering process. Participants had to feel secure in fully describing his or her reality and to see me only in a catalytic role. However, the incorporated freedom for the principal within this process led to the gathering of a considerable amount of unnecessary or irrelevant data as well as that which was relevant and important, but this distinction was not immediately obvious during the interview. Integral to the analysis and interpretation stage of the research was the necessity for me to be able to firstly categorize the data, and secondly, to separate the required data from that which could be discarded.

As previously mentioned, the pre-set questions in the semi-structured interviews helped this process of sorting, coding and separating the data. In addition, the following visual display framework (Figure 5.1) was used to help sort, code, inspect and interpret the data in order to produce a credible and informed understanding.

| OUTER SELF | | | INNER SELF | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BEHAVIOURS** | | **INTERFACE BETWEEN THE OUTER AND INNER SELF** | **BELIEFS** | **VALUES** |
| **NAME LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS** | **VALIDATE SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR** | **LINK TO PERSONAL HISTORY** | **SYNTHESIZE UNDERLYING BELIEFS** | **ALIGN WITH PERSONAL VALUES** |
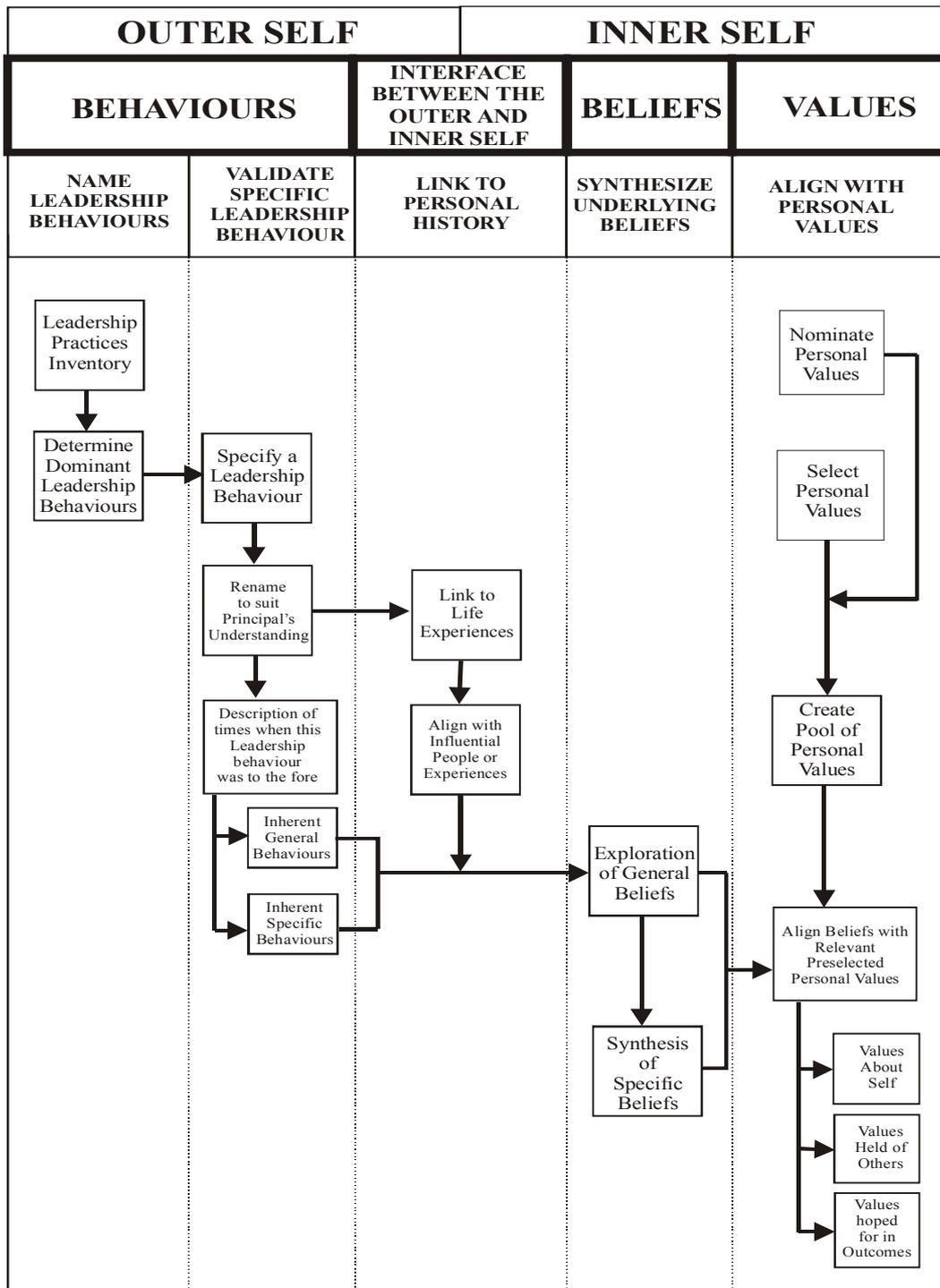
Figure 5.1   A diagrammatical representation of the cognitive processes used to code, sort, inspect, and visually display the data.

From a theoretical perspective, this visual display was developed from the conceptual framework (Figure 3.3) that used literature eclectically to link values to behaviour. The conceptual framework promoted the understanding that one's own idealized self-concept is at the heart of how one behaves, and indirectly influences behaviour through the

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sequential dimensions of the Self: self-esteem, motives, values, and beliefs. These aspects of the Self were described as being ever-increasingly subliminal dimensions and are little influenced by sensory feedback from one's reality. They are inner, tacit, and increasingly intangible behaviour-governing dimensions of a person. Importantly though, they influence how the person understands and interacts with all of their reality, and are not limited to just one dimension of their life. Beliefs, values, motives, self-esteem, and self-concept are relatively consistent within a person and impact in a similar way on all aspects of their life. Hence, the person recalling his or her own historical development of the importance of certain personal behaviours can help identify the more subliminal dimensions of the Self. By working from the known to the least known, then the order would be behaviours, beliefs, values, motives, self-esteem, and self-concept. Specific to this research study, the person's observable behaviour was used to lead them to recall moments in their personal history when this behaviour was promoted so as to help clarify their less obvious beliefs. This, in turn, assisted in identifying their less known values.

In practical terms, this visual display provided a clear overview of the data analysis and synthesis processes throughout the exploration and inspection stages of this study. The exploration stage of this data analysis and synthesis process enabled the principal to determine his or her pool of personal values. This was achieved through the use of the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* and the *Values Selection Questionnaire*. Then the internationally credible *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) created by Kouzes and Posner (2001) provided the means of not only overcoming any initial subjective uncertainty, ambiguity and hesitancy by the participating principal in describing what were his or her key leadership behaviours, but also, it greatly assisted in objectively determining what were the likely key leadership behaviours for each principal.

The inspection stage of this data analysis and synthesis process was concerned with validating and enhancing the specificity of the data from the LPI. By requesting each participating principal to discuss and comment on the LPI results, it was possible to ensure that these results captured their key leadership behaviours. Also the descriptor for each behaviour reflected the principal's actual understanding of this behaviour rather than maintaining the generic categories provided by Kouzes and Posner (2001). In addition, the principal was asked to describe specific occasions within his or her principalship that demonstrated the nature and importance of this particular behaviour within the

performance of their leadership role. From the data, the participating principal and I were able to look for general and specific behaviours enacted by the principal in order to satisfy their desire to lead in a particular chosen way.

During this part of the interview, the principal was also invited to reflect upon the possible source and development of their desire to act in accordance with their chosen way, by linking it to important past experiences within their personal history. Each was asked to describe the earliest times that they could recall behaving with the same purposes as those imbedded in their designated key leadership behaviour. This discussion endeavoured to touch upon the people and experiences from each principal's life that had been formative in creating the desire within the principal to personalize their leadership behaviour. Such data pointed towards the influence of an inner dimension of their leadership behaviour. It emphasised that the principal's personal preferences for particular important leadership behaviours were created within inner conscious and non-conscious cognitive processes. As mentioned in the literature review, the conscious processes are those associated with the cognitive analysis of personal success based on sensory feedback gained from previous and current behaviours. While the non-cognitive processes are those based on beliefs and values, which are formed and inculcated from lived experiences and which generally remain as uncritically maintained influences upon their perceptions and judgements.

The final two steps of the process shown in Figure 5.1 were essentially interpretive stages and not based directly upon answers to specific questions from the initial interview. The interview data provided by each principal was inspected, sorted and coded so as to present their underpinning beliefs and possible values. First, from each principal's descriptions of their leadership behaviours, and explanations and reasoning about their lived realities, I derived likely general beliefs, which appeared to support these behaviours, and also ascribed some manifested, or practically specific beliefs that were regularly applied to the principal's daily experiences in order to underscore these general beliefs. Through the regular and wide application of the specific beliefs connected with their daily leadership tasks, the principal sensed some satisfaction in achieving their general beliefs by enacting their most personally effective leadership behaviour. Secondly, I aligned these beliefs with the principal's pool of personal values previously created. From the discussions, explanations, and the descriptions of supportive experiential evidence, I imputed potential

underlying personal values and filtered these through the particular principal's results from his or her *Values Nomination Questionnaire* and *Values Selection Questionnaire* in order to precipitate matching values. During this process, the participating principal and I came to an understanding that within the principal's discussions, explanations and descriptions there were three categories of values being assigned: values related to the principal and how he or she behaved; values related to others in the school community and how they behaved; and values about the nature and achievement of the outcomes being pursued.

Following the completion of the data analysis and synthesis process for the two most distinguishable leadership behaviours for each principal, a visual display for each of the two leadership behaviours was presented and explained to the relevant principal. This ensured that each display could be understood, and accurately captured and interpreted the principal's perceived and described reality. Two subsequent semi-structured interviews were arranged with each participating principal, so that they were provided with the opportunity to delete, edit, or add to the displayed data so as to authenticate and enhance its descriptive and interpretive qualities.

Once the data had been collected and analysed using the above processes, issues associated with its storage needed to be addressed. Within the context of this study, the labelling of concepts, and the creation of categories of knowledge, which underpin these concepts, was a complex process that required an orderly and efficient system for data coding, storage, and retrieval (Corbin, 1986). Through the consistent and rigorous application of coding protocols and data storage methods, I was able to ensure that all data was accessible and readily and accurately retrievable for coding and concept reconstruction. In this particular study, all data was stored in the forms of written documents, computer files, and audiotapes. In order to achieve this, audiotapes of each interview were transcribed, coded, and filed. Lists of conceptual labels and categories that were generated were filed separately from the data. This comprehensive level of filing and storage of all data associated with this study ensured that it would be readily available for others to review and examine.

**5.3.4**         **Validity Issues**

The literature proposes that the following attributes, when applied to symbolic interactionist research, enhance its validity and authenticity:

1. Objectivity and confirmability whereby the research is expected to comply with rules of neutrality and freedom from bias. To achieve this end, the research must (Drew, Hardman, & Hart, 1996):

   a) Clearly specify my status and position so that the readers know exactly what point of view drove the data collection.

   b) Clearly state the essential characteristics of the participating principals and how and why they were selected or chosen.

   c) Carefully delineate the context or setting boundaries and characteristics so that the reader can make judgements about similar circumstances or settings.

   d) Define the analytic constructs that guide the study by describing the specific conceptual frameworks used in design and deductive analysis.

   e) Clearly specify the data collection and analysis procedures.

2. Authenticity and dependability so that the research results are consistent with the data collected. This can be achieved through (Merriam, 1998):

   (a) Clearly explaining my assumptions and theory behind the study, my relationship to the participants, the basis for selecting participants and a description of them, and the social context from which data were collected.

   (b) Using triangulation of multiple methods and multiple sources of data collection.

   (c) Providing a theoretical and analytical "audit trail" (Dey, 1993) by describing in detail how data was collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry.

3. Internally valid, credible, and authentic translation of the data since the "data do not speak for themselves" (Merriam, 1998). Because I was continually interpreting and translating the data through reflection, introspection, self-monitoring, and disciplined subjectivity, strategies needed to be implemented in order to confirm my findings. The

following strategies, more fully discussed in the previous section of this chapter, were used within this study:

a)   Triangulation – using multiple sources of data and multiple methods of data collection in order to confirm the emerging findings.

b)   Member checks – taking data and tentative interpretations back to the participating principals from whom they were derived and asking them if the outcomes were plausible.

c)   Researcher's biases – clarifying my assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study.

4. Externally valid, transferable, and fitting research findings whereby the conclusions of the study have a larger import. This can occur through what is learnt within this study being compared with that of other principals and to other research outcomes. This form of validity can be achieved by (Merriam, 1998):

(a)   Providing a rich, thick description of each principal's personal construct of self-knowledge so that the readers are able to determine how closely their situation matched the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred.

(b)   Using multiple examples of self-knowledge constructs for each of the five participating principals so as to maximize diversity, thereby allowing the reader to be immersed in a greater range of fully described and interpreted situations.

5. Utilization, application, and action orientated outcomes means that the findings have an impact on the participants, the researcher, and the community. In other words, not only did I and the participating principals come to understand more about the influence of personal values within the role of the principal, but that the knowledge gained within this research study was of benefit to improving the understanding of the leadership behaviour of other school principals.

It is argued that all of these attributes, which enhance the validity and authenticity of symbolic interactionist research, have been imbedded in the design and implementation of this particular research study.

**5.3.5        Ethical Considerations**

All symbolic interactionist research is concerned with producing valid and trustworthy knowledge in an ethical manner (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, the onus within such research is to constantly weigh-up the costs and benefits of the investigation, to implement safeguards to protect the rights of participants, and to abide by ethical considerations in the presentation of research findings (Diener & Crandall, 1978). Hence, ethical dilemmas were likely to emerge with regard to the collection of data, the dissemination of findings, and, in particular, in the relationship between myself and each of the participating principals (Merriam, 1998).

The standard data collection technique of interviewing in this qualitative study of the principal's self-knowledge of personal values presented its own ethical dilemma. As a symbolic interactionist researcher, I had to remember always that I was a guest in the private spaces of the participating principal (Stake, 1994). Inappropriate research actions can make participants feel that their privacy has been invaded, or they may be embarrassed by certain questions, or they may divulge things that they never intended to reveal (Merriam, 1998). While most participants enjoy sharing their knowledge, and appreciate the enhancement of their own understandings as a result, it must always be remembered that less than positive thoughts may surface in an interview, even if the topic appears routine or benign. It must be acknowledged that there may be instances when ethical dilemmas must be solved situationally and spontaneously (Punch, 1994). Hence, I was ever mindful of the need to morally and ethically care for and respect the participating principal's privacy and well being (Merriam, 1998).

Analysing data may present another ethical problem. As has already been proposed within symbolic interactionism, I was the primary instrument of data collection since all data was filtered through my particular theoretical position and biases. Deciding what was important, and what should or should not have been attended to, was initially my decision (Merriam, 1998). Thus, opportunities existed for excluding data contradictory to my views. While personal biases were not always apparent to me, it was essential that I strove to be as nonbiased, accurate, and honest as possible in all stages of the study (Diener & Crandall, 1978). Biases that cannot be controlled needed to be discussed in this thesis

document. Furthermore, it was essential always to present sufficient data to enable readers to draw their own conclusions.

The final area to address within ethical considerations is associated with the personal involvement of the principal participants. All of the systemic Catholic secondary school principals were informed of the purpose, methods, and time frame of this study. However, this information was reinforced with those principals who were specifically selected to participate in this study. At the first meeting with each selected principal, it was verbally stressed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time and that confidentially was assured. A similarly worded introductory letter (appendix 6) and consent form (appendix 7) supported these assurances. More specifically, pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity so that it would not be possible to identify persons or places from the data or reports contained within this study (Schrumacher & McMillan, 1993).

Given that this study was set within the context of Brisbane Catholic Education, ethical clearance was sought and granted from this governing body, as well as from the Australian Catholic University Ethics Committee (appendix 5 displays the approval letter). The current Brisbane Catholic Education policy states that principals are not allowed to support research being conducted within their school without the expressed formal permission of the Executive Director. In the light of endorsement from the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education, each principal had the delegated authority to allow the use of questionnaires and interviews in their school. The previously listed interview times and locations were selected in terms of convenience for each participating principal. However, it must also be acknowledged that, while the principal could provide time for the interview, they could not guarantee that unexpected issues would not arise prior to or during this time. Under these circumstances, it was necessary for me to respect the importance of the role of the principal and to be flexible enough to adjust the interview process.

Once the interviews commenced, each participating principal had the opportunity to critically review their personal construct of self-knowledge as described by me in order to ensure its accurate representation. This review and validation of the data, along with each participating principal's right to amend the self-knowledge reconstruction, served to ensure confidentiality and to protect privacy (Schrumacher & McMillan, 1993). In this

way, the ethical need to authenticate this symbolic interactionist research, and to make the knowledge forming process far more reciprocal, was emphasized (Day et al., 1993; Huberman, 1993). This meant that complimentary roles between the participating principals and myself existed so that wider possibilities were generated for greater reciprocity and mutual gain from the interview and its subsequent analysis (Bonser & Grundy, 1988; Lather, 1986; Williams, 2003). This form of collaborative approach allowed for the democratisation of the research process (Stenhouse, 1985) to ensure that the research processes were as ethical as possible.

## 5.4    CONCLUSION

This chapter examined and described the various parts of the research design that were implemented in order to maximize this examination of the concept of a values-led principal through the exploration of the principal's self-knowledge of their personal values and how this influenced his or her leadership behaviour. The first of these parts described the methods of data collection used within this case study. Also, this chapter included a rationale to explain how participants for this research were selected along with an examination of the key role played by the researcher. Then issues associated with validity and authenticity were also considered. Finally, analysis of the inherent ethical considerations within this particular study was highlighted and the resultant provisions used to address these issues are provided. The following chapter displays the data gathered by this research design

# CHAPTER 6

## DISPLAYING THE DATA

### 6.1    INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to display the data gathered by the various research methods used in this study. The format of this display of the data follows the design of this study outlined in the previous chapter in Table 5.1. In line with symbolic interactionist research, this study involved the two stages of exploration and inspection in respect to the data collection processes. Hence, the display of the data, within this chapter, will be subdivided into two sections representing the two stages of exploration and inspection. Within these two sections, the display of the data will be further subdivided so as to mirror the respective steps of data collection.   Section one will display data gathered during the exploration stage and include data from: Step 1, *the Values Nomination Questionnaire*; Step 2, the *Leadership Practices Inventory*; Step 3, the *Values Selection Questionnaire*; Step 4, the general data gained from the beginning of the initial semi-structured interview. Section two displays data gathered from the inspection stage of this study and includes data from a series of semi-structured interviews.

### 6.2    THE EXPLORATION DATA

It is recalled from Chapter 4 that data gathered during the exploration stage aids in understanding "what is going on" (Charon, 1998). Here, the researcher seeks to describe in detail what is happening in the designated social situation. The collection of data with respect to the participant's perceptions hoped to achieve two purposes for this study: provide a holistic picture of each principal's situation with respect to his or her personal values and key educational leadership behaviours; develop further interest by the participating principal in the importance of the role that their personal values might play in influencing their educational leadership behaviour and, thereby, enhance their commitment to the study.

### 6.2.1　Data gained from Step 1 - the Values Nomination Questionnaire

As explained in Chapter 5, the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* (Appendix 1) provided a number of blank rectangles on a single page and the task for the participating principal in this study was to record a different personal value in as many of the rectangles as they were able to write. There was no time limit, and the principal had the freedom to add more personal values than the number of rectangles provided or to use the blank reverse side of the page if the use of rectangles was off-putting. The data collected from this activity allowed the researcher to develop the following table:

Table 6.1　　A composite listing of each principal's nominated personal values as recorded on their respective *Values Nomination Questionnaire*.

| PRINCIPAL A | PRINCIPAL B | PRINCIPAL C | PRINCIPAL D | PRINCIPAL E |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student Focus | Dignity | Collegiality | Evangelisation | Honesty |
| Pastoral | Justice | Involvement | Fun | Integrity |
| Role Model | Love | Quality | Laughter | Authenticity |
| Gospel Values | Self-Awareness | Fairness | Integrity | Empowerment |
| Servant | Self-Love | Family | Contemplate | Respect |
| Participatory | Faith | Balance | Growth | Quality Service |
| Value-Judged | Loyalty | Laughter | Creativity | Courage |
| Discipleship | Charity | Right | Justice | Delegation |
| 'Lived' Model | Integrity | Education | Optimism | Enjoyment |
| Friendship | Hope | Community Involvement | Enjoyment | Catholic Perspective |
| Supportive | Generosity | Student Orientation | Vision | Good Communication |
| Advisory | Courage | High Work Ethic | Dreams | Needs of Students |
| Authority | Resilience | | Exploring | Realistic Goals |
| Mentoring | Compassion | | Curiosity | Realistic Expectations |
| Nurturer | Sensitivity | | Finding Best | |
| | Privacy | | Overcoming | |
| | Friendship | | Energy | |
| | Spirituality | | Practical | |
| | Family | | Doable | |
| | Heritage | | Relax | |
| | Difference | | Reaching Out | |
| | Knowledge | | Equity | |
| | Equity | | Search | |
| | Skill | | Question | |
| | Positivity | | Critique | |
| | Flexibility | | Work Out | |
| | Freedom | | Self-knowledge | |
| | Harmony | | Problem Solving | |
| | Solidarity | | Looking Forward | |
| | | | Expanding Horizons | |
| | | | Values Orientated | |
| | | | Finding Meaning | |
| Total = 15 | Total = 29 | Total = 12 | Total = 32 | Total = 14 |

These data present an insight into each principal's initial level of self-knowledge of his or her own personal values and suggests that there is no consistency in the level of such self-knowledge across these participants. Furthermore, it can be seen that the level of self-knowledge of personal values for nearly all of the principals is less than the 30 to 40 personal values that the literature (Rokeach, 1973) claims influences individual behaviour.

The self-knowledge of personal values for Principals A, C, and E would appear to be quite limited. This perception would support the understanding in the literature (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002) that people often have limited knowledge of their personal values. At this point it could also be argued that some of the values (eg. "participatory" for Principal A) might represent a number of related or subsumed values (eg. collaborative, sharing, inclusive).

### 6.2.2   Data gained from Step 2 - the Leadership Practices Inventory

The *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) created by Kouzes and Posner (2001) was used as the starting point for synthesising the key educational leadership behaviours for each of the participating principals. This inventory not only provided the means for determining what were the likely key leadership behaviours for each principal, but also, it overcame any initial subjective uncertainty, ambiguity and hesitancy by the principal in describing what were his or her key leadership behaviours.

As described in detail in Chapter 5, Kouzes and Posner (2001) posit that all forms of leadership depend on five particular patterns of behaviour and every leader incorporates these behaviours into their leadership to varying degrees of proficiency. Every leader has their own preferred leadership behaviour and this is reflected in their level of commitment to each of these five prescribed behaviours. These five patterns of behaviour are said to be:
1.  Challenging the process
2.  Inspiring a shared vision
3.  Enabling others to act
4.  Modelling the way
5.  Encouraging the heart

In order to determine the level of commitment to each of these patterns of behaviours, the principal was asked to complete the LPI Self evaluation questionnaire (appendix 2). Essentially, the principal was asked to rate 30 statements on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 meaning that he or she "almost never" engaged in the behaviour described, while 10 would indicate that he or she "almost always" engaged in that particular behaviour. As there are 30 statements, this meant that there were 6 statements aligned with each of the 5

patterns of behaviour. Consequently, the maximum rating for any one of the patterns of behaviour was 60 and the minimum was 6. The higher the rating the more dominant was that particular pattern of behaviour within the individual's overall style of leadership.

Based on these understandings, each of the participating principals completed the LPI and the results for each principal are shown in the following table:

Table 6.2    The data gained from the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) for each of the participating principals.

| PRINCIPAL | RANK | PRINCIPAL'S PREFERRED BEHAVIOUR | RATING |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 1 | Encouraging the heart | 52 |
|  | 2 | Enabling others to act | 49 |
|  | 3 | Modelling the way | 49 |
|  | 4 | Inspiring a shared vision | 48 |
|  | 5 | Challenging the process | 44 |
| B | 1 | Enabling others to act | 59 |
|  | 2 | Encouraging the heart | 58 |
|  | 3 | Modelling the way | 54 |
|  | 4 | Challenging the process | 52 |
|  | 5 | Inspiring a shared vision | 45 |
| C | 1 | Modelling the way | 40 |
|  | 2 | Enabling others to act | 40 |
|  | 3 | Encouraging the heart | 37 |
|  | 4 | Challenging the process | 34 |
|  | 5 | Inspiring a shared vision | 28 |
| D | 1 | Enabling others to act | 53 |
|  | 2 | Inspiring a shared vision | 51 |
|  | 3 | Challenging the process | 51 |
|  | 4 | Encouraging the heart | 48 |
|  | 5 | Modelling the way | 43 |
| E | 1 | Enabling others to act | 46 |
|  | 2 | Challenging the process | 42 |
|  | 3 | Encouraging the heart | 41 |
|  | 4 | Modelling the way | 37 |
|  | 5 | Inspiring a shared vision | 35 |

By agreeing or disagreeing with the resultant claims by the LPI as to what constituted the key leadership behaviours, the principal was immediately and unhesitantly drawn into a discussion with the researcher about his or her leadership behaviours. In the case of the

five participating principals within this study, there was unanimous agreement with the general results produced by the LPI. Each principal readily accepted that the LPI had nominated their key leadership behaviours, particularly after they had personalized the behaviour definitions.

### 6.2.3   Data gained from Step 3 - the Values Selection Questionnaire

While the LPI had indicated the key leadership behaviours of each principal, it was also necessary to determine his or her personal values. Given the understanding provided by the literature (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002) that it was more likely each principal would have limited self-knowledge of their personal values, this study required an additional means of determining each principal's array of personal values. Any limitation in the natural level of self-knowledge of personal values needed to be overcome. Arguably, in order to map the interrelationship between certain values and specific behaviours it was necessary to know both the values and the behaviour.

The *Values Selection Questionnaire* (Appendix 3) achieved this purpose. This instrument is in line with the values clarification exercises recommended by McGraw (2001) and Senge et al. (1994). Within this study, this instrument required individual principals to select his or her values from a comprehensive list of value words. The list provided to each principal included 170 potential values, compiled primarily from those provided by McGraw (2001) and Senge et al. (1994) with additional values from the work of Cashman (1998) and Hultman and Gellermann (2002). In addition, the *Added Values* section of this questionnaire provided the principal with the opportunity to add values to those supplied, such as those from his or her original nominated list or any other personal value.

The data collected from this activity allowed the researcher to develop the following table. The values categorized as "selected values" are those that were selected directly from the supplied list of 170 values. While those categorized as "added values" were those deemed to be important to the particular principal, but did not appear in the supplied list.

Table 6.3(a)  The Selected and Added values chosen by Principal A

| SELECTED VALUES | | | | ADDED VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caution | Accountability | Harmony | Security | |
| Deference | Caring | Tradition | Self-Control | |
| Participation | Compassion | Candour | Control | |
| Approval | Cooperation | Companionship | Recognition | |
| Diplomacy | Tolerance | Confidentiality | Courtesy | |
| Tact | Subservient | Justice | Equality | |
| Christian | Trustworthy | Friendship | Affirmation | |
| Loyalty | Honesty | Responsible | Balance | |
| Commitment | Enthusiasm | Supportive | Diversity | |
| Respect | Flexibility | Effectiveness | Hardworking | |
| Productivity | Improvement | Excellence | Diligent | |
| Self-Discipline | Innovation | Imagination | Efficiency | |
| Dedication | Quality | Initiative | Reliability | |
| Ethical | Responsibility | Intelligence | Consistency | |
| Humility | Faith | Originality | Discretion | |
| Law-Abiding | Catholic | Credibility | Honesty | |
| Sincerity | Generosity | Affirming | Integrity | |
| Order | Involvement | Successful | Morality | |
| Discerning | Politeness | Empowerment | Openness | |
| Sincerity | Cohesiveness | Giving | Inclusiveness | |
| Witness to Faith | Collaboration | Ownership | Situational Ethics | |
| Organizational | Accepting Others | Community | Developing Others | |
| Orientation | Community Orientation | Involvement | Concern for Others | |
| **Total number of values selected  =  90** | | | | **Total  =  0** |

Table 6.3(b)  The Selected and Added values chosen by Principal B

| SELECTED VALUES | | | | ADDED VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caution | Independence | Deference | Opportunity | |
| Expediency | Self-Control | Approval | Results | |
| Courtesy | Diplomacy | Tact | Spontaneity | |
| Affirmation | Responsiveness | Loyalty | Congruence | |
| Hardworking | Commitment | Respect | Faith | |
| Efficiency | Productivity | Reliability | Affirming | |
| Spirituality | Stability | Consistency | Empowerment | |
| Dignity | Humility | Integrity | Generosity | |
| Sincerity | Authority | Balance | Involvement | |
| Harmony | Order | Peace | Progress | |
| Tradition | Accountability | Belonging | Collaboration | |
| Caring | Compassion | Confidentiality | Interdependence | |
| Cooperation | Fellowship | Justice | Participation | |
| Respect | Patience | Kindness | Sincerity | |
| Tolerance | Discerning | Dependable | Optimism | |
| Responsible | Credibility | Supportive | Perseverance | |
| Consideration | Flexible | Confident | Authenticity | |
| Adaptable | Adventurous | Creativity | Courage | |
| Curiosity | Delight | Merit | Genuiness | |
| Effectiveness | Enthusiasm | Excellence | Teamwork | |
| Freedom | Humour | Imagination | Self-Discipline | |
| Improvement | Initiative | Innovation | Giving | |
| Intelligence | Intuition | Quality | Mutual Interests | |
| Originality | Influential | Networking | Service | |
| Risk-Taking | Ownership | Evangelising | Diversity | |
| Commitment | | Fulfilment | Love | |
| Concern for Others | Developing Others | Accepting Others | Community Involvement | |
| **Total number of values selected  =  105** | | | | **Total  =  0** |

Table 6.3(c)    The Selected and Added values chosen by Principal C

| SELECTED VALUES | | | ADDED VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| Confident | Flexible | Adaptable | |
| Delight | Politeness | Enthusiasm | |
| Humour | Responsive | Improvement | |
| Perseverance | Loyalty | Spontaneity | |
| Authenticity | Respect | Genuiness | |
| Affirming | Reliability | Fulfilment | |
| Empowerment | Consistency | Discerning | |
| Giving | Discretion | Mentoring | |
| Responsible | Honesty | Collaboration | |
| Tolerance | Morality | Equality | |
| Inclusiveness | Balance | Interdependence | |
| Love | Compassion | Networking | |
| Openness | Cooperation | Teamwork | |
| Dependable | Justice | Trustworthy | |
| Friendship | Trust | Sincerity | |
| Wisdom | Kindness | Community Involvement | |
| Situational Ethics | Accepting Others | Concern for Others | |
| **Total number of values selected = 69** | | | **Total = 0** |

Table 6.3(d)    The Selected and Added values chosen by Principal D

| SELECTED VALUES | | | | ADDED VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Courtesy | Alignment | Self-Control | Freedom | Enjoyment |
| Tact | Participation | Affirmation | Independence | Laughter |
| Responsiveness | Teamwork | Originality | Networking | Stillness |
| Catholic | Consideration | Generosity | Progress | Contemplation |
| Loyalty | Confident | Hardworking | Service | Practical |
| Commitment | Successful | Diligent | Humour | Doable |
| Respect | Perseverance | Health | Imagination | Fun |
| Reliability | Discerning | Self-Discipline | Improvement | |
| Stability | Fulfilment | Consistency | Innovation | |
| Dedication | Collaboration | Ethical | Genuiness | |
| Honesty | Equality | Humility | Affirming | |
| Integrity | Interdependence | Morality | Spirituality | |
| Sincerity | Diversity | Optimism | Truth | |
| Harmony | Inclusiveness | Peace | Tolerance | |
| Accountability | Love | Belonging | Evangelising | |
| Caring | Openness | Companionship | Faith | |
| Compassion | Partnering | Confidentiality | Cohesiveness | |
| Cooperation | Influential | Fellowship | Credibility | |
| Justice | Mentoring | Trust | Courage | |
| Patience | Christian | Kindness | Congruence | |
| Dependable | Wisdom | Responsible | Authenticity | |
| Creativity | Balance | Supportive | Synergism | |
| Delight | Altruism | Flexible | Responsibility | |
| Initiative | Empowerment | Adaptable | Spontaneity | |
| Intuition | Giving | Adventurous | Ownership | |
| Opportunity | Involvement | Curiosity | Risk-Taking | |
| Mutual Interests | Situational Ethics | Enthusiasm | Community | |
| Witness to Faith | Accepting Others | Quality | Support | |
| Concern for Others | Community Orientation | Developing Others | | |
| **Total number of values selected = 114** | | | | **Total = 7** |

Table 6.3(e)       The Selected and Added values chosen by Principal E

| SELECTED VALUES | | | | ADDED VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Honesty | Creativity | Recognition | Delight | Decisiveness |
| Integrity | Effectiveness | Competition | Enthusiasm | Hope |
| Authenticity | Humour | Approval | Improvement | Plan Ahead |
| Catholic | Optimism | Confident | Results | Reflect/Review |
| Empowerment | Credibility | Affirmation | Genuiness | Well Organized |
| Respect | Spirituality | Dependable | Affirming | |
| Quality | Giving | Cooperation | Service | |
| Courage | Collaboration | Hardworking | Interdependence | |
| Commitment | Networking | Diligent | Openness | |
| Efficiency | Participation | Reliability | Teamwork | |
| Consistency | Accountability | Dignity | Sincerity Witness to | |
| Caring | Fulfilment | Fellowship | Faith | |
| Wisdom | Successful | Trusted | Balance | |
| | Organizational Orientation | | | |
| **Total number of values selected = 53** | | | | **Total = 5** |

Each of these tables of values was then used as the potential pool of personal values for the respective principal in the future process of inspection.

## 6.2.4   Data gained from Step 4 - the Initial Semi-Structured Interview

While much of the semi-structured interview was aimed at assisting the inspection stage of the research, the opening section of each interview contributed to the exploration stage. During the early part of each interview, the principal was asked to respond to the following two questions:

1. Was the LPI accurate in its indication of your dominant leadership behaviours?
2. How would you prefer to define or describe your two most dominant behaviours?

This simple task readily assisted in opening up the discussion about the particular principal's preferred leadership behaviours. The substantial documentation provided by the LPI provided plenty of discussion points that were deemed not to be too personal or private. Hence, each interview began with purpose and enthusiasm. The opportunity provided for each principal to redefine or personally describe their two most dominant leadership behaviours became a natural progression to the subsequent reflective discussion. More particularly, this opportunity provided both the participating principal and the researcher with an insight into the principal's underlying causal influences of these behaviours. Hence, these personalized definitions follow as they form a valuable source of explored data.

Table 6.4     Confirmation and personal redefinition of the two[6] key educational leadership behaviours nominated by each principal as being central to their principalship.

| PRINCIPAL | RANK | LPI DESCRIPTOR | PERSONAL DESCRIPTOR |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | **1** | Encouraging the heart | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school |
| | **2** | Enabling others to act | Developing harmonious and beneficial work practices in others |
| **B** | **1** | Enabling others to act | Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done |
| | **2** | Encouraging the heart | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school |
| **C** | **1** | Modelling the way | Striving to model the standards expected of all within the school community |
| | **2** | Enabling others to act | Enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done |
| **D** | **1** | Enabling others to act | Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way |
| | **2** | Inspiring a shared vision | Encouraging and motivating people through inspiring a common vision of a better future |
| **E** | **1** | Enabling others to act | Building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work |
| | **2** | Challenging the process | Striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices |

The principal's personalized definition or description of his or her own leadership behaviours provided two additional distinctive benefits to this study. First, it provided the participating principal with a pathway for openly reflecting upon and talking about his or her own style of leadership and the importance of a certain emphasis within this personal style. Secondly, it presented the researcher with a guide towards further questioning aimed at inspecting and interpreting the complex inter-relationships between each principal's behaviours, beliefs and values.

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[6] This research study only set out to clarify and describe the relationship between some, not all, of each principal's leadership behaviours and their personal values. To this end, the Leadership Practices Inventory provided credible data in relation to some of each principal's leadership behaviours but it is accepted that other forms of key leadership behaviours might have existed. However, based on the international credibility of the Leadership Practices Inventory, it is claimed that the two highest rated key leadership behaviours, at least, are worthy of consideration in this research study.

As has already been mentioned, all five principals readily endorsed the nominated ranking and general intention of the LPI outcomes. However, each principal created enhanced meaning, interest, and ownership through personalizing the descriptor for each of his or her two most dominant leadership behaviours. This process had clarified the preferred style of leadership for each principal and this was of great interest to him or her. In turn, this new insight into their leadership style reinforced their commitment to this study and to the possibility of gaining more self-knowledge about their Self as a leader. From this point on, the researcher used each principal's own descriptor for his or her preferred behaviour rather than the LPI descriptor. Also, this source of explored data became the means of transition into the inspection stage of this symbolic interactionist study.

## 6.3    THE INSPECTION DATA

Unlike explored data, which aims to holistically describe the personal values and educational leadership behaviours for each individual principal, the inspection data involved isolating each of these elements and describing them in more detail (Charon, 1998). Here, the inspection processes must be flexible, imaginative, creative and non-routine (Stryker, 1980) in order to overcome the natural obstacles that regularly hide the data from view (Heck & Hallinger, (1999). The following cognitive processes, first presented as Figure 5.1, were used to achieve this purpose:

| OUTER SELF | | | INNER SELF | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BEHAVIOURS** | | **INTERFACE BETWEEN THE OUTER AND INNER SELF** | **BELIEFS** | **VALUES** |
| NAME LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS | VALIDATE SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | LINK TO PERSONAL HISTORY | SYNTHESIZE UNDERLYING BELIEFS | ALIGN WITH PERSONAL VALUES |

Leadership Practices Inventory → Determine Dominant Leadership Behaviours → Specify a Leadership Behaviour → Rename to suit Principal's Understanding → Description of times when this Leadership behaviour was to the fore → Inherent General Behaviours / Inherent Specific Behaviours

Rename to suit Principal's Understanding → Link to Life Experiences → Align with Influential People or Experiences → Exploration of General Beliefs → Synthesis of Specific Beliefs

Nominate Personal Values → Select Personal Values → Create Pool of Personal Values → Align Beliefs with Relevant Preselected Personal Values → Values About Self / Values Held of Others / Values hoped for in Outcomes

Figure 6.1    A diagrammatical representation of the cognitive processes used to explore, inspect, and visually describe the relationship between the participating principal's personal values and his or her educational leadership behaviours.

The inspection processes for each principal's situation initially focussed on the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for each principal as selected by that principal. The purpose here was to 'unpack' these highly ranked leadership behaviours into more precise general and specific constituent behaviours. The inspection process then focused on related general and specific beliefs for each principal's two key leadership behaviours. Finally, these beliefs were aligned to inherent personal values previously selected by the principal (Table 6.3).

## 6.3.1 The Data gained from Step 5 – the Analysis and Synthesis of the Highest Ranked Leadership Behaviours

In order to inspect each principal's two highest ranked leadership behaviours more closely, the semi-structured interviews were directed towards reflecting upon actual examples of school situations in which the principal sensed that he or she was successfully enacting the specific behaviour. During the description of these situations, the researcher guided the participating principal towards distinguishing other behaviours that were integral to accomplishing the overall highest ranked leadership behaviour. These integral behaviours were then categorized as being either general or specific in nature. The general behaviours had a more global outcome, whereas the specific behaviours were directed more towards the achievement of a precise outcome. The data collected from this activity allowed the researcher to develop the following tables:

Table 6.5(a)  A display of the general and specific behaviours integral to the accomplishment of each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for Principal A.

| PRINCIPAL | PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ALIGNED GENERAL BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school | ➢ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements<br>➢ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments | ➢ Praising people for a job well done<br>➢ Giving community members appreciation and support<br>➢ Expressing confidence in people's abilities<br>➢ Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments<br>➢ Recognizing people for commitment to shared values<br>➢ Rewarding people for their contributions |
|  | Developing harmonious and beneficial work practices in others | ➢ Giving power and opportunity to more able staff members in critical tasks and developing competencies in all<br>➢ Ensuring that innovative practices are carefully considered, well planned, and closely monitored<br>➢ Setting a personal example to all by modelling ways that are consistent with that expected | ➢ Expressing confidence in other people's abilities<br>➢ Setting an example of what is expected<br>➢ Following through on promises and commitments<br>➢ Developing cooperative relationships<br>➢ Ensuring that goals and plans are set<br>➢ Treating people with dignity and respect |

Table 6.5(b)    A display of the general and specific behaviours integral to the accomplishment of each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for Principal B.

| PRINCIPAL | PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ALIGNED GENERAL BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **B** | Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done | ➢ Fostering collaboration; <br>➢ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support; and <br>➢ Promoting a shared understanding of what needs to be achieved. | ➢ Developing cooperative relationships <br>➢ Listening to different points of view <br>➢ Treating people with dignity and respect <br>➢ Supporting other people's decisions <br>➢ Letting people choose how to do their work <br>➢ Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work |
| | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school | ➢ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements <br>➢ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments | ➢ Praising people for a job well done <br>➢ Giving community members appreciation and support <br>➢ Expressing confidence in people's abilities <br>➢ Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments <br>➢ Recognizing people for commitment to shared values <br>➢ Rewarding people for their contributions |

Table 6.5(c)    A display of the general and specific behaviours integral to the accomplishment of each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for Principal B.

| PRINCIPAL | PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ALIGNED GENERAL BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **C** | Strives to model the standards expected of all within the school community | ➢ Setting an example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values <br>➢ Setting standards through developing community goals and implementing plans <br>➢ Achieving small wins that promote consistent progress and builds community | ➢ Setting an example of what is expected <br>➢ Ensuring that goals, plans, and milestones are set <br>➢ Being clear about her own personal philosophy of leadership <br>➢ Making progress toward goals one step at a time <br>➢ Following through on promises and commitments <br>➢ Attempting to ensure that people adhere to agreed-on standards |
| | Enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done | ➢ Fostering collaboration by promoting community goals and building trust <br>➢ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support <br>➢ Maintaining enthusiasm and optimism by ensuring that work does not become overtly serious and there is always a humorous and enjoyable dimension to it | ➢ Developing cooperative relationships <br>➢ Listening to different points of view <br>➢ Treating people with dignity and respect <br>➢ Supporting other people's decisions <br>➢ Letting people choose how to do their work <br>➢ Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work <br>➢ Ensuring that humour, fun, and enjoyment are regularly part of celebrating community achievements |

Table 6.5(d)   A display of the general and specific behaviours integral to the accomplishment of each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for Principal D.

| PRINCIPAL | PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ALIGNED GENERAL BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **D** | Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way | ➢ Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust<br>➢ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, delegating critical tasks, and offering visible support<br>➢ Challenging people to reflect upon and to understand clearly what they are trying to achieve and to ensure it is for the common good | ➢ Treating people with dignity and respect<br>➢ Listening to diverse points of view<br>➢ Developing cooperative relationships and supporting other people's decisions<br>➢ Letting people choose how to do their work<br>➢ Encouraging people to confidently confront challenging situations, to be willing to take some risks, and to be open towards trying new approaches<br>➢ Helping people to grow in their jobs |
|  | Encouraging and motivating people through inspiring a common vision of a better future | ➢ Envisioning and communicating an uplifting and ennobling future<br>➢ Capturing the services of others in the achievement of a common vision by appealing to their passions, interests, hopes, and dreams | ➢ Speaking with conviction about the meaning and significance of work<br>➢ Being enthusiastic and positive about the future<br>➢ Appealing to others to share in the realization of the dream of the brighter future<br>➢ Initiating reflection and discussion about potential future trends<br>➢ Describing a compelling and captivating image of the future<br>➢ Being able to show others how their interests and passions can be realized |

Table 6.5(e)   A display of the general and specific behaviours integral to the accomplishment of each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for Principal E.

| PRINCIPAL | PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ALIGNED GENERAL BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **E** | Building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work | ➢ Developing knowledge and competencies in others so that they can confidently and independently complete responsibilities<br>➢ Fostering collaboration<br>➢ Strengthening people by giving them sufficient power, providing choice, assigning critical tasks, and offering regular support | ➢ Ensuring that people know what is expected of them and what help is available to them<br>➢ Treating people with dignity and respect<br>➢ Letting people choose how to do their work<br>➢ Developing cooperative relationships<br>➢ Supporting other people's decisions<br>➢ Listening to alternative points of view |
|  | Striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices | ➢ Searching out constructive opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve<br>➢ Being willing to experiment, take calculated risks, and to learn from any perceived deficiencies<br>➢ Recognizing individual contributions to the success of school projects | ➢ Consistently reviewing all critical practices and implementing perceived improvements<br>➢ Taking the initiative to overcome any perceived obstacles<br>➢ Looking outside of the organization for ways to improve<br>➢ Ensuring that all proposed changes or innovations are achievable and deemed to enhance teaching<br>➢ Speaking with confidence and conviction about the meaning and significance of work<br>➢ Praising people for their positive contribution to the success of the school |

### 6.3.2 The Data gained from Step 6 – Recording relevant aspects of the Principal's Personal History

The more comprehensive and detailed insight achieved in step 5 allowed the researcher to guide the principal towards discussing how and when these behaviours became important within his or her life. This part of the semi-structured interview required the principal to provide a brief personal history to account for the importance he or she placed on enacting these behaviours. The use of relevant accounts from the personal history of each principal served three purposes. Firstly, these accounts further align this study of personal values with the theoretical understandings presented within the literature. The literature posits that values are adopted uncritically and non-cognitively during important moments of personal growth experiences throughout one's life. The fact that each principal could relate life experiences from his or her personal history, as being the antecedent for them having adopted the preferred behaviour, confirmed this theoretical view. Secondly, the personal history accounts speak to the theoretical perspective that there is an inner, subjective, subliminal dimension to leadership behaviour. The personal histories highlighted the interplay between the inner and outer world of the principal in the regular performance of his or her educational leadership role. They point to there being an outer and an inner, a public and a private accomplishment associated with principalship behaviours. Here, principalship behaviour was not just about achieving a practical outcome; it was also about achieving it in a particular way so as to affirm inner, personal needs. Thirdly, the literature had also presented the understanding that beliefs were tacit antecedents of behaviour. Hence, the personal history accounts provided additional sources of data to that of the personalized descriptors of the key leadership behaviours from which it was possible to deduce potential beliefs.

The data collected from this activity allowed the researcher to develop the following tables:

Table 6.6(a)    Accounts from the personal history of Principal A that influences his/her particular choice of educational leadership behaviour.

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY |
|---|---|---|
| **A** | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school | 1.  The understanding that people respond positively to praise and affirmation was developed in the family upbringing, particularly by the mother, and this view influences attitude to all areas of life, not just professional perspective.<br><br>2.  This perspective was reinforced at the beginning of professional career when more experienced teachers willingly provided personal support and encouragement, which provided a strong and confident start. |
|  | Developing harmonious and beneficial work practices in others | 1.  The strong desire to set a positive role model was developed within the family where conservative values were nurtured and this included pride in oneself, which was mainly shown through taking pride in one's positive actions.<br><br>2.  The need to empower others to lead and take responsibility comes from having a clear recognition of one's own limitations. A key example of this is to acknowledge my predominantly Pastoral administrative background yet now having responsibility, as Principal, to oversee Curriculum development within the school as well.<br><br>3.  Having to immediately step in and deal with a serious staff interpersonal conflict situation when newly appointed to a school and, despite considerable personal uncertainty about succeeding in this endeavour, seeing the benefits to the whole school community of striving to improve the situation has engendered a high degree of positivity towards appropriately challenging teachers if improvement is deemed necessary for the good of the whole school. |

Table 6.6(b)    Accounts from the personal history of Principal B that influences his/her particular choice of educational leadership behaviour.

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY |
|---|---|---|
| **B** | Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done | 1.  A very positive sense of interdependence developed when elected as a School Prefect and the immediate realization that other people needed to be involved in completing all of my assigned responsibilities if success was to be achieved as there was too much for one person to accomplish.<br><br>2.  Being promoted to positions of added responsibility very early within my professional career helped to build the awareness that deep satisfaction comes from being empowered and enabled to accomplish the assigned responsibility in one's own way. |
|  | Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school | 1.  Being given leadership positions early in teaching career developed realization that anyone can be given a responsibility and can be allowed to enjoy either the satisfaction from successfully completing the task or the benefit from realizing it did not work as well as expected for a given reason.<br><br>2.  This perception was reinforced from a theoretical viewpoint through reading husband's corporate leadership and management literature, which supported the importance of building teamwork and cooperative practices. |

Table 6.6(c)

Table 6.6(c)　　　　Accounts from the personal history of Principal C that influences his/her particular choice of educational leadership behaviour.

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY |
|---|---|---|
| **C** | Strives to model the standards expected of all within the school community | 1. Strong family influence, particularly by father who often said that you could not expect someone to do something that you would not do yourself.<br><br>2. A general personal perspective is that setting goals, establishing plans to meet these goals, and then celebrating the accomplishment of these goals is important in all areas of life, not just the professional dimension; because it is essential to know where you are going and how you are going to get there, and then to be able to rejoice in the success of reaching your desired destination. |
| | Enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done | 1. From a very young age there was a realization that the more people you met the more aware you were of the diversity of gifts and talents within people and the silliness of not allowing people to use their unique talents for the good of everyone.<br><br>2. There has always been a realization that one cannot be another person; in all that one does it is essential to be true to one's self and in order to accomplish all that has to be done one needs to be assisted by the skills and knowledge of others. |

Table 6.6(d)　　　　Accounts from the personal history of Principal D that influences his/her particular choice of educational leadership behaviour.

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY |
|---|---|---|
| **D** | Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way | 1. While starting out in life by trying to control what other people were doing in order to achieve what was thought to be the best outcome, a number of key people reacted negatively to this approach and, thereby, helped to form a realization in me that it is far better to support and encourage the endeavours of others or else you are left to do everything yourself. |
| | Encouraging and motivating people through inspiring a common vision of a better future | 1. Organizational based, task-oriented, functional activities have always been a difficulty for me even as a young student having to be organized and directed by parents to complete homework. On the other hand, being creative and innovative seemed far more natural and immensely more fulfilling.<br><br>2. Always saw myself as a visionary and one who looked at things differently to most other people.<br><br>3. Sharing one's visions, particularly if they are somewhat radical or alternative, has not been a simple or an easy task and I have had to learn tact and diplomacy in order to build trust and credibility. |

Table 6.6(e)        Accounts from the personal history of Principal E that influences his/her
                    particular choice of educational leadership behaviour.

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY |
|---|---|---|
| **E** | Building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work | 1. As the eldest son, I was regularly given the opportunity to grow by being given the trust and the freedom to accept many different responsibilities.<br><br>2. When I first began teaching there was not any regular supervision or support and you were left to your own honesty, resources, and enthusiasm to ensure that expectations were met. This often led to a great deal of uncertainty, insecurity and hesitation. I would wish that teachers new to my school would not experience these negative feelings. |
|  | Striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices | 1. A very serious injury as a young boy meant that achieving the normal peer group recognition through sporting prowess was not possible and so I had to find an alternative acceptable way of doing this. This I achieved by attaining very high academic results through sheer hard work and attention to detail.<br><br>2. I have always seen myself as a risk-taker, a person who was regularly looking for new challenges and being willing to think divergently to overcome problems and obstacles. |

The combination of the data supplied by the analysis and synthesis of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours and the personal history accounts associated with each of these behaviours provided a rich pool of data in which to discover antecedent beliefs associated with these behaviours.

## 6.3.3    The Data gained from Step 7 – Discovering the Associated Beliefs

While the literature (Hodgkinson, 1996) presents the view that people are usually able to voice their beliefs, it also posits the understanding that an individual's beliefs are not readily known and can be easily hidden from others. The person needs to carefully discern their own beliefs for them to personally realize what they are. Beliefs cannot be measured from the outcomes of behaviours; they have to be discovered by the person from amongst the attitudes and perceptions that are aligned with these personal behaviours. My role, as the researcher, was to facilitate this discovery.

During Step 5 and 6 of the semi-structured interview, in which the participating principal was assisted by the researcher to describe more fully his or her leadership behaviours and to align these with personal history accounts, some beliefs became apparent. However, other beliefs remained undiscovered as the fear of interrupting the continuity of the interview process, and the obvious time restraints associated with conducting the

interview in the natural setting of the principal's school, meant that there was insufficient time for a close examination of the interview data as it was being presented. However, on transcribing, reviewing, inspecting, and interpreting the data following the interview, the researcher became aware of potential beliefs that appeared to emanate from the detailed description of the leadership behaviours and the personal history accounts. These potential beliefs were then presented to the respective principal for endorsement. This process was in keeping with the role of the researcher within a pragmatic constructivist study, which, as stated in Chapter 4, allowed for the possibility that the investigative process could end up with an explicit awareness of phenomena that the participant was initially unable to articulate. This process did not impose the researcher's assumed beliefs upon the principal but rather it allowed the researcher to assist the principal to discover his or her pertinent beliefs by presenting potential beliefs for consideration and endorsement.

As a result of this activity, the beliefs endorsed by the participating principal appeared to fall into the two categories: general and specific. General beliefs were those held by the principal that are global and implicit in nature, whereas, specific beliefs related explicitly to what the participating principal personally believed. The data collected from this activity allowed the researcher to develop the following tables. Within each of these tables the column containing the description of the particular behaviour includes not only the principal's personalized descriptor for this behaviour, but it also includes the more detailed information provided by the general and specific behaviours that had previously been aligned with this behaviour. In this way, this behaviour description column provides a rich description of the behaviour, enhancing the perception of alignment between these behaviours and the associated general beliefs and specific beliefs.

Table 6.7(a)    Principal A's personal understandings about his/her leadership behaviour and the associated beliefs that support these behaviours

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOURS | ASSOCIATED GENERAL BELIEFS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BELIEFS |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | *Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements<br>➤ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Praising people for a job well done<br>➤ Giving community members appreciation and support<br>➤ Expressing confidence in people's abilities<br>➤ Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments<br>➤ Recognizing people for commitment to shared values<br>➤ Rewarding people for their contributions<br><br>*Developing harmonious and beneficial work practices in others.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Giving power and opportunity to more able staff members in critical tasks and developing competencies in all<br>➤ Ensuring that innovative practices are carefully considered, well planned, and closely monitored<br>➤ Setting a personal example to all by modelling ways that are consistent with that expected<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Expressing confidence in other people's abilities<br>➤ Setting an example of what is expected<br>➤ Following through on promises and commitments<br>➤ Developing cooperative relationships<br>➤ Ensuring that goals and plans are set<br>➤ Treating people with dignity and respect | ➤ people are motivated by positive, constructive, and affirming praise<br>➤ people work better if they feel appreciated<br>➤ the leader gives essential direction to the efforts of the school community through acknowledging, supporting, and encouraging the positive effort of individuals, groups, and the whole community<br><br><br>➤ Inspiring a shared vision and a common purpose depends on good role modelling and regular encouragement;<br>➤ The leader is not able to know and do everything so it is essential to empower other more knowledgeable or skilful people in areas of specific need;<br>➤ Building rapport with staff enables avenues for more pointed professional conversations;<br>➤ Being challenged to change can improve a teacher's professional practice; and<br>➤ Thorough planning and preparation helps to overcome personal uncertainty or lack of specific knowledge. | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Value people's contribution<br>➤ Acknowledge what people do<br>➤ Give encouragement to people in their positive endeavours for the school<br>➤ Seek out contributors to thank them in both formal and informal ways<br>➤ Appreciate the diversity in contributions made by people from across the school community<br>➤ Always try to suitably reward people for their positive contributions to the successful accomplishments within the school<br>➤ Celebrate school achievements in appropriate ways.<br><br><br>It is important to personally:<br>➤ Be an exemplary role model;<br>➤ Use the knowledge and talents of others;<br>➤ Seek advice and to research thoroughly before dealing with unfamiliar issues;<br>➤ Thoroughly plan and monitor new innovations;<br>➤ Support and encourage all staff members;<br>➤ Treat each person on their own merits;<br>➤ Important to be enthusiastic and optimistic about the future of the school but not to the point of being unrealistic;<br>➤ While challenging teachers is an important leadership role, it should be done in a pastorally caring way; and<br>➤ Whole staff harmony, cooperation, and positive co-existence is important. |

Table 6.7(b)   Principal B's personal understandings about his/her leadership behaviour and the associated beliefs that support these behaviours

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ASSOCIATED GENERAL BELIEFS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BELIEFS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **B** | *Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Fostering collaboration;<br>➤ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support; and<br>➤ Promoting a shared understanding of what needs to be achieved.<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Developing cooperative relationships<br>➤ Listening to different points of view<br>➤ Treating people with dignity and respect<br>➤ Supporting other people's decisions<br>➤ Letting people choose how to do their work<br>➤ Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work | ➤ Being able to complete an important task in one's own way is far more satisfying and beneficial than being restricted to doing it in a prescribed way<br>➤ A leader does not have to do everything, nor can they do everything, and so it is better that they share the load with others<br>➤ Sharing responsibilities with others means that not only do more things get accomplished but also often they are done in a much better way | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Delegate full responsibility for important tasks to others<br>➤ Be a presence and to offer encouragement, advice, support, and help if and when it is needed by those who have accepted additional responsibilities<br>➤ Always provide freedom of choice to people, who have accepted a responsibility, and to resist telling them how to complete the assigned tasks<br>➤ Nurturing independence and confidence in others<br>➤ Build collaborative and cooperative relationships to ensure that the positive work of individuals, or groups, is affirmed and acknowledged by the whole school community |
| | *Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements<br>➤ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Praising people for a job well done<br>➤ Giving community members appreciation and support<br>➤ Expressing confidence in people's abilities<br>➤ Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments<br>➤ Recognizing people for commitment to shared values<br>➤ Rewarding people for their contributions | ➤ people are motivated by positive, constructive, and affirming praise<br>➤ people work better if they feel appreciated and have a sense of freedom in how to complete the task<br>➤ the leader gives essential direction to the efforts of the school community through acknowledging, supporting, and encouraging the positive effort of individuals, groups, and the whole community | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Value people's contribution<br>➤ Acknowledge what people do<br>➤ Give encouragement to people in their positive endeavours for the school and ensure they do not fear making mistakes<br>➤ Seek out contributors to thank them in both formal and informal ways<br>➤ Appreciate the diversity in contributions made by people from across the school community<br>➤ Always try to suitably reward people for their positive contributions to the successful accomplishments within the school<br>➤ Celebrate school achievements in appropriate ways |

Table 6.7(c)    Principal C's personal understandings about his/her leadership behaviour and the associated beliefs that support these behaviours

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ASSOCIATED GENERAL BELIEFS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BELIEFS |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | *Strives to model the standards expected of all within the school community.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Setting an example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values<br>➤ Setting standards through developing community goals and implementing plans<br>➤ Achieving small wins that promote consistent progress and builds community<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Setting an example of what is expected<br>➤ Ensuring that goals, plans, and milestones are set<br>➤ Being clear about her own personal philosophy of leadership<br>➤ Making progress toward goals one step at a time<br>➤ Following through on promises and commitments<br>➤ Attempting to ensure that people adhere to agreed-on standards<br><br>*Enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br>➤ Fostering collaboration by promoting community goals and building trust<br>➤ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support<br>➤ Maintaining enthusiasm and optimism by ensuring that work does not become overtly serious and there is always a humorous and enjoyable dimension to it<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br>➤ Developing cooperative relationships<br>➤ Listening to different points of view<br>➤ Treating people with dignity and respect<br>➤ Supporting other people's decisions<br>➤ Letting people choose how to do their work<br>➤ Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work<br>➤ Ensuring that humour, fun, and enjoyment are regularly part of celebrating community achievements | ➤ Modelling expected behaviour is very important because not only do people learn from each other but also it enhances your own credibility as a leader<br>➤ Formal planning is vital because it not only helps direct and unite action towards the desired goal but it also enables a more comprehensive review of the implementation process<br>➤ Having formal plans enables an ongoing awareness of the community's progress towards a goal and this affords the opportunity to reward those who have positively contributed towards the achievements<br><br>➤ Every person has something important, interesting, and valuable about him or her<br>➤ People can learn from each other and any one person is unable to accomplish every task<br>➤ People cannot be forced to achieve a purpose or responsibility, rather they have to be motivated to do it and this is more likely to happen if they have some power over how they do it or by watching others willingly and successfully doing it | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Live what you preach<br>➤ Do what is generally expected of everyone because that is easier and clearer than trying to articulate it<br>➤ Always do what you say you will do because it not only builds credibility but also ensures that someone else is not let down<br>➤ Set and record formal plans aimed at achieving public and predetermined outcomes<br>➤ Review progress of implementation plans in order to celebrate progress or to learn from mistakes<br>➤ Set practical, rather than theoretical, goals as people need to sense that the goals are being achieved or else they lose their motivation<br>➤ Doing things through small, achievable, and predetermined steps makes progress<br><br>It is important to personally:<br>➤ Listen to the diverse points of view of others and learn from their wisdom<br>➤ Delegate responsibility for important tasks to others with proven competency<br>➤ Be a presence and to offer encouragement, advice, support, and help if and when it is needed by those who have accepted additional responsibilities<br>➤ Always provide formal direction via agreed-to plans to people, who have accepted a responsibility, so that they are clear about what is anticipated<br>➤ Nurture independence and confidence in others<br>➤ Build collaborative and cooperative relationships to ensure that the positive work of individuals, or groups, is affirmed and acknowledged by the whole school community |

Table 6.7(d)   Principal D's personal understandings about his/her leadership behaviour and the associated beliefs that support these behaviours

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ASSOCIATED GENERAL BELIEFS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BELIEFS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **D** | *Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust<br>➤ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, delegating critical tasks, and offering visible support<br>➤ Challenging people to reflect upon and to understand clearly what they are trying to achieve and to ensure it is for the common good<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Treating people with dignity and respect<br>➤ Listening to diverse points of view<br>➤ Developing cooperative relationships and supporting other people's decisions<br>➤ Letting people choose how to do their work<br>➤ Encouraging people to confidently confront challenging situations, to be willing to take some risks, and to be open towards trying new approaches<br>➤ Helping people to grow in their jobs | ➤ If people are not doing what they value then they do it in a half-hearted fashion and no body gains full benefit from their actions or they refuse to become involved<br>➤ Allowing people to achieve desired outcomes in their own way is based on establishing mutual trust<br>➤ There is no 'one best way' of achieving goals but rather gaols are more comprehensively achieved by allowing those directly involved the freedom to accomplish the task in the way that has greatest meaning to them | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Let go of one's own insecurities<br>➤ Empower people to achieve their passions<br>➤ Treat everyone with trust, dignity, integrity, and respect<br>➤ Realize that it is impossible for one person to do everything and, therefore, it is necessary to allow others to complete important responsibilities<br>➤ Support, encourage, and affirm the positive contributions of others<br>➤ Build cooperative working relationships with others across all key activities in order to be able to spread one's energy<br>➤ Get to know other people so as to be able to give credible and constructive encouragement to them particularly during challenging times |
| | *Encouraging and motivating people through inspiring a common vision of a better future.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Envisioning and communicating an uplifting and ennobling future<br>➤ Capturing the services of others in the achievement of a common vision by appealing to their passions, interests, hopes, and dreams<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Speaking with conviction about the meaning and significance of work<br>➤ Being enthusiastic and positive about the future<br>➤ Appealing to others to share in the realization of the dream of the brighter future<br>➤ Initiating reflection and discussion about potential future trends<br>➤ Describing a compelling and captivating image of the future<br>➤ Being able to show others how their interests and passions can be realized | ➤ By creating meaning and purpose, leaders are able to encourage and motivate others to not only achieve improvement but also to enjoy their work<br>➤ In a seemingly ever-changing world people can sometimes lose their way and unless they are able to see a pathway to a brighter future they can become discouraged and frustrated<br>➤ In order to be able to remain positive, enthusiastic, and encouraging of others, it is necessary for the leader to maintain a balance in their life and to seek out opportunities to debrief, re-invigorate, and re-inspire their self | It is important to personally:<br>➤ Always remain optimistic and to inspire hope<br>➤ Look for the positives when things go wrong by learning from the experience<br>➤ Help others to see, and understand more deeply, what it is that they value most and to closely support them in their attempt to achieve it<br>➤ Search for meaning, worth, and value in all that people do<br>➤ Willingly and openly share with individuals, or groups, the positive aspects of the current and future direction of the school<br>➤ Seek regular opportunities to relax and to be involved in re-creational activities |

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Table 6.7(e)   Principal E's personal understandings about his/her leadership behaviour and the associated beliefs that support these behaviours

| PRINCIPAL | KEY PRINCIPALSHIP BEHAVIOUR | ASSOCIATED GENERAL BELIEFS | ASSOCIATED SPECIFIC BELIEFS |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | *Building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Developing knowledge and competencies in others so that they can confidently and independently complete responsibilities<br><br>➤ Fostering collaboration<br><br>➤ Strengthening people by giving them sufficient power, providing choice, assigning critical tasks, and offering regular support<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Ensuring that people know what is expected of them and what help is available to them<br><br>➤ Treating people with dignity and respect<br><br>➤ Letting people choose how to do their work<br><br>➤ Developing cooperative relationships<br><br>➤ Supporting other people's decisions<br><br>➤ Listening to alternative points of view | ➤ People must first be able to meet essential accountabilities then they can independently build on this to enhance the outcome<br><br>➤ Quality and excellence are essential outcomes, but they can be achieved in different ways<br><br>➤ People possess a rich diversity of skills and knowledge such that once they know what standards are expected from their actions it is important to allow them the freedom to achieve these in their own way | It is important to personally:<br><br>➤ Build trusting relationship by first ensuring that others can successfully complete their responsibilities<br><br>➤ Show respect and care for people by showing them how things are done and what is expected<br><br>➤ Create open channels of communication to enhance mutual support<br><br>➤ Empower, rather than abandon, people by ensuring they have knowledge and skills before giving freedom<br><br>➤ Provide opportunities for others to assume critical responsibilities because the leader cannot do everything<br><br>➤ Support, encourage, and affirm the positive contributions of others<br><br>➤ Build patience and tolerance in order to allow for the sharing of wisdom and the implementation of collaborative action |
| | *Striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices.*<br><br>**Aligned General Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Searching out constructive opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve<br><br>➤ Being willing to experiment, take calculated risks, and to learn from any perceived deficiencies<br><br>➤ Recognizing individual contributions to the success of school projects<br><br>**Associated Specific Behaviours:**<br><br>➤ Consistently reviewing all critical practices and implementing perceived improvements<br><br>➤ Taking the initiative to overcome any perceived obstacles<br><br>➤ Looking outside of the organization for ways to improve<br><br>➤ Ensuring that all proposed changes or innovations are achievable and deemed to enhance teaching<br><br>➤ Speaking with confidence and conviction about the meaning and significance of work<br><br>➤ Praising people for their positive contribution to the success of the school | ➤ Society expects a great deal from its schools and successful schools diligently endeavour to meet these expectations<br><br>➤ Maintaining quality is aligned with striving for continual improvement<br><br>➤ Enhancing the professional practice of teachers is the essential criteria that must be met by all proposed educational changes or innovations | It is important to personally:<br><br>➤ Critically review proposed educational changes to ensure that they do not add to the demands on teachers and, at the same time, improve teaching<br><br>➤ Ensure that school policies and practices are regularly reviewed and upgraded<br><br>➤ Be aware of contemporary innovations and be willing to adapt them to the school context<br><br>➤ Speak with confidence about what is achievable through good professional teaching<br><br>➤ Encourage and support staff who are striving to enhance the success of the school<br><br>➤ Value people's contributions and acknowledge what they do<br><br>➤ Be open to the ever-changing nature of schooling and to initiate school community discussions on the implications of any perceived future developments. |

### 6.3.4 The Data gained from Step 8 – The Visual Displays

The final step of this inspection stage was to identify the personal values inherent in the listed beliefs and behaviours. The principal's specific group of selected values, listed in tables 6.3(a) to 6.3(e) were used as the source for potential values. These values were matched with the general and specific beliefs for each of the two highest ranked leadership behaviours for each principal. Again, the researcher, following the initial interview, completed this inspection process and the subsequent two interviews were then used to present, clarify, review and endorse the selection of personal values that were aligned with the principal's beliefs and behaviours.

During the process of matching values to beliefs and behaviours, the researcher discovered that three categories of values were being promoted. Firstly, there were qualities that the principal valued about their Self and how he or she acted. Secondly, there were qualities that the principal valued in others and how they performed their designated roles. Thirdly, there were qualities that the principal valued about the actual outcomes of the work being done in the school and how this was achieved. The participants supported this categorization, as it added to their appreciation of the role that their personal values were playing within their principalship. A visual display was deemed to be an effective way of presenting and explaining the way in which the principal's personal values were influencing their leadership behaviour.

A copy of the visual display that links the two highest ranked leadership behaviours to relevant personal values for each principal follows.

Table 6.8(a)    The visual display for the first of Principal A's highest ranked leadership behaviours

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school by :**<br><br>➤ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements<br><br>➤ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Praising people for a job well done;<br><br>• Giving community members appreciation and support;<br><br>• Expressing confidence in people's abilities;<br><br>• Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments;<br><br>• Recognizing people for commitment to shared values; and<br><br>• Rewarding people for their contributions. | 1. The understanding that people respond positively to praise and affirmation was developed in the family upbringing, particularly by mother, and this view influences attitude to all areas of life, not just professional perspectives.<br><br>2. This perspective was reinforced at the beginning of professional career when more experienced teachers willingly provided personal support and encouragement, which provided a strong and confident start. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• people are motivated by positive, constructive, and affirming praise;<br><br>• people work better if they feel appreciated; and<br><br>• the leader gives essential direction to the efforts of the school community through acknowledging, supporting, and encouraging the positive effort of individuals, groups, and the whole community.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇑ Value people's contribution;<br><br>⇑ Acknowledge what people do;<br><br>⇑ Give encouragement to people in their positive endeavours for the school;<br><br>⇑ Seek out contributors to thank them in both formal and informal ways;<br><br>⇑ Appreciate the diversity in contributions made by people from across the school community;<br><br>⇑ Always try to suitably reward people for their positive contributions to the successful accomplishments within the school; and<br><br>⇑ Celebrate school achievements in appropriate ways. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>encouraging　supportive　affirming<br>recognition　approval　respect<br>integrity　sincerity　caring<br>empowerment　generosity　diversity<br>nurturing　accepting others<br>concern for others　developing others<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>loyalty　hardworking　commitment<br>diligence　reliability　dedication<br>responsibility　initiative　giving<br>involvement　ownership　participation<br>nurturing<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with positive qualities seen in people working together**<br><br>harmony　companionship　cooperation<br>friendship　cohesiveness　collaboration<br>productivity　success　quality<br>community involvement |

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Table 6.8(b)    The visual display for the second of Principal A's highest ranked leadership behaviour

## SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR

**Developing harmonious and beneficial work practices in others by :**

➤ Giving power and opportunity to more able staff members in critical tasks and developing competencies in all

➤ Ensuring that innovative practices are carefully considered, well planned, and closely monitored

➤ Setting a personal example to all by modelling ways that are consistent with that expected

**This is achieved through:**

- Expressing confidence in other people's abilities;

- Setting an example of what is expected;

- Following through on promises and commitments;

- Developing cooperative relationships;

- Ensuring that goals and plans are set; and

- Treating people with dignity and respect.

## PERSONAL HISTORY

1. The strong desire to set a positive role model was developed within the family where conservative values were nurtured and this included pride in oneself, which was mainly shown through taking pride in one's positive actions.

2. The need to empower others to lead and take responsibility comes from having a clear recognition of one's own limitations and acknowledging a predominantly Pastoral administrative background yet having, as Principal, to oversee the Curriculum development within the school as well, highlights this.

3. Having to immediately step in and deal with a serious situation of staff interpersonal conflict when newly appointed to a school and, despite considerable personal uncertainty about succeeding in this endeavour, seeing the benefits to the school community of striving to improve the situation has engendered a high degree of positivity towards appropriately challenging teachers if improvement is deemed necessary for the good of the whole school.

## UNDERLYING BELIEFS

**General beliefs are that :**

- Inspiring a shared vision and a common purpose depends on good role modelling and regular encouragement;

- The leader is not able to know and do everything so it is essential to empower other more knowledgeable or skilful people in areas of specific need;

- Building rapport with staff enables avenues for more pointed professional conversations;

- Being challenged to change can improve a teacher's professional practice; and

- Thorough planning and preparation helps to overcome personal uncertainty or lack of specific knowledge.

**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**

⇑ Be an exemplary role model;

⇑ Use the knowledge and talents of others;

⇑ Seek advice and to research thoroughly before dealing with unfamiliar issues;

⇑ Thoroughly plan and monitor new innovations;

⇑ Support and encourage all staff members;

⇑ Treat each person on their own merits;

⇑ Important to be enthusiastic and optimistic about the future of the school but not to the point of being unrealistic;

⇑ While challenging teachers is an important leadership role, it should be done in a pastorally caring way; and

⇑ Whole staff harmony, cooperation, and positive co-existence is important.

## INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES

**A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| caution | deference | self-control |
| pastoral | role model | servant |
| supportive | advisory | mentoring |
| nurturing | courtesy | diplomacy |
| politeness | tact | affirmation |
| respect | self-discipline | consistency |
| dedication | discretion | ethical |
| humility | integrity | sincerity |
| candour | caring | confidentiality |
| justice | respect | witness to faith |
| supportive | flexibility | affirming |
| empowerment | giving | diversity |
| trustworthy | sincerity | Christian |
| concern for others | | developing others |

**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| participatory | friendship | compassion |
| cooperation | tolerance | responsibility |
| involvement | concern for others | |

**C. Personal values associated with positive qualities seen in developing harmonious and beneficial teaching practices**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| recognition | efficiency | productivity |
| cooperation | harmony | order |
| friendship | cohesiveness | collaboration |
| effectiveness | improvement | quality |
| inclusiveness | balance | accepting others |
| community involvement | | Christian community |

Table 6.9(a)     The visual display for the first of Principal B's highest ranked leadership behaviour

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done by :**<br><br>➢ Fostering collaboration;<br><br>➢ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support; and<br><br>➢ Promoting a shared understanding of what needs to be achieved.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>▪ Developing cooperative relationships;<br><br>▪ Listening to different points of view;<br><br>▪ Treating people with dignity and respect;<br><br>▪ Supporting other people's decisions;<br><br>▪ Letting people choose how to do their work; and<br><br>▪ Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work. | 1. A very positive sense of interdependence developed when elected as a School Prefect and the immediate realization that other people need to be involved in completing all of the assigned responsibilities if success was to be achieved as there was too much for one person to accomplish.<br><br>2. Being promoted to positions of added responsibility very early within professional career helped to build the awareness that deep satisfaction comes being empowered and enabled to accomplish the assigned responsibility in one's own way. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• Being able to complete an important task in one's own way is far more satisfying and beneficial than being restricted to doing it in a prescribed way;<br><br>• A leader does not have to do everything, nor can they do everything, and so it is better that they share the load with others; and<br><br>• Sharing responsibilities with others means that not only do more things get accomplished but also often they are done in a much better way.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇑ Delegate full responsibility for important tasks to others;<br><br>⇑ Be a presence and to offer encouragement, advice, support, and help if and when it is needed by those who have accepted additional responsibilities;<br><br>⇑ Always provide freedom of choice to people, who have accepted a responsibility, and to resist telling them how to complete the assigned tasks;<br><br>⇑ Nurturing independence and confidence in others; and<br><br>⇑ Build collaborative and cooperative relationships to ensure that the positive work of individuals, or groups, is affirmed and acknowledged by the whole school community. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>self-control    courtesy    diplomacy<br>affirmation    loyalty    respect<br>self-discipline    consistency    humility<br>sincerity    caring    respect<br>patience    supportive    flexible<br>adaptability    intuition    risk-taking<br>affirming    empowerment    generosity<br>influential    service<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>responsiveness    hardworking    commitment<br>reliability    companionship    cooperation<br>tolerance    dependable    responsible<br>confident    creativity    imagination<br>initiative    perseverance    involvement<br>collaboration    accepting others<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with positive qualities seen in enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done**<br><br>efficiency    productivity    dignity<br>integrity    balance    harmony<br>accountability    belonging    fellowship<br>consideration    merit    effectiveness<br>enthusiasm    excellence    freedom<br>improvement    innovation    quality<br>opportunity    optimism    originality<br>ownership    inclusiveness    fulfilment<br>solidarity    friendship    charity<br>community involvement    community orientation |

Table 6.9(b)    The visual display for the second of Principal B's highest ranked leadership behaviour

| KEY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school by :**<br><br>➤ Recognizing individual or group contributions to school achievements<br><br>➤ Appropriately celebrating school community accomplishments<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Praising people for a job well done;<br><br>• Giving community members appreciation and support;<br><br>• Expressing confidence in people's abilities;<br><br>• Finding ways to celebrate accomplishments;<br><br>• Recognizing people for commitment to shared values; and<br><br>• Rewarding people for their contributions. | 1. Being given leadership positions early in teaching career developed realization that anyone can be given a responsibility and can be allowed to enjoy either the satisfaction from successfully completing the task or the benefit from realizing it did not work as well as expected for a given reason.<br><br>2. This perception was reinforced from a theoretical viewpoint through reading husband's corporate leadership and management literature, which supported the importance of building teamwork and cooperative practices. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• people are motivated by positive, constructive, and affirming praise;<br><br>• people work better if they feel appreciated and have a sense of freedom in how to complete the task; and<br><br>• the leader gives essential direction to the efforts of the school community through acknowledging, supporting, and encouraging the positive effort of individuals, groups, and the whole community.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇑ Value people's contribution;<br><br>⇑ Acknowledge what people do;<br><br>⇑ Give encouragement to people in their positive endeavours for the school and ensure they do not fear making mistakes;<br><br>⇑ Seek out contributors to thank them in both formal and informal ways;<br><br>⇑ Appreciate the diversity in contributions made by people from across the school community;<br><br>⇑ Always try to suitably reward people for their positive contributions to the successful accomplishments within the school; and<br><br>⇑ Celebrate school achievements in appropriate ways. | **A.  Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>Encouraging   supportive   affirming<br>recognition   approval   respect<br>integrity   sincerity   caring<br>empowerment   generosity   diversity<br>nurturing   accepting others<br>concern for others   developing others<br><br>**B.  Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>loyalty   hardworking   commitment<br>diligence   reliability   dedication<br>responsibility   initiative   giving<br>involvement   ownership   participation<br>resilience   tolerance   service<br><br>**C.  Personal values associated with positive qualities seen in people working together**<br><br>harmony   companionship   cooperation<br>friendship   cohesiveness   collaboration<br>productivity   success   quality<br>community involvement   dignity<br>hope   sensitivity   friendship<br>positivity   freedom   forgiveness<br>solidarity   stability   fellowship<br>interdependence   teamwork |

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Table 6.10(a)   The visual display for the first of Principal C's highest ranked leadership behaviour

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strives to model the standards expected of all within the school community by :** <br><br> ➤ Setting an example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values <br><br> ➤ Setting standards through developing community goals and implementing plans <br><br> ➤ Achieving small wins that promote consistent progress and builds community <br><br> **This is achieved through:** <br><br> • Setting an example of what is expected; <br><br> • Ensuring that goals, plans, and milestones are set; <br><br> • Being clear about her own personal philosophy of leadership; <br><br> • Making progress toward goals one step at a time; <br><br> • Following through on promises and commitments; and <br><br> • Attempting to ensure that people adhere to agreed-on standards. | 1. Strong family influence, particularly by father who often said that you could not expect someone to do something that you would not do yourself. <br><br> 2. A general personal perspective is that setting goals, establishing plans to meet these goals, and then celebrating the accomplishment of these goals is important in all areas of life, not just the professional dimension, because it is essential to know where you are going and how you are going to get there, and then to be able to rejoice in the success of reaching your desired destination. | **General beliefs are that :** <br><br> • Modelling expected behaviour is very important because not only do people learn from each other but also it enhances your own credibility as a leader; <br><br> • Formal planning is vital because it not only helps direct and unite action towards the desired goal but it also enables a more comprehensive review of the implementation process; and <br><br> • Having formal plans enables an ongoing awareness of the community's progress towards a goal and this affords the opportunity to reward those who have positively contributed towards the achievements. <br><br> **Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to:** <br><br> ⇑ Live what you preach; <br><br> ⇑ Do what is generally expected of everyone because that is easier and clearer than trying to articulate it; <br><br> ⇑ Always do what you say you will do because it not only builds credibility but also ensures that someone else is not let down; <br><br> ⇑ Set and record formal plans aimed at achieving public and predetermined outcomes; <br><br> ⇑ Review progress of implementation plans in order to celebrate progress or to learn from mistakes; <br><br> ⇑ Set practical, rather than theoretical, goals as people need to sense that the goals are being achieved or else they lose their motivation; and <br><br> ⇑ Doing things through small, achievable, and predetermined steps makes progress. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self** <br><br> fairness — involvement — diplomacy <br> tact — commitment — self-discipline <br> dignity — ethical — integrity <br> sincerity — accountability — humour <br> authenticity — giving — politeness <br> honesty — trustworthy — credibility <br> high work ethic <br><br> **B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others** <br><br> fellowship — respect — patience <br> tolerance — perseverance — responsive <br> reliability — responsibility — adaptability <br><br> **C. Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of striving to model the standards expected of all within the school community** <br><br> collegiality — quality — affirming <br> inclusiveness — openness — balance <br> loyalty — consistency — cooperation <br> justice — trust — friendship <br> enthusiasm — improvement — collaboration <br> equality — networking — teamwork <br> interdependence — community involvement |

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Table 6.10(b)     The visual display for the second of Principal C's highest ranked leadership behaviours

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done by :**<br><br>➤ Fostering collaboration by promoting community goals and building trust;<br><br>➤ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support; and<br><br>➤ Maintaining enthusiasm and optimism by ensuring that work does not become overtly serious and there is always a humorous and enjoyable dimension to it.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Developing cooperative relationships;<br><br>• Listening to different points of view;<br><br>• Treating people with dignity and respect;<br><br>• Supporting other people's decisions;<br><br>• Letting people choose how to do their work;<br><br>• Helping people to grow in confidence in how they do their work; and<br><br>• Ensuring that humour, fun, and enjoyment are regularly part of celebrating community achievements. | 1. From a very young age there was a realization that the more people you met the more aware you were of the diversity of gifts and talents within people and the silliness of not allowing people to use their unique talents for the good of everyone.<br><br>2. There has always been a realization that one cannot be another person such that in all that one does it is essential to be true to one's self and in order to accomplish all that has to be done one needs to be assisted by the skills and knowledge of others. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• Every person has something important, interesting, and valuable about him or her;<br><br>• People can learn from each other and any one person is unable to accomplish every task; and<br><br>• People cannot be forced to achieve a purpose or responsibility, rather they have to be motivated to do it and this is more likely to happen if they have some power over how they do it or by watching others willingly and successfully doing it.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇒ Listen to the diverse points of view of others and learn from their wisdom;<br><br>⇒ Delegate responsibility for important tasks to others with proven competency;<br><br>⇒ Be a presence and to offer encouragement, advice, support, and help if and when it is needed by those who have accepted additional responsibilities;<br><br>⇒ Always provide formal direction via agreed-to plans to people, who have accepted a responsibility, so that they are clear about what is anticipated;<br><br>⇒ Nurture independence and confidence in others; and<br><br>⇒ Build collaborative and cooperative relationships to ensure that the positive work of individuals, or groups, is affirmed and acknowledged by the whole school community. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>self-control   trustworthy   diplomacy<br>affirmation   loyalty   respect<br>self-discipline   consistency   genuiness<br>sincerity   politeness   respect<br>patience   tact   flexible<br>adaptability   ethical   authenticity<br>affirming   empowerment   integrity<br>sincerity   humour   spontaneity<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>responsiveness   hardworking   commitment<br>reliability   collegiality   cooperation<br>tolerance   dependability   responsibility<br>confident   delight   wisdom<br>perseverance   involvement   collaboration<br>accepting others<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done**<br><br>justice   giving   dignity<br>interdependence   balance   harmony<br>accountability   trust   fellowship<br>networking   teamwork   health<br>enthusiasm   laughter   quality<br>improvement   optimism   friendship<br>ownership   inclusiveness   fulfilment<br>concern for others   community involvement<br>community orientation |

Table 6.11(a)    The visual display for the first of Principal D's highest ranked leadership behaviours

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way by :**<br><br>➤ Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust;<br><br>➤ Strengthening people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, delegating critical tasks, and offering visible support; and<br><br>➤ Challenging people to reflect upon and to understand clearly what they are trying to achieve and to ensure it is for the common good.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Treating people with dignity and respect;<br><br>• Listening to diverse points of view;<br><br>• Developing cooperative relationships and supporting other people's decisions;<br><br>• Letting people choose how to do their work;<br><br>• Encouraging people to confidently confront challenging situations, to be willing to take some risks, and to be open towards trying new approaches; and<br><br>• Helping people to grow in their jobs. | 1. While starting out in life by trying to control what other people were doing in order to achieve what was thought to be the best outcome, a number of key people reacted negatively to this approach and, thereby, helped to form a realization that it is far better to support and encourage the endeavours of others or else you are left to do everything yourself. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• If people are not doing what they value then they do it in a half-hearted fashion and no body gains full benefit from their actions or they refuse to become involved;<br><br>• Allowing people to achieve desired outcomes in their own way is based on establishing mutual trust; and<br><br>• There is no 'one best way' of achieving goals but rather gaols are more comprehensively achieved by allowing those directly involved the freedom to accomplish the task in the way that has greatest meaning to them.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇨ Let go of one's own insecurities;<br><br>⇨ Empower people to achieve their passions;<br><br>⇨ Treat everyone with trust, dignity, integrity, and respect;<br><br>⇨ Realize that it is impossible for one person to do everything and, therefore, it is necessary to allow others to complete important responsibilities;<br><br>⇨ Support, encourage, and affirm the positive contributions of others;<br><br>⇨ Build cooperative working relationships with others across all key activities in order to be able to spread one's energy; and<br><br>⇨ Get to know other people so as to be able to give credible and constructive encouragement to them particularly during challenging times. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>justice, integrity, courtesy<br>responsiveness, respect, honesty<br>caring, patience, consideration<br>risk-taking, credibility, genuiness<br>openness, partnering, affirming<br>self-control, consistency, supportive<br>flexibility, adaptability, courage<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>loyalty, reliability, cooperation<br>dependability, confidence, creativity<br>delight, initiative, intuition<br>originality, sincerity, involvement<br>diligence, hardworking, perseverance<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way**<br><br>commitment, dedication, harmony<br>accountability, tolerance, freedom<br>opportunity, responsibility, networking<br>alignment, teamwork, participation<br>fulfilment, collaboration, equality<br>interdependence, diversity, inclusiveness<br>wisdom, balance, empowerment<br>progress, ownership, synergism<br>cohesiveness, belonging, fellowship<br>trust, enthusiasm, improvement<br>innovation, quality |

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Table 6.11(b)    The visual display for the second of Principal D's highest ranked leadership behaviour

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Encouraging and motivating people through inspiring a common vision of a better future by :**<br><br>➤ Envisioning and communicating an uplifting and ennobling future;<br><br>➤ Capturing the services of others in the achievement of a common vision by appealing to their passions, interests, hopes, and dreams.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Speaking with conviction about the meaning and significance of work;<br><br>• Being enthusiastic and positive about the future;<br><br>• Appealing to others to share in the realization of the dream of the brighter future;<br><br>• Initiating reflection and discussion about potential future trends;<br><br>• Describing a compelling and captivating image of the future; and<br><br>• Being able to show others how their interests and passions can be realized. | 1. Organizational based, task-oriented, functional activities have always been a difficulty even as a young student and having to be organized and directed by parents to complete homework. On the other hand, being creative and innovative seemed far more natural and immensely more fulfilling.<br><br>2. Always saw self as a visionary and one who looked at things differently to most other people.<br><br>3. Sharing one's visions, particularly if they are somewhat radical or alternative, has not been a simple or an easy task and one has had to learn tact and diplomacy in order to build trust and credibility. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• By creating meaning and purpose, leaders are able to encourage and motivate others to not only achieve improvement but also to enjoy their work;<br><br>• In a seemingly ever-changing world people can sometimes lose their way and unless they are able to see a pathway to a brighter future they can become discouraged and frustrated; and<br><br>• In order to be able to remain positive, enthusiastic, and encouraging of others, it is necessary for the leader to maintain a balance in their life and to seek out opportunities to debrief, re-invigorate, and re-inspire their self.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇑ Always remain optimistic and to inspire hope;<br><br>⇑ Look for the positives when things go wrong by learning from the experience;<br><br>⇑ Help others to see, and understand more deeply, what it is that they value most and to closely support them in their attempt to achieve it;<br><br>⇑ Search for meaning, worth, and value in all that people do;<br><br>⇑ Willingly and openly share with individuals, or groups, the positive aspects of the current and future direction of the school; and<br><br>⇑ Seek regular opportunities to relax and to be involved in re-creational activities. | **A.** Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self<br><br>integrity  self-knowledge  growth<br>creativity  vision  dreams<br>energy  relaxation  contemplation<br>tact  respect  integrity<br>sincerity  patience  consideration<br>honesty  intuition<br><br>**B.** Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others<br><br>curiosity  independence  responsiveness<br>commitment  reliability  dedication<br>honesty  tolerance  dependability<br>creativity  initiative  originality<br>responsibility  openness  wisdom<br>supportive  flexibility  adaptability<br>adventurous  curiosity  imagination<br>perseverance  courage<br><br>**C.** Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of motivating people through inspiring a common vision<br><br>optimism  exploring  overcoming<br>do-able  cooperation  freedom<br>opportunity  risk-taking  networking<br>teamwork  success  fulfilment<br>collaboration  interdependence  diversity<br>empowerment  progress  ownership<br>synergism  cohesiveness  belonging<br>enthusiasm  improvement  innovation<br>quality  developing others  problem solving<br>finding meaning  expanding horizons<br>achieving mutual interests |

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Table 6.12(a)    The visual display for the first of Principal E's highest ranked leadership behaviours

| KEY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | INTRINSIC BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work by :**<br><br>➤ Developing knowledge and competencies in others so that they can confidently and independently complete responsibilities;<br><br>➤ Fostering collaboration; and<br><br>➤ Strengthening people by giving them sufficient power, providing choice, assigning critical tasks, and offering regular support.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Ensuring that people know what is expected of them and what help is available to them;<br><br>• Treating people with dignity and respect;<br><br>• Letting people choose how to do their work;<br><br>• Developing cooperative relationships;<br><br>• Supporting other people's decisions; and<br><br>• Listening to alternative points of view. | 1. As the eldest son, was regularly given the opportunity to grow by being given the trust and the freedom to accept many different responsibilities.<br><br>2. When first began teaching there was not any regular supervision or support and you were left to your own honesty, resources, and enthusiasm to ensure that expectations were met. This often led to a great deal of uncertainty, insecurity and hesitation. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• People must first be able to meet essential accountabilities then they can independently build on this to enhance the outcome;<br><br>• Quality and excellence are essential outcomes, but they can be achieved in different ways; and<br><br>• People possess a rich diversity of skills and knowledge such that once they know what standards are expected from their actions it is important to allow them the freedom to achieve these in their own way.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇑ Build trusting relationship by first ensuring that others can successfully complete their responsibilities;<br><br>⇑ Show respect and care for people by showing them how things are done and what is expected;<br><br>⇑ Create open channels of communication to enhance mutual support;<br><br>⇑ Empower, rather than abandon, people by ensuring they have knowledge and skills before giving freedom;<br><br>⇑ Provide opportunities for others to assume critical responsibilities because the leader cannot do everything;<br><br>⇑ Support, encourage, and affirm the positive contributions of others; and<br><br>⇑ Build patience and tolerance in order to allow for the sharing of wisdom and the implementation of collaborative action. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>honesty  integrity  authenticity<br>respect  caring  credibility<br>service  sincerity  decisiveness<br>well organized<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>courage  commitment  trustworthy<br>creativity  giving  participation<br>wisdom  accountability  cooperation<br>dependability  confidence  enthusiasm<br>interdependence<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of enabling others to assume full responsibility for their work**<br><br>empowerment  delegation  enjoyment<br>efficiency  consistency  balance<br>fellowship  trust  effectiveness<br>optimism  collaboration  networking<br>quality service  realistic goals  success<br>approval  affirmation  dignity<br>improvement  results  openness<br>teamwork  fulfilment  hope<br>realistic expectations  good communication<br>organizational orientation |

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Table 6.12(b)    The visual display for the second of Principal E's highest ranked leadership behaviours

| SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR | PERSONAL HISTORY | UNDERLYING BELIEFS | INHERENT INFLUENTIAL PERSONAL VALUES |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices by :**<br><br>➤ Searching out constructive opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve;<br><br>➤ Being willing to experiment, take calculated risks, and to learn from any perceived deficiencies; and<br><br>➤ Recognizing individual contributions to the success of school projects.<br><br>**This is achieved through:**<br><br>• Consistently reviewing all critical practices and implementing perceived improvements;<br><br>• Taking the initiative to overcome any perceived obstacles;<br><br>• Looking outside of the organization for ways to improve;<br><br>• Ensuring that all proposed changes or innovations are achievable and deemed to enhance teaching;<br><br>• Speaking with confidence and conviction about the meaning and significance of work; and<br><br>• Praising people for their positive contribution to the success of the school. | 1. A very serious injury as a young boy meant that achieving the normal peer group recognition through sporting prowess was not possible and so had to find an alternative acceptable way of doing this.<br><br>2. Have always seen self as a risk-taker, a person who was regularly looking for new challenges and being willing to think divergently to overcome problems and obstacles. | **General beliefs are that :**<br><br>• Society expects a great deal from its schools and successful schools diligently endeavour to meet these expectations;<br><br>• Maintaining quality is aligned with striving for continual improvement; and<br><br>• Enhancing the professional practice of teachers is the essential criteria that must be met by all proposed educational changes or innovations.<br><br>**Consequential specific beliefs are that it it is personally important to :**<br><br>⇨ Critically review proposed educational changes to ensure that they do not add to the demands on teachers and, at the same time, improve teaching;<br><br>⇨ Ensure that school policies and practices are regularly reviewed and upgraded;<br><br>⇨ Be aware of contemporary innovations and be willing to adapt them to the school context;<br><br>⇨ Speak with confidence about what is achievable through good professional teaching;<br><br>⇨ Encourage and support staff who are striving to enhance the success of the school;<br><br>⇨ Value people's contributions and acknowledge what they do; and<br><br>⇨ Be open to the ever-changing nature of schooling and to initiate school community discussions on the implications of any perceived future developments. | **A. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in self**<br><br>honesty   integrity   authenticity<br>respect   caring   well organized<br>reflective   sincerity   decisiveness<br><br>**B. Personal values associated with positive personal qualities seen in others**<br><br>courage   commitment   trustworthy<br>creativity   giving   participation<br>wisdom   reliability   cooperation<br>dependability   confidence   diligence<br><br>**C. Personal values associated with achieving the outcome of striving for quality and improvement**<br><br>empowerment   delegation   enjoyment<br>efficiency   consistency   balance<br>fellowship   trust   effectiveness<br>optimism   collaboration   networking<br>quality service   realistic goals   success<br>approval   affirmation   dignity<br>improvement   results   openness<br>teamwork   fulfilment   hope<br>service   credibility   interdependence<br>accountability   enthusiasm   enjoyment<br>recognition   competitive   critical<br>realistic expectations   good communication<br>organizational orientation   strategic planning<br>Catholic perspective |

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## 6.4    CONCLUSION

This chapter displayed the data gathered during the various stages of this research study. The data was displayed according to the two research stages of exploration and inspection, which are integral to a symbolic interactionist study. The data gained from the exploration stage of the study described in detail the existing situation with respect to each participating principal's level of self-knowledge of his or her own personal values, the particular behaviours associated with his or her preferred style of leadership, and his or her array of likely personal values. These data were then used as a springboard into the inspection stage of the research. In this inspection stage of the study, the data indicated areas for deeper and more personal reflection and discussion. It allowed the principal to convey the meanings and understandings about his or her life, behaviours, beliefs, and values that enabled the development of a visual display of the complex and important inter-relationships that exist amongst these dimensions of the Self. The following chapter builds upon this display of the data by using the data to answer the research questions.

# CHAPTER 7

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 7.1    INTRODUCTION

As has been outlined in previous chapters, the focus of this study is on the concept of values-led principalship. More specifically, this research study attempts to provide a comprehensive exploration of this concept of values-led principalship by inspecting how the knowing of one's personal values might help one to be led by these values and, thereby, be able to act more effectively as a principal. To this end, the review of the literature in Chapter 3 enabled the identification of specific research questions to guide this study. These research questions were:

Research Question 1:    How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

Research Question 2:    How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

Research Question 3:    Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

Research Question 4:    Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

This chapter will centre on providing comprehensive answers to these research questions. These answers are based upon the analysis and synthesis of the data in the light of the knowledge and insights provided by the literature.

### 7.2    HOW KNOWLEDGEABLE ARE THE PRINCIPALS ABOUT THEIR OWN PERSONAL VALUES?

In Chapter 3, a review of the literature identified two key claims relevant to exploring the principal's potential knowledge of his or her own personal values. Firstly, it is suggested that people generally have very little self-knowledge of their values. Secondly, it is also claimed that it is very difficult for a person to come to know their personal values and to be able to clearly state these to another person (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002).

In this research study, two values clarification exercises were used to initially explore these claims. As outlined in Chapter 5, these exercises included the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* (appendix 1) and the *Values Selection Questionnaire* (appendix 3). Beyond these two values clarification exercises, there were also opportunities in a series of semi-structured interviews for participants to further explore their knowledge of personal values.

Data gained from the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* supported an initial interpretation in respect of each principal's level of self-knowledge of personal values. Here, principals who were able to nominate 30 to 40 personal values, were considered to have high levels of self-knowledge of their personal values[7]. Hence, the position of the principal's number of nominated values along the continuum between 0 and 40 values, was deemed to have provided a relative indication of his or her level of self-knowledge of their personal values. Figure 7.1 below is based on this assumption, and displays each principal's relative position on such a continuum.
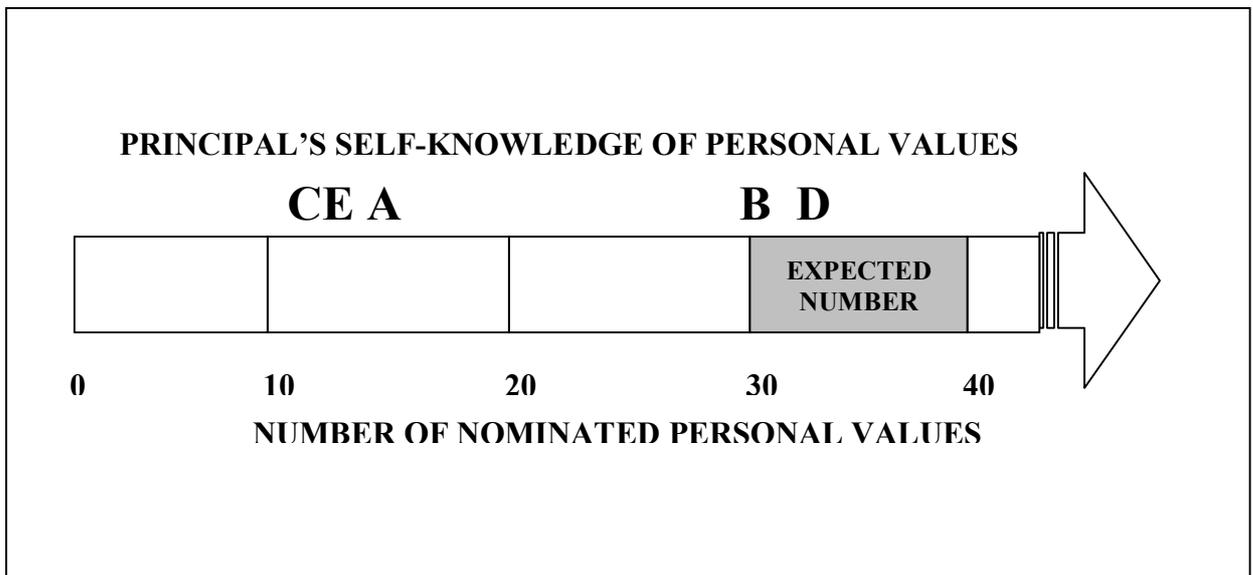


Figure 7.1    A display of the comparative level of each principal's self-knowledge of their personal values based on his or her ability to nominate their personal values relative to the expected number of 30 to 40 values.

This display suggests that both Principal D and Principal B appear to have high levels of self-knowledge of their personal values as they nominated close to the number of expected values. Whereas Principals C, E, and A appear to have very little knowledge

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[7] In the seminal work of Milton Rokeach (1973) it is suggested that, on average, people's behaviour is influenced by 30 to 40 personal values, and this claim provided a standard for judging the clarity of the principals' perceptions of their knowledge of personal values.

of their personal values based on their apparent inability to name anywhere near 30 to 40 personal values. A full account of the personal values, identified by the principals, was provided in Table 6.1.

This interpretation of the data gained some support from the interview data. In attempting to describe his own level of confidence in being able to nominate his personal values without help or guidance, Principal A noted:

> I found completing [the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*] difficult because I guess it challenged me to actually put down and verbalize what values were driving my decision-making and my processes. This is something that, probably, on a day-to-day basis I don't sit down and think about. As a result, I found it quite difficult to think of what were my values and quite demanding to verbalize.

Here Principal A acknowledged not only that he had little self-knowledge of his personal values and he found self-reflection "difficult", but also that he lacked commitment to learning more about his personal values.

In contrast to Principal A's "difficult[y]" in nominating his personal values, Principal B relished the opportunity to reflect upon, and to try to determine, her personal values. With reference to this activity, she observed:

> It was actually quite a pleasant experience to be able to name the sort of things that I value. When I saw all the boxes immediately I thought that there could not be that many values and I could probably sum mine up in only two or three. So I went away to think about it and I believe I even made a cup of coffee while I was thinking. Then I thought, 'Hang on, there are lots of things', and I must admit that the more I thought about it, the more of the values that I thought were my values came to mind. Some of them, I thought, 'Is this really a value which is my value'? For some others I thought, 'Is this really a value? It is what I value, but is it actually a value? It was certainly what I value'. When I was comfortable with what I valued, then I was happy to record it as a value.

Hence, both of these interview excerpts support the perception presented in Figure 7.1 that Principal A appeared to have very little self-knowledge of his personal values whereas Principal B's self-knowledge of her personal values appeared quite sound.

However, subsequent data gathered from the *Values Selection Questionnaire* and the semi-structured interviews presented a somewhat different understanding. These data suggest an image of uncertainty and a lack of explicitness in the self-knowledge of personal values in all of the principals. Firstly, this uncertainty and lack of explicitness is seen in the number of personal values selected by each principal in the *Values Selection Questionnaire*. Rather than selecting between 30 and 40 personal values, the number of personal values selected by the participating principals ranged from 52 to 114. When the number of selected personal values for each principal is placed on a values continuum similar to Figure 7.1, it can be seen that the number of values selected far exceeds the expected number. Figure 7.2 displays each principal's relative position on the values continuum based on his or her number of selected values.

**PRINCIPAL**

**E    C        A    B    D**

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100    110    120

**NUMBER OF SELECTED PERSONAL VALUES**
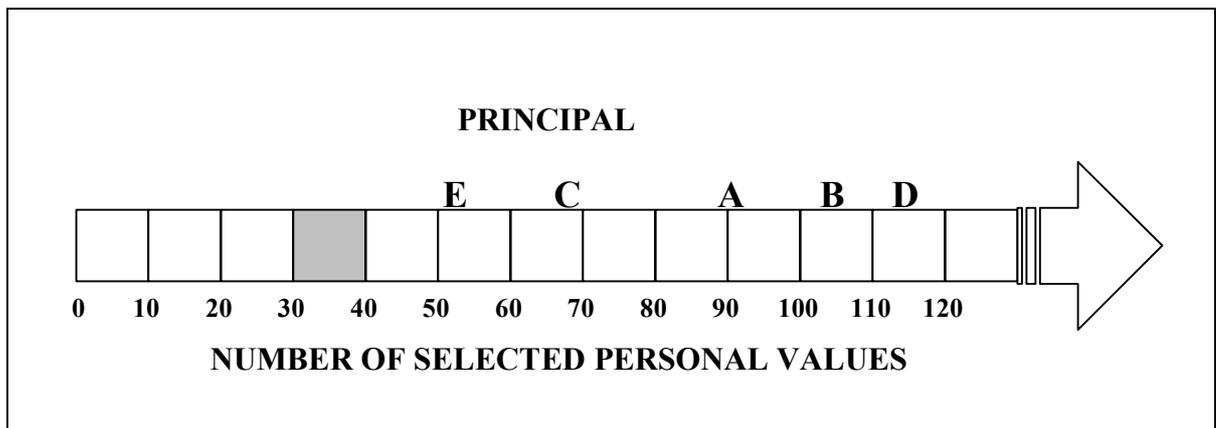
Figure 7.2    A display of the respective number of personal values selected by each principal as compared to the maximum expected number of between 30 and 40 values.

The understanding presented by figure 7.2 is that all five principals do not have explicit self-knowledge of their personal values. Rather than being able to carefully select their 30 to 40 personal values from the supplied list of 170 values, each principal appeared unable to explicitly distinguish their values and, as a result, selected far too many personal values. This suggests that each of the principals was unclear as to their exact personal values and that each principal had little knowledge of their personal values. Instead, they selected values that seemed to resonate with what they thought were their personal values. This understanding seems to underpin the feelings of Principal B as she reflected on her experience of having to select her personal values from the list of 170 offered by the *Values Selection Questionnaire.*

> As I went through the list I kept saying to myself, 'Yes, that's me, that's me, that's me'. This list certainly helped my values to come quite readily and quite quickly. Maybe there were some that I had to think carefully as to whether or not the value really applied to me, whether it really influenced me. I did note that there were some similar values coming up quite regularly. Similarly, there were some types of values that were repeated but I kept reaffirming that they did not apply to me. They did not strike a chord with me. I could say definitely that it did not apply to me.

Like the other principals, Principal B searched for value words that struck "a chord" with her rather than explicitly selecting specific value words. She was searching for values words that resonated with what she thought might have been her values rather than isolating her exact values from the list provided. This search for value words that resonated, or struck "a chord", with the principal resulted in the selection of value words that had similar meanings to their perceived values rather than the exact value. They were not able to differentiate between these similar value words and their true personal value. In other words, they were uncertain and unclear about their exact personal values.

This uncertainty and lack of explicitness in the principals' self-knowledge of personal values was also suggested in the lack of consistency between the personal values identified in the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* with those identified in the *Values Selection Questionnaire*. The following graph, Figure 7.3, displays the number of personal values that were consistently identified by each principal in both questionnaires, compared with the total number of personal values originally identified in the first questionnaire. This graph suggests that there was little consistency in the process of personal values identification by each of the principals. When completing the second questionnaire, each principal overlooked more of their originally nominated personal values from the first questionnaire than they actually re-nominated. Each principal failed to maintain a commitment to most of his or her original values. This would suggest that either their original selection in the first questionnaire was inaccurate or that they were confused by the large number of values offered in the second questionnaire. Either way, each principal exhibited uncertainty and a lack of explicitness in the self-knowledge of their personal values.
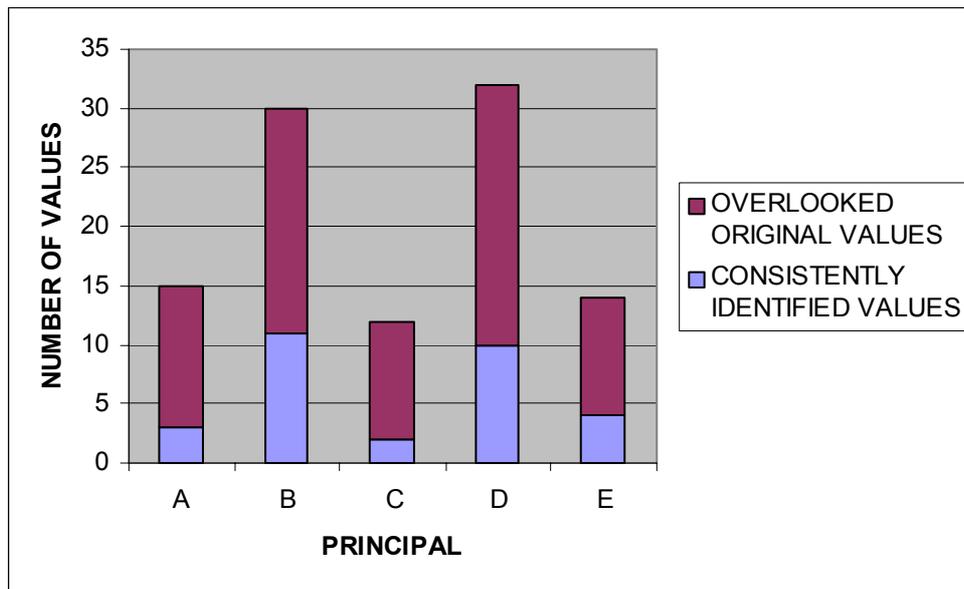
Figure 7.3    A graph showing a comparison of the number of consistently identified personal values by each principal with the total number of personal values initially identified in the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*.

However, this could be a somewhat incomplete perception. Rather than just considering whether or not a principal has precise and explicit knowledge of their personal values, a third possibility could be that he or she has a sense, an impression, or a notion of their values. While each principal appeared unable to clearly and accurately state his or her specific values, the data might support an understanding that he or she had a notion or an intuition of them. If one acknowledges that the principal had a notion of their personal values, rather than explicit knowledge of them, then it could be proposed that synonyms, instead of identical words, could suffice for a match between values nominated in the first questionnaire with those selected in the second questionnaire. If the principal was satisfied that their nominated values were accounted for by selected synonyms, then it might also be the case that he or she felt no need to rewrite any nominated values in the *Added Values* section of the *Values Selection Questionnaire* that did not specifically appear in the supplied list of values.

The idea that value synonyms might play an important role within the principal's values identification process came from the interview data. Principal B sensed that she was selecting "similar values" from the list of 170 supplied by the *Values Selection Questionnaire.* Also, Principal D said that he "noticed that [he] started to

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repeat what was essentially the same value but in different words" when completing the *Values Selection Questionnaire.* Both principals seemed to acknowledge that value words with a similar meaning, that is, value synonyms, were able to resonate within them as distinguishing personal values. This understanding suggests that the principals were attuned to a notion or intuitive sense of their personal values through a positive sensitivity to value synonyms, rather than having an explicit sensitivity for the specific value.

Data associated with Principals C and D can be used as examples to highlight the notional nature of each principal's self-knowledge of their personal values and the resultant important role that values synonyms might have played in the values selection process. For Principal C, the initial *Values Nomination Questionnaire* data, as displayed in Figure 7.1, presented the understanding that she had very little self-knowledge of her personal values. Whereas, a values synonyms analysis would suggest that she does have some notion or intuitive sense of her values. This can be seen from a values synonym comparison for Principal C that compares the seemingly non-matched nominated values from the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* with potential synonyms selected in the *Values Selection Questionnaire*. Table 7.1 displays this comparison and shows the possible alignment of Principal C's nominated values with synonyms from her selected values.

Table 7.1    Values that were chosen by Principal C from the *Values Selection Questionnaire* list that are possible synonyms for personal values listed on the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*

| Nominated Value | Synonyms from the Selected Values | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Collegiality | Fellowship Teamwork | Networking Cooperation Friendship | Collaboration Concern for Others |
| Laughter | Humour | Delight | |
| Fairness Right | Ethical | Justice | Equality |
| High Work Ethic | Commitment Accountability | Perseverance Reliability Consistency | Dependability Responsibility |

The data presented in Table 7.1 suggests that Principal C was more aware of her values than previously indicated. Even though Principal C was an unenthusiastic and reserved contributor when it came to being involved in a self-reflective process, it would seem that, with further discussion and examination, she was able to gain some

sense of her values and some satisfaction in being able to specify those values that were most likely influencing her leadership behaviour. Principal C's self-knowledge of her personal values was notional but accessible.

With Principal D, it is recalled that the understanding presented by the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* was very encouraging as he nominated 32 personal values, a number very closely aligned with that expected according to the literature. However, this positive view was greatly undermined by his selection of 114 personal values within the *Values Selection Questionnaire.* As with Principal C, there was seemingly contrary data, which suggested that, although possessing a more knowledgeable awareness of his personal values, Principal D still lacked certainty and clarity about his personal values. That is, that the level of his self-knowledge of his personal values was not explicit. This perspective was supported by the data, which showed that, despite adding some of his nominated values to the selected values list, Principal D failed to add the following values that were in his nominated list but were not available in the *Values Selection Questionnaire* list:

Table 7.2      List of Principal D's nominated values that were not added to the list of selected values

| Equity | Growth | Vision | Finding Best | Values Orientated | Search |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work Out | Reaching Out | Problem Solving | Dreams | Overcoming | Finding Meaning |
| Question | Relax | Self-Knowledge | Looking Forward | Exploring | Energy |
| Expanding Horizons | | Critique | | | |

By applying the values synonym analysis to Principal D's extensive list of selected values, it is possible to see how Principal D may have felt that these omitted nominated values had been catered for through the selection of words of similar meaning.

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Table 7.3    Values that were chosen by Principal D from the *Values Selection Questionnaire* list that are possible synonyms for personal values listed on the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*

| Nominated Value | Synonyms | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Equity | Respect<br>Caring<br>Accepting Others | Compassion<br>Tolerance<br>Equality | Consideration<br>Congruence | Diversity<br>Inclusiveness |
| Finding Meaning | Harmony<br>Freedom | Humour<br>Alignment | Successful<br>Fulfilment | Belonging |
| Search/Question/Critique | Accountability | Discerning | Openness | |
| Overcoming | Ownership<br>Peace | Flexible | Perseverance | Courage |
| Energy | Commitment<br>Reliability | Dedication<br>Dependability | Responsibility<br>Hardworking | Diligent<br>Enthusiasm |
| Finding Best | Synergism<br>Situational Ethics | Consistency<br>Improvement | Successful<br>Quality | |
| Vision/Dreams | Opportunity | Progress | | |
| Exploring | Initiative | Originality | Risk-Taking | Empowerment |
| Relax | Delight | Humour | Balance | Health |
| Problem-Solving | Intuition | Networking | Wisdom | Imagination |
| Growth/<br>Expanding Horizons | Mentoring<br>Adaptable | Adventurous | Innovation | Involvement |
| Values Orientated | Courtesy<br>Tact<br>Loyalty<br>Respect | Truth<br>Love<br>Christian | Giving<br>Generosity<br>Catholic | Ethical<br>Morality<br>Trust |
| Self-Knowledge | Stability<br>Honesty<br>Sincerity<br>Witness to Faith | Confident<br>Credibility<br>Genuiness<br>Independence | Self-Control<br>Self-Discipline<br>Humility<br>Responsible | Authenticity<br>Faith<br>Spirituality |
| Work-Out | Cooperation<br>Patience | Tolerance<br>Participation | Teamwork | Cohesiveness |
| Reaching Out | Responsiveness<br>Community Support<br>Collaboration<br>Interdependence<br>Love | Partnering<br>Community<br>    Orientation<br>Altruism<br>Service | Developing Others<br>Affirming<br>Companionship<br>Fellowship | Kindness<br>Concern for Others<br>Supportive<br>Mutual Interests |

These data suggest that Principal D might well have a notional sense of many of his values rather than an exact and explicit knowledge of them. Arguably, his self-knowledge of his personal values was high to the extent that he had a general appreciation or notion of their nature rather than an identifiable, unambiguous, precise, and explicit knowledge of his personal values.

This perception of the important role of synonyms within the process of values clarification was underscored by some of the value words recorded by the principals in the process of completing the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*. This process did not provide any help, guidance, or hints for the participating principal so that they had to provide their own word, or words, for each of their values. This process produced such words as, "value-judged", "lived-model", "doable", "work out", "reaching out", and "looking forward", all of which, it can be proposed, incorporate a concept, a view, an understanding, a notion about a particular personal value. These value-

descriptors might not be a regularly used word but they conveyed a meaningful and value-filled notion of what was important to the respective principal. That is to say, the participating principal had a tangible sense of what was important to him or her Self, but it was not always possible for him or her to find the exact word to describe it. Hence, synonyms fulfilled the need to find a satisfactory descriptor. The actual word used seemed to be less important than the meaning conveyed by the value descriptor.

This interpretation of the data suggested that the principals in this study experienced different levels of self-knowledge in respect to personal values. It would appear that self-knowledge of personal values is not an either/or phenomenon wherein one either has this knowledge or does not have this knowledge. Rather, the principal's level of self-knowledge of their personal values fell along a continuum; Principal D presented with the highest level of self-knowledge followed by Principal B, then Principal A, next Principal C, and, finally, Principal E appeared to have the lowest level of self-knowledge. Moreover, these data suggest that the principal's actual self-knowledge of their personal values was notional rather than explicit. This understanding is captured in the personal reflections of Principal E as he recounted his impressions of attending to the task of selecting his personal values from the list provided in the *Values Selection Questionnaire.*

> Not only did I find [the *Values Selection Questionnaire*] helpful, but I also found a lot more [personal values] that weren't in my initial list given to you, and some very important ones that I had not thought of. When you are asked to start from nowhere you can sometimes miss [personal values] that you can later realise are important [personal values] that would not otherwise be mentioned because you have not thought of them at that time. But if you have the list then you can pick them and realise the ones that are essential to you.

Each principal's explicit self-knowledge of their personal values was limited so that they all needed help to clarify, and to come to know, their personal values. All of the principals, even those that rated the highest on the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*, did not specifically know many of their personal values. However, when value synonyms were taken into consideration, the principal's notional self-knowledge of their personal values came to the fore, including those principals who had gained the lowest ratings for the *Values Nomination Questionnaire*. These data supports the

understanding that the principals had, to varying degrees, limited self-knowledge of their personal values and what knowledge they did possess was notional rather than explicit.

## 7.3    HOW HAVE THE PERSONAL VALUES OF THE PRINCIPALS BEEN FORMED?

Within the review of the literature in Chapter 3 it was proposed that personal values form in the everyday experiences of self-formation and self-transcendence (Joas, 2000) and are derived from the particular person's education, life experience, circumstance, biology, genealogy, and culture (Hodgkinson, 1996).   Furthermore, personal values are considered to be learned or introjected phenomenon that are thought to be uncritically subsumed into the psychic processes rather than being inherent within the individual (Kiros, 1998). That is to say, the literature proposes that people are not born with a preference for particular values but, rather, they learn to adopt or support particular values, which are observed or experienced in life, as these are seen as enabling them to accomplish preferred outcomes. However, this process of adopting values does not happen in a conscious and explicit way. One does not know when one is adopting a value, it just happens naturally and non-cognitively. While experiencing a particular set of formative circumstances, an array of possible influential values are subconsciously analysed, and it would seem that one's psyche tacitly embraces a preference for certain values to produce the most preferred outcome. These values continue, from this point onwards, to reside as subliminal influential determinants of one's actions until such time that they fail to produce a desired outcome or when they are made explicit to the individual and can be consciously embraced as being worthwhile or, contrarily, discarded as being unsuitable.

Following this lead in the literature, the principals in this study, when interviewed, were asked to provide personal history accounts that illustrated the relationship between their important leadership behaviours and personal values. These accounts were summarised in Chapter 6 (Tables 6.6a, 6.6b, 6.6c, 6.6d, and 6.6e). Each of these tables traces the link between the two most important educational leadership behaviours and significant experiences in the life of the principal.

These data present a persuasive understanding of how the principal had formed his or her personal values. For example, Principal A believed that his most important leadership behaviour was "Encouraging and acknowledging the positive contribution of others to the ongoing success of the school". When asked why this was important, he explained:

> I believe that people respond well to positive comments, constructive comments, so I think my role as a leader means that I have a responsibility to provide direction, constructive and positive direction, to the community. I also believe that people operate more effectively if they feel valued. If people feel appreciated they work better. I, personally, like to be thanked and acknowledged therefore I like to do that for other people, too. I think that I will get more output from a person if their efforts are seen and affirmed and acknowledged.

In discussing the origins of these perceptions, Principal A stated that:

> I think it comes back to my family upbringing. Obviously my parents and perhaps more my mother. It would have been more a value that my family encouraged and practiced. My parents encouraged all of their children to do their best and they really showed their appreciation for what we did. In terms of my professional development, possibly a couple of teachers from my beginning years of teaching. A bit of a mentoring role that they chose to play with me and this probably indicated, or reinforced to me, that supporting others is important. Then I had the opportunity to help other teachers, particularly younger teachers, by giving them a pat on the back or encouraging them and this seemed to make them better teachers.

It is clear that Principal A's preferred leadership behaviour is being influenced by pre-existing beliefs and prior values-forming experiences from his whole life. These experiences included formational situations within his family as well as positive experiences as a beginning teacher. These historical accounts support the understanding that Principal A's chosen leadership behaviour was not unique to his school situation but rather, was aligned to his personal beliefs and values. His leadership behaviour emanated from his being, his Self, and included qualities that were being universally applied to all contexts of his life including that of his principalship.

Principal B believed that her most important leadership behaviour involved "Being a team leader and enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done". This principal recalled that:

> I have always thought of myself as a team leader in the sense that I might have some priorities, and some things that I want to do, but it doesn't mean that I have to do them myself. I don't see myself as the only one who can do things. In fact, my strength is in getting others to do the sorts of things that I want done, but with their concurrence of course. I think one of the things I have always admired in other leaders in my experience in the teaching profession, is the ability they had of getting other people to use their own talents, gifts, and abilities. I find it good to get other people to do things better than I could have done myself.

These perceptions were traced back to when Principal B was a high school student.

> I can remember quite vividly in my senior schooling I had to learn very early to be independent. When I went to high school I had to go to boarding school and I have never lived at home since. All of my time at school, University, College, people have looked to me to take a role to be the leader or to be the spokesperson. Even now this happens, but I don't mind doing it and I am not uncomfortable doing it. In terms of understanding how I acted with other people, I suppose that came to me as a School Prefect. While I was very pleased to be elected a School Prefect I soon realised that I could not, and did not have to, do everything. It was better if I got other people to share the load or the task with me. Once I realised this, I found it easy to ask people for their help.

The personal beliefs and values inherent within these experiences for Principal B are captured in her statement that:

> I found that more things could be achieved than what I could do by myself and some things were done better by others than what I could have done. [Also,] I found it was, personally, very satisfying for me as I had a clear sense that the others felt very happy that they had also achieved something. Yes, even from those early days to see people actually having success in something gave me a real sense of satisfaction. Being able to enable them made me very happy. I guess it is the teacher in me. I think a lot of teachers would share that view. It is great to see someone else actually do something which you have enabled them to do. So, this has followed through to the sorts of things I do now.

A particular experience in life as a busy student had taught Principal B to value such things as teamwork, collaboration, empowerment, harmony, ownership, and

inclusiveness. Furthermore, these values were encapsulated in her beliefs that she "could not, and did not have to, do everything", that it "was better if [she] got other people to share the load", that it was important to "ask people for their help", that "some things were done better by others", that "others felt very happy that they had also achieved something", and that she felt "a real sense of satisfaction [in] being able to enable others". Hence, in Principal B's own words, "this has followed through to the sorts of things" she does now. These beliefs and values formed in Principal B as a high school student continue to influence all that she currently does, including how she enacted her principalship.

In trying to discern her most important leadership behaviour, Principal C was not able to separate the two behaviours of "striving to model the standards expected of all within the school community", and "enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done". When asked to comment on why she placed importance of the first of these two behaviours, Principal C responded:

> It is very important to me to [model the standards expected of all]. And it probably goes right back to when my family had a small business and I can clearly recall something my dad used to often say, 'You cannot expect someone to do something that you won't do yourself'. And I guess this still influences me, so yes, I believe you live what you preach.

With respect to "enabling other people to accomplish what needs to be done", she added:

> I don't know how this developed in me but I just believe that people are valuable. Probably, the more you meet people, the more you see people, and you see such a diversity of backgrounds and such a diversity of talents you just realise that the competencies of people are just so wide and variable that you are silly not to use them. The more I met people the more I realised that each one of them had something important, interesting, or of value about them. So, it has become a part of who I am, or at least what I think of others, … and has been in me for quite some time.

While Principal C's commitment as a leader to modelling the appropriate behaviour had been influenced by a particular early family experience, her desire to enable or empower others was not confined to a specific situation. Her ongoing observations and appreciation of the diverse capability of others had influenced her to incorporate a more flexible, inclusive, cooperative, and interdependent approach to fulfilling her

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leadership responsibilities. Again, the principal's behaviour was being influenced by beliefs and values formed in non-schooling contexts.

"Valuing what is important to other people and enabling them to pursue common purposes in their own way" was perceived by Principal D to be the key factor in his principalship. The importance of this behaviour was emphasised by Principal D during his interview.

> It is certainly what I aspire to do and it is what, when I am less stressed, I endeavour to encourage. I endeavour to allow people to value what is important to them and try to be supportive in achieving what they value. Because if they are not doing what they value then they do it half heartedly and we won't get the full benefit from the person.

While this is now seen by Principal D to be a cornerstone of his principalship, he admitted to it having evolved over time rather than having been adopted following a particular incident in his life. Within his professional life, he had not always valued the contribution that other people could make to his endeavours.

> I have had to actually relinquish a lot of control. I think, as I look back, there is a whole lot of me that wanted to impose my will on others in what I thought was the best way to go and there have been some key events in my life where people have actually 'stuck it to me' and said, 'What's the point of me doing your job for you, why don't you do it yourself?' And those moments have shaped and changed me. It is probably a double-edged thing. It is probably me being more sure of who I am and me coming to a better perspective that people actually work better when they are free to explore their passion.

As Principal D came to appreciate the contribution that others could make, he also learnt more about himself.

> It may have been insecurity in myself. Wanting to do it my way. Not trusting enough that you can actually assemble out of people's own desires a very powerful dynamic rather than believing that what I was doing was the best way. Yes, probably a touch of insecurity. Letting go so other people could do something in a different, if not better, way to me.

Principal D's changed behaviour was influenced by unexpected negative reactions from his colleagues. By valuing such things as their ongoing friendship, respect, responsiveness, support and commitment, Principal D had to change his beliefs. He

realized that he could not work in an independent, isolated, and self-interested way as this would not only discourage others from being involved, but it would also decrease their appreciation of his actions on their behalf. Principal D learnt to believe in the ability of other people to accomplish important responsibilities. He learnt to trust others and to depend on others to such an extent that he now saw this as his most important leadership trait.

For Principal E, the hallmarks of his educational leadership behaviour were in "building a trusting working environment that enables others to assume full responsibility for their work" and "striving for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices". Of particular note is that each of these commitments originated from quite dissimilar circumstances. In regard to the first behaviour, Principal E's experiences as a beginning teacher were formative, whereas childhood struggles to overcome the social limitations caused by a physical handicap were at the heart of the latter behaviour.

When asked to explain why he felt it was necessary as a principal to build a trusting working environment that enabled others to assume full responsibility for their work, Principal E responded:

> I think in the early years of teaching, for those in my generation of teaching, I don't think we had that close supervision to any really large extent at all. But we were certainly trusted, … it was just assumed that you would get on with your job and that you would do it and you were not ever aware of being monitored by the level of supervision that I now expect for a new person. But maybe it was happening but you were not aware of it. Maybe it was happening informally and maybe there were people talking about you. But in the early days of teaching in the State Department, I guess with the first principal I had, there were formalities and there were Inspectors that would come and do an annual inspection, but even in those days we did not have Heads of Departments, that was in the Sixties, as these only came online a lot later than that so I never had close supervision of my lesson preparation or my teaching. I think it was your own honesty and enthusiasm that sort of carried the day. So I don't treat my new people that way, I do set expectations, if you like, and at least give them a way that we do things. They can then come back and say that they would like to do it this way and I am willing to listen and in fact we make adjustments and we may change it. … When I had a Curriculum Coordinator in another school, I became aware that he was a bit sloppy, he was not dotting 'i's' and crossing 't's',

he had a broad brush approach, so I had to work closely and strongly with him for some time. But that approach paid off enormously because he really did develop into a very effective Coordinator. So I guess it gets back to initially offering good supervision.

When reflecting on why he felt it was important for him as a principal to strive for quality and improvement through reviewing and critiquing policies and practices, Principal E acknowledged a latent competitiveness in his character. On the occasion when 'his' school had been publicly recognized for its academic excellence, Principal E recognized that he took "great pride from the fact that [his] school had beaten so many other schools". Following further encouragement to trace the origins of this competitive need to strive for quality, Principal E recalled:

> When I was about six years old I had a very bad accident in which both my lower legs were seriously damaged. So much so that I had to have very regular treatment on them for the next four or five years and I was never able to play competitive sports that the boys of my age usually played. I realised very early in this period of time that the only way I could compete, if you like, or at least be able to show to others what I could do and to be accepted and recognized for who I was, was in my school work. So academic success was the only way I could compete on an even footing with my peers. I was conscious of this attitude and, yes, I really did strive to prove myself.

It would seem that this very same attitude to proving himself was now reflected in his principalship behaviour as Principal E was very committed to ensuring that there are clearly articulated and strongly supported school policies and practices aimed at achieving quality teaching and learning. Furthermore, his childhood challenges nurtured such personal values as diligence, dependability, decisiveness, courage, commitment, and confidence, to name but a few. Such values were still prevalent in his principalship beliefs and behaviours.

These data support the understandings in the literature that the formation of the personal values influencing the principal's educational leadership behaviour was not solely confined to their professional experiences. Rather, these personal values were formed from a wide variety of lived experiences from across an entire life. In this study, the participating principals were readily able to speak of events from their youth that influenced their leadership behaviour. These personal histories highlighted

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the beliefs and values that underpinned their preferred behaviours. Family life experiences played a very formative role in four of the five principals. For the remaining principal it was more to do with coping as a boarding student at secondary school. Even with the four principals who aligned their values to their particular experiences within their family, each recounted quite significantly different circumstances. One principal was influenced by the values and expectations of his mother. Another remembered the strictness and directness of his father. A third principal was influenced by the challenges and responsibilities of having to help in a family business. While the fourth principal claimed that the experiences of growing up as the eldest child of a relatively large family living in a fairly isolated area were of greatest influence in forming his values. All of these accounts tend to provide supportive data for the view presented in the literature that one's values are not inherent but are formed from such things as a person's education, life experience, and circumstances.

This understanding about the formation of personal values again highlights the uniqueness and individualistic nature of personal values. As previously discussed (7.2), the participating principals, in responding to the *Values Nomination* Questionnaire and the *Values Selection Questionnaire,* named a unique set of personal values. The data collected in the latter part of the interviews suggested that the individual's unique life experiences, in turn, led to the formation of a unique set of personal values. While all people are thought to have similar kinds of values, the difference is in how they perceive what is considered to be most satisfying for their own life (Unger, 1990).

This understanding of the formation of personal values also highlights the difficulties associated with changing personal values. Here it seems that changing personal values requires changing intimate understandings about one's Self, a very complex and complicated activity. It would require more than the mere promotion of a preferred value, as its adoption would also have to negate an understanding of one's Self developed and nurtured over time and applicable to all aspects of one's life. Newly promoted professional personal values have to compete with not only the existing general personal values, but also their accompanying historical importance before

they would be adopted. Hence, as the literature suggests (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002), people are very reluctant to change their personal values.

Finally, the data gathered in this study supports the view that the principal's personal values are not consciously selected or rejected as new leadership challenges arise, but rather, are a part of their holistic understanding of their Self. These personal values are not specifically aligned to their principalship behaviour. The same personal values influence the principal's behaviour in all aspects of their life; leadership behaviour is only one aspect. While a particular personal value might be construed as having a good or bad influence on their educational leadership behaviour, it may be perceived as having a different, even opposite, effect on other important personal behaviours apart from their principalship. Personal values are not role specific influences; they are holistic influences upon the individual. As such, they are not readily adopted or easily discarded.

## 7.4 CAN A PRINCIPAL GAIN INCREASED SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF HIS OR HER PERSONAL VALUES AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF THESE PERSONAL VALUES TO HIS OR HER EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR?

As previously highlighted in the literature (Aronson, 1995; Maddux & Lewis, 1995), we cannot assume self-knowledge of personal values and learning more about these personal values and their relationship to leadership behaviour is "difficult". This understanding was reinforced by the views presented by the participating principals in this study. For these principals, it appeared that the link between personal values and individual behaviour was widely, but uncritically, acknowledged. At the outset of the research, each of the participating principals readily endorsed the belief that their values influenced their own behaviours, but were at a loss to explain how this occurred. Principal A expressed this presumption by saying:

> I just know that values drive my actions but to actually put down and verbalize what values were driving my decision-making and my processes is something I don't sit down and think about. As a result, I find it quite difficult to formalize.

Similarly, Principal D expressed his presumption that his behaviour was influenced by values by highlighting that:

> When you are reflecting on your leadership behaviours, and why you do certain things as you do, you don't have that [*Values Selection Questionnaire*] list of values to look at. So you think about what is immediately obvious to you – your behaviours – and you overlook the hidden bits – your values. But if I'm asked straight out whether or not my behaviours are influenced by my values, the answer is, 'Yes, certainly'. You just don't doubt that even though you don't think about it.

Being unsure as to how their values impacted on their behaviour did not diminish, in any way, their total and unconditional acceptance of a direct association between their personal values and their behaviour. An unsubstantiated conviction about a direct relationship between personal values and individual behaviour was common to all five participants. Furthermore, the unsubstantiated quality of this perception was made even more noteworthy by the acknowledgement by each principal that, at the outset of this study, they were quite unsure of what their personal values were. Despite accepting the existence of an important relationship between their own values and their particular behaviour, this, in itself, did not motivate them to attempt to ascertain what their values were. According to the principals, the subliminal nature of their values, and the lack of knowledge about how one might readily explicate them, acted to discourage any attempt to redress their ignorance.

However, if a principal's leadership behaviour is to be values-led, then arguably, it is important for the principal to have a means to overcome these limitations in their self-knowledge. For the principal's personal values to lead their educational leadership behaviour, then he or she must be able to enhance their self-knowledge of these values to ensure they were leading the principal towards appropriate educational leadership behaviours. This thought led the researcher to develop and trial an instrument to assist principals to learn more about their personal values. Based on theoretical understandings identified in the review of the literature (Chapter 3), this instrument offered a visual display of the cognitive processes that link personal values to principalship behaviour (Figure 5.1, p. 93). The application of this visual display to the two most important leadership behaviours for each of the five participating principals (as indicated by the *Leadership Practices Inventory* and confirmed by the principal) enabled the researcher to develop a personalised visual display for each participating principal (Tables 6.8a - 6.12b). The creation of this theoretically

supported visual display suggests that it is possible to display the relationship between an individual principal's personal values and his or her leadership behaviour. Here it was assumed that this visual display would simultaneously describe the principal's personal values as well as inform the principal as to how these were influencing his or her educational leadership behaviour.

To check these assumptions, the principals in this study, when interviewed, were asked:

1. Is each of your two visual displays an accurate representation of your behaviour, beliefs, and values?

2. Is each of your two visual displays understandable and informative about the relationship between your personal values and the particular leadership behaviour?

In response to these questions, the principals noted:

> Well, it all makes a lot of sense. I can see how it all fits together. It is fascinating, really. Yes, I certainly can understand it all. And, yes, they do capture what I do, and what I believe, and they are certainly what I think my values are. I suppose, for me, the key bit is knowing more about what I think are my most important leadership behaviours. It's knowing better what I consider to be essential behaviours in my principalship that I find most beneficial. (Principal A)

> Yes, that is me. I certainly do that, and that, and, yes they are my beliefs and values. The sheets do accurately present what I said to you. It's interesting. They will probably mean more to me in time. (Principal B)

> As I said to you right at the beginning, I am not used to thinking or reflecting about me (sic) and what I do; I just do it because it is me. So, I suppose, I am not too sure as to exactly what I think about these. Certainly, they do show what I consider to be important in what I do. And, I can't disagree with what you have listed as my beliefs, they are true. I can see how these values link to the beliefs, but, as I said, whether or not they are my actual values, I am not sure. I can't see anything wrong in them but whether it is the real me, I'm not sure. Nothing seems wrong, so

perhaps it is me. I will need lots of time to think more about it. (Principal C)

No, there is nothing inaccurate about these. They do capture what I tried to say. Not that I understood the associations amongst all these things when I talked to you. But it really does make a lot of sense. I can see how it all comes together. The displays are certainly understandable and accurate. But what benefit? Maybe, it's about me knowing me (sic) better. Knowing what is really me. More than just knowing what I do but also knowing why I do it. (Principal D)

I like the logic of it all. It all fits together and links together. I have never thought about how my beliefs and values impact on my behaviours although, as I think I said to you at our first interview, I certainly believe that people's values are important in determining what they do. These displays clearly and simply show it all. I would have to agree with all that you have presented in these displays. They will certainly give me more things to think about as I go about my role as a principal. (Principal E)

In general, these responses seem to not only acknowledge the clarity and accuracy of each of the visual displays, but also showed a general appreciation from each of the principals of the personal insights they had gained from the visual displays. However, there were other, more specific, responses that show the usefulness of this instrument in helping principals clarify personal values and reflect on their leadership behaviour. For instance, for Principal E, there was noted reward in being able to deconstruct his key leadership behaviour of striving to achieve acknowledged quality outcomes from his staff. When asked to recall a specific situation that reflected the achievement of this outcome, Principal E remembered:

I had not thought of myself as being highly competitive. But yes, I did get a great deal of pride from the fact that my school had, in a sense, beaten so many other schools. We were only a small country school with minimal resources yet we had outperformed much larger schools who had access to everything that opened and shut. So, I suppose, there was a sense that I was delighted that our students had performed better than them. Maybe I am more competitive than I thought.

He was able to appreciate that the inherent values in this striving to achieve acknowledged quality outcomes were based upon beliefs about the need to successfully compete against other schools in the public arena. Furthermore, Principal

E was personally surprised by his own admission that his latent competitiveness emanated from personal values he formed as a young boy seeking peer acceptance by striving through alternative means, as he could not play competitive sport because of a long-term physical injury.

Similarly, as documented previously (Chapter 7.2), it was very beneficial for Principal B to be able to realize that her values, associated with being a team leader enabling other people to accomplish important tasks, were based on beliefs about people being motivated to perform well if they are given the freedom to do it in their own way. Also, she was able to see how her initial values, developed when she was a Prefect at a Boarding School, were later to be reinforced by practical experience and professional reading. Principal B recollected as a first-year principal:

> I became aware that, when I came here, that some people felt that I should have possibly been more in control of the things I had given to them to do, and I had some quite vigorous discussions with people when I said to them, "It doesn't matter if things don't work perfectly, that's when I will come in and help you". I wanted them to not feel afraid to run with things, I was there to help them achieve the outcome, I wasn't there to do it for them. I did not want to trip over them while they were doing it, they needed to feel that they could do it in their own way. Some people said to me in my first couple of years, "I have never heard that before, you mean I can actually run with it?". I remember a point in my life when I was quite consciously impressed by this way of acting as a leader. It was through some reading I was sharing with my husband, who is involved in another realm of life but a leader in his own right, and it was certainly his philosophy and we were able to discuss it. He was an employer and does have a feel for people, and knows how to get the best out of people, and he is a very strong leader in his field. One of the most frustrating things for people who are in a middle management role is to be given a task and then not be allowed the freedom to do it their way. In my opinion, a key role for the leader is to support such people by simply saying, "How is it going?", "Do you want a hand with it?", "Are you okay with that?", and to affirm what they are doing and letting them take the kudos for the outcome.

Principal B had found it quite insightful to see how different situations and experiences had reinforced common beliefs and key personal values such as flexibility, respect, adaptability, cooperation, collaboration, and personal dignity.

Based on these data, it is suggested that a personalised visual display that illustrates the link between leadership behaviours with inherent beliefs and personal values may assist the principal to gain increased self-knowledge of personal values and the relationship of these personal values to leadership behaviour. On reviewing their individual visual displays, each principal endorsed not only the accuracy but also the ease with which each display could be understood. From these visual displays, these principals could not only account for their own personal values, but also see how these personal values were impacting on their key leadership behaviours. The link between their personal values and their leadership behaviour was clearly established and understood.

Interestingly, some (not all) principals in this research study found the guided reflective and introspective interview process was more satisfying than the tangible presentations offered by the visual displays. For example, Principal B found that the formation of her own enhanced self-knowledge through the guided reflective and introspective process was more satisfying than the tangible presentations offered by her two visual displays:

> What have I learnt about myself? Well, can I say that the greatest benefit, for me, was not in being handed the [visual displays] but rather the reflective processes of gathering the data. Being a part of the interviews and talking, for the first time, about what I do and why I do it was of great benefit. I think that the [visual displays] weren't as important to me because I had already made the links. As we talked and I recalled the various bits of information, my mind started to put things together. The [visual displays] just confirmed it all. So, the process was the real benefit for me, rather than the formal outcome. In a similar way, I don't think this experience will have any immediate effect on me. I am happy with what I am doing and, now, I can also say I am happy with why I am doing it. My beliefs and values sit well with me at the moment. Perhaps, if something started going badly, then my new knowledge about myself might make it easier for me to know what I am doing wrongly.

In a similar vein, the nature of the interview process was an important aspect of Principal C's involvement in the research study. In the past, being reflective and introspective were things that Principal C had consciously tried to avoid. Given that she was readily able to acknowledge her enhanced self-knowledge as a result of her

participation in this research study, it is possible that she might be more willing to be involved in such reflective practices in future. Her thoughts about what she had learnt from this study were:

> Being a part of this study has certainly put me into my area of uncertainty and discomfort. It has made me think about myself and why I do things. As you know, I usually try to avoid that sort of thing. But it hasn't been too difficult or, rather, too uncomfortable. I have learnt about why I do things as a principal although I think I always, deep down anyway, knew what I prefer to do. Now it is all very clear. But, will I change? To be honest, I don't know. I do things because that's me, and that's how I prefer to do things. I now know more about 'me' but that has only really confirmed or clarified what I already felt, anyway.

These responses not only point to the contribution that the personalised visual display can make to the process of self-reflection and introspection, but also alerts us to the importance for some principals of a 'conversation' with the researcher centred on this display.

## 7.5 DOES AN INCREASED LEVEL OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF PERSONAL VALUES HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BRING ABOUT VALUES-LED PRINCIPALSHIP?

As argued in Chapter 3, this research study understands the concept of values-led principalship to imply that the principal is able to consciously adopt certain values because they are seen as providing desired purpose and direction to his or her leadership behaviour. In other words, the principal can consciously and deliberately allow particular values to influence his or her behaviour in order to achieve desired outcomes. In this sense, the concept of a values-led principal assumes that:

1. The principal can come to know what are the most suitable values to provide purpose and direction to his or her leadership behaviour; and that
2. These values can be readily inculcated into the principal's natural valuations in order to positively influence his or her leadership behaviour.

Inherent in this is an understanding that the principal also can come to know what values would be unsuitable for guiding his or her leadership behaviour and can discard these values from their valuations or suppress the influence of these particular

values. In sum, the concept of a values-led principalship suggests that, in some way, the principal can increase their self-knowledge of personal values in order to eclectically choose certain values to positively influence his or her leadership behaviour.

However, within the literature, there is a warning in respect to assuming that an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values will automatically bring about values-led principalship. Here it is claimed that personal values are formed from one's personal characteristics and one's personal life experiences (Hodgkinson, 1996). They originate within one's very core, one's self-concept, and are formed within one's self-esteem and one's personal motives (Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002; Osborne, 1996). These personal values are subliminal and affect all of one's behaviours and not just one's leadership behaviours (Hodgkinson, 1996). Increasing one's self-knowledge of personal values by overcoming their inherent subliminal nature, does significantly enhance one's awareness and comprehension of one's practice, but it does not bring about immediate change. For behavioural change to occur the particular value must be seen to be unsuitable from a holistic perspective within the life of the person (Graeber, 2001). While an observer may judge a certain part of a person's leadership behaviour to be inappropriate and based on erroneous values, the leader may not see their own behaviour in the same way, as they would be invoking a judgemental framework based on all aspects of their own life and not solely that provided by their performance as a leader. For the self-knowledge of a personal value to be effective in changing one's behaviour, it must not only distinguish the value, but it must also show it as either generally producing an unwanted outcome or as being incongruent, or in strong conflict with another key personal value.

These thoughts in the literature are supported by data from this study. In the final interview, each participating principal was asked: "What have you learnt about yourself, as a principal, from this study and is this new knowledge likely to change your educational leadership behaviour?" While acknowledging the gaining of enhanced self-knowledge, Principal A was more inclined to apply this to a different context rather than to use this new knowledge to critique his current practices.

> I can honestly say that I have gained, personally, a great deal from
> my involvement in this research. I have learnt a lot about myself

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that I would never, I believe, have learnt. It has been a really interesting process. But I suppose, for me, the greatest benefit has been in coming to know what I consider to be my most important, or essential, things I do as a Principal. I have a Principal's Performance Review coming up soon and I now feel more assured of what I can write in my Report about what I do as a principal. It will be interesting to see what others think of how I succeed in doing these things. Knowing about my beliefs and values just helps me to feel clearer about my behaviours. My beliefs and values, yes, are important and it is interesting to know about them, but it is knowing how I put them into practice which is of most interest to me. So, I can't see myself changing anything I currently do as a principal from what I have learnt during this study. Perhaps, though, I will do the same things but with far more conviction and confidence because I know more about what I am doing and I know that it is all linked to whom I am as a person.

Similarly, behavioural change was not a consideration for the other principals.

What have I learnt about myself? I don't think this experience will have any immediate affect on me. I am happy with what I am doing and, now, I can also say I am happy with why I am doing it. My beliefs and values sit well with me at the moment. Perhaps, if something started going badly, then my new knowledge about myself might make it easier for me to know what I am doing wrongly (sic). (Principal B)

I have learnt about why I do things as a principal although I think, deep down anyway, [I] knew what I prefer to do. Now it is all very clear. But, will I change? To be honest, I don't know. I do things because that's me, and that's how I prefer to do things. I now know more about 'me' but that has only really confirmed or clarified what I already felt, anyway. (Principal C)

Principal D was the most forthright in expressing his positiveness about being involved in this study. However, this positiveness was more aligned with his perceptions about the need for increased professional development of principals generally, than it was about the specific impact of the particular outcomes of this study pertaining to the relative appropriateness of his leadership behaviour and its antecedents:

To be involved has been great for me. I don't think principals, generally, get enough time to do this sort of thing. To think about what you do as a principal and why you do it. Our time is too taken up with having to do the here and now type stuff, and not enough time is given over to improving yourself. I have liked how what I do has been linked to what I believe and value. There is something

wholesome about knowing that your behaviours are grounded in some deeper substance within your Self and not just a means to an end. Is this new knowledge about myself likely to change me as a principal? I would like to think so, but how I am not sure. I would like to think that it will make me more accountable for what I do. I can now think about the sorts of values I am enacting when ever I do something. But I can't say for sure that that will happen. As you know, in the busy-ness of being a principal we can't always do everything we want to do.

Finally, Principal E was quite pragmatic about the outcome from his involvement in this research study:

> Yes, I have gained a lot of new knowledge about myself and how I go about being a principal from being a part of this study. But will this new knowledge change me? That's a hard question to answer. I suppose, for me, with anything new my first response is to ask, 'will this make it easier'. Whenever something new in teaching, a new technology for instance, is proposed, I ask myself, 'Will this make teaching any more efficient; will it make it easier to be a good teacher?' If I apply this same thinking to my experiences from this study, then my probable answer is, 'No'. While I have really learnt a lot of new things about myself, I can't see how it will make me any better as a principal. I think I will continue to do the same things that I have been doing even though I now know a lot more about myself. But, it is the future we don't always know about, we can't always predict. While I feel I am a successful principal now, who knows what the future holds. If something changes in the future, and I am put under different pressures or expectations as a principal, then what I have learnt about myself might make it easier to deal with. I am glad I have been involved but I can't say how it will impact on my principalship.

It can be seen that each response is more of an "uh huh" recognition of a new understanding, rather than a "wow" response from a powerful new insight that mandates essential and immediate personal changes. There is clear recognition of new knowledge about their inner Self, and how their values and beliefs are influencing their leadership behaviour, but there is not the sense that this increased self-knowledge is going to immediately initiate a change in their leadership behaviours. The perceived benefits gained from an increased self-knowledge of their beliefs and values were mainly being able to clarify, substantiate, and support the principal's individualistic leadership style and provided him or her with renewed confidence and assurance.

Thus, being more knowledgeable about personal values was unlikely to initiate a change in these values or a change in behaviour. This understanding is supported in the literature (3.4.4) and the data (7.3) pertaining to the formation of personal values. Here it is claimed that personal values are formed from one's personal characteristics and one's personal life experiences (Hodgkinson, 1996). These personal values originate within one's very core, one's self-concept, and are formed within one's self-esteem and one's personal motives (Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002, Osborne, 1996). Moreover, these personal values are subliminal and affect all of one's behaviours; not just one's leadership behaviours (Hodgkinson, 1996). Hence, while increasing one's self-knowledge of personal values by overcoming their inherent subliminal nature does significantly enhance one's awareness and comprehension of one's practice, it does not bring about immediate change. For behavioural change to occur, the particular values must be seen to be unsuitable from a holistic perspective in the life of the person. This understanding also points to the need for professional development opportunities for principals to move beyond a dominant focus on professional behaviour, and challenges principals to engage in activities that make explicit their inner Self. It seems that behavioural change requires prior change in all the dimensions of the inner Self, including personal beliefs and values as well as motives, self-esteem and self-concept.

## 7.6    CONCLUSION

The use of a wide variety of research methods within this study resulted in a "rich picture" of values-led principalship and provided answers to the four research questions that guided this study. Data collected using the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* and the *Values Selection Questionnaire* assisted the researcher to answer the first research question: How knowledgeable are the principals of their own personal values? These data highlighted the uncertainty that existed in the participating principals in being able to name their personal values, and led to the conclusion that these principals had limited self-knowledge of their personal values.

Data collected in the semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to answer the second research question: How have the personal values of the principals been formed? Here the data corroborated the understanding presented in the literature that

people's values are uncritically absorbed into the very being of the person during significant moments in his or her life. Each participating principal's personal history of how certain values, beliefs, and behaviours were formed, not only showed that they were formed during formative moments in their personal as well as professional life, but also that these important experiences helped to define their Self. The learning from this is that one's values are integral to one's Self and this renders the changing of one's values as being very complex and difficult.

Interview data also allowed the researcher to answer the third research question: Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour? In response to this research question, this study showed that it is possible to visually display both the participating principal's personal values and the relationship that these values have to particularly important principalship behaviours. From these visual displays, the principals could not only account for their own personal values, but also see how these personal values impact on their key leadership behaviours. The link between their personal values and their leadership behaviour was clearly established and understood.

Again, interview data allowed the researcher to answer the fourth research question: Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values bring about values-led principalship? These data showed that enhanced self-knowledge of personal values alone, was not likely to cause any change to the way the principal enacted his or her leadership behaviours. Enhanced self-knowledge of personal values did not appear to bring about values-led principalship. The changing of personal values and, subsequently, behaviour, requires prior changes in the more intimate or inner understandings about one's Self. Hence, values-led principalship requires consideration of the inner antecedents of personal values. A more comprehensive and holistic self-knowledge of the inner Self could enable values-led principalship. This understanding identified the need for professional development opportunities for principals to move beyond a dominant focus on professional behaviour, and challenged principals to engage in activities that make explicit their inner Self. It was argued that it is only through such professional development that values-led principalship can be achieved.

Finally, these interpretations of the data suggested that the principals could not be considered to be values-led principals. As argued in Chapter 3, values-led principals need to have high levels of self-knowledge of their personal values and deliberately apply these values in their everyday cognitive processes. However, these principals required help to clarify and come to know their own personal values. When called upon to explore their personal values, each principal lacked, in varying degrees, precision and accuracy in their self-knowledge of their personal values. With suitable guidance each principal was found to have varying degrees of notional awareness of their likely values. They each had a notional sense of what each value meant to them rather than being able to give the value a specific name. The principal's self-knowledge of his or her personal values seemed to be notional or tacit rather than clear or explicit. In this sense, it could be suggested that the personal values were obscure directors or drivers of the leadership behaviours of each of the participating principals. Personal values were influencing the principal's behaviour but he or she was not really aware of what these values were or how they were affecting their behaviour. In this sense, the participating principals were being values-directed or values-driven, rather than values-led.

# CHAPTER 8

## REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS

### 8.1    PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the concept of values-led principalship. This research provides an exploration of this concept of values-led principalship by inspecting how the knowing of one's personal values might help one to be led by these values and thereby, be able to act more effectively as a principal. In particular, this research study investigated values-led principalship from the perspective of five secondary principals working in the system of schools under the auspices of the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. By exploring each participating principal's self-knowledge of their personal values and inspecting how these personal values influenced his or her particular principalship behaviour, it is claimed that this study has investigated a hitherto blank spot in educational leadership research. This particular research study has successfully addressed an important omission in educational leadership research by constructively examining the concept of values-led principalship.

The impetus for this study was a pragmatic concern for effectiveness in principalship. As a secondary principal, the researcher was keenly interested in learning more about principalship and being able to demonstrate effectiveness in this role. Anecdotal evidence suggested that principalship was becoming more complex and there was no clear understanding of this role. In an uncertain and changing educational environment, principals face a series of dilemmas that are beyond linear processes of problem-solving. Moreover, the expectations of principalship had grown as policy makers deemed principals to be primarily responsible for the provision of quality schooling.

An initial review of the literature (Chapter 2) situated the principal's experience of constant change and uncertainty within the macro context of "social flux and transformation" (Drucker, 1993). "Cultural breakdown" (Arbuckle, 1992) has led to value conflicts as well as ethical contradictions within organizations and leadership.

As a way forward, theorists call for "developmental organizations" and "developmental leadership" (Gilley & Matycunich, 2000). Here, the emphasis is on achieving "organizational consistency" and human development through a deliberate process of "values alignment".

In the micro context of the school, the principal experiences the effects of social flux and transformation through the outcomes of educational reform influenced by economic rationalism. This results in new dilemmas, paradoxes and seemingly unresolvable situations. Hence, the principalship, itself, is being re-imagined as theorists focus on the application of values and ethical behaviour to educational administration (Starratt, 2003). The call is for a new type of principal, who is "people centred, achievement oriented and values-led" (Day, 2000). Here it is argued that strongly held and enacted values lie at the heart of effective leadership and principalship. These sentiments are supported in the findings from a recent Australian study of the challenges faced by leaders of contemporary frontline service organizations such as health and education, which indicated that the most difficult challenges to such leaders present themselves as dilemmas, paradoxes, or tensions that involve a contestation of values and/or an ethical contradiction (Duignan, 2003).

Despite this support for values-led principalship, this study found a paucity of contemporary research in this area. Less than a handful of studies investigated the role that personal values play in influencing the behaviour of principals. Of the 70 studies identified in the ERIC database under the topic of values and principalship, only 3 studies (Campbell-Evans, 1991; Laible & Harrington, 1998; Moorhead & Nediger, 1991) documented attempts to synthesise the array of values that influence a principal's behaviour. Within the literature, this omission or 'blank spot' within contemporary research is considered undesirable (Begley, 2000; Buell, 1992; Strachan, 1999). Consequently, an initial concern for exploring effectiveness within principalship was narrowed to focus on the role that personal values play in influencing the behaviour of principals. The purpose of this research study was to address the current blank spot in respect to research in the area of values-led principalship.

## 8.2    THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that were to guide this study were developed following a comprehensive review of literature in respect to values-led principalship (Chapter 3). This focus was based on the assumption that the notion of values-led principalship implies a link between the principal's personal values and their educational leadership behaviour. With reference to relevant literature, this research study developed a conceptual map of the Self, which included the phenomena of self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and behaviours. In addition, there was an exploration of the level of self-knowledge that one has about each of these parts of his or her Self.

This review of the literature highlighted five important insights in respect to personal values. First, personal values are formed during the general experiences of life to become the most influential source of values that impact upon any individual. Second, personal values do indeed, influence behaviour. Third, personal values are subjective, inner world phenomena that, often, are tacit, subliminal influences upon one's behaviour. Fourth, having knowledge of one's own personal values is not a natural or a common occurrence, and the gaining of this particular form of self-knowledge is difficult and requires effort and appropriate processes. Finally, the appropriate process for gaining self-knowledge of one's personal values is through self-reflection and introspection.

From the theoretical knowledge gained from this literature review, the researcher identified the following research questions:

Research Question 1:   How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?

Research Question 2:   How have the personal values of the principals been formed?

Research Question 3:   Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?

Research Question 4: Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?

Subsequently, these research questions guided the choices in respect to the theoretical framework that was to inform the design of this study.

## 8.3    THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Within research, the theoretical framework forms the philosophical lynchpin between the theoretical and practical aspects of the learning journey presented in the study. Within this particular research study, it was recognized that the repertoire of social inquiry methods being employed in the field of educational leadership has greatly expanded over the last thirty years (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). The historically dominant positivist tradition now competes with a range of alternative, systematically different research methodologies and methods that reflect different philosophical traditions (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Ribbins & Gunter, 2002). Each of these traditions offers a research paradigm with its unique set of basic beliefs or metaphysical principles that in turn, provide criteria upon which construct validity in research design is judged.

In choosing a research paradigm, the researcher is advised to focus on the research problem and the specific research questions (Crotty, 1998). With this advice in mind, this research study was situated within an epistemology of pragmatic constructivism, the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism, and the orchestrating perspective of a case study research. This theoretical framework was considered appropriate to the research problem and research questions given the difficulty associated with coming to understand personal values, which are considered to be subjective, tacit, subliminal phenomena not readily observable and measurable.

In the first instance, pragmatic constructivism was deemed appropriate for this research study because of its acknowledged suitability when searching for knowledge in the little known or hidden realm of subjective, tacit, subliminal phenomena of personal values (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). This outcome was achieved via pragmatic constructivism's distinctive ontological, epistemological and methodological claims (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 111-112). From an ontological perspective, "constructivism's relativism … assumes multiple, apprehendable, and somewhat conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects, but that may

change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated". From an epistemological perspective it accepts a "transactional/objectivist assumption that sees knowledge as created in interaction among the investigator and the respondents". Constructivism relies on a hermeneutic/dialectical methodology aimed at understanding and reconstruction of previously held problematic constructions.

In accepting these philosophical claims, the researcher was aware of the polarized positions within the constructivist research community (Bowe & Berv, 2000; Phillips, 2000). Bredo (2000) identifies four such positions: "Individual Idealist Constructivism; Individual Realist Constructivism; Social Idealist Constructivism; and Social Realist Constructivism". Each of these positions offers a different view on the origin of human knowledge and reality. Faced with these polarized positions within constructivism itself, scholars such as Schwandt (1994) and Burbules (2000) advocate reframing the debate away from the ontological, epistemological, and methodological concerns that tend to divide constructivist researchers, by moving to a more pragmatic perspective. Here constructivism operates within a problem-based framework that focuses on the research problem and gives priority to doing rather than knowing. Research begins with exploration of the human activity from the perspective of the individual's conscious thoughts or awareness as it emerged from the practical conflicts associated with the activity.

In line with these arguments in support of pragmatic constructivism, the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism informed this study. This theoretical perspective was deemed appropriate to a research problem that focused on the relationship between leadership behaviour and personal values and was pragmatic in nature. As an approach to research, symbolic interactionism explores how people have made sense of their world in a dynamic process of social interaction and offers an approach to social inquiry that fits the doctrine of pragmatism (Charon, 1998; 2001). This approach required a research design built upon three fundamental principles: the centrality of meaning; the social production of reality; and the importance of subjectivity. These three fundamental principles propose that people act on the basis of the meaning they themselves ascribe to objects and situations; that one's meanings arise out of the social interaction of the individual with others; and

that one's meanings are subjectively transformed further through a process of interpretation during interaction.

In order to understand the reality from the perspective of the individual, it is recommended that symbolic interactionism research involves two key stages of inquiry: exploration and inspection (Charon, 1998). As a first step, exploration involves using any ethical procedure that aids in understanding what is happening in the particular complex social situation. Ideas, concepts, understandings, beliefs, and so on, are collected and then actively modified and adjusted as new data is gathered. The purpose is to become holistically acquainted with the particular area of social life and to develop some focus of interest. Inspection is considered to be the second step. It involves isolating important elements within the explored situation and describing the situation in relation to those elements. Inspection also involves forming descriptive statements about each important element in the situation, then applying that description to other interaction situations.

Mindful of the principles of symbolic interactionism, a case study was chosen as an appropriate orchestrating perspective for this research study. A case study methodology describes an approach to research that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Sarantakos, 1998). This research study recognises that there are different types of case study: the "intrinsic case study", where the study is undertaken because the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case; the "instrumental case study", where a particular case is examined to give insight into an issue, or to refine a theory; and the "collective case study" where the instrumental case is extended to cover several cases" (Stake, 1994). Given the purpose of this research study was to address the current blank spot in respect to research in the area of values-led principalship, this research study was framed as an instrumental case study.

The most important initial task of such case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case, as a single entity around which there are natural boundaries. Once the initial task of a case study is delimited it is then argued that the research methodology must have the following distinguishing characteristics: (i) The case

study is "particularistic" because it studies whole units in their totality, and not aspects or variables of these units, such that it is problem-centred, small scale, and outcome-oriented research (Stake, 2000); (ii) it is "descriptive" since the outcome from the study is a rich, sophisticated description of the phenomenon under study and uses several research methods to ensure completeness and avoid errors (Sarantakos, 1998); and (iii) it is "heuristic" as it illuminates the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study and can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the researcher's experience, or confirm what is already known (Merriam, 1998).

Within this research study, the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism informed by a pragmatic understanding of constructivism provided general advice in how this research had to be implemented as well as guidance towards the selection of relevant and suitable research methods.

## 8.4    THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Within this research, the boundaries of the case were defined in terms of Catholic secondary school principals within the Brisbane Catholic Education system of schools. This was an "instrumental case study" (Stake, 1994), as the purpose of this research study was to address the current blank spot in respect to research in the area of values-led principalship. A "non-probabilistic" (Merriam, 1998) and "purposeful" (Patton, 1990) sample of principals from the 26 secondary Colleges was invited to participate in the study.   In particular, this research study used "daisy chaining" (Gordon, 1994, p. 6) properties associated with using the Delphi Method whereby a selection of five principals was non-probabilistically chosen from the total "universe" (Sutherland, 1975, p. 471) of potential participating principals.

This study employed multiple research methods in the two research stages of exploration and inspection. These methods are outlined in Table 5.1 and included an open-ended questionnaire, two closed questionnaires, and a series of semi-structured interviews

The exploration stage of this research study commenced with an open-ended questionnaire, the *Values Nomination Questionnaire* (appendix 1). Essentially, this

form was a sheet of paper with many blank rectangles, and participants were asked to reflect on their personal values and to record these values by writing a value in a rectangle. This exploration stage continued with two closed questionnaires. The *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) (appendix 2) created by Kouzes and Posner (2001) was used as a starting point for developing a synthesis of the key educational leadership behaviours for each of the participating principals. The *Values Selection Questionnaire* (appendix 3) required each principal to simply select his or her values from a comprehensive list of value words. The list provided to each principal included 170 potential values, which were compiled from the literature (McGraw, 2001; Senge et al., 1994).

This exploration stage raised issues in respect to values-led principalship and it was these issues that were investigated in the inspection stage of the research study. The use of a series of three semi-structured interviews in this stage provided a twofold benefit. First, these interviews assisted in addressing the perceived need to support the data gained from the questionnaires with additional sources of data in order to enhance the rightness of the data. Secondly, the interviews enabled a closer investigation of the self-knowledge of particular principals so that each of the research questions could be examined from the more personalized and descriptive data obtained. In short, the semi-structured interview offered a data-gathering environment in which the principal and researcher were able to work together to build a more complete understanding and explanation of the principal's self-knowledge of their own leadership behaviours, beliefs, and values.

## 8.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The use of a wide variety of research methods within this study resulted in a "rich picture" of values-led principalship and provided the following answers to the four research questions that guided this study.

**Research Question 1: How knowledgeable are the principals about their own personal values?**

In response to this research question, this research study found that the principals in this study experienced different levels of self-knowledge in respect to personal values. Here the data highlighted the uncertainty that was experienced by the participating principals. Moreover, it would appear that self-knowledge of personal values is not an either/or phenomenon wherein one either has this knowledge or does not have this knowledge. Rather, the principal's level of self-knowledge of their personal values fell along a continuum with some principals exhibiting higher levels of self-knowledge than others. Moreover, the principals' actual self-knowledge of their personal values seemed more notional than explicit, and all needed help to clarify and to come to know their personal values.

**Research Question 2: How have the personal values of the principals been formed?**

Within this research study, the data corroborated the understanding presented within the literature (Hodgkinson, 1996) that people's values are uncritically absorbed into the very being of the person during significant moments in his or her life. The principals' personal history accounts of how certain values, beliefs, and behaviours were formed showed that they were conceived during formative moments in their personal, as well as professional life. It seems that important experiences in the whole of life helped to define their Self. Moreover, personal values are not consciously selected or rejected as new leadership challenges arise, but rather, personal values are a part of the principal's holistic understanding of their Self and, therefore, difficult to isolate.

This understanding of the formation of personal values also highlights the difficulties associated with changing personal values. Here it seems that changing personal values requires changing intimate understandings about one's Self, and this is a very complex and complicated activity. Such change would require more than the mere promotion of a preferred value, as its adoption would also have to negate an understanding of one's Self that had been developed and nurtured over time.

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Moreover, a strongly held personal value is applied to all aspects of one's life, not just to a work role. Newly promoted professional personal values have to compete with not only the existing general personal values but also their accompanying historical importance before they would be adopted. Hence, as the literature (Hultman & Gellermann, 2002) suggests, people are very reluctant to change their personal values.

**Research Question 3: Can a principal gain increased self-knowledge of his or her personal values and the relationship of these personal values to his or her educational leadership behaviour?**

A review of the literature suggests the possibility and desirability of being able to illustrate the link between personal values, beliefs and behaviours. Following this lead, the researcher was able to produce a visual display that illustrated the link between personal values, inherent beliefs and leadership behaviours for each of the participating principals.  From these visual displays, the principals could not only account for their own personal values but also see how these personal values impact on their key leadership behaviours. On reviewing their individual visual displays, each principal endorsed not only the accuracy but also the ease with which each display could be understood. Interestingly, these principals found the conversation with the researcher about the relationship between personal values and leadership behaviour through the guided reflective and introspective interview process was more satisfying than the tangible insights offered by the visual displays.

**Research Question 4: Does an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values have the potential to bring about values-led principalship?**

Finally, the data showed that enhanced self-knowledge of personal values alone, was not likely to cause any change to leadership behaviours. To a person, the principals in this study valued the opportunity to learn about their personal values. There was clear recognition of new knowledge about their inner Self, and how their values and beliefs are influencing their leadership behaviour, but there was not the sense that this increased self-knowledge was going to immediately initiate a change in their leadership behaviours. The perceived benefits gained from an increased self-knowledge of their beliefs and values were mainly being able to clarify, substantiate,

and support the principal's individualistic leadership behaviour and provide him or her with renewed confidence and assurance.

This interpretation supports the warning in the literature against the assumption that an increased level of self-knowledge of personal values will automatically bring about a change in behaviour. Here it is claimed that personal values are formed from one's personal characteristics and one's personal life experiences (Hodgkinson, 1996). These personal values originate within one's very core, one's self-concept, and are formed within one's self-esteem and one's personal motives (Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002; Osborne, 1996). Moreover, these personal values are subliminal and affect all of one's behaviours: not just one's leadership behaviours (Hodgkinson, 1996). Hence, while increasing one's self-knowledge of personal values by overcoming their inherent subliminal nature does significantly enhance one's awareness and comprehension of one's practice, it does not bring about immediate change. For behavioural change to occur the particular value must be seen to be unsuitable from a holistic perspective in the life of the person. This understanding also points to the need for professional development opportunities for principals to move beyond a dominant focus on professional behaviour and to challenge principals to engage in activities that make explicit their inner Self of self-concept, self-esteem and motives as well as personal values.

## 8.6    CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STUDY

The purpose of this research study was to explore the concept of value-led principalship. This research provides an investigation of this concept of values-led principalship by inspecting how knowing one's personal values might help one to be led by these values and thereby, be able to act more effectively as a principal. In general, the findings from this research study suggest that values-led principalship is a simplistic conceptualisation that does not reflect the complexity of the whole Self. It not only overlooks the complexity of the process associated with personal values formation, but it also assumes a simplistic relationship between personal values and the principal's leadership behaviour. By not considering how personal values are formed, and the inner antecedents of personal values within the Self, any self-knowledge of one's personal values remains notional knowledge. Such notional self-

knowledge maintains the tacit, subliminal influence of personal values on behaviour. In this light, personal values are directing or driving behaviour, rather than leading behaviour, as their influence is hidden from conscious awareness and consideration.

Arguably, the principals in this research study were values-driven rather than values-led. The concept of values-led principalship assumes that the principal is consciously aware of the personal values that influence his or her leadership behaviour and deliberately adopts certain values because they are seen as providing desired purpose and direction to their actions. On the other hand, values-driven principalship suggests that personal values remain subliminal and notional dimensions of the inner Self and the relationship between these personal values and leadership behaviour remains unexplored and unchallenged. With knowledge of the inner Self, including the dimensions of personal beliefs and values as well as self-esteem, self-concept and motives, these principals would be in a better position to critique the relationship between their personal values and leadership behaviours. Moreover, they perhaps would be more able to change their personal values in order to bring about desired behavioural changes.

This distinction between values-driven and values-led principalship suggests that a more comprehensive and holistic self-knowledge of the inner Self is necessary in order to enable values-led principalship. Hence, it is argued that the worthiness of promoting the concept of values-led principalship should be moderated within contemporary educational leadership theory until such time that further research can offer greater insight into how personal values, or their antecedents of self-concept, self-esteem and motives, can be used to lead principalship behaviour.

## 8.7    PROPOSITIONS RESULTING FROM THIS STUDY

As a pragmatic constructivist study, this research has examined the concept of values-led principalship both specifically and generally so as to increase knowledge and theoretical understandings about this concept. In particular, this research study had an intrinsic value in that it sought to understand values-led principalship from the perspective of the five participating principals.  In addition there was an instrumental value in seeking to clarify the general meaning of this concept of values-led

principalship. From this instrumental perspective, this research study raised issues in respect to the professional development of principals and as a consequence the following propositions are advanced:

1. The professional development of principals should prepare them to incorporate regular self-reflective and introspective practices.

This research study has highlighted the role that the inner dimensions of the Self play in influencing human behaviour. In the light of this understanding, it is also important to note that the literature (Cashman, 1998; McGraw, 2001) posits regular self-reflective and introspective practices as an essential way of explicating such subliminal phenomena of the inner Self. Hence, for principals to fully understand and appreciate all aspects of their educational leadership behaviour, they need to familiarise themselves with normally subliminal influences through regular self-reflective and introspective practices. However, as this research study has found, regular self-reflective and introspective practices are not a natural practice for the principals in this study. It is therefore proposed that formal and informal professional development opportunities be provided to support principals in regular self-reflective and introspective practices.

2. The professional development of principals should challenge them to develop a rich knowledge of their inner Self.

The model of the Self developed in Chapter 3 in response to the insights provided by the literature, promoted the understanding that there are a number of important but often subliminal dimensions of the Self that are influencing behaviour. For principals wanting to be fully cognisant of all aspects of their leadership behaviour in order to ensure relevance and suitability, it would seem essential that they are able to gain knowledge about their inner Self. In particular, the subliminal dimensions of personal beliefs and values as well as self-concept, self-esteem, and motives are said to influence behaviour. Hence professional development opportunities should support principals to reflect on the relationship between their leadership behaviour and the various subliminal dimensions of the inner Self. As this research study has shown, a personalised visual display of the relationship between leadership behaviour and the

dimensions of the inner Self can be a useful 'tool' in assisting principals in their professional learning.

3. The professional development of principals should assist them to appreciate how their whole life experience is woven into their leadership behaviour.

Data gathered during the course of this research study supports the understanding presented in the literature that personal values are formed uncritically during important life experiences. Furthermore, such personal values then become influential phenomena in all aspects of the person's life. Once adopted, the influence of a personal value is not confined to the specific context in which it is adopted but rather, is a source of potential influence in all areas of the person's life. In particular, these personal values directly influence the person's beliefs and behaviours. In this way, the principal's whole life experiences are integrally woven into their principalship behaviour. Their whole life experiences are potential sources of personal values, which affect beliefs, and in turn, behaviours. Hence, the professional development of principals should assist them to appreciate this understanding of how their whole life experience is woven into their principalship behaviour. This understanding enables the principal to develop deeper self-knowledge of their leadership behaviours. As this study has found, self-knowledge provides the principal with increased self-confidence and certainty about their personal style of leadership.

4. Contemporary principals require formal professional mentoring programmes to assist them to more truly clarify and understand the antecedents of their leadership behaviours.

The literature (Jopling, 2000; Osborne, 1996) provides the understanding that the gaining of self-knowledge is not a natural or an easy task. Moreover, authentic self-knowledge depends upon an avoidance of being false to one's real Self and this requires deep personal honesty and arduous effort. These perceptions found support in this research study. Hence, the participating principals acknowledged the important role of the researcher in providing a process for self-reflection and introspection upon their leadership behaviour and its antecedents. Findings within this research study showed that the researcher played an important role in helping the principals to clarify

important elements of their Self and, thereby, increased their self-knowledge. In particular, the researcher, as mentor, guided the principal's reflections by asking questions that directed the principal towards deeper knowledge of the formation and specific characteristics of their leadership behaviours. Given that this process was of value to all of the principals in this study, it is proposed that formal mentoring programmes should be provided to assist all principals to more truly clarify and understand the antecedents of their leadership behaviours

## 8.8    LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Although this study was focused on values-led principalship, it is acknowledged that it was limited in its scope, as it focused on principals within the systemic Catholic secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Furthermore, it concentrated its attention on only five of these principals in its search for a more informed and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between personal values and educational leadership behaviour. However, it is argued that the strategy of limiting the sample to only five principals made the study more manageable and allowed for information-rich cases to be explored (Merriam, 1998). The small purposeful sample (Patton, 1990) offered an effective means to understand better the complex inter-relationship between the principal's personal values and his or her leadership behaviour. In this way, this research aimed to reconstruct the particular depth of personal beliefs, values, and meanings that individual principals brought to their cognitive processes that were at the heart of their leadership behaviour. Hence, the findings presented are specific to the situations described herein and do not claim to represent the whole population. Therefore, this research seeks its important response from within those who read it. Its external validity relies upon the "reader user generalizability" (Merriam, 1998, p. 211) through "case to case transfer" (Firestone, 1993, p. 16).

In addition, this research study recognises the inherent limitations of a constructivist research paradigm and the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). This research study aimed to understand values-led principalship so as to achieve a more informed and sophisticated reconstruction of this phenomenon. The 'product' of this research was judged according to quality criteria of authenticity

and trustworthiness. Thus positioned this study avoids a positivist approach. It does not seek to explain reality through the accumulation of objective knowledge and produce verified hypotheses established as facts or laws. There is no attempt to discern what was generally true about the leadership behaviour of the principal and a deliberate decision was made not to collect data to validate the accuracy of the participant's perceptions. In addition, the conventional, positivist benchmarks of rigour such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity have not been applied. Likewise this research study avoids taking a critical stance; it does not seek to critique and transform oppressive structures through the accumulation of structural and historical insights. Thus this study did not set out to judge the nature of the principal's leadership but rather to richly describe it. It was more relevant within the purpose of this research to focus on explicating the principal's way of knowing about his or her leadership behaviour (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Groundswater-Smith, 1998) without fear of judgement and contradiction. Thus the emphasis was on the principal's thinking behind their leadership behaviour and not on specifically observing, categorizing, and judging the behaviour, itself.

A limitation in the research study methodology was its use of the Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes and Posner, 2001). Inherent within the application of the Leadership Practices Inventory is the authors' assumption that all forms of leadership depend on five particular patterns of behaviour: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modelling the way, and encouraging the heart. Hence, this assumption defines a certain style of leadership and as such prescribes the behaviours to be reported on by the participating principals. It may well overlook other forms of acceptable leadership behaviour. While acknowledging this limitation in the use of the Leadership Practices Inventory, it is argued that this did not have a detrimental affect on the data gathered for three reasons. Firstly, the use of the Leadership Practices Inventory was merely to establish some relevant key leadership behaviours with each principal. It was not intended that this Inventory would clarify each principal's every key leadership behaviour. Secondly, the appropriateness of the key leadership behaviours nominated by the Leadership Practices Inventory was verified with the respective principal. Furthermore, principals were provided with the opportunity to alter the behaviour descriptor so that it more suitably reflected his or her understanding of their leadership behaviour. Thirdly, this research study only set

out to clarify and describe the relationship between some, not all, of each principal's leadership behaviours and their personal values. To this end, the Leadership Practices Inventory provided credible data in relation to some of each principal's leadership behaviours. This research study does not seek to claim that the key leadership behaviours described by the Leadership Practices Inventory for each principal are their only key leadership behaviours and accepts that other forms of key leadership behaviours might have existed. However, based on the international credibility of the Leadership Practices Inventory, it is claimed that the two highest rated ley leadership behaviours, at least, are worthy of consideration in this research study.

Another limitation of this research was that it was constrained by the self-interest of the researcher. In this sense, this research had a self-indulgent (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992) quality as the topic and methodology were selected in response to the researcher's own professional biases, experiences, perceptions and working context. More particularly, this study involved principals who were colleagues and professional friends of the researcher. While this research into values-led principalship did occur within this relatively intimate and small group, the paramount feature of this study, that it was to be of mutual benefit for both the researcher and the participating principal, was always maintained. Even though the intensity of the research methodology was high, given the closeness of the existing personal relationship between all participants and the researcher, and the personal nature of the inquiry, the commitment to progressive and accurate reconstruction of the formation of personal values, and their relationship to the principal's leadership behaviour, ensured that the participant's perceptions and person were always treated with integrity.

Also, it must be noted that data presented in the interviews were edited to keep to the topic of the research. Consequently, this study presented case stories that did not tell as full and comprehensive a story as was revealed to the researcher. Phenomena related to the leadership behaviour of the principal beyond the personal beliefs, values, meanings and behaviour outside of the boundaries of the case, were not explored. The fact that the discussion about the principal's personal values was specifically related to the acknowledged important leadership behaviour under review, greatly assisted in this endeavour. This meant that concerns impacting on the principal

from sources other than his or her leadership role within the particular school were justifiably ignored.

In conclusion, it is emphasised that the findings contained within this study represent the participating principals' perceptions as well as those of the researcher. While acknowledging these research delimitations, this study still claims to represent a worthwhile attempt to promote a deeper appreciation of values-led principalship by its ability to openly examine the important relationship between a principal's personal values and his or her leadership behaviour.

## 8.9    RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As a review of the literature reveals, little research has been conducted into the inner, subliminal dimensions of the Self and, in particular, of values. Although this study sought to contribute towards redressing this imbalance, further research is necessary. It is argued that the benefits gained from this particular research into the concept of values-led principalship would be greatly complimented by additional research. Hence, future research studies in educational leadership should:

a)    Investigate the concept of values-led principalship in other contexts.

This research study, as a case study, was limited in scope, as it focused on five principals within the systemic Catholic secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Additional replication studies should be conducted with principals in other Catholic schools, particularly primary schools.  Another useful direction of research would be to conduct this present study with principals in different types of schools, including Australian and international schools. Arguably, it would appear worthwhile to diversify the application of this visual display not only to the role of the principal beyond secondary schools and outside of the Brisbane Catholic Education system, but also to other forms of leadership too.

b)    Progressively examine all of the inner dimensions of the Self that influences principalship behaviour.

This research study has shown how the inner dimensions of personal values and beliefs were influencing educational leadership behaviour of each of the participating principals. However, there are strong claims in the literature that other dimensions of the inner Self can also influence the principal's behaviour. These dimensions of the inner Self include motives, self-esteem, and self-concept. Given the strength of this claim in the literature, it seems that the nature of the influence of each of these dimensions on principalship warrants further close examination through research.

c)    Enhancing the visual display

This study has found that one's motives, self-esteem, and self-concept are the antecedents of personal values. Hence, it would be beneficial for future research to enhance the visual display to include motives, self-esteem, and self-concept. Arguably, such a refinement would gain more clarity about one's values and one's Self, and would more closely align the principal's leadership behaviours to the unique sense of who they are, what they feel about their Self, and what they value and want to achieve. By enhancing the visual display to incorporate these antecedents of personal values, it would seem likely that the visual display would be more able to assist in the self-critiquing processes that lie at the heart of values-led principalship.

d)    Investigate the application of the visual display to roles other than the principal.

In this present research study, the processes used to create the visual display provided direction and purpose to the important, but often overlooked, process of self-reflection. In particular, the processes used to create this visual display provided a clear but flexible way to explore, investigate, inspect, and interpret both observable practices and pivotal personal phenomena that is usually subliminal, notional and unaccountable. Hence, further research could determine the general suitability of this visual display formation process not only as a guiding structure for self-reflection, but also as a template for professional mentoring.

## 8.10    CONCLUSION

The findings from this study suggest that values-led principalship is a simplistic conceptualisation that does not reflect the complexity of the whole Self. It not only overlooks the complexity of the processes associated with personal values formation but it also assumes a simplistic relationship between personal values and the principal's leadership behaviour. By not considering how personal values are formed, and the inner antecedents of personal values within the Self, any self-knowledge of one's personal values remains notional. Such notional self-knowledge maintains the tacit, subliminal influence of personal values on behaviour. In this light, personal values are directing or driving behaviour, rather than leading behaviour, as their influence is hidden from conscious awareness and consideration. Arguably, the principals were being values-driven rather than values-led. Values-led principalship, as opposed to values-driven principalship, requires reflection upon the inner antecedents of personal values. If the principals were to have self-knowledge of self-concept, self-esteem, and motives, then they would be in a better position to critique their Self, including their personal values and behaviours. Moreover, they would be more able to change their personal values in order to bring about desired behavioural changes. This understanding suggests that a more comprehensive and holistic self-knowledge of the inner Self would enable values-led principalship.

Furthermore, these findings identify the need for professional development opportunities for principals to move beyond a dominant focus on professional behaviour and to challenge principals to engage in self-reflection. It supports the view that principals need help and guidance in the essential area of making explicit their inner Self, so that they can more fully critique the antecedents of their own leadership behaviour. These findings promote the professional development of principals that focuses on reviewing the formation of their inner Self over a lifetime. This professional development should challenge individuals to achieve a greater congruence amongst their inner Self, their personal values, and their leadership behaviour. The findings of this research study suggest that it is only through holistic professional development that values-led principalship could be achieved.

While this research acknowledges that many questions remain unanswered, this study does shed light on the concept of values-led principalship and suggests a way forward in respect to the professional development of principals. However, to borrow Peshkin's words, this study is offered on the understanding that:

> When I disclose what I have seen, my results [will] invite other researchers to look where I did and to see what I saw. My ideas are candidates for others to entertain, not necessarily as truth, let alone the truth, but as positions about the nature and meaning of a phenomenon that may fit their sensibility and shape their thinking about their own inquiries. (Peshkin, 1985, p. 280)

# APPENDIX 1

# <u>**VALUES NOMINATION QUESTIONNAIRE**</u>

In the boxes below (and/or on the back of this sheet if necessary) try to nominate all of those values which you consider to be influential in guiding your thoughts and behaviours as a principal.

The number of boxes provided is only arbitrary so do not feel that you have to come up with this number of values or, on the other hand, limit yourself to only this number of values. The number of values that you wish to nominate is up to you.

| | | |
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# APPENDIX 2

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**JAMES M. KOUZES/BARRY Z. POSNER**

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# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

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# SELF

**Your Name:**_____

## INSTRUCTIONS

Write your name in the blank above. On the next two pages are thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each carefully. Then look at the rating scale and decide *how frequently you engage in the behavior* described.

Here's the rating scale that you'll be using:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 = Almost Never | 6 = Sometimes |
| 2 = Rarely | 7 = Fairly Often |
| 3 = Seldom | 8 = Usually |
| 4 = Once in a While | 9 = Very Frequently |
| 5 = Occasionally | 10 = Almost Always |

In selecting each response, please be realistic about the extent to which you *actually* engage in the behavior. Do *not* answer in terms of how you would like to see yourself or in terms of what you should be doing. Answer in terms of how you *typically* behave—on most days, on most projects, and with most people.

For each statement, decide on a rating and record it in the blank to the left of the statement. *Do not leave any blank incomplete.* Please remember that all statements are applicable. If you feel that any statement does not apply to you, in all likelihood it is because you do not frequently engage in the behavior. In this case, assign a rating of 3 or lower. When you have responded to all thirty statements, turn to the response sheet on page 4. *Make sure that you write your name on the response sheet in the blank marked "Your Name."* Transfer your responses and return the response sheet according to the instructions provided.

For future reference, keep the portion of your LPI-Self form that lists the thirty statements.

# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

## SELF

To what extent do you typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the number that best applies to each statement and *record it in the blank to the left of the statement*.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost Never | Rarely | Seldom | Once in a While | Occasionally | Sometimes | Fairly Often | Usually | Very Frequently | Almost Always |

_____ 1. I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.

_____ 2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.

_____ 3. I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.

_____ 4. I set a personal example of what I expect from others.

_____ 5. I praise people for a job well done.

_____ 6. I challenge people to try out new and innovative approaches to their work.

_____ 7. I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.

_____ 8. I actively listen to diverse points of view.

_____ 9. I spend time and energy on making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on.

_____ 10. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.

_____ 11. I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.

_____ 12. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.

_____ 13. I treat others with dignity and respect.

_____ 14. I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.

_____ 15. I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost Never | Rarely | Seldom | Once in a While | Occasionally | Sometimes | Fairly Often | Usually | Very Frequently | Almost Always |

_____ 16. I ask "What can we learn?" when things do not go as expected.

_____ 17. I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.

_____ 18. I support the decisions that people make on their own.

_____ 19. I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.

_____ 20. I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.

_____ 21. I experiment and take risks even when there is a chance of failure.

_____ 22. I am contagiously enthusiastic and positive about future possibilities.

_____ 23. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.

_____ 24. I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.

_____ 25. I find ways to celebrate accomplishments.

_____ 26. I take the initiative to overcome obstacles even when outcomes are uncertain.

_____ 27. I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.

_____ 28. I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.

_____ 29. I make progress toward goals one step at a time.

_____ 30. I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

_Now turn to the response sheet and follow the instructions for transferring your responses._

# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY [LPI]

## SELF

### RESPONSE SHEET

Your Name:_____

**Instructions:** Write your name in the blank above. Separate this response sheet from the rest of the LPI by tearing along the perforated line. Transfer the ratings for the statements to the blanks provided *on this sheet.* Remember to assign a rating of 3 or less for any statement you feel you do not have enough information to adequately assess. Please notice that the numbers of the statements on this sheet are listed from *left to right.*

After you have transferred all ratings, return the form according to the "Important Further Instructions" below.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ | 3. _____ | 4. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 7. _____ | 8. _____ | 9. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 12. _____ | 13. _____ | 14. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 16. _____ | 17. _____ | 18. _____ | 19. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 21. _____ | 22. _____ | 23. _____ | 24. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 26. _____ | 27. _____ | 28. _____ | 29. _____ | 30. _____ |

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### Important Further Instructions

After completing this response sheet, return it to:

_____

_____

_____

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# APPENDIX 3

# VALUES SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

**PART A:** Read through the list of value words/phrases below and circle only those values that you believe are important influences upon you in your role as a principal.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accepting Others | Credibility | Imagination | Peace |
| Accountability | Curiosity | Improvement | Quality |
| Adaptability | Dedication | Inclusiveness | Recognition |
| Adaptable | Deference | Independence | Reliability |
| Adventurous | Delight | Influential | Respect |
| Affirmation | Dependable | Initiative | Responsibility |
| Affirming | Dependency | Innovation | Responsible |
| Alignment | Dependent | Integrity | Results |
| Altruism | Developing Others | Intelligence | Risk-taking |
| Approval | Dignity | Interdependence | Routine |
| Authenticity | Diligent | Interdependent | Security |
| Authority | Diplomacy | Intuition | Self-Control |
| Balance | Discerning | Involvement | Self-Discipline |
| Belonging | Discretion | Justice | Self-Interest |
| Candour | Diversity | Kindness | Seniority |
| Caring | Effectiveness | Law-Abiding | Service |
| Catholic | Efficiency | Love | Sincerity |
| Caution | Empowering | Loyalty | Situational ethics |
| Christian | Empowerment | Mentoring | Speed |
| Cohesiveness | Enthusiasm | Merit | Spirituality |
| Collaboration | Equality | Mutual Interests | Spontaneity |
| Comfort | Ethical | Manipulation | Stability |
| Commitment | Evangelizing | Material Possessions | Status |
| Community | Excellence | Morality | Status Quo |
| Community Involvement | Expediency | Networking | Subservient |
| Community Orientation | Faith | Perseverance | Successful |
| Community Support | Fellowship | Politeness | Support |
| Companionship | Flexibility | Popularity | Supportive |
| Compassion | Flexible | Prestige | Synergism |
| Competition | Freedom | Productivity | Tact |
| Compliant | Friendship | Progress | Teamwork |
| Concern for Others | Fulfilment | Obedience | Territory |
| Confident | Generosity | Obedient | Tolerance |
| Confidentiality | Genuiness | Openness | Tradition |
| Congruence | Giving | Opportunity | Trust |
| Consideration | Glory | Optimism | Trusted |
| Consistency | Hardworking | Order | Trustworthy |
| Control | Harmony | Organizational Orientation | Truth |
| Cooperation | Health | Originality | Winning |
| Courage | Honesty | Ownership | Wisdom |
| Courtesy | Honour | Participation | Witness to Faith |
| Creativity | Humility | Partnering | |
| Credentials | Humour | Patience | |

**PART B:** In the space provided below, record any values that you believe are important influences on you in your role as a principal but were omitted from the list above.

_____

_____

_____

# APPENDIX 4

# GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE
# SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

## FIRST INTERVIEW:

1. What were your thoughts/feelings/reactions to completing the Values Nomination Form?

2. What were your thoughts/feelings/reactions to completing the Values Selection Form?

3. Which was your preferred way for clarifying your personal values? Why?

4. Having reviewed the feedback from the LPI results, do you believe that it has captured your preferred principalship behaviours?

4. If you were to describe your key leadership behaviours to another person, how would you describe them as distinct from the LPI descriptor?

5. Can you describe in some detail a particular school situation that has occurred that highlights your commitment to this particular leadership behaviour?

6. Why is this behaviour important to you?

7. What do you believe you achieve by placing importance on acting in this way?

8. Can you recall why this type of behaviour has become so important to you?

9. Can you describe how this behaviour has become an important part of your principalship?

10. Can you describe other times in your life when this same behaviour guided your actions?

11. Please describe in some detail a specific time in your principalship when you tangibly sensed that you were really achieving something of great importance.

12. Please describe in some detail a specific time in your principalship when you tangibly sensed that you were not achieving the outcome that you desired.

13. When you are confronted with a perplexing and complex situation as a principal, are you guided towards finding a solution by (a) what is important to you, (b) what is important to your staff, or (c) what the Catholic Education Office would want you to do? Why? Can you describe a situation in which these 3 sources of expectations were upon you and indicate how you resolved the situation?

## FINAL INTERVIEW:

1. Is the visual display understandable? Does it make sense? Is it logical?

2. Is the visual display accurate? Has the data been interpreted accurately? Is there anything that should be changed, swapped, or deleted?

3. Is the visual display of any benefit?

4. Has the research process been of any personal benefit?

5. What have you learnt about yourself, as a principal, from this study?

6. Is this new knowledge likely to change your educational leadership behaviour?

7. Should other principals have the opportunity to participate in this process?

8. Should any part of the process be changed?

# APPENDIX 5

# ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

## ✚ ACU National

Human Research Ethics Committee
Expedited Review
Approval Form

| Principal Investigator/Supervisor: Dr. Gayle Spry | Campus: McAuley |
|---|---|
| Co-Investigators: | Campus: |
| Student Researcher: Mr Christopher Branson | Campus: McAuley |

**Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:**
The Principal's Self-knowledge of their Values: the inner world of educational leadership.

**for the period:**

**Human Research Ethics Committee Register Number:** Q2001.02.15

subject to the following **standard** conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (1999):

(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;

and subject to the following **special** conditions being met, as stipulated by the Human Research Ethics Committee:

1.0 *** Section 3 (B.2) is to be retyped and resubmitted. The options available require that Dr.Spry be listed first and designated Supervisor. Then Mr Branson can be listed correctly as Student Researcher
2.0*** The conflict between D.1.2 (6 participants) and D.1.5 (26) is to be resolved. It appears that .1.2 should be 26 with age ranges revised if needed.
3.0 *** The original materials (survey forms, audiotapes) are to be stored on ACU premises even during the study. Mr Branson is entitled to generate copies and store these (securely) at another location. (Note that access to the materials may be required by the HREC for audit purposes, thus on-site storage is mandated.)
4.0 *** The questionnaires and their data appear only in E.1.1. Their recording would be expected to generate additional forms of data such as computer files. The storage and disposal of these data should be specified.
5.0 *** Section F.1. The participating principals will not be anonymous. Their names and many other details will be known to the researcher during the research process as is necessarily the case with interviews.
6.0 *** Section G should be completed in more detail. In particular, the response given to G.2 is not clear. It would appear to be an undertaking that no detail or combination of details will be reported that would allow an individual to be identified
7.0 *** The private telephone number and private address of the student researcher are not to appear in the letter.

(Expedited Review Approval.dot @ 27.06.2002)                                         Page 1 of 3

8.0 *** D.4.2 The HREC is to be provided with a copy of the consent letter from the Brisbane Catholic Education Office when this is obtained.

9.0 *** D.5.1 The required answer to this section is "YES" since the participants will be known to the researcher in the role of interviewer. .

10.0 *** D.5.1 A consent form has been provided. It is required that this be produced in duplicate form, one labeled as "Respondent's Copy" and the other labeled "Researcher's Copy".


**The Principal Investigator / Supervisor is requested to note the following comments:**

1.0 D.3.1 Permission will be sought (not "sort") from the Director

2.0 The information letter is unusually long, filling two pages even with the selection of a reduced font size. It appears to be wordy, and the researcher and supervisor are encouraged to review the letter. (Note that the student's home address and home phone number are to be removed.)

3.0 It is to be noted that there is no connection between the mandatory or other status of the participation and anonymity.

4.0 The information letter needs editing, particularly in regard to confidentiality a suggested wording would be:Confidentiality will be maintained during the study and in any report of the study. All participants will be given a code and names will not be retained with the data. Individual participants will not be identifiable in any reports of the study as only aggregated data will be reported (or as all identifying information will be reomoved from any report).

5.0 Note that letter and consent forms should be on letterhead (not just ACU logo).

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: ...................................

(Chair, Expedited Review Panel, HREC)

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**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
OR BY THE SUPERVISOR AND STUDENT RESEARCHER**

The Principal Investigator, or the Supervisor and Student Researcher, are to sign, date and return this form to the local Research Services Officer. Evidence of compliance with any special conditions set by the HREC should be provided when the form is returned. Please note that data-collection must not commence until the stipulated special conditions have been met.

The date when I/we expect to commence contact with human participants or access their records is:
...7/.0/.02...

I/We hereby declare that I/We am/are aware of the principles and requirements governing research involving human participants, as expressed in the Human Research Ethics Committee's *Guidelines*, and I/We agree to the standard and special conditions (if applicable) stated above.
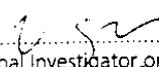
Signed: ...................................................................    Date: ..11. 7 02.
[Principal Investigator or Supervisor]
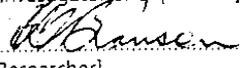
Signed: ...................................................................    Date: 17 - 01 - 02
[Student Researcher]

---

# APPENDIX 6
# LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Australian Catholic University

## INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** The Principal's Self-Knowledge of their Values : the inner world of educational leadership.

**NAME OF STAFF SUPERVISOR :**        Dr Gayle SPRY

**NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER :**        Mr Chris BRANSON

**NAME OF PROGRAMME IN WHICH ENROLLED:**    Doctor of Philosophy

The aim of this research is to explore the concept of the Principal's self-knowledge of their personal values as a means of further understanding leadership behaviour. This research will endeavour to make more explicit the tacit components of self-knowledge that continually impact upon the leadership actions of principals. Contemporary literature in the field of educational administration suggests that principals need to be inward as well as outward looking. Self-knowledge, as a primary means of looking inward, is identified as a key dimension of the role of today's school principal. This research will explore the nature of the principal's self-knowledge.

It is anticipated that the type of data gathering methods to be used in this particular research would cause minimal concern for those principals willing to participate. First, identifying personal details are not required within the data. Secondly, the study attempts to surface the individual principal's self-knowledge of their values and will not make any comparative evaluation of this data. However, it should be noted that any learnings about self-knowledge of personal values within principals gained form this research could be used in future publications or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify you in any way.

The key issues for consideration by potential participants would revolve around being willing to:
      (i)  have some colleagues complete a questionnaire about your leadership; and
     (ii)  be interviewed about your personal beliefs, attitudes, values and motivations.

The research methods within this project will involve two components. First, each participating principal will be asked to complete a questionnaire about how they see themselves in their role as a principal. It is in this phase that other colleagues would be invited to contribute their observations by completing a similar questionnaire. The questionnaire may take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The second component of the project involves an open-ended interview that would review outcomes from these questionnaires and then explore the principal's self-knowledge of their beliefs and values. This would be held at a time and place convenient to the participating principal and could take up to 90 minutes to complete. Subsequent understandings gained from these data gathering techniques would be supplied back to the participant to ensure its rightness.

This study supports the recognition of a personal and instinctive dimension to leadership practice. The view of leadership proffered in this research would promote the acceptance that leaders need to have the freedom and insight to be able to develop their own unique and specific style of leadership based upon an explicit understanding of their self through an enhanced knowledge of their own values.

Furthermore, such leaders would be more readily able to engage in specific professional development activities that are uniquely adapted to their own purposes and to the role that they especially require.

This letter not only attempts to make you aware of the nature of this research project but also seeks to confirm your personal participation. Should you still wish to participate then it is necessary for you to complete the attached consent form. Be assured that you are free to refuse consent altogether without having to justify your decision, or you are able to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in the study at any time without giving a reason.

If you require further information about this research please contact the Research Supervisor, Dr Gayle Spry, whose contact details are provided below.

| DETAILS | SUPERVISOR |
|---|---|
| NAME | Dr Gayle SPRY |
| ADDRESS | Australian Catholic University McAuley Campus PO Box 247 EVERTON PARK QLD 4053 |
| TELEPHONE NUMBER | 07 3855 7301 |

At the conclusion of this research project, all outcomes of the study will be shared with participants in the first instance. This will assist in achieving the aim of this study of providing professional development possibilities for the participant.

Please note that this study has been fully 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 Supervisor or Student Researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the following address. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome of this investigation.

Chair, HREC
C/o Research Services
Australian Catholic University
PO Box 247
EVERTON PARK QLD 4053
Tel: 07 3855 7294
Fax: 07 3855 7328

If you agree to participate in this project, you should sign the Consent Form and return it to the Student Researcher.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Gayle SPRY                    Mr Chris BRANSON
RESEARCH SUPERVISOR              STUDENT RESEARCHER

# APPENDIX 7
# CONSENT FORM

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

## CONSENT FORM

**TITLE OF PROJECT:** The Principal's Self-Knowledge of their Values : the inner world of educational leadership.

**NAME OF STAFF SUPERVISOR :** Dr Gayle SPRY

**NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER :** Mr Chris BRANSON

I ............................................... have read and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw at any time. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: ................................................................................................
(block letters)

SIGNATURE ...................................................... DATE ..................................

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: ...................................................................

DATE:................................................

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: ....................................................................

DATE:................................................

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