A CASE STUDY OF THE INDUCTION EXPERIENCE OF NEW TEACHERS IN ONE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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DECLARATION

I declare that this project is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

R.L. Thornton

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ABSTRACT

Many principals, as leaders in Catholic schools today, are concerned with building a strong school culture based on the common belief of Jesus Christ. Induction of new teachers into the school influences this culture as they bring with them a diversity of beliefs, experience, attitude, and professional maturity. The challenge principals, as leaders, face is continually renewing the shared vision of the community, and maintaining a balance between the corporate needs and those of individuals.

The literature suggests that in building a strong culture of a school, a principal must engage in leadership which empowers others to see meaning in what they do, and share in the vision of the community. Building a strong school culture with a shared vision, requires a commitment to renewal. Induction, as an interrelated component of staff development, provides an opportunity for renewal of both school and individual goals.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experience of a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. From this experience, the researcher endeavoured to develop a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of induction, which in turn, would inform the formulation of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs.

A process of reflective deliberation (Bonser & Grundy, 1988) has enabled a rich picture to be gathered, as practitioners reflected on their recent experience of induction within one Catholic primary school. This methodology of action research, with its "moments" of planning, acting, and reflecting, was most suitable for involving practitioners in bringing about change.

The research highlights some key insights into what are considered as important issues to focus on during induction. They are: telling the story of a culture rooted in beliefs and values; creating a relational climate; and professional development which recognises, cultivates, and respects differing values. Recommendations made by participants became guiding principles for the planning of future induction programs in the school, and these strengthened the argument of the need for openness to differences rather than the urge towards sameness (Nicholson, 1991).

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CHAPTER 1   THE RESEARCH DEFINED

1.1 The General Research Problem

The importance of induction as part of professional development is recognised

within education (Spencer, 1988; Day, 1994). However, the terms induction,

professional development, and staff development are widely and loosely used in

education arenas today, and can be used to describe various aspects of the

development of a person within an organisation. Professional development is

used interchangeably with staff development, and for the purpose of this paper

will include what is termed staff development. Staff development is then inclusive

of induction.

An initial reading in the area of staff development identifies two polarised

positions that describe the goals of professional education.

> On one hand, there is education for development, creativity,
> invention, co-operation, democracy, participation, self-development,
> the search for significant values, freedom of expression for
> individuals and groups, the right of everyone to aesthetic experience,
> the satisfaction of needs, both essential and non-essential. On the
> other hand, education is an instrument of oppression, control,
> segregation, intolerance, to a greater or lesser extent overt racism,
> boredom, bureaucratisation, social reproduction, the triumph of
> platitudes, moralism, the reification of significant values. (Gelpi in
> Brennan, 1990, p.30)

While the first of these positions favours individual and group development, the

second suggests organisational or systemic growth at the expense of individuals

and groups. At the outset of this study, the researcher was interested in the

various stances that leaders within Catholic schools could adopt in relation to these conflicting positions. Post-modern understandings of the Catholic school as a "community of difference" (Nicholson, 1991) seemed to offer a way forward. Here it is proposed that educational institutions are framed as communities in which heterogeneity is celebrated within a framework of shared values. A community of difference balances respect for the individual with the need for communal and organisational goals.

1.2 The Particular Problem

This openness to differences was of interest to the researcher, as principal of a Catholic school in its founding years. At the outset of the study, I was influenced by the image of "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994), and had a sense of stewardship in building a strong school culture. In this view the leader articulates and expands the vision of the community. At the same time, I was concerned that a strong school culture should not suppress individual differences and growth.

The problem which initiated this study emerged from myself, as principal, having a general unease (Patching, 1990) about our induction program. It was of concern that the principal's understanding of the communal vision is imposed on new staff members of the school during induction, and the newest members of the school are not heard, nor given a chance to influence this vision. This could be represented by the analogy of the round peg fitting into the square hole - the staff member fitting into the already established school culture.

Here there was a situation where it was felt improvement could be made to the induction of new staff into the school, without being entirely clear how (Patching, 1990). The problem can be expressed as the desire to fulfill both school/organisational and individual/group needs. In other words, there was a concern that a formal induction program would empower others to live out their sense of purpose and vision (Ridden, 1992), while endeavouring to establish an orderly climate, maintain curriculum related to school goals, and monitor and improve school performance.

1.3 The Context of the Study

The focus of this study is a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. This school opened in 1993 with five full time staff members. This included an official administration team of one full-time principal and a part-time assistant to the principal in religious education. It was the desire of the principal to be able to work with the staff as a team.

As noted above, the image of "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994) best describes the understanding of leadership held by the principal during the formative stages of the school. The leadership role was to "keep alive the stories" (Treston, 1994, p.11), by articulating and expanding the vision of the community. While this still remains vital in the culture of our school, it has become more challenging as the community has grown and changed, and staff and student numbers have increased and become more diverse.

At the time of the study, staff ranged in age, experience, and expertise, and therefore have brought individual wisdom and needs to a beginning school. Staff are all baptised Catholics, espouse Catholic beliefs, and come from background experiences of basic Catholic Faith traditions. The growth in number and diversity of staff has also brought the need to further explore a shared vision upon which goals will be set. It was considered of importance to lead individuals to give meaning to what they were doing as they worked to achieve school goals.

The need for a well-planned induction program in the foundational years of this Catholic school was considered important, as the school community built its own culture. Staff have come for various reasons and brought with them their individual skills, attitudes, knowledge, and experience. These qualities, influenced by their professional maturity and beliefs, had the potential to contribute to the culture and vision of the school. Each staff member needed to see some meaning in what they were doing, whilst contributing to the development of an authentic ethos within this Catholic school.

1.4 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experience of a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. From this experience, the researcher endeavoured to develop a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of induction, which in turn, would inform the formulation of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs.

The study aims:

1. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help participants to achieve a greater awareness of the unique culture of the school.

2. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help to meet the individual needs of participants.

3. To identify elements within a formal induction program that facilitate renewal by challenging both the individual's and school's vision, values and experience.

4. To develop a set of guiding principles for future induction programs in the school.

These aims led the researcher to identify three pertinent research questions:

* What elements in a formal induction program contribute to the development of a unique culture and a communal school vision?

* In what ways are an individual's personal and professional needs able to be met within a formal induction program?

* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant since it seeks to contribute to the understanding of how a formal induction program may contribute to both individual and school development. As discussed in section 1.1, theorists have offered conflicting views of staff development. Post-modernist writers (Nicholson, 1991) have suggested the community of difference as a way forward, with individual/group development being balanced with school/organisation goals. However, practical accounts of just how to achieve this balance in a formal induction program are non-existent. This study hoped to fill this gap by providing a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of a formal induction program as it was experienced in one Catholic primary school. While the findings of this study will inform future induction programs in this school, it is also expected that this understanding will assist others in the planning of similar staff development activities.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in that it examines the induction program of only one Catholic school, and the time for that study is over a short term of nine months. The writer, as participant observer, has carried out the study in the school of which she is principal, and it does not include the perceptions of other than new staff members. The study involves only a small number of staff, all of whom are teaching staff.

1.7 The Design of the Study

Within this study, the researcher adopted a form of case study, known as action research. A qualitative process of reflective deliberation (Bonser & Grundy, 1988) took participants through three action research cycles comprising of "moments" of data collection, reflective deliberation and planning. In cycle one, data production involved individual interviews, which were audio-taped and transcribed. The researcher and the interviewee then met to produce a jointly authored statement that encapsulated the interviewee's beliefs about the induction program. In cycle two, participants met with the researcher in a small group. At this meeting they shared their statements and established a set of guiding principles for future induction programs. In cycle three, an outside validator then met with the group of participants to allow them to modify, accept or change these principles. This assisted in ensuring the validity of the research.

1.8 Summation

The stewardship of a new Catholic primary school brings with it a responsibility for the lay principal to be "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994). This image of a communal vision causes concern for this principal/researcher. The concern is that if the principal's understanding of the communal vision is imposed on new staff members during the induction program, the value of staff heterogeneity could be suppressed (Nicholson, 1991). There would be little openness to differences, and the influence individuals have on the school culture could be suppressed.

It is this problem which led the researcher to a review of the literature in the areas of school culture, leadership, and staff development. This review is discussed in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the design of the study is outlined with a rationale for action research and reflective deliberation being provided. In Chapter 4, the story of this action research project is told from both the perspectives of the researcher and the participants. Finally, in Chapter 5, the findings of this project are discussed and recommendations for future induction programs proposed.

CHAPTER 2   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experience of a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. From this experience, the researcher endeavoured to develop a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of induction, which in turn, would inform the formulation of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs.

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* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

It is these research questions that led the researcher to a review of the literature. This literature review acts as a "vehicle for learning" (Bruce, 1994). By reading in the areas of school culture, leadership, and staff development, the researcher became aware of the complexity of staff induction and was able to propose a conceptual framework that explained the induction experience. In particular, this review of the literature clarified:

* the factors that contribute to building school culture, and ultimately school renewal;

* the contribution of the principal to the building of school culture;

* the need for principals to become transformational leaders; and

* the interrelated components of staff development, and the place of induction

within the experience of professional education.

2.2 Building a Catholic School Culture

The term "culture" has been variously described in educational literature. For the purpose of this study, school culture is defined as "the distinct way of life which gives meaning and order to the school community - the tangible, intangible and symbolic elements of organisational life" (Beare, Caldwell & Milliken, 1989, p.173-177). It is determined by the individual values and experiences which each person brings to it, the ways in which its people act and interact and the footprints they leave behind them.

> Culture is important, then, because it represents the values which bind people together. Put differently, it depicts the framework of beliefs which provides a normative basis for action and ultimately holds teachers professionally accountable for the many tasks involved in educating students. (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p.60)

For the culture to be strong and co-ordinated, Beare et al. (1989) states the need for close correspondence between the intangible and tangible elements, and between the shared vision and the actual manifestations and practices.

The principal plays an important role in facilitating the alignment of these tangible and intangible elements. Having a shared vision based on a common belief is important as it gives direction for a school. Effective principals will reflect on the nature of the task they perform, clarify their beliefs and views on educational

matters, and articulate their vision to the school community (Beare, et al., 1989). This vision does not come in an instant, but grows and changes over a significant period of time. It is built out of education, beliefs, experiences, and values (McCorley, 1988; Nicholson, 1991).

> The vision of the educational leader is rooted in his(sic) personal and professional beliefs - what he is - the things basic to this human life and educational vocation. (McCorley, 1988, p.46)

McCorley concurs with Sergiovanni & Starrett (1971), that leadership needs to give certainty and purpose to others who may have difficulty in articulating a goal or purpose for themselves, and that it would be difficult for the school leader to communicate the vision to others, if the leader was not clear herself/himself.

It is important that others have an understanding of where the principal is coming from, what they are doing, and where they are heading (McCorley, 1988). This helps build TRUST. A trustworthy leader, who builds a sense of trust in one's staff, will be more effective in getting the work done through a win-win agreement where both parties share a common vision based on agreed principles (Covey, 1992).

The key to a shared vision, and an effective organisation, is to get the value system aligned with correct principles (Covey, 1992). We must display trust and trustworthiness, and not stray from our true north if we are to be effective in achieving our desired purpose. The most fundamental source and root of all the

rest, as stated by Covey (1992, p.140), one that can be absolutely be relied on in any given set of circumstances, is our adherence to a set of core principles. The more we work at it the more we will achieve success.

> Principles are like a compass. A compass has a true north that is objective and external, that reflects natural laws or principles, as opposed to values that are subjective and internal. Because the compass represents the verities of life, we must develop our value system with deep respect for "true north" principles. (Covey, 1992, p.94)

Gospel values and the Catholic tradition provide "true north" principles for the Catholic School community. Its heritage is found in the life of Jesus (Everett, Sultmann, & Treston, 1990; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). This is the foundation for a Catholic School's values, beliefs, symbols, and shared meanings. This is what the Catholic School principal has stewardship of, and must work to maintain.

Maintaining a Catholic culture in a school challenges the lay principal to be the "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994) in its part of the evangelising mission of the Church. The Catholic school exists to present a vision of reality that has its origins in the gospel of Jesus.

> Its task is fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life: the first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught, in the light of the gospel; the second in the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian. (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, p.33)

The challenge to those who lead in a Catholic School of the nineties is to ensure that this vision is being lived out in the life of the school. The success of this is found not so much in the syllabus and methodology but is dependent upon the staff who work there, and their belief and commitment to it (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977).

Therefore any change that takes place in the school will be with and through staff, and relies on their commitment and motivation towards the vision. The role of the principal as leader is that he/she must clearly articulate this vision and create the conditions of trust, support, and openness for effective staff development processes (Fullan, 1991).

As well as a shared vision, the literature also suggests that strong school culture requires a deliberate commitment to school renewal. A renewal program is needed within a school to involve the school community in re-evaluating its performance, structures and processes so that there is a consonance between the core values and principles expressed in the vision and its actual practice (Spry & Sultmann, 1994). Documents produced following the Second Vatican Council challenged leaders in a Catholic school to live out the principles by which renewal can be made to meet the needs of contemporary men and women. They include being a faith community where gospel values are reflected in policies, structures and relationships; being focused on total development and the dignity of each person; being called to service for all; openness; truth; hopefulness; and authentic liberation (Dwyer, 1986).

2.3 Transformational Leadership

The literature highlights the role of the principal in achieving a shared vision and a strong school culture. Writers in the area of school leadership and management recommend that the principal adopt the style of transformational leadership. Over the last decade theorists (Burns, 1989; Leithwood, 1992) on effective leadership have placed an emphasis on relationships, values, and ethics. Transformational leadership is argued by many writers (McCorley, 1988; Ridden, 1992; Treston, 1992) to be effective leadership for bringing about school renewal, and shaping the culture in a school.

The leadership task in this situation requires effective principals to transform school goals into personal goals (Ridden, 1992), which will help staff to live out their dream (McCorley, 1988). This can not be done by force, but by motivation and empowering of others to want to renew and improve what they do. Effective leadership will be required to be relational, collective, and purposeful (Burns, 1989).

> The challenge for school executive staff is to demonstrate leadership which focuses on outcomes, culture building, participation and empowerment. (Ridden, 1992, p.16)

The goals pursued for the transformational leader can be found in the context of developing and maintaining a collaborative, professional school culture, fostering teacher development, and improving group problem-solving (Leithwood, 1992). The transformational leader "shapes the culture of the organisation, transforming

needs and wants into values and motivations" (Ridden, 1992, p.16).

Even though the transformational leader may clearly articulate the vision, it can not be only one person's dream (Pejza, 1994). Others must share this vision, if this vision is to become a reality. Transformational leadership facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment, and the restructuring of their systems for goal accomplishment (Leithwood, 1992, p.9).

Transformational leadership goes beyond and subsumes instructional leadership (Leithwood, 1992). It empowers others to live out their sense of purpose and vision (Ridden, 1992), at the same time endeavouring to establish an orderly environment, maintain curriculum related to school goals, and engages staff as a team to reflect on and improve instruction, and monitor school performance. If teachers and principal have a shared vision and commitment to school goals, along with trust and good communication (Spencer et al., 1989; Treston, 1994), they will display a positive attitude to the monitoring of school performance. This positive attitude will range from classroom practice and student outcomes to their own professional development needs and reviewing of school goals.

2.3.1 Leadership with Power to Facilitate Change

By virtue of their heirachial position, the principal has access to "top-down" power. This includes power to control the decision-making process (Leithwood, 1992), including power over the focus of professional development. The principal as a transformational leader, uses strategies for altering power relationships and

engages in ways of increasing staff participation in decision-making and enhancing opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership. "A leader's power is ultimately intended to nurture the power within others" (Treston, 1994, p.17). This form of power is consensual - a form of power manifested through other people and not over other people (Leithwood, 1992). This type of power helps individuals to see meaning in what they do (McCorley, 1988), and become more motivated to improve their practices. They are able to find an identifiable purpose in the shared vision, and display this in what they do and how they do it.

This form of power is also relational - a form of power that has the capacity to influence others and be influenced by them (Edwards, 1981). It is about being able to receive, take account of the feelings and values of another, and being able to include the other in our world. It is not power over, but power through others. It has its basis in trust (Covey, 1992). Relational power can not be the view of only one person, but be shared by all involved, leaders and followers (Burns, 1989). This power can come without authority, and leadership can occur within those not in an official position of authority . Leadership occurs in a social situation, and is not the same as holding an office or making decisions (Foster, 1986). It occurs within these social situations and through an interactive process between leaders and followers. It is inseparable from followers' needs and goals, and the leader is committed to the followers, empowering them and stirring their emotions (Ridden, 1992).

Transformational leaders do not use their power to meet the needs of followers, but go further in influencing and empowering them to meet their own needs.

> It is the ability of the leader to reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings, and inspires human intent that is the source of power. (Foster, 1986, p.180)

The use of interpersonal dynamics (Ridden, 1992) gives the leader influence rather than authority over followers. It aims at a win-win situation by involving others in decision-making (Treston, 1994), and giving them a sense of purpose and vision, and a feeling of self-worth. The leader, with authority or not, becomes a change agent, by empowering others to sense the need for change, and becoming actively involved in it.

As leaders are agents of change, administrators are called to be servants of the collective vision (Leithwood, 1992), and have an awareness and desire to empower others to take up a leadership role. For leadership is not a position but a role (Pejza, 1994; Ridden, 1992). It can spring from anywhere, and enables others and allows them in turn to become enablers. The leader is truly concerned with the development of followers, with the realisation of followers' potential to become leaders themselves (Leithwood, 1992). Servant leadership enables others to take the lead. It is serving for the sake of others. Servant leaders are understanding of the needs of others, and are trusted by them. People today ask for dignity, meaning and commitment. They do not want control but a dedication to developing people and maximum delegation. Ristau (1991) sees this image as a

web, with the leader in the centre of a dynamic system, reaching out to those around.

The challenge for the transformational leader is to see education as an education to wisdom, to an awareness of the great meanings and values nourishing the human spirit as they are embodied in this tradition (McMahon, Neidhart, Chapman, & Angus, 1990). This ethical leadership needs to take place in a wider context of culture and society, especially at those points where our way of life is calling itself into question.

The transformational leader is interested in "caring" relationships (Beck, 1992) based on morals and values, and the interaction between leader and followers has a specific purpose or end (Wainwright, 1990). This leader has a genuine unselfish interest in the future and well-being of others, while an autocratic leader may have the same interest for a different reason - pride, and exchange for compliance (Block, 1993).

Transformational leadership in professional development in a school is about more than improving student outcomes. It is about personal development of individuals as well. Awareness of personal needs and goals by a leader is a motivational force for staff which develops a positive self image (McQuillan, 1994). This leadership encourages, challenges, and allows others to grow and change as individuals. It is about affecting the attitudes and actions of others in a dynamic manner (Wainwright, 1990).

Growth and change is a gradual process which happens over time (Fullan et al., 1992). Principals with a stewardship of "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994), will build a culture with and through others. This stewardship is a way to use power to serve through the practice of partnership and empowerment (Block, 1993). Principals, as transformational leaders, can facilitate change so that service is the centrepoint, and ownership and responsibility are strongly felt among the staff as a team. A personal commitment to a common purpose (Flynn, 1993) by the leader builds a strong culture.

2.4 Staff Development

The term staff development is used widely and loosely in the educational arenas today, and can be used to describe various aspects of the development of a person within an organisation. However, it will be used here to describe and/or include the inservice, professional development, and school-based development of a staff member. The term will be used to include all of the above, in describing the holistic development of each member of staff. A member of staff includes both teaching and non-teaching personnel (Spencer, 1988).

Staff development provides opportunities for renewal. Renewal is change, and without change there is no leadership (Pejza, 1994). To bring about change in a school, an administrator can begin by focusing on staff development (Day, 1994).

Staff development impacts on school improvement as it provides new perspectives on technological, political and cultural aspects of change (Spry & Sultmann, 1994). The roles of both teachers and principal in the staff development process is changing, with teachers having a more active and accountable role (Seller, 1993). Leadership for staff development implies both the desire and the capacity to develop professional maturity in individual staff members, as well as in the corporate staff body.

> New images of leadership indicate that both teacher professionalism and the school culture require nurturing, development, and support from the principal. Professional development of staff is key to successfully meeting the requirements. (Seller, 1993, p.23)

A number of writers (Day, 1994; Walker, 1990) have discussed the changing role of the principal as leader in staff development. They describe the effectiveness of interdependent leadership roles and the need for interaction and involvement of staff in decision-making. The principal does not necessarily always have the leadership role, but interchanges as new leaders evolve through the process.

The principal's responsibility and accountability lies with providing an effective teaching-learning environment for students (Spencer, Nolan, Ford, & Rochester, 1989). However, this task is complex, and calls for the need of a well-planned, yet flexible staff development program, which caters for individual as well as school needs (Walker, 1990). Staff induction is an integral and inter-related part of this program (Spencer, 1988), to ensure that staff feel they are contributing to the vision of the school, and that they are growing and fulfilled in their own vision.

The process a leader for change uses may differ according to the professional maturity and needs of staff. Staff development programs, when well-planned and catering for these differences, are an attempt by the principal to bring about change to teaching and learning in the school. They can effectively lead to change in beliefs and attitudes, build on knowledge and skills, and when implemented, bring about change in the learning outcomes of students (Fullan et al., 1992). Leaders who choose a process based on principles of trust and trustworthiness will experience growth in leadership and success in relationships. This legitimate power (Covey, 1992), will lead to the empowerment of others - honour for sustained positive influence.

> Leaders who work with people rather than over followers make a statement about entrusting the future of the agency to the cooperative efforts of group members. (Treston, 1994, p.17)

When staff feel empowered, and feel they have some control over their work, they are more likely to be prepared to commit themselves to renewal (Ridden, 1992). If they participate in the decision-making and leadership roles, they become livers of the vision and mission of the school.

Transformational leadership engages in synergy to bring about a more committed and participative role in bringing about change. These leaders believe that staff members as a group could develop better solutions than one person alone (Leithwood, 1992). Individuals may be brilliant but unless all the brilliance is brought together the potential of the outcome is untapped (Senge, 1990). This idea

of team requires collaboration, open communication, commitment, respect, a spirit of reconciliation, and trust.

2.4.1 Interrelated Components of Staff Development

Induction is an interrelated component of staff development (Spencer, 1988). The nature of staff development has changed, and is continuing to change, as more effective practices are identified for assisting teachers and principals to improve instruction. Leadership for staff development, as suggested by Spencer (1988), implies both the desire and the capacity to develop professional maturity in individual staff members, as well as in the corporate staff body. He further develops the role of leader in professional development as he outlines his principles of staff development - staff heterogeneity, accountability and responsibility, staff induction, staff supervision, staff evaluation and further professional development. These principles, he suggests, when recognised as interdependent components, can be used as strategies for developing a school-based staff development program. This program would then demonstrate the attempt to address the areas of need - awareness, attitudes, knowledge, skills and techniques - in the maturation and development of teachers.

While other writers (Day, 1994; Spencer, 1993; Walker, 1990) do not describe these principles as such, they do acknowledge the complex nature of staff development and the interrelated part of staff/professional development in the context of leadership for the improvement of effective teaching and learning in the school.

As leaders they can act to provide the individual and often courageous input needed to create that nucleus of change which, driven by the vector of their own vision, will oppose the integrative power of the self-renewing dynamic, and act to undermine it, so that a new qualitatively different educational regime can be achieved. (Sungailia, 1990, p.22)

These writers discuss the changing role of the principal as leader in staff development, and describe the effectiveness of interdependent leadership roles (Day, 1994), and the need for interaction and involvement of staff in decision-making (Walker, 1990).

2.4.2. Meeting School and Individual Needs

Effective staff development within the school system will aim to meet both school and individual needs. The school system is a living system, a system alive, and operates on the basic principles of self-renewal and self-organisation (Sungailia, 1990). It is geared to its own survival and renewal of culture, while being responsive to new challenges which transform both individuals and the corporate body. As personnel change, so do the needs and structures of expectations within the living system. Leaders must "participate in the maintenance of those structures of expectations or in their destabilisation and recreation" (Sungailia, 1990, p.18).

This task of the leader is complex, and calls for the need of a well-planned, yet flexible staff development program, which caters for individual as well as school needs (Day, 1994; Walker, 1990). School staffs are composed of a diverse group of individuals with varying needs, backgrounds, attitudes, beliefs, and at different stages of professional growth. Depending on these, and other factors such as

experience, cognitive complexity and motivation, development requires flexibility, and supervisory avenues need to be different to cater for all (Walker, 1990).

The vision expressed through the mission statement offers a challenge to influence staff in developing a climate for teaching and learning which reflects the values of the Catholic school (Trafford, 1989). The transformational leader empowers others to live out the vision in what they do and how they do it.

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2.4.3 Framework for Induction

Staff induction is an integral and interrelated part of staff development (Spencer, 1988). Staff development begins with the arrival of each new staff member, whether it be a university graduate, a teacher on transfer, or an experienced teacher being re-employed. Induction is a necessary first phase of staff development in any organisation if it is proactive in developing a unified team, working together towards achieving the school's aims and goals (Spencer, 1988). The individuality and diversity of each member of staff makes the leader's role in staff development challenging. An effective leader will recognise the importance of what each member contributes to the vision, and work through others to achieve organisational goals (Duignan, 1987).

With the added dimension each staff member brings to the school culture, each one can make a difference (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Schein, 1992), and the leader's responsibility is to develop a staff development program that not only meets the needs of the individual but will also meet the needs of the aims and goals of the school. These should be interwoven and as compatible as can be to be effective in "living" and articulating the vision, both individually and for the school. From the very beginning of being appointed to a school, an individual brings his or her own culture to the group culture, and the group culture can not be seen as a separate identity.

> Every continuing group of people develops and maintains a unique culture; as the membership changes, so the culture will reflect both the particular contributions of the new members and the loss of the idiosyncratic qualities of the old. (Beare et al., 1989, p.177)

A staff member's first and lasting impression of the culture of the school, will be his/her induction into the school. To be proactive in meeting the responsibilities for the well-being of new staff members, it should be recognised that the needs of new staff members vary from those of the beginning teacher to those of the teacher coming from another school and include those of the teacher entering our system for the first time. They all need, and deserve, an induction program that will be effective in giving them a sense of belonging and worth, and confidence in their value of contributing to the culture and development of the school.

Staff induction is of importance to the whole school community (Seller, 1993), and the responsibility of not just the principal. Involvement of the whole school

community in the planning and preparation of the school induction program assists in having a school with a shared vision, clear in its goals, and co-operative in its practice. Planning and preparation of the induction program should be an interactive part of the overall staff development program (Spencer, 1988). A clear preparation and planning framework for induction is outlined by Spencer (1988) as including stages of orientation, familiarisation, and incorporation.

During the orientation stage, provision is made for members of staff to meet both formally and informally.

> Induction should commence with personal communication - the newcomer should know that he (sic) is among people who are willing to be friends, and in a community that will appreciate and accept him (sic) if he (sic) is willing to contribute at least as much as he (sic) receives. (Spencer, 1988, p.107)

This view suggests that the initial interview and contact to the school should be in a relaxed atmosphere, which displays a feeling of welcome to the newcomer. The newcomer must be made to feel valued and that his/her contribution to the school culture is needed and welcomed. This will assist in future co-operative involvement in, and development of, the school's vision and goals.

For a new staff member to have a clear understanding of the school community, it is necessary to have background information on many aspects of the school (Spencer, 1988). These will include such things as school brochures, school profile, area profile and amenities, staff, and enrolments.

New staff members are always anxious to know what the school looks like and what their working environment will be like. The familiarisation stage aims at making the newcomer feel comfortable with the environment and establish a sense of belonging. It is important that other staff members, in particular the administration team, make it clear that they are willing and available to help (Spencer, 1988).

The newcomer needs to become familiar with the layout of the school, and can be given an escorted tour of the buildings and grounds by those who can answer queries. At this stage, the school mission, policy, organisational practices, and curriculum should be introduced (Spencer, 1988).

The incorporation stage aims at clearly establishing roles and duties, and how he/she will be part of a team. This is the continual stage of staff induction (Spencer, 1988), and is necessary in developing and maintaining effective teaching-learning in the school according to the school's vision. In addition to establishing clear roles, the new teacher can be given a "buddy", who will be of assistance throughout the early stages for as long as necessary. This fosters loyalty, co-operation, security, and builds confidence in collaborative decision-making in the future. Newcomers must be assured that they are valued (Spencer, 1988), both as an individual and a member of the school community. Plans must be made for ongoing communication to address such matters as responsibilities, duties, expectations, and constraints (Beare et al., 1989).

2.5 A Conceptual Framework for Induction

A synoptic view of the literature in the areas of school culture, leadership, and staff development suggest a useful conceptual framework for induction. Writers in the areas of school culture theorise that a school builds a new culture of its own, while endeavouring to maintain and espouse the traditional beliefs and values of a Catholic school (Everett, et al., 1990). This culture is shaped and influenced by each and every new staff member that enters the school (Beare et al., 1989; Schein, 1992). With the heterogeneity of staff, comes the challenge for the principal as leader and "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994) to recognise and acknowledge the diversity of each newcomer (Spencer, 1988), and empower them to see meaning in what they do while contributing to the collective vision of the school community (McCorley, 1988; Ridden, 1992).

Thus, the literature recommends that the principal adopts the style of a transformational leader. This form of leadership results in a partnership between the principal and the staff of the school, which in turn assists in building a strong culture (Block, 1993; Flynn 1993). Staff development provides new perspectives on cultural aspects of change (Spry & Sultmann, 1994), and at the same time can cater for the individual needs of staff (Fullan et al., 1992). As staff induction is an interrelated component of staff development, it is the first phase in working through others to achieve organisational goals.

The conceptual framework that follows outlines where induction lies in the building of both individual and communal visions, while contributing to the

culture of a school community.
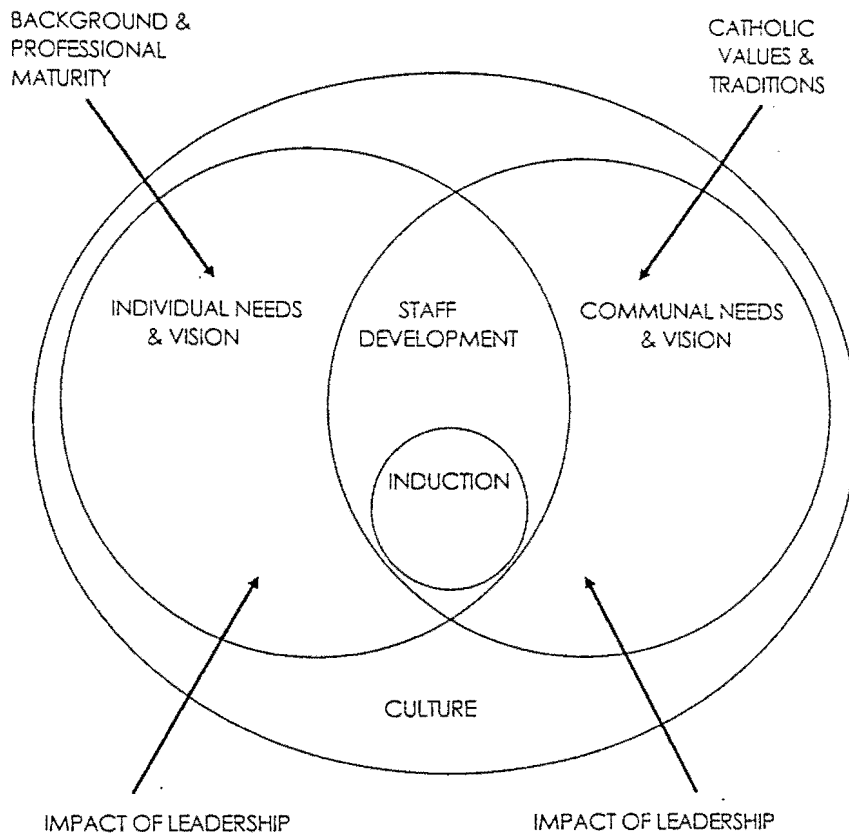
Figure 2.1: A Conceptual Framework for Induction

This diagram shows the various influences of the cultural aspects of bringing about change through staff development. It shows that communal and individual visions are not considered as separate components of building a strong culture, as suggested by Schein (1992) as a definition of culture:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1992, p.12).

The common themes which have emerged throughout the literature can be summed up in the following way, with reference made to the conceptual framework shown previously:

Creation of a positive mythology

During induction the school's story is told and retold in order to preserve the values and beliefs, that are held in stewardship by the principal as "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994).

A strong effective culture is rooted in beliefs and values

The Catholic school has a culture based on a common belief that provides a framework for building a vision, and binds people together (Everett et al., 1990; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). The cultural fit within the school is reinforced during induction by ensuring that new staff, decision-making practices, and leadership style all support key values (McCorley, 1988; Nicholson, 1991).

The quality of the relational environment is important in positively influencing the culture

Building a relational environment from the time of induction creates a climate with participative decision-making, trust, caring, support, service and empowerment (Beck, 1992; Covey, 1992; & Fullan et al., 1992).

* Recognition, cultivation and respect for differing values contribute to effectiveness

Staff need to feel they are not only contributing to the vision of the school, but also are growing and being fulfilled in their own vision (Nicholson, 1991; Walker, 1990). Through a well-planned staff development program, involving an effective induction program, staff can be empowered to have control over their work, and commit themselves to renewal towards the vision of the school (Ridden, 1992; Treston, 1994). Staff then become a team, engaging in synergy, and bringing about change for the improvement of the school (Covey, 1989; Leithwood, 1992; Senge, 1990).

2.6 Summation

This literature review acted as a "vehicle for learning" (Bruce, 1994) by clarifying the possibilities and limitations of the induction experience. By reading in the areas of school culture, leadership, and staff development, the researcher became aware of the complexity of staff induction. In order to make sense of this complexity, the researcher proposed a conceptual framework that situated induction within its wider context. As well as helping to explain the induction experience, this framework also informed the design of the study. This design is outlined in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 3 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experience of a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. From this experience, the researcher endeavoured to develop a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of induction, which in turn, would inform the formulation of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs.

The study aims:

1. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help participants to achieve a greater awareness of the unique culture of the school.

2. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help to meet the individual needs of participants.

3. To identify elements within a formal induction program that facilitate renewal by challenging both the individual's and school's vision, values and experience.

4. To develop a set of guiding principles for future induction programs in the school.

These aims led the researcher to identify three pertinent research questions:

* What elements in a formal induction program contribute to the development of a unique culture and a communal school vision?

* In what ways are an individual's personal and professional needs able to be met within a formal induction program?

* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

The literature suggests that school leadership can be conceptualised as the "communal institutionalising of a vision" within the context of self-renewing Catholic school (Spry & Sultmann, 1994, p.111). Through leadership, the school community generates, shares and lives out its vision. However, achieving a balance between respecting individual differences and the need for a shared vision can be problematic for school leadership (Nicholson, 1991).

This principal/researcher suggests that school leaders can address this problem through a well-planned induction program. An induction program for new teaching staff provides an opportunity to not only "pass on" a corporate identity but also offer an invitation for newcomers to contribute to further vision making and culture building. At the same time, it is recognised that an induction program could easily become a vehicle for indoctrination and the suppression of individual differences (Nicholson, 1991).

3.2 Reflective Deliberation: A Methodological Framework

The methodological framework used in researching this experience of a formal induction program, was one of action research, based on reflective deliberation (Bonser & Grundy, 1988). The researcher favoured a qualitative approach to this research, as data was to be gathered directly from individuals in their natural environment. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the teachers' reflective activity, in relation to their experiences of the induction program. Therefore, a case study approach was considered appropriate as it uses direct investigative methods to explore the reflections of the participants. The case study was the preferred strategy as "what" questions needed to be asked (Burns, 1994).

Case studies consider the complexity of the environment and the researcher expects that behaviour is a response to the gestalt, the wholeness, the situation. "Every case is embedded in historical, social, political, personal and other contexts and interpretations" (Burns, 1994, p.326). It is a process of research which tries to describe and analyse some entity in qualitative, complex, and comprehensive terms not infrequently as it unfolds over a period of time (Wilson, 1979). Case studies have a limited audience and have value only by those interested in the subject. They can be too long, and generalisations made are questionable (Wilson, 1979). However, the researcher considers a case study to be useful in this setting, as the study deals with information in a particularistic way that mirrors the reality of life in the school.

The case study of the group of newcomers to the school, will provide data which

will establish generalisations (Burns, 1994; Cohen & Manion, 1994) about the needs of future induction programs. This process of research will try to describe and analyse the group's knowledge and understanding of the induction program, and the degree to which individuals are able to contribute to the culture of the school.

Action research was used as a methodological framework for this case study, as its purpose has a means of remedying problems diagnosed in specific situations, improving a given set of circumstances, and injecting additional innovatory approaches (Cohen & Manion, 1994). All of which are incorporated within the specific aims of the research project, where data is collected from participants as newcomers to the school.

The action research consisted of a "group process of rational reflection generating a critique of the social and educational milieu in which the members operate" (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992, p.122). The participants are included as evaluators (Batcheler & Maxwell, 1987) of the induction program, and through collaborative planning, self-reflection and responsiveness, develop a plan for an improved induction program for the future.

> Action research is a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social and educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out. (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p.5)

The involvement of practitioners in all aspects of the action research process

allows for improvement in understanding and outcomes (Bonser & Grundy, 1988).

The process of reflective deliberation, as described by Bonser & Grundy (1988),

allows for participants in the research to be involved in a systematic process of

thinking and acting in order to raise and formulate ideas which are then further

reflected upon and refined. The process takes the participants through a cycle

which involves three interrelated "moments" of planning, data production and

reflection.

```
INITIAL REFLECTION
- A CONCERN
                    |
                    PLANNING
                           DATA PRODUCTION
REFLECTIVE
DELIBERATION
         INDIVIDUAL
            LEVEL
                    PLANNING
                          DATA PRODUCTION
REFLECTIVE
DELIBERATION
         SMALL
         GROUP
         LEVEL
                    PLANNING
                        DATA COLLATION/
REFLECTIVE          INTERPRETATION
DELIBERATION
         EXTENDED
         GROUP
         LEVEL

         AGREEMENT
         DOCUMENTATION
```
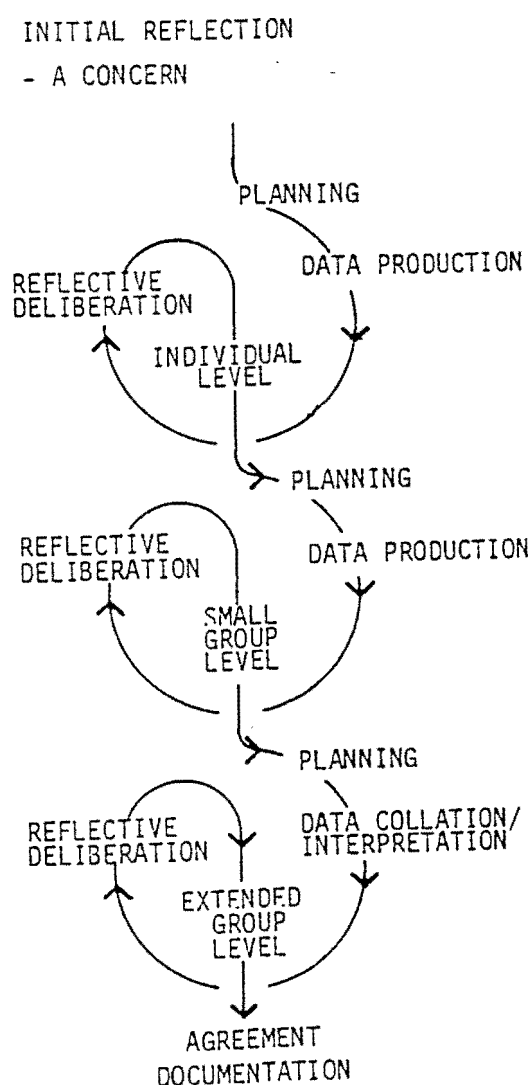
Figure 3.1 The Reflective Process

(Bonser & Grundy, 1988:42)

The planning "moment" of each cycle allows for clarification of purpose on the part of both participant and researcher. This involves, at the individual level, a discussion about their roles between the participant and the researcher, and plans for subsequent use of the data produced. The data production "moment" engages participants individually in an interview with the researcher about the induction program. A second discussion is then held with each participant to clarify, elaborate or modify ideas in the account. Critical reflection upon the report provides an opportunity for revision of the original oral account. A jointly authored statement is then produced by the participant and the researcher, to accurately reflect the participant's views of the issue.

These jointly authored statements are then issued to each group member. A group discussion is held to share the views and arrive at a consensus of the main ideas to develop a set of guiding principles for future induction. Another group meeting is then held with an outside validator to further clarify, elaborate or modify the views of the group.

Through this process of reflective deliberation (Bonser & Grundy, 1988), the researcher is able to facilitate, rather than control reflection, and gain trust in the process of collaborative decision-making.

3.3 Participants

New staff members to the school have been referred to as participants. As educational practitioners, they have been actively involved in data collection, interpretation, and planning. Participants in the research comprised of a group of four new teaching staff members involved in the present induction program at the school. The participants comprised of two male and two female teachers. They ranged in age from twenty-one to fifty eight, with various degrees of experience, understanding and professional maturity. They are all Catholic, and their teaching experience is only in Catholic schools. They can be described as follows, with the use of pseudonyms.

Clare is most probably in her last two years of her teaching career, and at her last school, after a career of over thirty years. This is the first school she has taught in with a lay principal. She was at her last school for eight years.

Chris is the youngest of the group, in his first year of teaching.

Mandy has come to her third school in her fifth year of teaching. This is the largest school she has taught in.

David is the most qualified and experienced member of the group, and has a career spanning thirteen years, with experience in schools of varying sizes and localities.

Participants were told before commencement that the research would involve an individual interview, group interview, and outside validation. Confidentiality and anonymity was assured. After gaining informed consent, a consent form was signed. Data were stored securely, with nothing being included in publication without their permission. Pseudonyms for participants have been used in the research report to protect their anonymity.

Participants were invited to take part in the research project after the nature and purpose of the study was outlined to them. Ethical considerations were adhered to throughout the research, encouraging confidence from the participants. Throughout the research, the principal/researcher endeavoured to be sensitive to the ethical principles of impartiality, confidentiality, and collaboration.

Research approval was gained through Brisbane Catholic Education and the Australian Catholic University Ethics Committee.

3.4 Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation

The interview was used for data collection by way of direct verbal interaction. Three approaches to qualitative interviewing (Patton, 1990) were used in some instance during the process. In the first cycle of action, the individual interviews with participants were formal and structured. The interview schedule for this moment of data gathering is included as Appendix ii (p.94). A predefined set of open-ended questions was used, and participant's answers were audio-taped to

get the richest evidence within the limits of time available, as suggested by Stenhouse (1983). The researcher considered this appropriate as the participants were well-informed, articulate, and approachable practitioners (Wiersma, 1991).

> By controlling and standardizing the open-ended interview, the evaluator obtains data that are systematic and thorough for each respondent but the process reduces flexibility and spontaneity (Patton, 1990, p.281).

Further data were collected using an informal conversational interview style. Here the researcher and participant freely discussed the transcript of the previous interview and formulated a jointly authored statement.

The second action cycle involved a group interview, and here the general interview guide approach was used. This allowed the researcher to gather data around common themes, and allowed for clarification, modification, and elaboration from spontaneity. The interviewer, being a participant observer (Stenhouse, 1983), was very much involved in the process for improving induction in the school. Therefore, collaborative decision-making was used in reaching a consensus on views and to develop a guiding set of principles.

The third action cycle also involved a group interview, and once again the general interview guide approach was used by the validator. Before each group session the roles of the researcher and participants were clearly defined, and questions were structured around a framework to reach the desired outcome. These focused interviews attempted to elicit participant's responses to the researcher's analysis of

data, and data was cross-checked (Cohen & Manion, 1994) after each cycle.

3.5 Conduct/Timeline of Research

The research study took place over a period of nine months, during the 1996 school year. The process used for data collection was based on the reflective deliberation cycles from Bonser & Grundy (1988). The timeline was as follows:

APRIL   Literature was reviewed and ethical approval was sought from Brisbane Catholic Education and The Australian Catholic University. Research was outlined to staff and volunteer participants called for.

MAY   Individual interviews held, audio-taped, and returned to participants for clarification, modification or elaboration (reflective deliberation).

JUNE   Researcher meets with individuals to develop jointly authored statements.

JULY   Small group discussion held to share statements and develop a set of guiding principles.

AUGUST   Validator meets with the small group of participants to further clarify, modify, accept or change the principles.

AUGUST-NOV.   Analysis of data. Written draft of research project. Final draft
and submission of project.

3.6 Validity

The qualitative technique chosen by the researcher requires methods to ensure
validity of the case study (Burns, 1994). Validity refers to the interpretations and
generalizability of results, and qualitative cross validation is referred to, by
Wiesma (1991), as triangulation. In order to ensure validity in this case study
method, the researcher used a cyclical method which allowed for interpretations to
correspond to how the participants interpreted their reality. Specifically, the
researcher challenged assumptions, checked and rechecked meanings with the
participants, searched for exceptions and sought confirmation.

In addition, the researcher enhanced the trustworthiness of the data through
gathering multiple viewpoints and a more complete picture of the phenomena
(Cohen & Manion, 1994). Data analysis was facilitated through a process of
researcher interpretation, followed by discussion with participants to promote
accuracy. Group discussions involved sharing and collaborative decision-making.
This study also used an outside validator for correct interpretation and
confirmation of the data.

3.7 Summation

Action research was used as the methodological framework for this study. Specifically, the researcher used a qualitative process of reflective deliberation (Bonser & Grundy, 1988) that took participants through three action research cycles comprising of moments of data collection, reflective deliberation and planning. In cycle one, data production involved individual interviews, which were audio-taped and transcribed. The researcher and the interviewee then met to produce a jointly authored statement that encapsulated the interviewees beliefs about the induction program. In cycle two, participants met with the researcher in a small group. At this meeting they shared their statements and established a set of guiding principles for future induction programs. In cycle three, an outside validator then met with the group of participants to allow them to modify, accept or change these principles. This assisted in ensuring the validity of the research.

CHAPTER 4   PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experience of a formal induction program in one Catholic primary school. From this experience, the researcher endeavoured to develop a "rich picture" (Patching, 1990) of induction, which in turn, would inform the formulation of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs.

The study aims:

1. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help participants to achieve a greater awareness of the unique culture of the school.

2. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help to meet the individual needs of participants.

3. To identify elements within a formal induction program that facilitate renewal by challenging both the individual's and school's vision, values and experience.

4. To develop a set of guiding principles for future induction programs in the school.

These aims led the researcher to identify three pertinent research questions:

* What elements in a formal induction program contribute to the development of a unique culture and a communal school vision?

* In what ways are an individual's personal and professional needs able to be met within a formal induction program?

* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

This chapter describes the planning, acting, observing and reflecting "moments" of the action research project, concerned with gathering data on the effectiveness in meeting both individual and school needs through a staff induction program. The events and findings will be outlined through describing the events of each phase of the process.

The process involved four new teachers to the school, who volunteered to take part in this project. The school year began with three days of staff development, which was planned the year before. The school is still in its formative years and concerned with building a strong culture, so these days were primarily focused at inducting the new members of staff into the school. They aimed to provide opportunities for staff to gain a sense of belonging and enjoyment, articulate the school's mission and philosophy, and participate in goal-setting for professional growth.

4.2 The Story Through the Phases

4.2.1 Phase 1 - Planning

Through observation and questioning, this writer, the principal and "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994), found that this part of the induction program gave new staff a clear understanding of the school's philosophy and mission, but at this stage they did not rate a sense of belonging highly. With these results, as shown graphically in Appendix i, discussed with the planning committee, it was agreed that a review of the induction program should take place in order to effectively meet individual as well as school needs during induction of new staff.

In planning this project the researcher was guided by the work of Bonser and Grundy (1988:42), which suggested that the art of deliberation is enhanced by following a process of reflective deliberation which incorporates the "moments" of acting and observing, and deliberative "moments" of planning and reflecting. This process can be shown through the following diagram:

INDUCTION PROGRAM
PLANNING 1996

PHASE 1

REFLECTING   PLANNING

INDIVIDUAL
LEVEL

OBSERVING   ACTING ——————————→   REFLECTIVE DELIBERATION

PHASE 2

PLANNING

PLANNING

REFLECTIVE   DATA PRODUCTION   INDIVIDUAL
DELIBERATION   FIRST   INTERVIEWS
                    INDIVIDUAL   ACTION
JOINTLY   LEVEL
AUTHORED
STATEMENTS

PLANNING

REFLECTIVE   DATA PRODUCTION
DELIBERATION   GROUP
GUIDING   SECOND   INTERVIEWS
PRINCIPLES   SMALL   ACTION
                    GROUP
                    LEVEL

PLANNING

REFLECTIVE   DATA COLLATION/
DELIBERATION   INTERPRETATION   VALIDATOR
                                       WITH GROUP
                    EXTENDED   THIRD
                    GROUP   ACTION
                    LEVEL
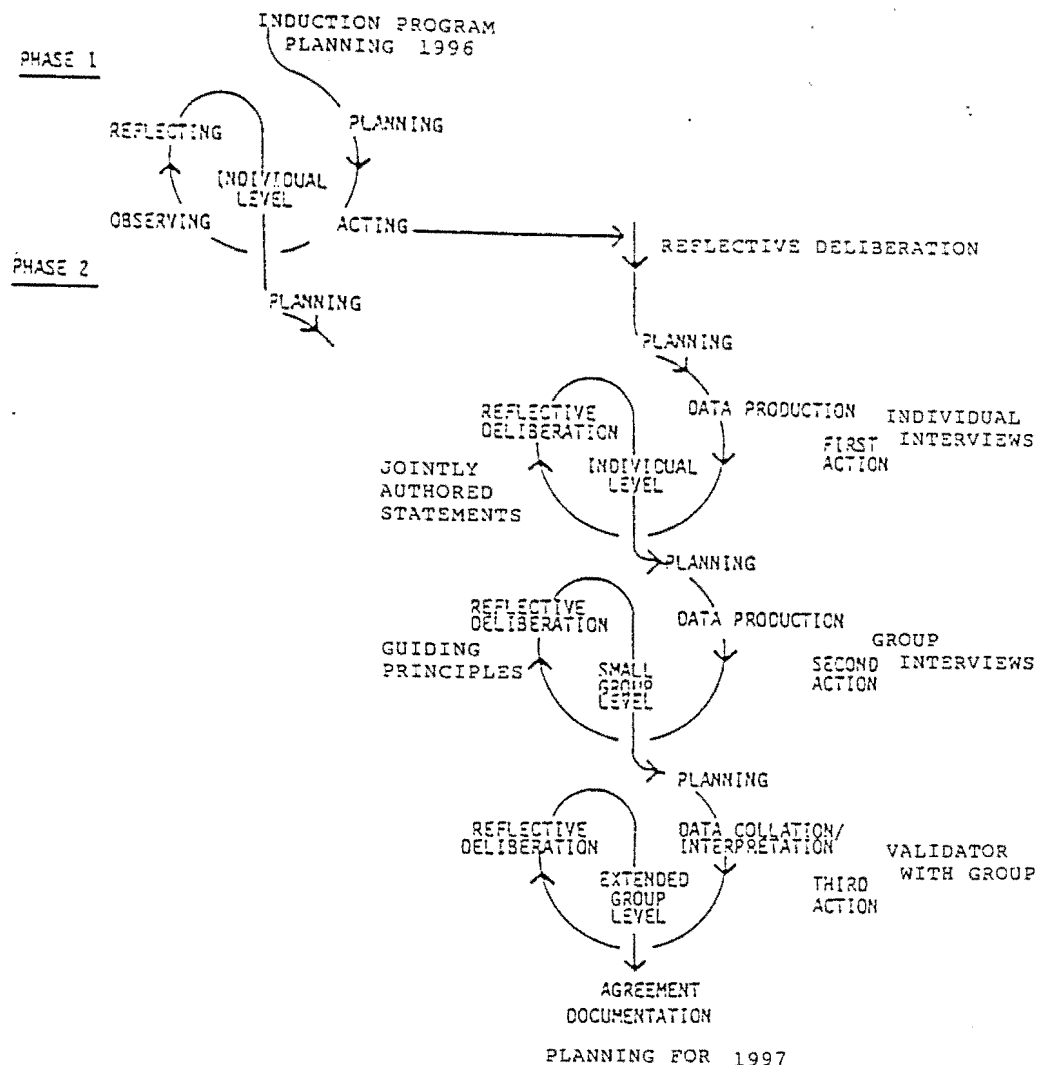
AGREEMENT
DOCUMENTATION

PLANNING FOR 1997

Figure 4.1

The Acting "Moments" involving Reflective Deliberation Process

(Bonser and Grundy, 1988:42)

The process begins with individual participants expressing ideas in a conversational mode and reflecting upon the transcribed spoken word. This leads to a written statement, which is considered to be an authentic account of the participant's ideas. It is this written transcription of ideas which then becomes the

basis of group reflection.

4.2.2 Phase 1 - Action

The acting "moment" in this initial phase of the staff induction project focused the individual participants on the topic of induction meeting their needs, and took them through three cycles which involved interrelated "moments" of planning, data production and reflection, as illustrated in Figure 4.1.

The First Action

In the planning "moment" for this first action, the researcher described to each participant the planned approach for data generation and collection. It was explained that, through the interview and subsequent discussion, the researcher was hoping to assist participants to articulate their views and share their understandings of how the induction program could become more effective in meeting both individual and school needs, and, as a group, develop a set of guiding principles for future induction programs at the school.

The data production "moment" involved individual participants in a research interview. Each interview took approximately half an hour, and as interviewer, the researcher attempted to take a reflective approach. The interviewee was given a set of pre-defined questions (Appendix ii) to reflect on prior to the interview. These questions were then used during the interview to stimulate the verbalisation of thoughts. The questions were open-ended, and the interview was audio-taped to give the richest evidence within limited time (Stenhouse, 1983).

At no time were any of the participants unable to offer an answer to any of the questions, and often there was elaboration and the offering of further information. Only one participant asked for clarification, and that was Chris who wanted clarification of the interpretation of culture in this situation.

The reflective "moment" involved the transcribed interview being returned to the participant for personal reflection and acceptance. This was conducted in a less formal and semistructured way, using a general interview framework as a guide (Patton, 1990). In collaboration with the researcher, ideas were taken from the transcript and used to develop a jointly authored statement (Bonser & Grundy, 1988) for each participant (Appendix iii). These statements were then given to each participant for cross-checking (Cohen & Manion, 1994) and further reflection.

The Second Action

All four participants came together as a group for this data production "moment", and the researcher facilitated the dissemination of ideas. The purpose and aims of the research project were once again outlined to the participants to ensure understanding and acceptance. The researcher described to the group how the process would proceed, and how the outcome would be the production of a set of guiding principles for future induction programs. Roles of both the researcher and participants were outlined and accepted by the group. As the researcher was the principal of the school, and had an interest in any renewal in the school, it was necessary to build a sense of trust and acceptance as participant observer (Stenhouse, 1983).

Each participant read and reflected on their jointly authored statement, before passing it on to the rest of the group to read. There was then time for questions of clarification, although all participants were satisfied with the clarity of all statements. Each participant was then asked to speak to their written statement, enabling others to have greater understanding and improved meaning in what was written (Cohen & Manion, 1994). This produced a lot of valuable discussion, which was facilitated by the researcher, who consciously made sure that each participant was heard and their views respected.

The participants being well-informed, articulate, and approachable practitioners (Wiersma, 1991), engaged in discussion and collaborative decision-making without any need for encouragement. The reflective deliberation on the data produced in the jointly authored statements was able to be conducted in a relaxed and informal way, using a general interview framework (Patton, 1990).

The participants, as a group, were asked to reflect on the statements, and brainstorm to list some guiding principles for next year's induction program. All points were listed, and a first draft was made (Appendix iv). Participants then spontaneously clarified, modified, and elaborated (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Patton, 1990) on what was listed. One participant observed that the list could be dissected into three categories, and suggested that the final draft could be in those categories. The final draft was made through collaborative decision-making and reaching a consensus on views. It consisted of three guiding principles for future inductions (Appendix v).

Plans were then made for the next cycle to reflect on the guiding principles and the process in general, and to validate its authenticity. The validator and participants were given the final set of guiding principles, and the researcher met with the validator to ensure understanding of the project and to assist in planning of the next reflective "moment".

The Third Action

An outside validator was invited, and agreed to meet with the group of participants to validate both the outcomes of the project and the process used (Burns, 1994; Cohen & Manion, 1994; Wiesma, 1991). The validator, a Catholic Primary School Principal, met with the group of participants without the researcher present. This was to ensure authenticity of outcome statements, and to validate the process used as one which was collaborative, participative for all, and based on trust.

The interview with the group was informal, using a general interview framework (Patton, 1990) to generate discussion and allow for openness and change. The validator began by outlining his role and a suggested process for the meeting. All agreed that the process would involve questions to determine understanding of the purpose and aims of the project, effectiveness of the process of reflective deliberation used, and the authenticity of the outcomes. Some of the open-ended questions asked were:

* What was the purpose of the research project?

* How was this purpose achieved?

* What were the outcomes?

* Were the outcomes consistent with the data generated?

During the discussion, the validator summarised and recorded points as they were made, making sure all participants contributed to the discussion. He then formulated a report (Appendix vi) on his findings, validating the outcomes and process.

4.2.3. Phase 2 - Planning

The guiding principles resulting from this study will be disseminated to all staff, in particular, the members of the school professional development team. These principles will become part of the planning for next year's induction program and future programs. The team's task will be to use these principles in planning the action stages of induction. Members of the research participant group have voiced a desire to continue their involvement during the planning of these action stages.

4.3 Summation

This case study tells the story of how the researcher and a group of new staff members came together in an action research group to investigate how a staff induction program in one Catholic primary school can effectively meet both

individual and school needs. The researcher decided, in the initial planning "moment", it would be appropriate to use a modified version of the reflective deliberative process suggested by Bonser and Grundy (1988). This plan was put into action and the participants, as individuals and members of a group, systematically reflected on their experiences and views, with a goal to develop a set of guiding principles which would lead to the improvement of future practice.

CHAPTER 5   REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS

5.1 Purpose of Study

The challenge for the principal of a relatively new Catholic primary school is to build a strong school culture with a vision shared by the school community. The principal, as leader and "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1992), is challenged within this stewardship to recognise an alternate vision of inexhaustible heterogeneity rather than perfect unity (Nicholson, 1991). The guiding principle would be openness to differences rather than the urge towards sameness.

In researching the question: "How can a staff induction program in one Catholic primary school effectively meet both individual and school needs?", three main questions can be explored. They are:

* What elements in a formal induction program contribute to the development of a unique culture and a communal school vision?

* In what ways are an individual's personal and professional needs able to be met within a formal induction program?

* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

Through researching the outcomes of the questions stated above, it was possible to produce a set of guiding principles for future induction in the school. This study

will also assist in the design for the induction program for 1997.

The results of the study have impacted not only on the design of future induction programs, but also on those who were involved in the planning and implementation, the emphasis placed on areas of staff development, and the goals for future planning. The aims of the study were:

1. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help participants to achieve a greater awareness of the unique culture of the school.

2. To identify elements within a formal induction program that help to meet the individual needs of participants.

3. To identify elements within a formal induction program that facilitate renewal by challenging both the individual's and school's vision, values and experience.

4. To develop a set of guiding principles for future induction programs in the school.

A case study was used to gain insight into teachers' reflective activity in relation to their experiences of the induction program. This was considered appropriate as it uses direct investigative methods to explore the reflections of the participants (Burns, 1994), and provide data to establish generalisations (Burns, 1994; Cohen & Manion, 1994) about future induction programs.

Action research, based on the reflective deliberation process outlined by Bonser and Grundy (1988), was used as a framework for this case study. This process involved practitioners in all aspects of the action research, allowing for improvement in understanding and outcomes. Reflective deliberation allowed participants in the research to be involved in a systematic process of thinking and acting in order to raise and formulate ideas which were then further reflected upon and refined. The process took the participants through cycles which involved three interrelated "moments" of planning, data production, and reflection. The three cyclic actions involved an individual interview, group interview, and group interview with an outside validator.

5.2 The Research Questions Answered

Answers to the research questions came through an analysis of the data, leading to conclusions based on findings from the three cyclic actions of the reflective deliberation process.

The first research question was:-

* What elements in a formal induction program contribute to the development of a unique culture and a communal school vision?

Participants based their interpretations of the shared culture of the school firstly, on their first impressions of the school itself, and then later on the behaviours displayed by staff, students and parents.

My first impressions from when I came along - how organised everything was. It seemed to be a professional culture. (From David's transcript)

The children have a lot of respect for teachers. (From Chris' transcript)

I was very impressed with the behaviour of the children, the organisation of the school as a whole. (From Clare's transcript)

All four participants commented on the school's expectations, as expressed by Mandy:

I think the school has high expectations of everybody. Not unreal expectations (very reasonable). I think if you don't have high expectations of people, they won't even attempt to fulfil them. (From Mandy's transcript)

The shared vision of the school was both consciously and unconsciously articulated by individuals in the school community. This was clearly visible to participants through their expressions of what they valued. This is supported through the literature of Everett et al.(1990), and Fullan and Hargreaves (1992), who suggest that culture represents the values which bind people together, and is expressed through the mission of the school.

The second research question was:-

* In what ways are an individual's personal and professional needs able to be met within a formal induction program?

It was through exploring this question that the heterogeneity of the staff was

emphasised, as suggested in the writings of Spencer (1988) and Walker (1990). The advantage of having a cross-section of professional maturity amongst the participants also became evident. Although there were similarities emerging from the study, there also appeared to be distinct individual needs, which could be attributed to the participant's professional maturity. This is supported through the literature of Covey (1992) and Fullan & Hargreaves (1992).

During the reflective deliberation of the second action cycle, each participant had a particular issue that he/she emphasised which continued to re-emerge during the discussion.

David is the most experienced and qualified teacher of the four, and was interested in furthering his career and appreciated "the time and encouragement to pursue my own interests".

Mandy was interested in whether or not she would fit in to the group and the importance of "relationships and support from other teachers".

Clare is near the end of her teaching career, and was interested in what changes she would encounter. As this was the first time in her long career she had worked with a lay principal, she wondered if "the values would be the same, and if the Catholicity of the school would be any less".

Chris is in his first year of teaching, and he was concerned with issues like "how to access resources in the library, and the general running of the school". He

expressed a need to "feel part of the school".

The third research question was:-

* What aspects of the induction program facilitate renewal by challenging an individual's and school's vision, values, and experience?

All four participants agreed that they were challenged professionally during the beginning weeks of induction, as they had to "take time to reflect on our goals for the year" (Mandy). There was a strong feeling of appreciation for a clear articulation of the school's vision and values being expressed at this time. No matter where they were along the maturity continuum, whether dependent, independent, or interdependent (Covey, 1992), they wanted to be aware of the school culture. Expressing the culture enabled the new members of staff to have some understanding of the shared values and beliefs that bind the school community (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). This time for reflection, is suggested by Spry & Sultmann (1994) as a necessary stage in a process for renewal.

The participants outlined their anxiety regarding the culture and vision of the school in a variety of ways, as they were all concerned about the teaching and learning climate they were entering (Trafford, 1989). Their stage of professional maturity (Covey, 1992) influenced their paradigm of where they saw themselves within this new community, and how their needs would be met. The following exerts from the transcripts suggest what each participant viewed as helping to challenge them:

I have also found that this school seems to be very much a professional development school. We have to continually attend seminars because of the high value and goals that are at this school. (Clare)

When you come to a school, you come really with your own personal experience and vision, but the school has a vision as well ... those first few days of inservice ... you can really sit down and think of your own vision, think about what everyone else has done and be challenged in what you are thinking. (Mandy)

I thought that was a good idea to get new people in to tell their story and see how it fits in the school vision ... being able to goal set and just having time to think about what you want to get out of the year and then I suppose having time to reflect on that back through staff meetings to bring those points up again that it does not get lost in the everyday activities of school life. (David)

The school expectations are quite high ... group work and where we are heading ... to be open with people. (Chris)

The differences in what participants were concerned about as challenging, could be linked with the various stages of professional maturity (Covey, 1992) among the group. Perhaps this is an issue that could be investigated further in the future. This perception was seen by the researcher as of assistance in being able to make generalisations (although limited) from the case study.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

An analysis of the data from the case study, leads to the conclusion that bringing about change for greater effectiveness, is influenced by various cultural aspects, as shown in Figure 2.2. The leadership necessary to bring about change that positively influences culture will recognise the value of shared wisdom and participation in processes of planning, reflective deliberation, and collaborative action. This is supported by the use of Bonser & Grundy's reflective deliberation process (1988), and through the literature of Fullan & Hargreaves (1992), Spry & Sultmann (1994), and Treston (1994).

The purpose of the study was to bring about change by collecting a rich picture (Patching, 1990) from participants regarding their experience and needs during a formal induction program. This reflective deliberation process will provide guidelines for the content of future induction programs in the school, and influence the leadership necessary to implement such a program.

The learnings of the principal/researcher can be summed up through three dominant themes that were discerned in the literature when attempting to answer the research question of how a staff induction program in one Catholic primary school can effectively meet both individual and school needs. These are: Retelling the story of a culture rooted in beliefs and values; Creating a relational environment; and Professional development which recognises, cultivates and respects differing values.

Retelling the story of a culture rooted in beliefs and values

With all of the participants being Catholic, there was an assumption that the school had common values, beliefs, symbols, and shared meanings founded in the life of Jesus (Everett et al., 1992). However, two of the participants looked for "signs" of the "Catholicity".

> I was also very impressed with the Catholicity of the school, even though we do have a Lay Principal at the school, and this is the first time in twenty six years in Australia that I have had a Lay Principal and I thought to myself it was going to be a little different, in fact it was exactly the same, in some cases even better (From Clare's transcript).
>
> I looked for the general atmosphere of a Catholic school and because I am a Catholic teacher then I would see the fit come in there that we are heading towards the same vision (From David's transcript).

Espousing Catholic principles, and clearly articulating the vision and mission of the school, was necessary in meeting the needs of individuals and in maintaining the stewardship and direction of the school. The importance of retelling the story to preserve the Catholic school values and beliefs, is supported in the literature of Beare et al. (1989), Treston (1994), and McCorley (1988).

The renewing of the shared vision during induction sets direction, and assists in goal setting for professional development and achieving school goals (McCorley, 1988). Giving time for reflecting on the vision helps newcomers to become familiar with the school's beliefs, values and expectations, and assists all staff in focusing on their own vision.

Creating a relational environment

Allowing time for social interaction sets a climate which is relaxed and welcoming. Leadership for developing a relational environment which positively influences the culture was shared by principal and other staff members. The principal's role as leader is about working with and through others to make a difference (Beare et al., 1989), and build a culture (Fullan et al., 1992; Treston, 1992). All participants were concerned about the culture of the school, and if their values, beliefs, and experiences were in alignment with that of the school, and others who they would work with. Participants related that they learnt from their relationships with co-workers, and the atmosphere that was set by them made them comfortable. Staff, other than the principal became leaders, empowering newcomers to transform their needs and wants into values and motivations (Ridden, 1992; Leithwood, 1992).

Meeting the basic needs of new staff need to be recognised, and their individual professional maturity acknowledged. Time needs to be given to relationship building and developing a basis of trust. This is supported in the literature of Beck (1992) and Covey (1992).

The newcomers need to have direction and relate some meaning in what they are doing (McCorley, 1988). This was done through leadership which challenged them to have the power to meet their own needs. It was necessary to make time for reflection, planning, and goal-setting.

Professional development which recognises, cultivates and respects differing values

With the professional maturity of staff being so diverse, staff development needs to be well-planned and cater for the diversity. The professional development offered was appreciated by all participants, but a balance with relationship building was needed during the early stages of induction. This can be found in the transcripts and jointly authored statements.

Leadership allowed newcomers to contribute to the culture of the school, while growing and being fulfilled in their own vision (Nicholson, 1991; Walker, 1990). By reassessing their own professional needs, new staff members were able to participate in collaborative decision-making and influence whole school staff development goals. As Ridden (1992) suggests, staff feel empowered when they have some control over their work. The school culture is then being built as a climate which is collaborative, supportive, and engaging in synergy for renewal (Leithwood, 1992 & Senge, 1990).

It was acknowledged by participants in the study that it was a challenge to meet the needs of each individual newcomer. However, there were basic recommendations that could be made as guidelines for future inductions.

5.4 Recommendations

The recommendations which follow represent the combined deliberations of both participants and the researcher. As the researcher was a key stakeholder in the context and in the project, holding the position of principal in this particular school as well as researcher, an interested outsider was brought in to validate both the process used and the recommendations made. The recommendations (Appendix iv) made by the participants took into account the views of all participants. These were discussed and questions asked for clarification.

One participant made the observation that there were three main themes evident through the recommendations. This was agreed upon by all, and through collaborative discussion, decisions were made on final recommendations. These final recommendations then became a set of guiding principles for the planning of future induction programs at this particular school. These guiding principles may also prove useful for those interested in improving induction to meet both individual and school needs.

* *opportunities for new staff to build relationships and feel welcome and comfortable.*

* *time for - professional development*

  - personal reflection and goal setting

  - spiritual direction

* *understanding of school's organisational practices and policies*

These guiding principles, as a result of this study, provide another reminder that the participation of staff members in planning can be our greatest catalysts for change and keeping the vision alive.

5.5 Summation

The challenge for leaders building a strong school culture is to find a balance in meeting both individual and school needs. This study may assist with guidelines for beginning to meet this challenge through a well-planned induction program, providing opportunities for relationship building, time in personal and professional development, and understanding the school's vision through organisational practices and policies. The analogy of the round "peg" trying to fit the square "hole" now appears with adjustments to both the "peg" and the "hole", so both fit more comfortably and work more effectively as one.

These challenges will lead to the renewal of culture, and transform the individual and corporate body (Sungailia, 1990). Hence, the principal does not need to be the only "Keeper of the Dream" (Treston, 1994). Through leaders empowering others to find meaning in what they do (McCorley, 1988), a school can become a system "alive", with a shared vision, renewed through the formal induction program.

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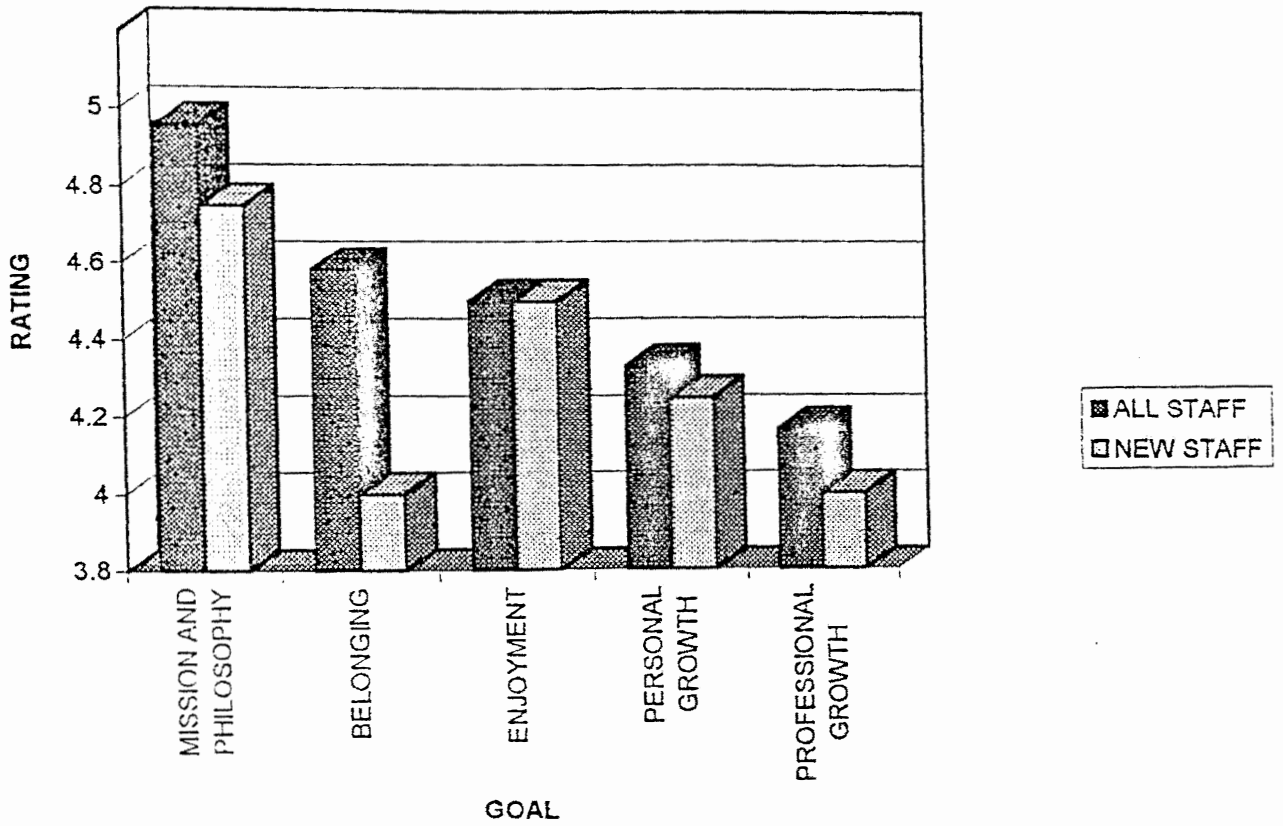
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APPENDIX i

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF RESULTS OF 1996
INDUCTION SURVEY

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT RATING

Bar chart titled "GOAL ACHIEVEMENT RATING" with the vertical axis labeled "RATING" (scale from 3.8 to 5) and the horizontal axis labeled "GOAL". Categories: MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY, BELONGING, ENJOYMENT, PERSONAL GROWTH, PROFESSIONAL GROWTH. Legend: ALL STAFF, NEW STAFF.

APPENDIX ii

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Through the induction program....

What helped to determine the unique culture and collective vision of the school?

What helps an individual appreciate the contribution of their personal and professional vision to the culture of the school?

What helps determine the fit or `misfit' between personal vision, values, and experience, and the collective vision of the school community?

Possible Contributing Questions

What are some of the things that have made you feel you are part of the school, and that you belong?

What was your first impression of St. Rita's?

How would you describe our school culture? What has influenced your perception?

What things regarding our school are you still wondering about?

In what ways have your own personal needs been met so far?

In what ways could you see yourself being able to contribute further to the culture of the school?

APPENDIX iii

JOINTLY AUTHORED STATEMENTS

HOW CAN A STAFF INDUCTION PROGRAM IN ONE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL EFFECTIVELY MEET BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND SCHOOL NEEDS?

JOINTLY AUTHORED STATEMENTS:

Clare...

The induction program met my needs through making me feel welcome and comfortable in knowing it was a culture of values, social interaction, and high expectations. It provided ongoing professional development, and expressed ideals of the Catholic school atmosphere through leadership.

Chris...

The induction program met my needs through a culture that was welcoming. There was a balance of professional development and relationship building through peer support and the opportunity for involvement in collective decision-making. However, the accessing of resources, library, and the day to day "practices" could have been addressed more fully in the first couple of weeks.

Mandy...

The induction program met my needs through enabling me to become familiar with the expectations of the school, as well as giving me the opportunity to re-assess and reflect on my own professional needs and ideals. This time of reflection and relationship building enabled me to feel comfortable and welcome in my new work situation.

David...

The induction program met my needs through helping me to feel at ease and welcomed within the school community. It allowed me to "catch-up" on professional development needs and provided opportunities for involvement in all aspects of school life. The program also provided time for reflection, planning and goal-setting, which consolidated my perception of the professional culture of the school.

APPENDIX iv

RECOMMENDATIONS (FIRST DRAFT OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (DRAFT 1)

*   *meet informally at beginning of school to get to know school.*

*   *accessing resources/buildings/support personnel.*

*   *time for professional development.*

*   *time to build support network.*

*   *time to build relationships.*

*   *time for personal reflection and goal setting.*

*   *understanding of day to day practices.*

*   *understanding school expectations.*

*   *time for spiritual direction.*

*   *welcoming and comfortable.*

APPENDIX v

SET OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE INDUCTION PROGRAMS

*   opportunities for new staff to build relationships and feel welcome and comfortable.

*   time for - professional development

    - building support networks

    - personal reflection and goal setting

    - spiritual direction

*   understanding of school's organisational practices and policies.

APPENDIX vi

VALIDATOR'S REPORT

TO: Mrs Rhonda Thornton

FROM: Mr Col O'Brien

RE: Validation of research relating to Induction Program, St Rita's Catholic School, Victoria Point

Background

I met with the four participants in this research project on the morning of 8 August 1996 for a period of 1 hour and 30 minutes. I proposed that we validate the research through reflection upon and discussion of the following questions:

1.   What were the aims of the research project?
2.   How were these aims achieved?
3.   What were the outcomes?
4.   Were the outcomes consistent with the data generated and the aims of the research?

This process was acceptable to the participants.

Report

1.   Purpose

The participants identified the purpose of the research project as follows:

"It was a reflection on current practice for the purpose of improving same. It focussed on our school atmosphere/ Catholicity, the professional development needs of staff both existing and new, staff relationships and networks of support and expectations of staff members."

2.   Process used to achieve purpose

The participants identified the process used as follows:

"After our appointment to the school and following a parent information evening and staff induction program we were invited, by letter, to participate in the research project. We were all new to the teaching staff in 1996, there was a balance of ages, experience and gender among us (the participants). Following our acceptance to participate we were given questions to reflect upon. We were neither encouraged nor discouraged to discuss these with one another or others. We then met with the researcher individually and were invited to respond to the questions. The climate established by the researcher encouraged us to speak from 'our heart'. The questions were comprehensive in that we didn't feel as though there were things 'left unsaid'. Our responses were taped then transcribed. We received a copy of these for reflection. We then again met individually with the researcher to jointly author a statement from the key points of our taped responses. Finally, we met with the researcher as a group to identify, from our jointly authored statements, a set of principles which will serve to guide the future planning of our school's induction program."

3. Outcomes

The participants themselves identified the outcomes in terms of:

"A relational focus, a professional development focus and a focus on the school community's expectations of us in our role as teachers."

There was a strong consensus among the participants that the outcomes as documented by the researcher, were consistent with the data generated through the reflective deliberation process used for this research project and that these principles would serve to guide the planning of future induction programs.

Conclusion

The responses from the participants indicate that:

The aims of the research project were met.

The process involved an invitation to participate, an individual interview, a jointly constructed statement, a group interview.

The outcomes were authentically derived from the research data.

The outcomes would serve to guide the planning of future staff Induction Programs.

Col O'Brien
(Validator)