

**New Zealand Secondary School Principals’
Perceptions of their Role: A Limiting Form of
Contingency Leadership**

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ABSTRACT

Guided by the theoretical underpinnings of constructivism, this study set out to gain a realistic understanding of the role of the secondary principal as it is currently performed in New Zealand. In so doing, it sought to identify factors, within the current system of school self-management in New Zealand that have impacted on that role.

The study adopted a mixed methods approach to data collection and analysis. The leadership perceptions of 94 secondary school principals in New Zealand were used, as well as a detailed analysis of the leadership interactions and actions of five of those principals. Data were gathered using survey, reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews of the participants. Data analysis comprised both quantitative methods and case study analysis.

The findings of the study indicate that, because of the nature of the system of self-managing schools in New Zealand, secondary principals lack leadership independence and are prevented from fully focusing on the learning needs of students. The findings also indicate that rather than being educational leaders, the prime role of a secondary principal is to manage the interface between the school context and powerful external expectations of an effective school. In so doing, this study identifies the negative impact of a self-managing school system on educational leadership.

Consequently, the findings from this study highlight the need for a change in the educational environment in New Zealand to one in which school and school leadership effectiveness is determined by the capacity of the school and the principal to meet the learning needs of the students and their community.

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“Tha gradh agam orti, Cynthia.”

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures	x
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
New Zealand Self-Managing School System.....	3
Purpose and Focus of the Study	4
Significance of the Study.....	6
Structure of the Thesis.....	6
Chapter 2. Literature Review.....	8
Chapter Overview.....	8
Focus and Scope of the Review	9
Generalized Leadership Perceptions.....	11
Defining leadership by a set of skills, attributes or dispositions.	11
Leadership models of practice.....	15
Transformational leadership.....	18
Moral or values leadership.	19
Values-driven contingent leadership.....	20
Strategic leadership.	21
Leadership strands within the self-management system.....	23
The Principals' Role	27
The impact of stakeholder expectations and perceptions.	28
The perceptions of the principal.....	34

The role of the New Zealand secondary school principal.....	37
Summary.....	41
Chapter 3. Methodology	43
The Research Design Process	43
Selection of the Research Paradigm.....	43
Constructivism.....	45
Theoretical Framework.....	46
Interpretivism	47
Case Study.....	48
The Use of Mixed Methodologies.....	50
Research Design Issues	51
Research protocols.....	51
The presence of an insider researcher.....	52
Overview of the Approach	54
Participants.....	56
Study 1.....	56
Study 2.....	58
Measures	59
Study 1: Self-administered survey.....	59
Survey design.....	60
Study 2: The case study principals.....	61
The reflective journal.....	61
Semi-structured interview.....	63
Analysis.....	65
Study 1: Quantitative data analysis.....	65
Study 2: Qualitative data analysis.....	66
The use of memo writing.....	67

Position of the researcher	68
Ethical Considerations	69
Reliability and Validity	70
Chapter 4. Survey Results	73
Demographics of the Sample	73
Leadership Skills	79
Factor analysis of leadership skills.....	88
Leadership Activity	94
Chapter 5. Case Study Results	105
The Case Study Principals.....	105
Case Study Principal 1: Greg.....	106
School context	106
Characteristics of the principal’s leadership style.	106
Description.....	106
Impact Factors	108
Leadership Model	110
Emerging themes.....	111
Case Study Principal 2: Mark.....	112
School context.	112
Characteristics of the principal’s leadership style.	112
Description.....	112
Impact factors.....	115
Leadership model.	116
Emerging themes.....	117
Case Study Principal 3: Penny	118
School context.	118
Characteristics of the principal’s leadership style.	118

Description.....	118
Impact factors.....	120
Leadership model.....	122
Emerging themes.....	123
Case Study Principal 4: Marge	123
School context.....	123
Characteristics of the principal’s Leadership Style	124
Description.....	124
Impact factors.....	126
Leadership model.....	128
Emerging themes.....	129
Case Study Principal 5: Kevin	130
School context.....	130
Characteristics of the principal’s leadership style.....	131
Description.....	131
Impact factors.....	134
Leadership Model	136
Emerging themes.....	137
Reflective Journal Data	133
Leadership activity.....	138
Key leadership factors.....	139
Chapter 6. Discussion of the Findings	141
The Nature of Secondary School Leadership in New Zealand.....	146
Management orientation.....	147
Contextually responsive leadership.....	148
Market philosophies.....	149
Personal accountabilities.....	151

The impact of self-management.....	152
A Contingent Interpretation.....	156
A Multi-Levelled Contingency Model.....	161
The Leadership Dimensions	163
Summary.....	166
Chapter 7. Delimiting Effects of the Self-Managing Schools Concept	167
School Self-Management	167
Changes to the Self-Managing Schools System	171
Summary.....	175
Chapter 8. Conclusion.....	177
Overview of the Study	177
Limitations of the Study.....	178
Implications of the Research Findings for Leadership Literature.....	179
Implications of the Research Findings for Policy and Practice.....	180
Review of the self-managing school system.....	180
New perspectives on school effectiveness.....	181
Recommendations for Future Research.....	182
The impact of the concept of self-management.....	182
New models of secondary school leadership.....	182
A new understanding of learning.....	183
Future Directions.....	183
Appendices	185
References	218

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Participants	57
Table 2: Importance of skills, competencies and dispositions (expressed as a percentage) ..	79
Table 3. Essential skills, competency or disposition by gender (expressed in percentages)..	81
Table 4: Essential Skill, competency or disposition by experience (expressed in percentages)	83
Table 5: Essential Skill, competency or disposition by school decile (expressed in percentages)	84
Table 6. Skill Relationships (Rotated Component Matrix using 5 variables).....	90
Table 7. Leadership Focus.....	95
Table 8. Leadership Focus Factors for All Respondents (by percentage).....	97
Table 9. Leadership Focus Factors by Gender (expressed as a percentage)	99
Table 10. Leadership Focus Factors by Experience (expressed as a percentage)	100
Table 11. Leadership Focus Factors by School Location (expressed as a percentage).....	101
Table 12. Leadership Focus Factors by School Decile (expressed as a percentage).....	102
Table 13: Hours per Week the Participants Spent on Leadership Activity Areas.....	138

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Study design.....	55
Figure 2: Phases in the research process.	56
Figure 3: School Location - Male.....	75
Figure 4: School Location - Female	75
Figure 5: Decile Range - Male	76
Figure 6: Decile - Female	76
Figure 7: School Size - Male	77
Figure 8: School Size - Female	77
Figure 9: School Location and Experience - Female	78
Figure 10: School Location and Experience – Female.....	78
Figure 11. Scree plot.....	89
Figure 12. Boxplots of factors from factor analysis.....	94
Figure 13. Demographic background of the case study participants.....	106
Figure 14. Summary of the leadership style - Greg.....	108
Figure 15. Summary of the impact factors - Greg.....	110
Figure 16. Summary of the leadership model – Greg.....	111
Figure 17. Summary of the leadership style - Mark.....	114

Figure 18. Summary of the impact factors - Mark	116
Figure 19. Summary of the leadership model- Mark.....	117
Figure 20. Summary of the leadership style - Penny.....	120
Figure 21. Summary of the impact factors-Penny.....	122
Figure 22. Summary of the leadership model- Penny	122
Figure 23. Summary of the leadership style - Marge	126
Figure 24. Summary of the impact factors - Marge	128
Figure 25. Summary of the leadership model – Marge	129
Figure 26. Summary of the leadership style - Kevin.....	134
Figure 27. Summary of the impact factors - Kevin	136
Figure 28. Summary of the leadership model – Kevin.....	136
Figure 29. Reactive leadership models of the case study principals.	142
Figure 30. Responsive leadership models of the case study principals.....	143
Figure 31. Contingency leadership model of New Zealand secondary school principals....	156
Figure 32. Contingency leadership of Greg.....	160
Figure 33. Contingency leadership of Marge	161
Figure 34. Multi-leveled Contingency Leadership Model	162
Figure 35. A learning –focused model of school self-management.....	173

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Schools are seen as having an essential role in providing the foundation for the capacity of individuals to play a useful part in society. They have also been seen as an important element in providing the basis for the development of society as a whole. Inherent in those expectations is the belief that schools will keep pace as society changes. Karen Sewell, the Secretary for Education, pointed to this need in her introduction to the New Zealand Curriculum (2007): “Our population has become increasingly diverse, technologies are more sophisticated, and the demands of the workplace are more complex. Our education system must respond to these and the other challenges of our times” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 1).

However, over the last few decades, changes in all aspects of society have accelerated, and there is now the question whether schools are keeping pace with them. This has been highlighted by commentators such as Elmore (2000), Mulford (2006), and Stoll, Fink and Earl (2003), all of whom believe that schools are not progressing and that education systems and educational leaders have a long way to go to meet the educational imperatives of the 21st century. Stoll and Fink (1996) encapsulated this sentiment: “Many of our schools are good schools - if this were 1965” (p. i). In New Zealand, similar concerns about schools can be found in the calls for a new pedagogical school leadership model by Fancy (2005) and Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009). This study points to such calls being problematic in New Zealand because, in its current form, the self-managing educational environment makes it difficult for school leaders to facilitate reform in the leadership. Elmore (2000) wrote about school leadership reform in the United States saying that, “relying on leaders to solve the problem of systemic reform in schools is, to put it bluntly, asking people to do something they don’t know how to do and have had no

occasion to learn in the course of their careers” (p. 2). The same sentiment could well be applied to New Zealand’s school leaders.

No one doubts that schools need to enhance the learning of their students. Nor does anyone doubt that the capacity for them to do so rests largely in the hands and leadership skills of an effective principal providing opportunity for pedagogical enhancement within their school. The recently published *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why. Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration (BES)* (Robinson et al. 2009) clearly identified that the willingness of the principal to provide opportunity for learning development in their school was a significant factor for change in schools. However, it will be evident from this study that the current model of the self-managing school in New Zealand has imposed extensive, systemic demands on schools which have mired principals in a swamp of administration and interschool competitiveness, and which have inhibited their capacity to be educational leaders.

This study is a detailed look at how the self-managing school model has impacted on the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand. It does this by examining the perceptions, experiences, and leadership practices of a group of secondary principals. It began with the understanding that principals saw the recent calls for new leadership models as problematic in the current educational environment because those calls failed to take into account the multiplicity of demands and limitations placed on the role. It also began with the belief that such generalized models of school leadership, as well as those evident in the writings of researchers such as; Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Beresford (2000), Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) and, Sergiovanni (2005), actually mask that complexity. The study had two key aims. The first was to provide a detailed exposition of the role of the principal so that such calls in future would be grounded in the reality of the role. The second was to examine those factors which impacted on the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand.

To achieve these aims the study first examined the leadership perceptions of 94 secondary principals in New Zealand. Then, using those perceptions, it examined the leadership practices of five of those principals. In using the leadership practices of current principals, the study was guided by Dimmock and Walker (2000) and Leithwood et al. (1999), who advocated that any understanding of school leadership should arise from an examination of that leadership in the context in which it is taking place.

During the course of the study, the focus remained on the impact on the role of the educational environment in New Zealand. It did so with the key assumption that the self-managed school model adopted by New Zealand in 1989 was different in significant ways to the self-managing systems elsewhere (Robinson & Ward, 2005; Wylie, 1997). Because of this difference, the role of the principal would also be different. In this way, the study not only identified the impact of the self-managing school model in New Zealand on school leadership, but it also identified the impact of the broader, political, social, and economic context of the New Zealand educational environment. In so doing, the study also draws attention to some significant concerns about the current New Zealand self-managing school system.

New Zealand Self-Managing School System

In most other areas where self-management was adopted, schools remain within districts with a level of common purpose (Wylie, 2007). Because of this, those schools have retained a level of administrative support, or are buffered to some extent, from the individual accountabilities and interschool competitiveness which mark the New Zealand system. Wylie (2007) highlighted these elements as the key difference between the system in New Zealand and that of the successful school self-managing system in Edmonton, Canada.

In New Zealand, schools are isolated entities which operate within a market environment. This has meant that they are in competition for students and, as a consequence, they are subject

to market perceptions of what an effective school is. At the same time, New Zealand schools have a significant level of administrative responsibility. Because of these factors, the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand is especially complex. Principals have to look both outward and inward as they respond to the demands of a multiplicity of stakeholders, while at the same time meeting a deluge of reforms driven by political or economic agendas (Brooker, 2005; Thrupp, 2004).

This is why calls for principals to become educational leaders (Fancy, 2005; Robinson et al., 2009) could be viewed as problematic for New Zealand secondary school principals. As both Wylie (1997) and Brooker (2005) have pointed out, there has been little effort to alter the responsibility of principals in the last three decades. They are still required to look after property, finance, and staffing issues, as well as meet increased politically-driven accountabilities. In effect, they are expected to run a medium-sized business as efficient business leaders, as well as be educational leaders in an organization whose outcomes are, at best, uncertain. Consequently, the role of the secondary principal remains fragmented, dynamic, and marked by conflicting expectations. More importantly it has meant the role has become increasingly confined to contextualized problem-solving (Thrupp, 2006).

Purpose and Focus of the Study

The purpose and focus of this study was to provide a grounded insight into the nature of the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand. By using participant experience, the study investigated the extent to which three key leadership elements (individual perception of leadership, societal and political expectations of school leadership, and school context), interact to create the particular leadership style individual principals adopt.

It was accepted at the start of the study that there have been some concerns in some quarters about using only principal perception to study school leadership. For example, Southworth

(1998b) and Day et al.(2000; 2008) argued the need for multiple perspectives using document analysis, interviews, and observations. As Day et al. (2000) wrote, “On evidence of the literature . . . it would appear that previous research has relied too heavily on head teachers themselves as the primary source of data on leadership in schools” (p. 29). However, for this study, the researcher believed that an understanding of the pressures on the role was more properly undertaken through the perspectives of those who performed the role. In this way, it was felt that the links between the individual leadership models, school context, and external leadership expectations could be more readily explored. Also, by examining the phenomenon through participant experience, the researcher was guided by Southworth (1998b), who pointed to the importance of contextual understanding when examining leadership. Southworth argued that one of the weaknesses of much of the existing educational leadership literature was that it drew general conclusions and did not take into account the contextual complexity in which the leadership was performed. Consequently, this study used as its prime data source the leadership activity of a group of principals in a range of secondary schools in New Zealand.

To guide the study, three major research questions were developed, and some guiding questions were also devised which were designed to inform the data gathering and analysis process. These major research questions arose from two specific insights gained from a close study of the literature on school leadership which reinforced the experience of the researcher as a secondary principal. The first insight was that, while the literature acknowledged that school leadership was complex and multi-faceted, there were few specific details as to the current nature of the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand. The second insight was that strong societal and political expectations of school leadership and of an effective school were key factors in determining the nature of the leadership (Elmore, 2000; Gunter 2001; Leithwood, 2005b). The research questions are detailed below:

1. What is the nature of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?

2. What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals?
3. What are the implications of the findings for a conceptual understanding of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?

In addition, the following three sub questions were devised to assist in the data gathering and analysis process:

- Is secondary school principalship in New Zealand different from other forms of school leadership?
- What are the contingent actions, interactions and conditions both from inside and outside the school which influence a principal's general understanding of the role?
- Is there a link between school context, the person of the principal and the individual leadership style adopted?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it attempts to provide a detailed understanding of the current role of the New Zealand secondary school principal. In so doing, it seeks to identify those factors which define the nature of the role and limit the leadership independence of principals. In particular, it seeks to identify how the present model of self-managing schools in New Zealand has impacted on the capacity of secondary school principals to be educational leaders. It also suggests ways that the current self-managing schools model could change so that schools and their leaders may adapt to meet the imperatives for change of the 21st century.

Structure of the Thesis

In this chapter, a general introduction to the thesis is provided in which the context, purpose, research questions, and guiding questions are outlined. The significance of the study is also explained. Chapter 2 provides a critical review of the literature of school leadership. In

particular, it points to some of the broader issues pertaining to the nature of school leadership and of the self-managing school system in New Zealand. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology chosen for the study. In it, justification for the mixed quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis methods is provided. The theoretical underpinnings of a constructivist paradigm used in the interpretive phase of the study are also explored, and ethical issues arising from the study are explained and discussed. Chapters 4 and 5 then outline the results from the survey and the case studies.

In Chapter 6 the implications of these findings are explored. In particular, this chapter details the reasons why the study reached the conclusion from the data that current secondary school principalship in New Zealand is a limited form of contingency leadership. As part of these conclusions, possible changes in the current self-managing school model are suggested, as well as the development of a new secondary leadership model focused on the learning needs of the students within the school. In Chapter 7 a possible paradigm shift in educational leadership is discussed and a new educational leadership paradigm offered. Finally, the conclusions of the study are discussed in Chapter 8. In this chapter, the significance of the study for the theoretical literature, future research and policy development is also outlined.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Overview

In this chapter the literature that guided this study is reviewed. The focus of the review was informed by the belief of Dimmock and Walker (2000), Elmore (2000), and Southworth (1998b) that any understanding of school leadership should arise from a study of such leadership within the context in which it is taking place. Elmore (2000) also pointed out that any understanding of the role should account for the impact of the wider social and political context as well as the specific school context. Consequently, this review sought to identify the degree to which societal and political expectations and perceptions of leadership, as well as specific contextual factors, contributed to the leadership of secondary principals in New Zealand.

To do this, the researcher took three perceptions as a starting point. The first was that the role of a school principal is defined by the societal and political perceptions and expectations of an effective school from the educational environment in which the school is placed (Elmore, 2000). The second was that within the self-managing school system, school leadership has, as its key function, to maintain the interface between these perceptions and the school context (Gunter, 2001). The third was that these perceptions and expectations were especially powerful in New Zealand because of the particular nature of the self-managing schools model in New Zealand (Robinson & Ward, 2005; Thrupp, 2006; Wylie, 1997; 2007).

To determine the validity of those beliefs the review was undertaken in two parts. First it sought to identify, through the literature, how broadly held leadership views have impacted on school leadership in general, and to link those views to perceptions of school leadership in New Zealand. To do this the review used the broad leadership theoretical settings identified by Yukl

(2010): trait, behavior, power-influence, situational and, intergrative and sought to draw connections between them and the current model of secondary school leadership in New Zealand. At the same time, the review examined the self-managing school system in New Zealand and how it has impacted on school leadership.

The review then sought to identify the nature of current leadership activities of principals by determining how relationships between school context and the personal leadership perceptions and the leadership skills of the principal have influenced the individual leadership models principals adopt within their school. Finally, a study of recent research on secondary school principalship in New Zealand was undertaken to identify the nature of the role within the New Zealand educational environment. The chapter ends by linking these insights to the research questions that guided this study.

Focus and Scope of the Review

The focus of this review was on literature which would enable the researcher to identify the nature of the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand. However, two issues arose from that focus and these impacted on how the review was conducted. The first was the amount of material specific to the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand. While material does exist and the amount is growing, it is not as extensive as the literature on other forms of school leadership in New Zealand. The second issue was the vast amount of literature on school leadership. Day et al. (2000) described the literature on school leadership as, “a bewildering array of theories models, principles and strategies” (p. 14). On account of these two issues, two strategies were adopted. The first was to extend the review to more generalized school leadership literature and identify concepts which could be reasonably related to the New Zealand school environment. The second was to mostly confine the review to school leadership literature written

since 1990. This date was chosen as it was identified as the time when the self-managing school concept first impacted on school leadership in New Zealand.

Another concern was the timing of the review. An early literature review could contradict the constructivist approach which, in the conceptual phase of the study, was assumed to be the best approach. This assumption was guided by the views of Southworth (1998b), who argued that school leadership could only be properly understood by examining it within the context it was taking place. However, Glaser (2002), Chenitz (1986), and Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued that in a grounded study approach, any review of the literature should be delayed until after the data had been collected and analysed. Glaser, in particular, felt that delaying the review would ensure the researcher would avoid having pre-conceived ideas, conceptual frameworks, or theories of others which could potentially influence the data analysis.

Nevertheless, two considerations convinced the researcher that this early literature review was appropriate. The first was that such a review could overcome any possible bias created by the researcher being a practising principal. The second was that, by exposing the researcher to conceptual understandings about school leadership beyond his personal experience, it would enable the researcher to gain some insight in to those factors, beyond his experience, which also contributed to the nature of the role. It was felt that to enter into a data gathering process without those understandings on which to centre the collection and analysis of data could mean that the study could give undue weight to the personal perceptions of the researcher or to atypical leadership models.

Consequently, the review reported in this chapter occurred during the conceptualization phase of the study. It consists of literature drawn from both New Zealand school leadership research and international research about leadership concepts. It was, however, continually revisited throughout the study as themes and concepts came to light. This meant that as the study

progressed, there was a tendency to move back and forward between the collection and analysis of the data and the review of the literature, in a constant process of recursive interaction, described by Glesne (1999) as a “dance with the literature” (p. 21). In this way it was felt the review met both the concerns of the grounded approach theorists and the practical considerations arising from the position of the researcher.

Generalized Leadership Perceptions

The first focus of the review was to identify those broad leadership concepts and expectations, which provided the theoretical basis for the generalized leadership perceptions about the role. Elmore (2000) pointed out that these broadly held perceptions and expectations, which are linked to similar perceptions of the function of schools, are powerful factors in determining the nature of school leadership. In particular, he identified two key beliefs that contributed to the strength of these perceptions. The first was the societal belief that leaders can be distinguished by special traits or skills. The second was the political and societal expectations that school leadership models, devised remotely from the school, could form the basis of good leadership practice. The degree to which these beliefs are imbedded in leadership concepts was evident in the school leadership literature which is rich with lists of skills, attributes and competencies principals need to have (Day et al., 2008; 2009; Leithwood and Duke, 1999; Sergiovanni, 2002), and with models of leadership practice they should imitate. Leithwood et al. (1999) identified 26 such models. Both of these concepts are discussed in the following sections. The impact of these concepts on leadership thinking is also discussed. In particular their contribution to the development of two clearly defined leadership dimensions is outlined.

Defining leadership by a set of skills, attributes or dispositions.

The idea that effective leadership can be synthesized into a set of skills, traits and attributes is not new. Attempts were made as far back as the 1930's to define effective leadership using

lists of personal attributes (Burns, 1978). While this concept is no longer accepted by many scholars as a way to describe leadership effectiveness, it is, nevertheless, well embedded in societal and political perceptions and expectations of school leadership (Gunter, 2001).

In New Zealand, this belief that school leaders have special skills or dispositions has been given particular strength by the nature of the self-managing schools system. The general theory of the self-managing school system was that responsibility should be devolved to schools and monitored through personalized accountabilities (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988; Gunter, 2001, Robinson & Ward, 2005). In New Zealand, this devolution of responsibility and the level of personal accountability were especially powerful because schools were isolated entities (Perris, 1998; Robinson & Ward, 2005; Wylie, 1997). This isolation had two effects on the leadership. First it focused attention on the leadership practices of the principal and on the context of the individual school (Robinson & Ward, 2005). This latter effect is especially significant as in New Zealand schools were expected to meet market values by competing for students (Thrupp, 2006). The second effect was that concepts of what constituted a 'good school' came to rest in the hands of the public which then applied broadly held leadership concepts to school leadership (Codd, 1993; Wylie, 2007). As a consequence in New Zealand, effective school leadership came to be recognized as competency in a set of generalized leadership skills and effective leadership and effective school concepts have become entwined (Robinson & Ward, 2005).

More importantly, the strength of this view, that school leadership can be recognized by a set of skills, has not diminished despite changes in leadership thinking. While more recent leadership theorists have moved towards broader leadership competencies or dispositions and leadership is now being seen by them as part of the whole organization (Harris, 2008), the concept that effective leaders are competent in particular skills remains engrained in societal leadership views (Elmore, 2000). In New Zealand this belief is further reinforced by being expressed in some of the official literature, (Education Review, 1997; 2011; Ministry of

Education, 2009) and by the leadership perceptions and actions of some current principals who became school leaders, or were senior managers, during its ascendancy in the 1990's (Wylie, 1997). It is also reinforced by some of the current school leadership literature (Day et al, 2000; Notman & Henry, 2009; Robinson et al., 2009) which focus on leadership effectiveness being identified through the principal displaying particular skills or traits, in particular, the principal's energy levels, stress tolerance, internal control orientation, emotional maturity and integrity (Yukl, 2010). It is also sustained by the 'blame and shame' mentality of the media, the use of tables of results in the media to compare schools, and by the tendency of successive governments to blame systemic failings on the personal failings of the principal (Gunter, 2001; Thrupp, 2006). This has meant that, despite the fact that scholars now tend to describe school leadership activity in broader terms, such as 'strategic' or 'moral' (Begley 1999; Caldwell, 2010; Sergiovanni 2002), the belief that school leaders need particular leadership skills and traits remains well entrenched in the leadership perceptions being applied to school leadership in New Zealand (Brooker, 2005).

Gunter (2001) and Harris (2008), writing about school leadership in the United Kingdom, identified two additional causes for the persistence of this concept which could be equally applied to New Zealand. The first has been the demand for personalized accountabilities from those in society who feel they have benefitted from the inequities of the current system. Thrupp (2006) believed this was a particular aspect of the New Zealand self-managing school system. This view was supported by Brooker (2005) and Wylie (1997). They also believed that there are elements of society everywhere who find personalized accountabilities a convenient mechanism to maintain control over the education system by linking school effectiveness to the competency of the principal in a set of comparative leadership skills (Codd,1993). Smyth (2011) described this aspect of the self-managing school system as placing control in the hands of "savvy,

upwardly mobile, middle-class educational consumers, who know how to work schools politically to their advantage” (p.105).

The second cause has been the need for governments, operating in an international economic arena, to assert greater control over learning outcomes. Smyth (2011) described this aspect of self-management as an “ideologically warehoused” (p.112) phenomenon from the economic agendas of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. This need has become even more important in the last two decades as countries have begun to compete on an international economic stage in which international tests of educational outcomes, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), are seen as indicators of economic success. As a consequence governments have become more focused on the nature of effective schools and school leadership (Day et al., 2009; Elmore, 2000; Gunter, 2001; Harris 2008; Macpherson, 2010; Notman & Henry, 2009). This has also meant the government has had to ensure school leaders meet increasing amounts of technical compliance demands and to insist on the use of specific skills to meet those demands (Caldwell, 2006a; 2010; Gunter, 2001; Perris, 1998; Robinson & Ward, 2005). These demands frequently took the form of list of standards, reinforced by external review.

This use of standards to control the profession has been especially prevalent in England, Australia, and Canada (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood et al., 1999; Wylie, 2007). It has also been a key factor in the New Zealand educational environment (Wylie, 2007). For instance, in 2001 the role of the secondary principal was redefined by the Ministry of Education in terms of generic and enterprise leadership competencies (Hay Group, 2001). In 2009, a set of new professional standards for secondary principals was also published. This second set of standards listed a range of leadership attributes and leadership skills a principal should be competent in; such as, creating a learning environment; personal skills, such as creating relationships and, management skills (Ministry of Education, 2009). These lists or standards, despite their quasi-

professional form, were in fact little more than lists of personal traits or competencies (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Macpherson, 2010).

In New Zealand, this need for the government to assert control over educational outcomes has also resulted in a range of leadership initiatives which, while being designed to provide advice and guidance for principals, actually define the nature and form of their leadership. For instance, the Ministry of Education's website, *Leadspace*, the professional leadership strategy, the Kiwi Principals Initiative (Ministry of Education, 2008) and, the publication of Best Evidence Syntheses (Ministry of Education, 2003-2009) all define school leadership in terms of broad skills and attributes or leadership models, described by Macpherson (2010) as little more than "politically correct and nationalistic models" (p. 142).

The consequence of this focus on leadership trait and dispositions has been that the strongly held societal belief that school leaders have special skills remains a key aspect of broadly held perceptions of school leadership effectiveness and of the nature of the role of the principal (Gunter, 2001).

Leadership models of practice.

A second key factor in developing generalized perceptions about the nature of school leadership has been the belief that effective leadership can be created by principals imitating models of best practice. For instance, the concept can be seen as a basis for some of the professional literature from the Ministry of Education, such as the Professional Standards for Secondary Principals (2009) and in the Kiwi Principal Initiative (Ministry of Education 2008). It can also be seen in some of the generalized descriptions of an effective leader in the media. Links between leadership models and societal views of leadership are also strong because some models of leadership, such as the transformational leader, matched societal views of what a leader should be (Elmore, 2000). Leadership models also played a significant part in linking

school leadership practice to societal leadership perceptions (Gunter, 2001). As Gunter (2001) pointed out, the gradual loss of favour of the neo-liberalist economic views contributed to the moral leadership concept and to the calls by scholars such as Sergiovanni (2001) and Leithwood (2001) for school leadership models that were focused on forms of moral authority or values. Likewise, Harris (2008) felt the internationalization of economic forces and the need for countries to compete educationally in international tests, contributed to the focus on student outcomes and hence the focus on pedagogical leadership (Fancy, 2005; Robinson et al., 2009). In the same way, concerns caused by the world-wide recession and the belief that schools should contribute to economic development contributed to the strategic leadership model and the enterprise principal concept of Caldwell (2010).

Leadership models were also important in terms of developing school leadership understanding. While they provided a theoretical basis for the societal and political expectations of an effective school leader, they also reinforced the concept that school leadership was a different form of leadership from business leadership (Sergiovanni, 2002; Southworth, 1998a). In so doing they enabled a particular set of school leadership skills to be recognized which could be used as the basis for descriptions of leadership effectiveness (Gunter, 2001).

However, the use of leadership models also contributed to the complexity of the role for the individual principal because they created a dual leadership concept; the principal as educational leader or moral leader and, the principal as manager or organizational leader (Cardno & Collett, 2004). It was this duality which seemed to underlie much of the role conflict identified by Billot (2003). On one hand leadership models pointed to effective school leadership being a high order form of leadership and reinforced this by using titles such as 'transformational' (Leithwood et al., 1999), 'moral' (Sergiovanni, 2002) or 'values driven' (Day et al., 2001). On the other hand, the daily reality of principals was largely short term problem-solving or dilemma management (Cardno & Collett, 2004; Billot, 2003; Brooker, 2005). This duality of view and experiences led

to the concept, identified by Billot (2003) and Elmore (2000) that principals saw the role as consisting of two leadership dimensions; a symbolic leadership dimension in which they met societal leadership perceptions and a practical leadership dimension in which they problem-solved or dilemma managed within the school. Bolamn and Deal (2008), however, believed that organizations were complex entities and many factors made organizational life complicated, ambiguous and unpredictable. They suggested the biggest challenge for leaders was to frame their organization in a world that was more global, competitive and turbulent. They argued that leaders needed to be more flexible and versatile enough to reframe their experience. They also suggested that management was a moral obligation and leaders should attempt to combine realism with a commitment to larger values and purposes. This would seem to suggest that some of the duality identified by Billot (2003), Cardno and Collett (2004) and Elmore (2000) was the product of the environment and new leadership expectations rather than simply different leadership perceptions.

To demonstrate the links between leadership models, current social and political leadership effectiveness perceptions and the broad leadership concepts which form the basis of the perceptions of school leadership in New Zealand, four broad leadership models were examined by the researcher. These models did not represent the sum of all school leadership models. Leithwood et al (1999) for instance, identified twenty-six school leadership models, many of which they felt were the same. Nevertheless, they were chosen because they enabled the reviewer to examine the links between broad leadership theory and school leadership concepts. In particular, they enabled the reviewer to examine school leadership concepts in relation to the key organizational constructs identified by Mintzberg (1983). Mintzberg identified, that within organizations, relationships were either personalized or formally detached according to their role in a way that was similar to the pattern variables identified by Talcott Parsons (1951). These relationship patterns provided the basis for the loose or tight couplings Leithwood et al. (1999)

identified within most models of school leadership. Mintzberg (1983) also identified that leadership behavior arose from the complex interplay between by the nature of the organization, the roles of the individuals within the organization and assumptions within the organization and the community as to the purpose of the leadership. These models also enabled the reviewer to examine how shifts in societal views impacted on leadership effectiveness perceptions and expectations. The four models chosen were; transformational leadership (Leithwood et al., 1999), moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1987), values-led contingent leadership (Day et al. 2000) and, strategic leadership (Caldwell, 2010).

Transformational leadership.

Of the leadership models, transformational leadership is regarded by most scholars as having the greatest impact on school leadership perceptions. According to Burns (1978) transformational leadership it is not based on a "give and take" relationship of transactional leadership, but on the leader's personality, traits and ability to make a change through example, articulation of an energizing vision and challenging goals. Burns also theorized that transforming leadership and transactional leadership were mutually exclusive styles. However, transactional and transformational leadership operate on one leadership continuum.

However, the personalized nature of transformational leadership is a key school leadership concept because it matched societal expectations of what a leader should be; the charismatic innovator (Elmore, 2000). As Day et al. (2000) pointed out, it can be found in a variety of ways in other leadership models. He identified it in four such models; 'liberation' (Tampoe, 1998), 'educative' (Duignan & McPherson, 1992), 'invitational' (Stoll & Fink, 1996) and, 'moral' leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992).

As a model it has as its basis, organizational improvement through a leader who established commonly held visions and goals. Leithwood et al. (1999) described a transformational leader as

one whose prime motivation was to increase the organization's capacity for change by inspiring the people in the organization through a common purpose of organizational improvement. In other words, the leader motivated people to do more than they otherwise would. In this sense the model gained some of its characteristics from leadership trait theory. It was also popular because it matched the leadership perceptions of neo-liberalists who maintained the leadership capacity of the principal was responsible for the success or otherwise of a school.

The model was important in the evolution of educational leadership perception because it provided the basis for the belief that school leadership was about organizational improvement through improving the capacity of the individuals within the organization. However, it undervalued the amount of management tasks principals were required to perform and the level of technical accountability required of them by the government (Wylie, 1997). It also undervalued the impact on the leadership of the practical leadership dimensions by largely ignoring the impact of the school and the person of the leader. Elmore (2000) and Gunter (2001) pointed out that school leadership is not free of the society in which it is performed and of the personal histories of those performing it. In this way it also failed to account for the fact that school leadership and school effectiveness was a highly political issue within which there were competing versions of what represented school effectiveness (Gunter, 2001).

Moral or values leadership.

The second leadership model chosen was that of moral leadership. The key advocates of this model were Begley (1999) and Sergiovanni (1992; 2002; 2005). Moral leaders could also be transformational leaders but, according to Sergiovanni (1992), rather than personal attributes, they used moral authority as the basis of their leadership. Consequently, this model represented a move in thinking about school leadership away from links to trait theory to a more symbolic leadership based on the development of an organizational culture.

What was significant about this model was that it confirmed the belief that schools had a social function and that school leadership was, consequently, different to business leadership. More importantly, it opened the possibility of the school context impacting on the leadership because, as Sergiovanni (1992) argued, school leadership models should be based on the real practices of teachers and principals. It also gave a glimpse into the contextual complexity of the role by defining school leadership as a process of navigating through values conflicts. This understanding, expanded on by Begley (1999), Day et al. (2009) and Leithwood et al. (1999), pointed to school leaders adopting a level of contingent responsiveness because of the need to choose high order values over low order values when confronted with a values conflict within the school. In this sense, the model provided the basis for the belief of Day, Harris and Hadfield (2001) and Leithwood et al. (1999) that school leadership effectiveness focus should shift from the bureaucratic and technical elements of the role, to a more global view.

However, in defining the role of the principal as a cultural or moral activity, this model also undervalued the strength of the technical, political and economic compliances which were features of the self-managed school concept. Nevertheless, it strengthened the understanding that school leadership was different to business leadership. It also provided a basis for the distributive leadership concept of scholars such as Harris (2008) by suggesting that school leadership did not reside in one person but could be distributed throughout the organization. It also pointed to the impact of context, in particular the staff, on the leadership by determining that the principal and the staff were inextricably bound together within a single organizational culture.

Values-driven contingent leadership.

The third leadership model chosen was the values-driven contingent leadership model of Day et al. (2000). In this model the principal was still a transformational leader but he or she was strongly values-orientated and applied those values through contextually responsive leadership activities.

This model was important in the development of leadership perceptions as it acknowledged the multi-faceted nature of the role and the impact of the person of the principal on the role. As Day et al. (2000) indicated, while being values-led, principals were also people-centered, achievement-orientated, inward and outward facing and had to manage a whole range of tensions and dilemmas. In a similar vein to Sergiovanni's (1992; 2002) moral leadership model, principals were also more concerned with cultural change than structural change. Also, the effective principal was one who had moved beyond a narrow rational, managerial view of their role to a more holistic, values-led approach, guided by personal experience and preference.

As with the previous models, this model reinforced the concept that school leadership was a different form of leadership. It also gave greater weight to the contingent nature of the role by maintaining that effective leadership lay within the capacity of the principal to form relationships within the organization. For instance, an effective principal was reflective, caring and highly principled and capable of emphasising the human dimension of their management enterprise. However, it also largely ignored the fact that the managerial aspects of the role and the technical skills needed to run a school remained a constant factor in the self-managing school concept. It also undervalued the strength of the competing political and economic demands on the principal and the impact of the societal views of school and school leadership effectiveness.

Strategic leadership.

The final model chosen represented a shift in perception to the original self-managing school concept in which the leadership is subject to public scrutiny and controlled by strong political and societal expectations. This model gained strength in the early 2000s in response to a changing international economic landscape. To some extent, it also emerged because of concerns about the lack of impact of the self-managing school model on educational outcomes. Its basis was that schools were not community focused but part of the national economic context with the leader being an enterprise principal. In this model, the principal looked beyond the school to a

broader social and political context and had the role of aligning their school with national economic development strategies. Caldwell (2010) described this model as the product of the, “significant tensions between the ‘new enterprise logic’ and the status quo scenario for current schools” (p. 96). This model also placed schools and their leaders squarely in the position of being an organization for economic betterment and as such, responsive to societal and political expectations for educational outcomes.

As its major exponent, Caldwell (2010) argued that schools should no longer be seen as comfortable learning communities but organizations which were responsive to the educational perceptions of key groups in society. He also argued that perceptions of the role of the principal should move away from that of symbolic or cultural leadership to a leader who takes into account national and international economic and social trends and builds the capacity of students for future social and economic development (Cheng, 2010; Caldwell, 2010; Quong & Walker, 2010).

What distinguished this model was the level of the focus on political perceptions and expectations of leadership. In it the principal needed to adopt a leadership style which took into account the rights of stakeholders to determine what was taught and to know what was happening within the school. In essence, this model was an updated and more economically overt version of the political and economic philosophies which drove the standards-based school system reforms of the early 1990s (Elmore, 2000) and the self-managed school concept in New Zealand in 1989 (Codd, 1993; Robinson & Ward, 2005; Wylie, 1997). In so doing it clearly established that principals lacked leadership independence but were directly responsible to social and political perceptions of school purpose.

This model was important because it articulated the newly strengthened neo-liberal concept that schools and their leaders should be market-responsive. While it appeared to be a step back to

the thinking of the early 1990s, the reality is that this view of school leadership and school purpose is gaining new strength as the worldwide recession moves current political and economic thinking towards a more market-driven ideology. In New Zealand the concept that principals should be market-responsive has always been an important aspect of the self-managing schools model and this model provided a theoretical basis for the strengthening of that concept. However it paid little attention to the impact, identified by Elmore (2000), Harris (2007) and Gunter (2001), of influential groups in society, who want schools to conform to the status quo because they perceived the current system had afforded them an advantage. Because of this, it was a leadership model which undervalued the inequities which exist within the current system and the degree to which those inequities impact on current school leadership practice by forcing principals to be market responsive rather than focused on the learning needs of their students.

Leadership strands within the self-management system.

The two key leadership elements; expectations of leadership effectiveness based on traits and skills and, effective leadership being defined by models of practice were major factors contributing to the belief held by many principals, that school leadership consisted of two dimensions; a symbolic leadership dimension and, a contextualized leadership dimension. The research of Billot (2003) identified the existence of these dimensions as the basis of the role conflict felt by secondary school principals in New Zealand. On one hand they were aware of, and could articulate, a conceptual leadership view that was similar to that identified with trait leadership theory or models of best practice. On the other hand, their daily leadership activity was contextualized management or problem-solving. More importantly, both Billot (2003) and Gunter (2001) argued that the degree to which broad leadership concepts were imbedded in societal leadership perceptions meant that to be seen to be effective, the principal needed to be effective both in the conceptual leadership dimension and the contextualized leadership dimension. Robinson and Ward (2005) and Cardno and Collett (2004) believed this duality was

especially strong in New Zealand because of the nature of the self-managing school system in New Zealand.

In adopting the self-managing school concept in the late 1980s, New Zealand was following an international trend towards the devolution of responsibility from the government to the community (Codd, 1993). However, in New Zealand the reasons for its adoption were also linked to some quite specific concerns. The first was the need to control spending within the whole public sector. The second was to provide the community with a level of control over schools. The third was concerns about educational outcomes and the need for the government to control them. These reasons resulted in a system which had three, interrelated strands, each of which required a different leadership response.

The first of those strands was the democratic-populist strand which saw parental involvement in the running of schools as a form of participatory democracy (Robinson & Ward, 2005). This strand came from the government's perception of the feelings of helplessness and disempowerment felt by the community about education. It also came from many submissions to the Task Force to Review Educational Administration (Picot, 1988) in the late 1980s that called for more community involvement in schools. Parental choice was also seen by the government as direct form of accountability (Codd, 1993).

The Picot Report (Picot, 1988) responded to those concerns by declaring, "the running of learning institutions should be a partnership between the teaching staff (the professionals) and the community" (p. xi). The effect of this was to make all schools individual entities by the establishment of the system of Boards of Trustees (Education Act, 1989) which made schools more responsive to community perceptions through a system of localized responsibility. These boards were also empowered to appoint and appraise the principal as the "Board's chief executive" (Education Act, 1989). Because of this, and because these boards had more power

than any other self-managed school system (Education Review Office, 1997), a mixture of localized leadership perceptions, as well as some broadly held societal perceptions of leadership emphasizing leadership skills and leadership personality, became part of the expectations and perceptions of the function of the principal. This also ensured that the principal would need to be sensitive to community perceptions of the school and of school leadership.

The second strand was the managerial strand. This strand saw local governance as the way to increase effectiveness of educational delivery while retaining centralized control through technical compliance (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988; Perris, 1992). Central to this was a belief that school efficiency would be created by freeing up local administration from centralized bureaucracy, thereby allowing managers to be responsive to the needs of the local stakeholders (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988; Caldwell, 2006a; Codd, 1993). Instead, this strand brought with it the need for principals to focus on the managerial and technical aspects of their school (Billot, 2003; Wylie, 1997; 2007). In addition, it had the effect of isolating the principal from the teaching and learning, and instead placed their focus on the systems which support the teaching (Elmore, 2000; Gunter, 2001; Wylie, 1997). Consequently, a significant proportion of the principal's role was the use of a range of quite specific managerial skills, competence in which could then be used to determine his or her effectiveness as a school leader. This aspect of leadership effectiveness has remained especially strong in New Zealand because of the on-going use by the government of professional standards for principals, and the tendency of external agencies such as The Education Review Office (ERO) to use lists of competencies as measures of leadership effectiveness (ERO, 2011).

The third strand was the market strand (Codd, 1993; Robinson & Ward, 2005; Thrupp, 2006). This strand was intended to create school efficiency through schools competing for students, and was grounded in the neo-liberal belief that competition improved the delivery of most services. The Treasury also took the view that state intervention was neither equitable nor

efficient (Codd, 1993). This view also arose from the belief that education in New Zealand was poorly managed because of provider capture (Fisk & Ladd, 2000). This strand had three effects on school leadership.

The first effect was to bring to the role a stronger focus on school image and school context. This further reinforced the need for principals to focus on the systems that supported teaching and learning rather than the learning itself. Elmore (2000) described this aspect of self-management as a ritualistic leadership, which was designed to buffer the teachers and the school from public scrutiny and to give the appearance of some control over the teaching and learning.

The second effect was to encourage schools, the community, and the media to identify school and school leadership effectiveness by using relatively narrow ranges of measurable or comparative outcomes or personal characteristics (Fisk & Ladd, 2000; Thrupp, 2006). This brought a quasi-scientific focus (Lauder & Hughes, 1999) to the role. It also meant that leadership effectiveness came to be determined by a limited range of comparative criteria, often reinforced by the generalized reports of ERO and the publication of the so-called “league tables” in newspapers (Thrupp, 2006). It also brought with it the use of those measures to position the school in the market place.

The third effect was that community perceptions of leadership, and what represented an effective principal, became very important in terms of the leadership activities of the principal. In particular, the marketing of schools, and schools being judged by their success in attracting students, encouraged stakeholders to use quite specific leadership skills to assess a principal’s effectiveness. In this way entrepreneurialism or school imaging became key leadership skills (Wylie, 1997).

These three strands, and the need for principals to respond to them, meant the self-managing school system in New Zealand had a significant impact on defining the nature of the role of the

principal. First, it ensured the role would be a complex mixture of educational and non-educational leadership functions (Robinson & Ward, 2005; Wylie, 1997). Second, by subjecting the activities of individual principals to community scrutiny, and by linking their leadership to societal and political perceptions of leadership, it ensured that the principal would be sensitive to the community expectations of them or of the school (Codd, 1993). Finally, it had the effect of school leaders being made to focus their leadership activity on contextualized problem-solving, creating the need for the principals to maintain an interface between their school's context and the external perceptions and expectations of school effectiveness.

Consequently, the self-managing school model in New Zealand is seen as a key factor in defining the nature of the role of the secondary school principal. Its impact on the leadership of individual principals also meant that for the purpose of this research, any understanding about the nature of the role could not arise from a study of leadership models or broad leadership concepts alone. Such an understanding would more appropriately come from a careful examination of the leadership activities undertaken by principals within the school. It was this insight that gave strength to the belief that this study should adopt a constructivist stance for its data collection and analysis.

The Principals' Role

In the second phase of the review, the aim was to identify the nature of the leadership activities of principals. In particular, the aim was to identify those factors that impacted most on the leadership of the individual principal.

Two key factors were identified. The first was the expectations of the stakeholders from inside and outside the school: the parents, school staff and the government and its advisors (Elmore, 2000). The second was the personal leadership perceptions and skills of the principal. These factors are discussed in the following sections.

The impact of stakeholder expectations and perceptions.

A key characteristic of the role of the principal is its complexity and the degree to which a multiplicity of expectations are placed on the principal from a variety of stakeholders from within and outside the school (Day et al., 2009; Leithwood et al., 1999). The literature reviewed made it clear that the workload of principals, everywhere, was significant and that the complexity of the role lay largely, with the need for principals to be responsive in a wide variety of ways to a wide variety of demands. Elmore (2000) and Wylie (1997; 2007) pointed to the increased administrative workload of principals generated by the demands of the government since the early 1990s. The need for contextual responsiveness was identified by Boon and Stout (2004), Day et al., (2000; 2009), Dimmock and Donoghue (1996), Fidler (2000) and, Komives et al., (2005). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), Walker and Quong (2005), Day et al., (2009), and Notman and Henry (2009) all believed that part of the role's complexity lay within the need for principals to match their leadership activities to perceptions of need from within the school.

Day et al. (2009) and Leithwood and Duke (1999) argued that principals could not adopt a particular model of leadership, but had to draw from an eclectic range of leadership responses because of the variety of expectations upon the role. These expectations were also identified by Foster and Hilaire (2004) as a key reason why efforts to define the role by using lists of preferred behaviours or predetermined leadership responses was satisfactory only for the technical aspects of the role. They were also the reason why Sweatt (2002) believed that the role had no particular form but was a juggling act in which the principal needed to demonstrate contextual awareness by establishing links between their vision, self-interest and the perceptions and self-interest of the members from within or outside the school.

This need for contextual responsiveness was the basis of d'Arbon, Duignan and Duncan's (2002) claim that school leadership was less of a purposeful activity and more of a responsive activity in which the principal develops links between ranges of stakeholder perceptions. Sweatt

(2002) likened the style of leadership needed by a principal to that of someone conducting an orchestra in which the harmony was created from the dissonance within the musicians and the participation of the audience. The difference being, however, that while members of an orchestra have a single goal, often individual teachers do not. In this way a school operates more as a functional hybrid (Mitzberg, 1983) than a coherent organization with tightly focused goals. As a consequence, the role of the principal is one of supervising, rather than controlling, a group of skilled professionals and matching the skills of those professionals to community expectations of school purpose. This contextualized complexity was also the reason why Elmore (2000), in his study of principals in the United States, argued that the requirements of the modern principal's role were not that of leadership, but a form of ritualistic management tasks. Gunter (2001) and Thrupp (2006) also believed that the role was made more complex by the strong political expectations on the technical aspects of schools.

However, the indications from the literature suggest that the role in New Zealand is especially complex. Thrupp (2006) and Wylie (2007) argued that this was because the political demands on principals in New Zealand were particularly strong. They identified two reasons for the strength of these demands. The first was the degree to which the government controlled key aspects of school functions such as resourcing and staffing. This need initially arose from the inability of the government in the 1990s to control the way that decisions by one school impacted on another school (Robinson & Ward, 2005). This had brought with it resourcing issues and an unaccounted for inequity in terms of educational access (Codd, 1993; Thrupp, 2006). The second reason was the growing world recession in the 1990s and the internationalization of the economy in the 1980s. These meant that the government was faced with the need to meet international economic imperatives and adhere to international funding policies.

Consequently, because of the level of political control experienced by all principals in New Zealand, a significant aspect of the leadership activity of the secondary principal is made up of a wide range of imposed, systemic and operational necessities which control key aspects of the school, such as staffing, resourcing, curriculum, and assessment. These impositions, coupled with the on-going perception of policy makers and politicians that the role should be focused on measurable or trainable aspects (Holland, 2004), the standardized Education Review Office reports (Thrupp, 1996), plus the media focus on narrow sets of outcomes (Wylie, 1997; 2007), have meant that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is made more complex because it operates in a climate of imposed construction. This imposition has been further enhanced by the tendency of successive governments to follow the examples of governments in other countries and defining the role by drawing links between school leadership competencies and private sector leadership competencies (Codd, 1993; 2004). These impositions have also been additionally strengthened by the use of professional standards and the use of the National Administrative Guidelines to define functions within the role, such as healthy eating (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Community perceptions and expectations of school effectiveness have also been a strong factor in defining the role of the principal in New Zealand. The rhetoric around the changes to self-management in 1989 was that schools would develop individually and more closely serve their communities (Perris, 1998; Picot, 1988; Robinson & Ward, 2005; Smyth, 2011). The reality has been quite different and the impact of self-management has, “produced a rigid consumer-driven, conservatism” (Report to PPTA Conference, 2008, p. 5). This has meant principals have had to fashion their leadership to meet societal perceptions of school and school leadership, which have their origins within a context of inter-school competition rather than meeting the learning needs of the students in the school. It has also meant that principals have had to take on a form of scientific rational model of leadership with a focus on data and predetermined success

outputs (Lauder & Hughes, 1999). Studies by Thrupp (2007), Wylie (2007) and Thrupp and Irwin (2010) all point to the failure of the current model of self-management in New Zealand to enhance student learning outcomes.

The consequence of these conflicting and powerful expectations has also been that effective school leadership in New Zealand is now perceived by the community, and politicians as personal assertiveness, entrepreneurialism, and strong management control (Lauder & Hughes, 1999; Robinson et al., 2009). At the same time, these expectations have imposed a level of conservatism on the role, and reluctance by principals to make changes because of the strength of these effectiveness criteria.

This is partially why calls for leadership change in New Zealand (Fancy, 2005, Robinson et al., 2009) and internationally (Caldwell, 2006a, 2010; Fullan, 2003; Harris, 2005, have been seen by secondary school principals in New Zealand as representing a new layer of complexity. While these calls advocate that principals should be flexible, future orientated, visionary, independent, and pedagogically motivated (Fullan, 2003; Robinson et al., 2009), the perceptions generated by social and political expectations of school and school leadership is that schools should not change and school leaders should maintain the status quo.

The perception that principals should maintain the status quo has also arisen from strong pressures within schools regarding leadership expectations, and from the need for principals to maintain organizational acceptance. Elmore (2000), in his study of principals in the United States, pointed to the high need for organizational acceptance of the leadership activities of a school principal. This was supported by Gunter (2001) in her study of school leadership in the United Kingdom. A similar message was apparent in the International Successful School Principalship Project in which school leadership in 14 countries was analyzed (Day et al., 2009). It was also detected by Humphries and Einstein (2003), who described educational leadership as

an activity in which there was a significant inter-relationship between the principal's skill at perceiving need and the staff's acceptance of that need. Owens (2004) also felt that there was a much higher component of acceptance of the leader's right to lead in schools than originally thought. Foster and St. Hilaire (2004) also pointed out that no leadership could take place in a school unless there was an acceptance by the staff that the leadership activities and the person enacting those activities matched the perceptions of what was acceptable leadership practice.

This need for a high level of organizational acceptance can perhaps be related to the focus of the international educational reforms over the last three decades. Despite their intensity, the reforms have not greatly impinged on an education system that has as its basis the individual teacher within the classroom or on the teaching process itself (Elmore, 2000). This has meant that teachers remain the key element within the school, and meeting their concerns remains an important factor in the leadership activities of individual principals (Elmore, 2000; Richardson, Lane & Flanigan, 1996).

In New Zealand, the self-managing school system, in which schools and principals are isolated and, which has as its basis individual accountabilities, has made organizational acceptance especially important as a determiner of leadership effectiveness. Also, the nature of school organization in New Zealand is such that principals are required to work closely with the teaching staff, and most principals have been appointed from the "shop floor". This makes them educationalists in their orientation, and sensitive to the attitude of teachers (Brooker, 2005). Teachers in New Zealand are also highly unionized (Wylie, 1997). All teachers in state schools are employed under a common collective agreement which also imposes limits on some of the technical decisions principals can make, for example, class size or teaching loads (Secondary Teachers Collective Agreement, 2008-2010). Consequently, just as Shriberg, Shriberg and Lloyd (2001) identified in their study of schools in the United States, teachers in New Zealand have a significant role in shaping the leadership model to a degree that is not found in businesses. Even

the level of the leadership activity is determined by staff attitude. Humphrey and Einstein (2003) identified that when there was an organizational and personal sense of a lack of direction, more overt leadership was acceptable by teachers. When there was a sense of direction teachers sought more autonomy and did not enjoy direct leadership.

To an extent, this need for such a high level of organizational acceptance also places a new perspective on the relationship between the principal and the teacher identified by Sergiovanni, (2002). He believed that the principal and the teachers were bound together as leaders and followers. In reality, the relationship within New Zealand secondary schools is more that of the principal being responsive to the expectations of the staff and ensuring his or her leadership activity fits within a range of acceptable leadership practices (Brooker, 2005; Cardno & Fitzgerald, 2005). However, organizational acceptance can also be linked to the broader role of the principal to create structures for learning and to develop common goals. Robinson et al. (2009) and Macbeath and Dempster (2009) for instance, argue that a key role of the principal is to create a climate for learning, stability, shared goals and high expectations of academic achievement. They felt this could only be done through consultation and by reaching common agreement about the direction the school should take.

More importantly, organizational acceptance goes beyond technical mastery to a level of personal acceptance. Lucas (2003) identified that the technical mastery of the principal was determined by teachers to be an important factor in their acceptance of the leadership. However, Day et al. (2009) found that principals with high levels of acceptance demonstrated a form of organizational perceptiveness that allowed them to adopt practices that were seen to be both appropriate and acceptable to the staff. This perceptiveness was described by Portin, Schneider, De Armond and Gundlach (2003), and by Dinham, Cairney, Craigie, and Wilson (1995) as the capacity to maintain an on-going diagnosis of school conditions and the capacity to react to the findings of that diagnosis to the common advantage of all in the organization. In other words, to

the teacher, the role of the principal is to be responsive to the multiple constructed realities which exists within the school (Leithwood et al.,1999) and to act in what is essentially a problem-solving role which buffers them from the changes and expectations from outside the school (Elmore, 2000).

The perceptions of the principal.

A second key elements identified in the literature as having an impact on the leadership activities of the principal were his or her personal leadership perceptions and personal leadership skills. In New Zealand this element is especially important as the role is personalized to a very high degree and because the nature of the self-managing system, in which the principal and the school are isolated, has subjected the principal to a significant level personal accountabilities.

Gunter (2001), Leithwood et al. (1999) and Notman and Henry (2009) also pointed out that school leaders are not remote from their organization, and their capacity to form relationships within the school is a key factor in the how they perform their role. Consequently, while there is a belief in some of the literature that the role can be performed using a set of leadership skills which can be developed and enhanced remotely from the school, the personalized nature of the role means that the leadership skills, leadership perceptions and the leadership dispositions the principal brings to the role are key factors in determining how he or she will perform the role.

This is not to say that technical mastery, using a set of common skills, is not important. In New Zealand, principals are subject to high levels of technical compliance and some of the management activities principals have to perform are well prescribed. Day et al. (2009) and Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996) also believed that technical skill development was important. Day et al. (2009) in particular, felt that in the early years principals would focus on the technical aspects of the role, and as they grew more technically experienced this would enable them to adopt a more conceptual leadership style and focus on the global aspects of the teaching and

learning process. Boon and Stott (2003) argued that once principals became experienced they would be better at, or at least more aware of, the technical skills and be able to apply a level of experience to any problems they may face, which would reduce the pressures caused by the complexity of the role. This concept of linear progression from inexperienced to effective was also described in the framework of the National College for Leadership of School and Children's Services (2001). In this framework, five stages of principal development were recognized from "emergent" to "consultant". In New Zealand the First Time Principals Programme (FTPP) has as its basis the belief that in the first two years, the focus of principals was on the development of technical management skills. Linear development was also detected by Macpherson (2010) in some of the recent principal development strategies undertaken by the government in New Zealand, such as the Kiwi Principal Initiative (2009). This concept that a principal's leadership skill development was linear could perhaps be equated to the tendency in the 1990s to link school leadership to business leadership (Dall'Allba & Snadberg, 2006).

However, linear progression is not a concept that can be readily applied to the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand because it ignores the complex interactions and reactions within the school and the multiple expectations on the principal from outside the school. For instance, there is no assumption in the current educational environment in New Zealand that a school can afford to wait for a new principal to develop enhanced leadership skills. This is because of the strong link that exists between the leadership and the school's effectiveness in the market place. Also, secondary principals in New Zealand generally have reasonably well-developed technical skills and some leadership experience on appointment (Cardno & Fitzgerald, 2005). Secondary schools in New Zealand provide a wide range of leadership opportunities, and most principals have been senior managers in schools prior to appointment (Cardno & Fitzgerald, 2005; Robinson et. al., 2009).

Consequently, while there can be no doubt that the application of technical skills is enhanced by experience which enables principals to apply more solutions to problems, the actual requirements for the individual principal is more personal (Notman & Henry, 2009). This means the nature of the individual's leadership model is more likely defined by the links the principal draws between the contexts of the school, their personal leadership perceptions and the leadership strategies principals adopt because of those perceptions (Harris, 2008). This is further reinforced by the belief of Sweatt (2002) that the principal needed to demonstrate contextual awareness by establishing links between their vision, self-interest and the perceptions and self-interest of the members from within or outside the school. It is also reinforced by the description of Mintzberg (1983) that the configuration of organizations is an approximate match between the forces in the environment and factors within the organization.

Just how personalized the role is can be seen in the way principals view the impact of the role on them. In a survey of primary and secondary principals by the New Zealand Council of Educational Research (Wylie & Hodgen, 2006), many principals indicated that they had real issues around job pressure, work-life balance and ill-health. A similar message came through a report in 2005, commissioned by the New Zealand Primary Principals' Federation, on principal stress. While secondary principals were under-represented in this report, it indicated that most principals felt high levels of stress, lack of sleep, frustration and anger. The main stressors quoted in the report were the same as those identified by Billott (2003) in her study of secondary principals in New Zealand; high levels of management tasks, the leadership expectations of those within the school and the tendency of the stakeholders within and outside the school to hold the principal personally accountable for the learning outcomes of the school.

This has meant that while some of the literature talks of principals developing global leadership skills through experience. Caldwell (2006a) and Day et al. (2009), for instance, argued that principals moved from a managerial role to a more global leadership model with

experience. Harris (2008) and Mulford (2006) also argued that, as principals gained more experience, they developed a capacity to seek change and develop alternative leadership models. Sergiovanni (1992) felt that moral authority came with experience. Spillane (2005) and Telford (1996) also argued that principals would develop distributive leadership models with experience. However, the reality within the school is more likely to be quite different. The scope of the role, the multiple stakeholder expectations, and the personal capacity of the principal to cope with the conflict between these elements tends to limit the leadership focus to those areas the principal has developed skills in, and to use leadership activities within the school that fit into a broad range of acceptable leadership practices (Cardno & Fitzgerald, 2005). At the same time, because the personal effectiveness of the principal is inextricably linked to the success of the school in the market place (Elmore, 2000; Gunter, 2001), principals are also more likely to adopt a range of leadership practices that are designed to ensure they meet the perceptions of leadership effectiveness from outside the school.

The role of the New Zealand secondary school principal.

As stated at the start of this chapter, a key issue in reviewing the literature on the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand was the comparative lack of research centered solely on New Zealand secondary school principalship. There are studies on broader school leadership concepts that touch on the role of the secondary principal. The most significant of these recent studies is *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why. Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration* (Robinson et al. (2009). This study indicated that pedagogical leadership possibly had a greater impact on student outcomes in primary schools as compared to secondary schools. It also identified the need for more research on the five leadership dimensions (establishing goals, resourcing strategically, planning evaluating and coordinating teaching and curriculum, promoting and participating in teacher learning and development, ensuring an orderly environment) in terms of secondary school leadership. Nevertheless, it was felt

important to identify research specific to secondary school principalship in New Zealand and through that research seek to determine any particular features of the role.

Several studies were identified which emphasized the interpersonal skills secondary school principals needed. Edwards (1986), in his doctoral thesis, examined aspects of the socialization processes principals underwent. This study culminated in a cultural theory of principalship. Robinson, Absolum, Cardno and Steele (1990), in a study of two Auckland secondary principals, argued that the emphasis on structural change and school-based planning in the 1989 reforms needed to be supplemented by a greater emphasis on interpersonal practices. Barwood (1999) in his study of the induction training needs of new secondary principals in the Waikato and South Auckland identified the loneliness of the position and the impact on the principal's private life. Wadsworth (1990) in a four year research involving 48 principals, 46 of whom were secondary principals, found that principals required more assistance in the personal domain aspects of the role. Mexted (1999) in a study of six women secondary principals also found that the personal elements within the role were strong influences on the leadership of the principal. A similar view was offered by Strachan (1999) in her study of the leadership of three women who were principals of co-educational secondary schools in New Zealand.

Several studies were also identified that emphasized the complexity of the role. Cardno (1994), in a study of the dilemma management of two secondary principals instituting professional appraisal, determined that training programmes for principals needed to acknowledge that they performed the dual role of evaluators and developers of staff. Edwards (1991) based his action research approach to the development of the management capabilities of a group of secondary principals in South Canterbury on the principal's role being a blend of business manager, leader of people, curriculum leader and change manager. Billot (2003) identified the role conflict being experienced by secondary principals in New Zealand because of the differing expectations on the role from within and outside the school. Cardno and Collett

(2004), in a study of the curriculum leadership of secondary school principals described the role of the secondary principal as an, “overstretched workload in a job that is complex and highly demanding” (p.27). They linked this workload to the self-managing school system in New Zealand: “Today’s secondary principals carry an enormously varied workload, which in a self-managing environment includes human resource, financial and property management and a range of other tasks such as marketing” (p.15). This view of the complexity of the role was supported Notman (2009) in his study of a single principal. He argued that the complexity lay in the, “dichotomous nature of school principalship: to be encouraging, consultative and democratic on the one hand; yet to be exacting, autonomous and, at times, autocratic, on the other”(p.31).

Cardno and Collett (2004) and Billot (2003) identified three characteristics of the role; its wide scope created by many competing demands, its fragmented nature, created by frequent interruptions and crisis demands and, the competing expectations on it from a range of stakeholders, including the high accountability demands from central agencies, parents, students and staff. Consequently, they believed the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand was more that of the chief executive of an organization than an educational leader. This belief, that the role was that of a chief executive, was also supported by the Professional Standards, officially documented by the Ministry of Education in 1999 (Ministry of Education, 1999). Leadership Dimension Five described the role of the principal as fulfilling, “the role of chief executive to the Board of Trustees”.

Billot (2003) and Cardno and Collett (2004) believed that this dichotomy of assumptions that the role was both educational leader and chief executive contributed significantly to its complexity. Southworth (2000) argued that this duality was an unavoidable consequence of the different assumptions about the purpose of the principals’ role and the functions of schools that were inherent in the self-managing schools’ system in which the principal was both manger and educational leader. However, Cardno and Collett (2004) argued that this duality was especially

strong in New Zealand and that its strength arose partially from the failure of the government and its advisors to appreciate the complexity of a secondary school's organizational structures and the particular demands placed on the secondary principal by self-managing schools' environment. On one hand principals were expected to be curriculum leaders and "demonstrate a thorough understanding of current approaches to effective teaching and learning" (Ministry of Education, 1999, p.27). On the other hand, they were expected to meet increasingly complex compliance demands and to be the business leader of a complex organization. Billot (2003), Cardno and Collett (2004) and Service (2011) also argued that the increase in these managerialistic demands has meant the functions of the chief executive have begun to dominate the leadership focus of secondary school principals in New Zealand. While Yukl (2010) argued that leadership and management were inter-changeable, the predominance of the managerialism identified by Billot (2003), Cardno and Collett (2004) and Service (2010), seemed to directly impact on the capacity of secondary school principals to have the "hands-on" approach to leadership identified by Robinson et al (2009, p.7) as being essential for the improvement of student learning outcomes. This domination of formal leadership functions, as well as the size and complexity of secondary schools, also pointed to a possible difficulty for secondary school principals to be able to operate effectively in the five leadership dimensions identified by Robinson et al.(2009) and the eight leadership dimensions (agreeing on a shared moral purpose, disciplined dialogue about learning in the school, planning and monitoring is evidence based, active professional learning, enhancing the conditions for learning, coordinating, monitoring and managing the learning, using distributive leadership, working with the parents and the wider community) identified by Macbeth and Dempster (2009) as being necessary for the learning enhancement of students. Robinson et al. (2009) acknowledged this difficulty for secondary principals; "The greater size of many secondary school, their differentiated structures and the culture of specialist teaching suggest that the influence, particularly of the principal, may be attenuated" (p.100).

Service (2011) also argued that this difficulty was enhanced by differing perceptions and expectations of the role within the school. In her study of the leadership of a secondary principal in New Zealand she identified that, despite the efforts of that principal to meet the obligations of the Professional Standards (Ministry of Education, 1999) to be an instructional leader, most teachers in that school continued to regard the principal as being a resource provider rather than an educational leader. Billot (2003), Cardno and Collett(2004), Service(2011) and some anecdotal evidence, indicated that secondary school principals in New Zealand were frustrated by this duality of expectations and by the level of administration imposed on them.

Summary

Several insights into school leadership emerged from the review of literature and these formed the basis of the data collection and analysis methods used in this study. The first confirmed that the leadership is a complex phenomenon. This complexity arises from the need for principals to be differently responsive within two leadership dimensions, both of which impact on the role in conflicting ways; societal expectations and perceptions of the role, and leadership expectations and perceptions from within the school. The second was that the nature of the daily leadership activity of the principal was most likely contextualized problem-solving, and that this activity gained its form from a combination of the principal's personal leadership perceptions, the leadership perceptions within the school, the technical skills of the principal, and the contextual needs of their school.

These insights pointed to the need for a study of leadership to go beyond a conceptual understanding of school leadership to a detailed examination of the leadership activity of individual principals within the school. In particular, the insights argued for the need to understand the impact on the role of the multiple perceptions and expectations from within and outside the school. This meant that the study needed to use a constructivist viewpoint to examine

the real world experiences of practitioners (Charmaz, 2000). It also meant that the study would need to use a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis methods. In this way it would be able to draw its conclusions from a detailed understanding of the role and be able to take into account the impact of the multiple contextual factors. These would include the impact of parents and the community (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu & Easton, 2010; Thrupp, 2006), the capacity of other leaders in the school (Robinson et al., 2009) and, school contexts (Hattie, 2009). They would also include the leadership perceptions of the principal on the leadership models of individual principals (Foster & Hilaire, 2004; Southworth, 1998a).

From the insights gained from the literature review, three research questions were also identified to support the data gathering and analysis process:

- What is the nature of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?
- What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals?
- What are the implications of the findings for a conceptual understanding of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?

The following chapter describes the methodology used for the data gathering and analysis used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the methods used for data collection and analysis in this study are described. The chapter is divided into ten sections. In the first section the research design process is discussed along with the rationale for the research paradigm and the theoretical framework chosen for the study. The second section then discusses the use of case study and the type of case study used. The next section provides the justification for the use of the mixed methods approach for data collection and analysis in the study. In section four research design issues, identified in the format stage of the study are described, along with the methods used to overcome those issues. The fifth section then provides an overview of the research approach along with a description of the two studies undertaken. In the sixth section the methods used to select the participants in both studies are described, and the characteristics of the participants in each study are provided. Section seven then details the data collection measures used in both studies. In section eight the data analysis methods are outlined. In this section also, the methods used to overcome the impact of the researcher as a principal on the data collection and analysis methods are detailed. Section nine discusses ethical considerations in relation to the study. Finally, section ten details the methods used to ensure the reliability and validity of the study as well as the methods used to ensure its trustworthiness.

The Research Design Process

Selection of the Research Paradigm.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) described a paradigm as, “The net that contains the researcher’s epistemological, ontological and methodological premises” (p.19). Freebody (2003) also described a paradigm as, “a coherent collection of propositions about the world, their relative importance, and particular ways of finding out and knowing about them –rather than just a

collection of techniques” (p.38). Creswell (2007) called the paradigm the “worldview” (p.19). Creswell also pointed out that four key paradigms inform qualitative research; postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy and, pragmatism. Postpositivism has a scientific approach to the research and has a focus on empirical data collection. While it is seen as being reductionistic by some researchers (Creswell, 2007) it does have the advantage that it uses multiple levels of data analysis for rigour. Constructivism, which is sometimes equated with interpretivism, is a paradigm which seeks to understand the world in which we live or work. The goal of the researcher, with this paradigm, is to use participant experience and to examine how the participants construct the meaning from the situation. Constructivists also focus on the context of the participants. Advocacy is a paradigm which seeks to change the lives of the participants and the research tends to be an action research for reform for a marginalized group. Pragmatism is a paradigm which focuses on the outcomes of the research rather than the conditions which led to the problem being studied. Thus, rather than a focus on methods, the focus is on the problem and the pragmatist is not necessarily committed to one system of philosophy or reality. Instead, they are free to choose whatever method of research which suits their needs. Consequently, pragmatists tend to use multiple methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007).

Guided by the understanding of these paradigms and by the understandings gained from the literature, that the role of a school principal is contextualized, complex and multi-faceted (Day et al., 2009), a constructivist paradigm with a hermeneutic methodological perspective was adopted for this study. In this way the study would seek to understand the role by examining it through the perspective of the participants within the context of the individual schools. Schwandt (2000) described this methodological perspective as, “Hopping backwards and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualise it and the parts conceived through the whole which motivates them” (p.193). However, because of the complexity of the phenomenon, it was also

determined that the pragmatic constructivist approach advocated by Charmaz (2000) would be used and data collection and analysis would employ both qualitative and quantitative methods. It was felt that the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis would provide a more detailed understanding of the leadership. The rationale for the constructivist approach used in this study is discussed in the following section.

Constructivism.

Holliday (2002) suggested that, for educational research, the interpretive paradigm should be a flexible and dynamic approach which allowed the researcher to, “catch glimpses, illuminate and then try to interpret bits of reality” (p.5). Schwandt (2000), in particular, felt the advantage of constructivism as an approach was that it allowed for multiple realities which would then gain meaning as the study progressed in the interactions between the participants and the researcher. Consequently, within the interpretivist paradigm, the use of a constructivist approach was assumed to be the best method for this study as it provided the necessary flexibility of data collection and analysis to understand the leadership. It also enabled the researcher to examine it from the point of view of the participants.

In the choice of a constructivist approach the researcher was also guided by Charmaz (2000) and Creswell (2007). They argued that a constructivist approach emphasised the studied phenomenon rather than the method of studying it, as for instance in a postpositivist stance. Creswell (2007) also argued a constructivist approach enabled the researcher to uncover experiences, relationships and to “make visible hierarches of power, communication, and opportunity” (p.238). Creswell also pointed out that a constructivist approach had two additional advantages for the study of a complex phenomenon such as school leadership. First, it had a specific focus on the contexts in which the participants lived and worked and this ensured the understandings gained from the study would take into account the impact on the leadership of the contexts in which the leadership was taking place. Second, the approach also allowed the

researcher to position himself in the research and for the interpretations to be shaped by his own personal experiences as a secondary school principal.

The description of constructivism by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) was also an important factor in the choice. They described the approach as assuming, “a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities) a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings) and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodologies” (p. 21).

Theoretical Framework

In choosing the theoretical framework for this study the researcher was initially guided by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) who pointed out; “All research is interpretive; it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (p. 19). The researcher was also persuaded by Kraus (2005) who argued that, “the goal of a qualitative investigation is to understand the complex world of human experience and behavior from the point of view of those involved in the situation of interest” (P.764).

The choice of ontological and epistemological framework in this study was suggested by two key beliefs. The first was the belief, gained from the literature, that there are multiple realities within a school (Leithwood et al., 1999) The second was belief that schools are constructed realities in which the participants made sense of their reality within that construction (Southworth, 1998b).

Consequently, the study is interpretive and is based on two main assumptions. The first is the ontological assumption that we each experience reality from our own point of view (Kraus, 2005). Within this study it was accepted that as the data was collected and analysed there would be multiple realities drawn from the participants’ individual perceptions of the role. The second is the epistemological assumption that a phenomenon is best viewed in its context. This meant, that for this study, the knowledge about the role brought to it by the participants, would be based

on participant experience. It also meant that new understandings, by both the participants and the researcher, could emerge as the study progressed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

Interpretivism

Merriam (1998) pointed out that interpretivism is used interchangeably with naturalistic inquiry, field study, participant observation, inductive research, ethnography and case study. Generally, it is simply described as qualitative to distinguish it from quantitative. The key philosophical assumption behind the interpretivist paradigm is that the view of reality is based on experiences and perceptions of the participants within a specific context. Kraus (2005) described this as, “the inquirer and the inquired into are interlocked in such a way that the findings of the investigation are the literal creation of the inquiry process” (p. 761). Schwandt (2000) pointed out, for the interpretive researcher, human action is inherently meaningful. “Interpretivist epistemologies can in one sense be characterised as hermeneutic, because they emphasise that one must grasp the situation in which human actions make (or acquire) meaning”(p.193).

Schwandt also believed that the process of understanding this meaning or of gaining ‘*Verstehen*’, is achieved in three ways; identification with the participant, examining the phenomenon and, interpretation of the language.

These understandings pointed to interpretivism as the best approach for this study of the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand. This choice was also guided by the literature that pointed to school leadership as being contextualised by a complex interplay of factors from within the school and external factors, including the person of the principal (Day, Sammon, Hopkin, Harris, & Gu, 2009). It was also felt that this complexity would require flexible data collection and analysis methodologies which would be best found in an interpretivist approach. It was also felt that this approach would not only expose those contextual influences but it would allow sufficient flexibility so that the data collection methods could evolve as the study

progressed and understandings about the role grew or changed. An interpretivist study would also allow the researcher, “to re-see the everyday as shared events, understood in comparable and shared ways, which are possible precisely because they are shared” (Freebody, 2003, p. 42).

Consequently, while the methods of data collection and analysis used in this study were largely interpretative, using case study, a pragmatic mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in two studies was also employed to ensure a detailed understanding of the phenomenon. A more detailed justification for this use of mixed methodologies or integrated methodologies (Day et al. 2009), is outlined in the next section. A description of each of the studies is provided in a later section. The use of case studies is discussed in the following section.

Case Study

Creswell (2007) described the use of case study as, “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)” (p.73). Case study research has also gained considerable prominence in educational research for some decades. Freebody (2003) believed that this was because, in educational settings, which are complex and dynamic, it is peoples’ behaviours and practices within a particular context that provide the basis for broader understandings. By using case study, theorising is also not done in a vacuum nor are the generalizations arising from the study presented without a context in which they can be viewed. Merriam (1998) argued for the use of case study to support understandings in educational research. She pointed to the definition of case study by Yin (1994), “...an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear” (p. 27). Merriam also pointed out, that where a phenomenon is not in itself sufficiently ‘bounded’ (p. 27), such as leadership, that

phenomenon cannot, in itself, be a case study but case studies can be used as “units of analysis” (p. 34) to answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about that phenomenon.

Creswell (2007) identified three types of case studies; the single instrumental case study, the collective or multiple case studies and, the intrinsic case study. In the single instrumental case study the researcher focuses on an issue or concern which a single bounded case study illustrates. In the collective case study one issue or concern is selected but multiple cases studies are used to illustrate it. This method also uses the logic of repetition in which the researcher replicates the procedures for each case to identify broad themes or relationships (Yin, 1994). The use of multiple case studies also overcomes the concern of some qualitative researchers of generalisations being generated from one, possibly atypical, example. The final type; the intrinsic case study, focuses is on the case itself, and is mostly associated with the study of a unique programme or event.

For this study, the collective case studies model was determined to be the best approach. As the aim of this study was to understand the leadership practices of secondary school principals in New Zealand, it was felt that a detailed understanding of the complex and multi-faceted phenomenon could only be gained if more than one case study was used. Creswell (2007) argued that the use of more than one case study could dilute the overall analysis. However, it was felt that by using more than one case study multiple perspectives would be provided and the generalizations arising from the studies could be placed in contexts. It was also considered that multiple case studies would enable the researcher to examine different perspectives of the role. Multiple sources of information would also be used to examine each case; including reflective journals and interviews. Thus, the conceptual view of the role gained from the quantitative study, would be examined in the context of a school and generalisations about the role arising from the study would be based on the more grounded understanding of the role gained from a qualitative

study. This use of mixed quantitative and qualitative methods is discussed in the following section.

The Use of Mixed Methodologies

The use of mixed methodologies is not uncommon, especially where studies are made of human actions. Brewer and Hunter (1989), Charmaz (2000), Merriam (1998) and Creswell (2007) all advocated the use of a mixed methodology approach for practical reasons such as triangulation, and because it could provide deeper understanding of a complex topic. Brewer and Hunter (1989) in particular argued: “This multi-method strategy is simple, but powerful. For, if our various methods have weaknesses that are truly different, then their convergent findings may be accepted with greater confidence than any single method’s findings would warrant” (p. 17). Other researchers, such as Onwuegbuzie, Bustamante and Nelson (2010) also pointed to the value of using statistics to support qualitative accounts of a phenomenon because they provided an authenticity a single view would not. Charmaz’s (2000) model of pragmatic grounded theory, on which this study was based, also emphasized the importance of using multiple methods to check emerging theories, stating that, “Hypotheses testing in grounded theory leads to confirmation or disconfirmation of the emerging theories” (p. 524).

The decision of the researcher to adopt this mixed methods approach in this study also rose from concerns about the size of the sample needed to understand a complex (Leithwood et al., 1999), multifaceted (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2001; Whitaker 2003), and contextualized (Day et al., 2009) role. In general, samples in qualitative data tend to be small, although Marshall (1996) suggested that, “The size of the sample is determined by the optimum number necessary to enable valid inferences to be made about the population” (p. 522). However, the researcher was concerned that if the participant sample used for this study was seen as being too small, it would not be perceived as being representative by principals and other educationalists. Also, if it was

not placed in a school leadership context that the readers could understand, conclusions arising from the study might be perceived as lacking generalizability.

Consequently, the researcher looked first to the creation of a broad understanding of secondary school leadership in New Zealand by using data from a relatively large sample of principals. This empirical data, and the assumptions arising from it, would then be used to guide the second part of the study which would consist of the collection and analysis of data from a smaller group of principals whose leadership would be viewed within the context of their school. This use of quantitative data collection and analysis to support a qualitative study was influenced by Creswell (2007) and Miller and Crabtree (1998). Thus use of mixed methodologies was also influenced by Day et al. (2009) who argued that such a use of integrated methodologies was appropriate for pragmatic reasons.

Research Design Issues

During the conceptual phase of the research design, some practical issues needed to be addressed. These were centered on the position of the researcher as a principal and his place in the study in relation to the participants. Consequently, early in the design process, methods to overcome possible issues arising from the position of the researcher as an insider were put in place. These are detailed below.

Research protocols.

Personal and anecdotal experience pointed to secondary principals in New Zealand as being protectionist, particularly when discussing their leadership role in relation to their school. It was evident that in designing a research model which involved participants discussing their individual leadership, some consideration needed to be made for ways to ensure the participants felt the researcher, who was a fellow principal, was maintaining some level of objectivity. This

need is a concern for all research involving human interaction where the study will assume, what Denzin and Lincoln, (2000) described as, “interpretive sufficiency” (p. 528).

This concept of professional neutrality was an especially important issue in this study as the researcher was himself a principal, interacting with principals who operated in an environment where schools compete for students. As Merriam (1998) pointed out, “Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world” (p. 214).

The researcher was also aware that if the participants did not feel professional neutrality had been achieved they could use their knowledge of the role to mask the authenticity of their responses by providing professionally acceptable rather than authentic responses. Therefore, a set of protocols, which would define the nature of the interaction between the researcher and the participants, was established to ensure the participants were aware that those interactions were not hierarchical or that the researcher was not judgmental. These protocols, which are listed below, were shared with the participants as part of the informed consent process:

- The researcher is himself a principal and therefore understands the actual events or phenomenon being described, as well as the possible implications arising from those events or phenomenon.
- The researcher and participants are in a non-hierarchical relationship and the expressions of feelings and concerns by the participants will be accepted without question or comment.
- The focus of the research will stay on the experience of the participants as principals within the context of their own school.

The presence of an insider researcher.

It was acknowledged at the outset of the research design process that the role of the researcher as a secondary principal could potentially impact on the assumptions drawn from the

data and, perhaps, on the responses of the participants. Consequently, during the conceptual phase of the design process, strategies were developed to militate against this. Three articles by Brannick and Coghlan (2007), Coghlan (2007) and Mercer (2007) were consulted. While it was accepted that these articles did not represent the sum of all the discussion on “insider research”, they did contribute a broad empirical insight on both insider, and its companion, action research.

The problem faced by the researcher was two-fold. First was that insider research has been typically disqualified because it is perceived as not conforming to the precepts of intellectual rigor (Coghlan, 2007). Second, it is felt that insider researchers could bring a bias to the study because of a personal stake or an emotional investment in the subject of the research (Brannick & Coghlan 2007). As Coghlan (2007) pointed out, an insider researcher could assume too much, bring his or her own bias to bear, not be probing enough or even miss a crucial question. Therefore, as part of the data collection and analysis process, there would be interaction between the researcher, an advisory group of three secondary principals that provided input into the survey and interview design, and the participants so that the validity of any emerging theories could be tested. In this way, any possible reflexivity or bias on the part of the researcher could be accounted for. Also, a regime of careful reflection on the conclusions drawn from the data would be maintained and the validity of those conclusions would be checked with the participants and also with the literature and the empirical data.

At the same time, it was assumed that the use of mixed methods, in which objective data from a larger group would be tested by the subjective data from the smaller group, would enable the researcher to triangulate the validity of the conclusions being drawn. This duality of analysis was informed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) who felt that, “it is necessary to understand practice as having both objective (externally given) and subjective (internally understood and interpreted) aspects both of which are necessary to understand how practice is practiced, how it

is constituted socially, and how it can be transformed” (p. 578). In this way, it was felt the data analysis process met the intellectual rigor identified by Coghlan (2007) as being essential in a study using an inside researcher approach.

Overview of the Approach

This research consisted of two interrelated studies, in which a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis was employed. In the first study, data from a survey of a relatively large sample of participants was used to enable the researcher to identify some broad themes about the impact of the New Zealand educational environment on the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand, and to gain some specific insights into the nature of the role. The second study consisted of an analysis of the leadership actions and interactions of a smaller group of principals. By following this two-phase process, a rich view of the role was obtained. Because the themes and insights gained in the first study were tested in the second study, the process also provided a form of “methodological triangulation” (Denzin, 1978, p. 304).

The data collection and analysis process is illustrated in Figure 1, which has been adapted from Day et al. (2008).

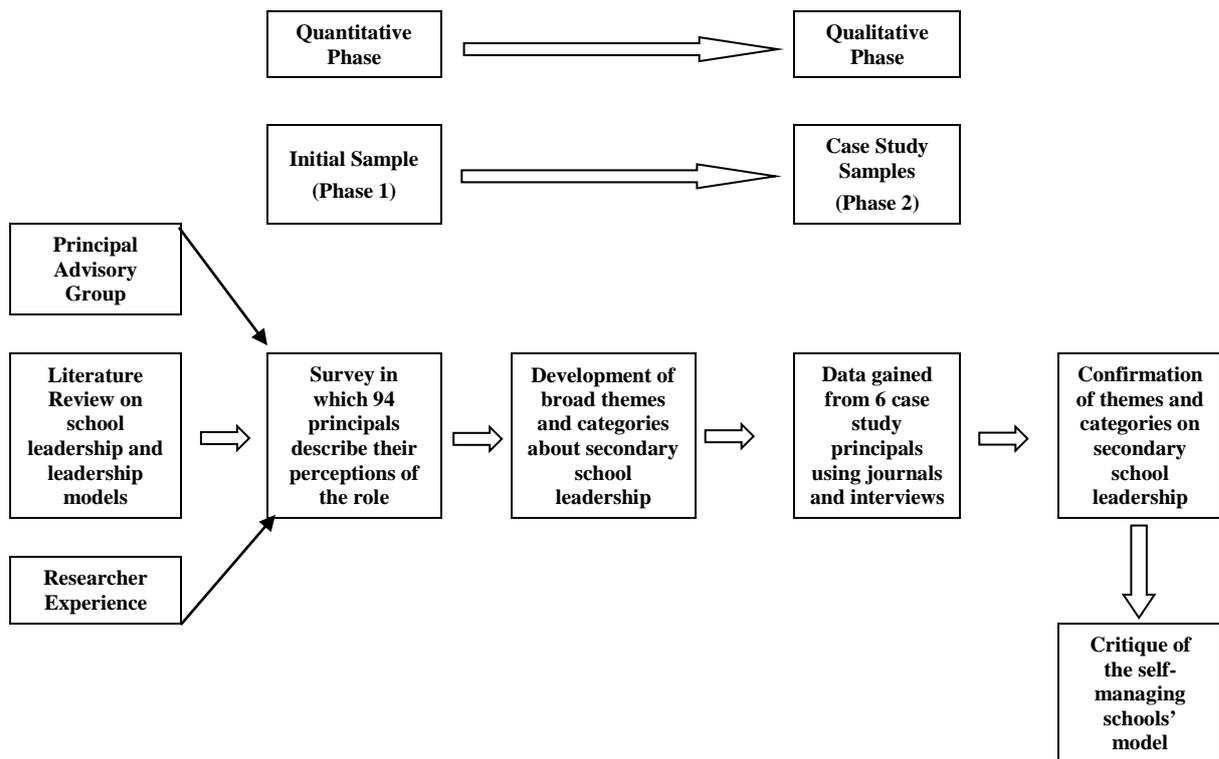


Figure 1. Study design

The actual data collection and analysis process consisted of eight interrelated stages. The first two stages were exploratory. In these initial stages the data collection and analysis methods were developed and the initial group of participants was identified, a survey was designed, and the participants surveyed. Stages three and four consisted of the analysis of the data from this survey and the identification of the case study principals for the second study. Stage five was centred on the initial collection of data from the case studies. This consisted of the creation of a reflective journal which each case study principal completed. The data from these journals were then analysed. In this stage, the questions used to guide the semi-structured interviews were also developed. Stages six and seven consisted of the semi-structured interviews of the case study principals and the analysis of the data from those interviews. The final stage, Stage eight, was the writing phase. This process is illustrated in the Figure 2.

Research Phase	Stage in Research	Research Method	Description
Exploration	Stage 1	Methodology decided	The research project and possible methods were explored with a group of principals
Exploration	Stage 2	Survey - open and closed elements	This survey was sent to 200 principals. It was designed to provide both objective and subjective responses
Inspection	Stage 3	Data analysis	The data from the survey was analyzed using a SPSS data analysis program
Exploration	Stage 4	Reflective Journals	Five principals identified from the survey were asked to complete a reflective journal which described their leadership activity and their reactions in a typical week.
Inspection	Stage 5	Data analysis	The data from the journals were analyzed using thematic cross referencing with the survey
Exploration	Stage 6	Structured and semi-structured interviews	Using the material from the journal, each of the six principals was interviewed. The interview was used to clarify emerging themes as well as identify specific issues for individuals.
Inspection	Stage 7	Data analysis	The data from the interviews was analyzed and cross referenced with the survey and the journal data. Tentative hypotheses were devised and propositions about the role developed
Writing	Stage 8	Writing themes	Emerging concepts were written up and discussed

Figure 2: Phases in the research process.

Participants

Study 1.

For the first portion of the study, a sample of 200 principals was selected, stratified on gender, type of school, socio-economic status of the school, and school location. Data on schools and principals was obtained from the Ministry of Education.

This group was then sent a survey and asked to complete it. No other documentation, such as Education Review Reports or examination statistics was used as part of the selection process as it had been determined at the start of the study that principal effectiveness would not be a criterion for selection. Along with this survey, each principal was also provided with an information sheet (Appendix A) as to the purpose of the study. They were also offered the

opportunity to contact the researcher and seek clarification. A written consent form (Appendix A) was also required from each participant to be posted back with the survey.

Ninety four principals responded to this initial approach and the sample was checked to ensure it was representative. This process found that the sample was broadly representative of all secondary principals and no further respondents were added at this point. Details of the sample can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants

	Male %	Female %
	N=66	N= 28
Experience		
Less than 5 Years	30	39
6-10 Years as principal	32	29
11 + Years as principal	36	32
Location		
Rural	36	21
Urban	36	71
Small Town	26	7
Socio-Economic Status		
Decile 1-3(Low)	30	21
Decile 4-6 (Medium)	38	32
Decile 7-10 (High)	30	39
School Type		
State School	83	75
Integrated	12	21

	Male %	Female %
	N=66	N= 28
Private	3	4
Nature of the School		
Coeducational	74	50
Boys Only	6	4
Girls Only	0	29
School Size		
100-300 students	26	14
301-500 students	14	11
501-700 students	27	7
701-900 students	12	11
901 -1100 students	2	32
1100 plus students	17	25

Study 2.

For the case study sample in the second study, the more selective, theoretical sampling methods suggested by Schtazman and Straus (1973) were employed. This consisted of using both the researcher's knowledge and the data from initial survey to select five case study principals. Initially, all participants had been offered the chance to be a case study principal and of the 94 respondents, 60 indicated a willingness to be case studies.

The five case study principals were chosen because they were broadly representative of all secondary principals in New Zealand in terms of school type, years of service and gender. They were also chosen for the pragmatic reason that they could be easily accessed by the researcher

because they were largely within a single area. These principals were then asked to complete a reflective journal and were interviewed.

Measures

Study 1: Self-administered survey.

The use of a self-administered survey to collect data is a common device for quantitative researchers particularly if there is a need for some form of statistical analysis as part of the research design, or where the sample is too large or not readily accessible to the researcher (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). However, the decision to use a self-administered survey, rather than a supervised survey, did present some potential difficulties that had to be considered as part of the design of the survey. The first was the need to devise questions which would not specifically encourage socially desirable responses on the part of the participants (Billot, 2003; Gronn & Ribbens, 1996). The second was to ensure the data gained from the responses was a reasonable representation of the views of the participants.

To overcome these potential difficulties, an advisory group of three principals was asked to give feedback on the survey design. This group consisted of three of the researcher's colleagues who were not part of the study because of the proximity of their schools to that of the researcher. The group was made up of one principal who had more than 18 years' experience, one who had been a principal for less than five years and one who was in his tenth year of principalship. Two of these principals were from mid-decile schools and one was from a high decile school. Two of them were from co-educational schools while one was from a single-sex boys' school. Along with the experience of the researcher as a principal, this group helped ensure questions were devised which allowed for little individual interpretation and to ensure the survey would not be too onerous.

The experiences of the researcher were also used to examine the responses to the survey during the data analysis phase. Where questions about the nature of an individual response arose, that participant was then contacted by the researcher and the response checked. This process was guided by Miles and Huberman (1994), who felt that knowledge of the phenomenon by the researcher was a valid way to interpret responses and to question possible individualized nuances within those responses.

Survey design.

In the initial phase of the survey design, the researcher looked to Billot (2003) and her study of secondary principals in New Zealand. The aim was to develop a device that principals would readily respond to, would not be seen by them to be superficial, and was something that would not add greatly to their workload. Therefore, using Billot's survey as a model, and guided by the advisory group of principals, a survey with mostly closed questions was devised (Appendix B) although participants were encouraged to add personal comment if they wished. Where there were closed questions, in Sections B and C, a Likert scale was used with three or six categories. The decision for the numbers of categories in each of these sections was determined by the need for the level of detail in the responses. So, for instance, Section B used six categories as this section sought the most detailed understanding of the role. Section C, on the other hand, required more broad information and only three categories were used.

The survey was divided into five sections (A-E). Section A provided demographic data and was designed to determine whether those responding were a representative sample. It also provided an insight into factors within the sample which could possibly impact on the results. Section B asked the principals to identify the essential skills needed to be a principal and was designed to develop a conceptual understanding of what principals thought the broad nature of the role was. Section C sought more specific information on the tasks principals performed by asking them to identify their leadership activities over a given week. In this way the researcher

could identify the main focus of principal activity in relation to external expectations of the role, and could use this understanding to inform the reflective journal development and data analysis process for the second study. Section D sought more personal responses about the role on issues such as stress, the hours worked, and the morale of the participants. Again, this was to support the design and development of the reflective journals and the interview in the second phase, as well as provide an insight into the leadership activities of the individual principal. Also, by gathering this personal data, a more complete picture of the role was achieved and the responses of the case study principals could be examined in light of these general and personal perceptions. In Section E, participants were asked to list professional development they felt worthwhile. Interestingly, less than 40% of the participants completed Section E. Those who did mentioned support from fellow principals as the most beneficial professional development. Several, who did not complete the section, indicated that there was little relevant professional development available. This seemed to support the research of Macpherson (2010) that principals generally found the professional development available lacked relevance.

Study 2: The case study principals.

In the second phase of the study two devices were used to collect data. The first was a reflective journal. The second was the use of a semi-structured interview.

The reflective journal.

A sample of this journal is found in Appendix C. The five principals selected as case studies completed this journal. Participant reflection, through the use of a journal, was believed to be important because it detailed the daily leadership activity of the participants as well as providing an insight into their leadership perceptions.

Normally a reflective journal is a device used by a researcher to document progress and the impressions of the participant as the study develops. Janesick (1998) referred to this use of

researcher journals as a rigorous documentary tool. However, in this study the journal had a different use in that the data the participants supplied was more a detail of their daily leadership activity and the time they spent on that activity. In this way it was possibly more similar to a diary.

The journal had two broad purposes. The first was to focus the participants on the project. The second was to provide a picture of the daily leadership activity of the principals and the personal response of the participants to that activity. In terms of the second purpose the journal performed more as an “ethnographic dialogue” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000 p.741). Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) emphasized the importance of this form of dialogue in interpretative research:

Participants frequently shift from one way of seeing something to another, not only to see it from their own points of view and from the points of view of relevant others but also to see it both from the perspective of individuals and from as ‘big picture’ perspective on the setting which means seeing the local as connected to the wider social and historical conditions. (p. 573)

The participants were asked to complete their journal on a daily basis over one week; a “typical week”, to distinguish it from a week where the activity might not be a reflection of the reality of their role. The journal was to be completed during the day to ensure true reflection and was to include the time spent on a list of broad leadership activities identified from the survey. At the end of each day the participants were asked to make a personal comment about aspects of the day they enjoyed and aspects they found difficult. In this way, the nature of their leadership model could be identified and those factors which impacted on it could be determined.

The journal had several specific functions:

1. It provided the researcher with an insight into the daily focus of individual principals;

2. It gave the researcher the capacity to confirm some of the impressions of the role gained from Section C and D of the survey;
3. It helped the researcher to develop an understanding of the context in which the case study principals worked;
4. It enabled the researcher to approach the participant with knowledge of that context so that matters arising in the interview could be discussed in a more open and honest way.

The journal also meant that the researcher could have a broad understanding of the leadership model adopted by that principal and as a consequence more meaningful probe questions could be devised for the individual interviews.

Semi-structured interview.

Once the reflective journal was completed and the broad leadership foci of each case study principal identified, the principals were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. The purpose of these interviews meant that more specific information could be extracted in a participatory and collaborative mode of operating, and allowances could be made for any possible protectionism by the principals. In choosing a semi-structured interview format, the researcher was guided by Merriam (1998) and Yin (1994) who advocated the use of the semi-structured interview format because it provided sufficient flexibility to approach different respondents differently while still covering the same areas of data collection. The researcher was also guided by Kvale (1996) who argued that, if the aim of an interview was to gain open, nuanced descriptions of different aspects of the subject's world, it was essential the interviewer exhibit openness to new an unexpected phenomenon rather than have pre-formulated questions and predetermined categories for analysis. In this way, the use of the semi-structured interview format complemented the pragmatic constructivist stance of the research in that the information gained from the journal, and the interview of each principal, enabled the researcher to explore specific factors which might impact on the leadership activities of that particular principal. This

interview format, in which headings or probe questions were used, as well as open dialogue, was also determined to be the best format to extract information from principals who otherwise might be guarded in their responses. At the same time, by ensuring the participatory nature of the interview, the participants were able to make general as well as personal comments about the role which would further enrich the researcher's understanding of their leadership and their perceptions of the role.

The first step in preparing for the semi-structured interviews was to develop an interview guide (Appendix D). This was based on the themes emerging from the data gained from the survey and from the information gained from the reflective journals. It was also guided by the insights gained from the literature review; in particular the research of Billot (2003) and by the interview format used in the International Successful School Principal Project (ISSPP) (Ylimaki, 2007). Guided by Merriam (1998) the interview model was then trialed with the advisory group described earlier in this chapter, and some minor adjustments were made to ensure that the questions provided the necessary openness for the participants to respond. The results of the trial were incorporated into the interview design.

With the permission of the participants, the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed prior to final analysis. During this transcription phase, the interviews were analyzed by using a detailed analysis of the words and phrases to identify common themes or concepts (Appendix E).

It should be noted that at no time during the interview process was there an attempt to determine whether the principals felt that they were effective or not. As indicated above, the researcher had decided early in the study that seeking such information could inhibit individual responses by making principals less open. It was also felt that such an interest would introduce a different dimension into the research because the concept of effectiveness was too subjective.

This decision was also in keeping with the stated purpose of the study, which was to examine the breadth and complexity of the role rather than determine effectiveness within the role.

Analysis

Study 1: Quantitative data analysis.

The demographic and background data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, and graphs. Then the survey data was analyzed, first by looking at simple response frequencies and percentages for each of the questions in the survey to get a rough sense of how the principals were responding. Next a factor analysis of the survey responses was conducted using exploratory factor analysis and varimax rotations of the findings. Both the eigenvalue greater than one criterion and a scree plot were used to determine how many factors to retain for rotation. The process of developing factors was iterative in nature, and a variety of solutions were examined before settling on a five-factor solution. After the factors were determined, scales were developed by summing items that loaded above .40 on each factor. These scales were then related to a variety of independent variables, such as time in the role and gender of the principal, school location, school size, and socio-economic status of the school. The details of these analyses are explained in greater detail as the results are presented. In this way the study was able to answer the first research question, “What is the nature of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?”

Also, prior to beginning the second study a grid, showing emerging themes and relationships from the survey was devised (Appendix H). This grid was used to guide the formation of the reflective journals and interviews used in the second study.

Study 2: Qualitative data analysis.

In the second study, a case study analysis approach was used. In this study a detailed description of the case and its setting (Creswell, 2007) was devised using the interview and reflective journal data of each principal. This description was used to identify emerging themes and leadership concepts. During the analysis of the reflective journal and interview of each principal emerging themes were also constantly examined by placing them in a research journal maintained by the researcher (Appendix I) and in diagrams (Appendix G) used to clarify the relationships within the leadership of each principal. In this way patterns (Creswell, 2007) were identified. In this way also, themes about the leadership for each principal were refined as the data came to hand.

Data from the journals were analyzed in two ways. First, the time spent on the range of leadership categories by each principal was determined. This enabled a broad picture of the leadership foci of each principal to be identified and comparisons to be made between the principals and their leadership foci. Then, using these data a visual picture of the leadership of each principal was created using a graphing approach, called star graphs. In this way, the individual leadership foci and styles were identified and became the basis of the interview for each principal.

Second, the list of leadership activities the principals identified as enjoying or not enjoying was analyzed using grounded method, similar to that advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1998), to identify common words, phrases, or themes. This provided the researcher with a broad list of leadership activities, or types of leadership activities, which seemed to represent what principals did as part of their role. This also enabled the researcher to identify broad themes about the role, and to determine the level to which the role is relational, involves dilemma management or short-term problem solving on a daily basis. This also assisted the researcher to identify a range

of factors which impacted on the leadership and were used in the development of the visual picture of the leadership of each principal.

The interviews were transcribed for analysis. Each transcript was analyzed line-by-line (Appendix E) and open coding was used to identify broad categories or themes. These emerging categories or themes were then compared to others within the interview and to those from the reflective journal to determine any relationships and identify common themes. To facilitate these processes two grids were devised. The first (Appendix J), recoded the responses under a range of broad headings. The second, (Appendix F) drew links between the emerging themes in a process, known as axial coding. In this way the researcher was enabled to identify key concepts about the role and to confirm some of the understanding from the survey about the nature of the role.

In this way also, the specific leadership actions and interactions of individual principals could be identified, and factors identified in the survey as impacting on the role could also be checked. By doing this, the researcher was able to answer the second research question: “What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals?”

The use of memo writing.

At an early stage of the data analysis, the researcher developed a research journal for his own use. Emerging themes, concepts and ideas were placed in the journal. The function of this journal was to ask questions, identify links, and guide the next steps in the data collection and analysis process. This journal was constantly checked and added to as the study progressed. This meant that throughout the study, there was a constant process of recursive analysis in which themes from one source were checked by data from another source or linked by memos. This journal also had the effect of maintaining the logic of the study as well as supporting the data analysis process. At the same time, it provided a level of triangulation between data sources to ensure the validity of the data. A page from this journal can be found in Appendix I.

A key element of this journal was the use of memos written by the researcher to himself. These were designed to clarify the thinking of the researcher and to establish new directions from the data. For instance, a memo following the first set of interviews stated, “The idea of being an instructional leader remains an important idea for principals but the question is whether it is being eroded by external requirements” (Memo, 4 June 2010).

Another example of a memo written during the data analysis phase deals with concerns expressed by principals about the growing centralization and its impact on principals to operate responsively: “There appears to be a concern that increasing centralization is meaning that contingent leadership (of which instructional leadership is the main variety) is now more focused on external elements and therefore more reactive rather than responsive” (Memo, 4 April 2009).

Position of the researcher.

During the data collection and analysis phase in both studies, the impact of the researcher on the process was constantly reviewed. It was accepted that as the researcher was a secondary principal and primarily responsible for the collection and analysis of the data, this could bring a bias to the study. However, it was also acknowledged that the position of the researcher as a principal was of some advantage. First, the researcher’s role enabled the level of the trust and the rapport to be developed with the participants that Dimmock and O’Donoghue (1996) felt was necessary for a qualitative study. This rapport also meant that the participants were possibly more open in their responses than they may have been with someone who they felt did not understand the role. This trust and rapport was especially important during the interviews as it encouraged the participants to make specific, and occasionally quite personal, comments about their feelings and the impact of the role on them. However, it did mean that, because the data was gained in a form of participatory interaction involving the researcher and the participant, it was important in the analysis of the data that the views of the participants were presented in a

way which was consistent with their meaning. To achieve this, conclusions or themes emerging from the data were checked with the participants throughout the whole process.

It was also accepted that the participants' views could be influenced by the collegial relationship they had with the researcher. Again, throughout the data collection and analysis process, the researcher was careful to check the emerging themes with the participants. Also, to prevent undue influence by the researcher, those principals with whom the researcher had a friendship or who were in schools in competition with the researcher's school were removed from the research process.

Ethical Considerations

Because the study involved human interaction in a complex and dynamic environment, ethical considerations were seen as being of paramount importance. In particular, the need to protect the participants was seen as being a vital aspect of the study. At the planning phase of the study, ethical approval was gained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Otago. This included to the need to acknowledge a Maori dimension where this dimension was seen to impact on individual responses or where the principal indicated a Maori perspective impacted on their view of the principalship. During the data collection in both phases of the study, care was taken that the data would not expose the participants to unnecessary risk, so the names of schools and people were omitted from the transcripts. At the same time, where it was determined that data could expose a participant to risk, such as a personal comment or criticism of a third party, the use of that data was discussed with the participant. In this way, a constant process of informed consent was used and appropriately documented. For instance, each principal was sent an approval form with the survey and asked to complete it prior to completing the survey. An example of this form is found in Appendix A. Any surveys returned without the consent form were discarded. On all documentation it was also made clear that the researcher was under an

obligation to protect each participant from potential risk of harm, and that each participant could inform the researcher where they felt this was not the case. Participants were also informed they could withdraw at any time and that their personal rights superseded the needs of the researcher. Throughout the whole process, the participants had the opportunity to contact the researcher or the supervisor directly, if there were concerns.

For the case study principals, their right to withdraw from the study at any time was reiterated prior to being sent the journal and again, prior to being interviewed. They were also offered the right to see the transcript of the interview, and informed that the recordings would be transcribed by the researcher only and would be destroyed at the end of the study.

Prior to each interview, the researcher also re-informed the participants, both of the nature of the research and the overarching research protocols described in the previous chapter. In this way, the researcher followed the dictates of Marshall and Rossman (1989), in that for each participant there was an effort to “demonstrate awareness of complex ethical issues in qualitative research and show that the research is both feasible and ethical” (p. 71).

The concern of public exposure of the individual principal in the case study group was also addressed by giving each principal a pseudonym for identification and by discarding any information that could identify the participant or the school.

Reliability and Validity

Issues of reliability and validity are critical to any investigation (Patton, 2001). Within a traditional quantitative paradigm, reliability refers to the ability to attribute the effects that one has found to the causes one wishes to argue for. Validity refers to the degree to which the various aspects of the research are generalizable beyond the specific study at hand.

There has been extensive debate about how these traditional aspects of quantitative research, reliability, and validity can apply in an interpretative qualitative research or in mixed methods approaches. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 288), roughly equivalent terms would be, “credibility”, “neutrality” or “confirmability”, “consistency” or “dependability” and “applicability” or “transferability”. No matter what terms are used, Lincoln and Guba (1999) emphasized that, “The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: How can an enquirer persuade his or her audience (including self) that the findings of an enquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?” (p. 398). Patton (2001) also posed three questions for the credibility (validity and reliability) of a qualitative research study:

- What techniques and methods were used to ensure the integrity, validity and accuracy of the findings?
- What does the researcher bring to the study in terms of experience and qualification?
- What assumptions underlie the study?

These questions were carefully considered as part of the research design. Lincoln and Guba (1999) also suggested that the researcher should adopt certain techniques to establish trustworthiness, and these were incorporated into the research design. With regard to the general issues of reliability and validity within this study, the key question was whether the ideas, propositions, and conclusions drawn from this study corresponded with reality as the principals experienced it, and to what degree the findings could inform others interested in similar leadership issues in schools.

The techniques used to ensure validity and reliability used in this study are listed below:

- Considerable time was spent with the participants of the second phase of the study to establish and learn about their school and their background.

- Triangulation was achieved through the use of a variety of data collection and analysis methods including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This enabled the researcher to view issues from a variety of perspectives. Patton (2001) believed that triangulation strengthens a study and is achieved by such a combination of data collection and analysis methods. This use of a variety of methods also enabled rigorous reflexivity.
- Independent verification of the research process used in the study was gained from two supervisors and a group of advisors.
- Initial understandings were tested using a variety of data collection and analysis methods and were reconsidered where the data did not confirm them.
- The understandings which emerged in the interpretative phase of the study and the data which led to those understandings were checked with the participants throughout the study to ensure accuracy and credibility.
- Rich descriptions of the context and the leadership of the case study principals were supplied to allow readers to make decisions about the credibility and transferability of the findings arising from those case studies. As Golafashani (2003) pointed out, the degree to which an account is believed to be generalizable is a factor in the validity of qualitative research.
- The study itself provides an audit trail, by describing in detail how the data was collected, how categories and codes were derived and how decisions were made throughout the enquiry.

This chapter has outlined the methodology used for this study. The results from each study are presented in the following two chapters.

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY RESULTS

As described in the previous chapter, the data collection and analysis processes were conducted in two studies using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods. In the first study, a self-administered survey asked the participants to identify the skills they felt were essential for the role, to provide details of their daily leadership activities, and to identify any specific issues which influenced their leadership perceptions and leadership activities. In the second study the leadership of five case study principals was examined in detail. In this chapter, the results from the self-administered survey are displayed in three parts, with each part presenting the results from a particular section of the survey. The results of the case study principals are presented in the following chapter.

Demographics of the Sample

Ninety four secondary principals from throughout New Zealand responded to the survey. This was a response rate of 47% of those approached (n=200). This represented approximately 30% of all secondary school principals (n=315) in New Zealand. Sixty-six (70%) of those respondents were male and 28 (30%) were female. This broadly matched the gender differences for secondary principals in New Zealand (69% male, 31% female) from the demographic data obtained from the Ministry of Education in April 2008.

The demographics of the sample was further analysed using a range of variables taken from the literature and from categories used by the Ministry of Education to determine the salary of principals (Ministry of Education, 2009) . These variables were school location (urban, small town, rural), socio-economic status of the school (low decile 1-3; medium decile 4-6, high decile

7-10), principal experience (inexperienced 1-5 years; experienced-6-10 years; highly experienced-more than 11 years), and school size.

The demographics of the sample broadly reflected the demographics of secondary principals in New Zealand. However, some trends were noted which should be mentioned to ensure an understanding of the sample:

- The male principals were largely from urban schools.
- A large proportion of the female principals were in rural schools.
- A large proportion of the inexperienced male principals tended to be in schools of less than 300 students, while the inexperienced female principals tended to be in schools of 900 or more students.
- A large proportion of the inexperienced male principals were in low decile schools.
- More experienced principals tended to be in high decile schools.
- The male principals were predominately in small to medium size schools, while female principals were predominately in large schools.
- A large proportion of the participants who had been principals for more than 11 years were in rural schools.
- More experienced principals tended to be in larger schools.

Further details of the sample are displayed in Figures 3-10.

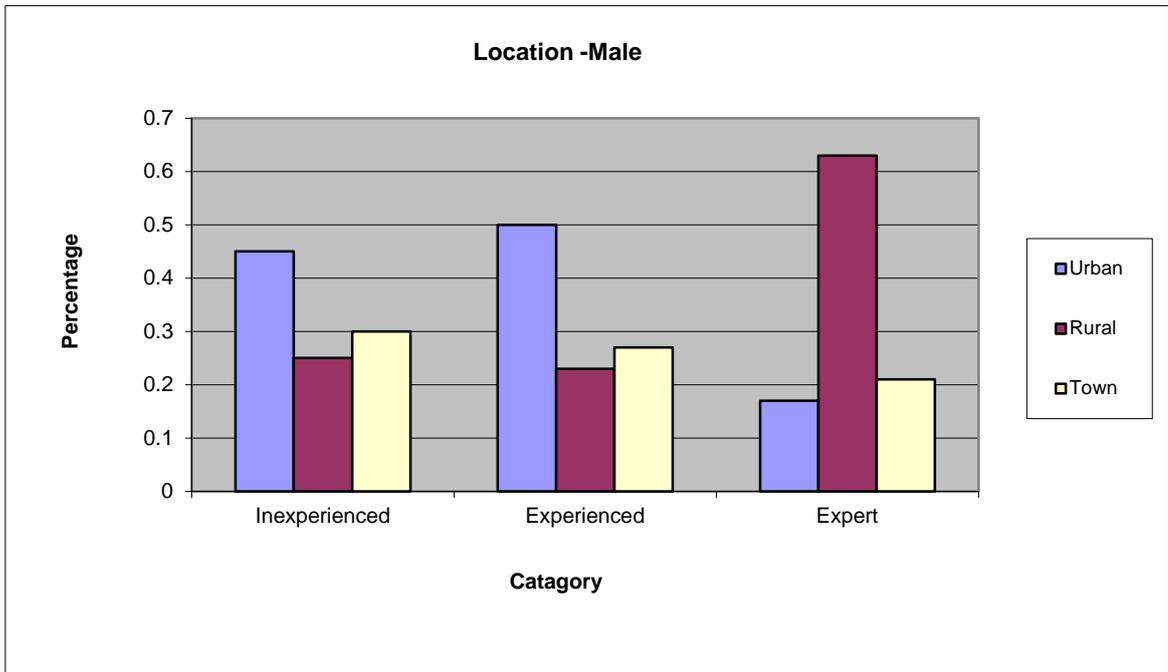


Figure 3: School Location - Male

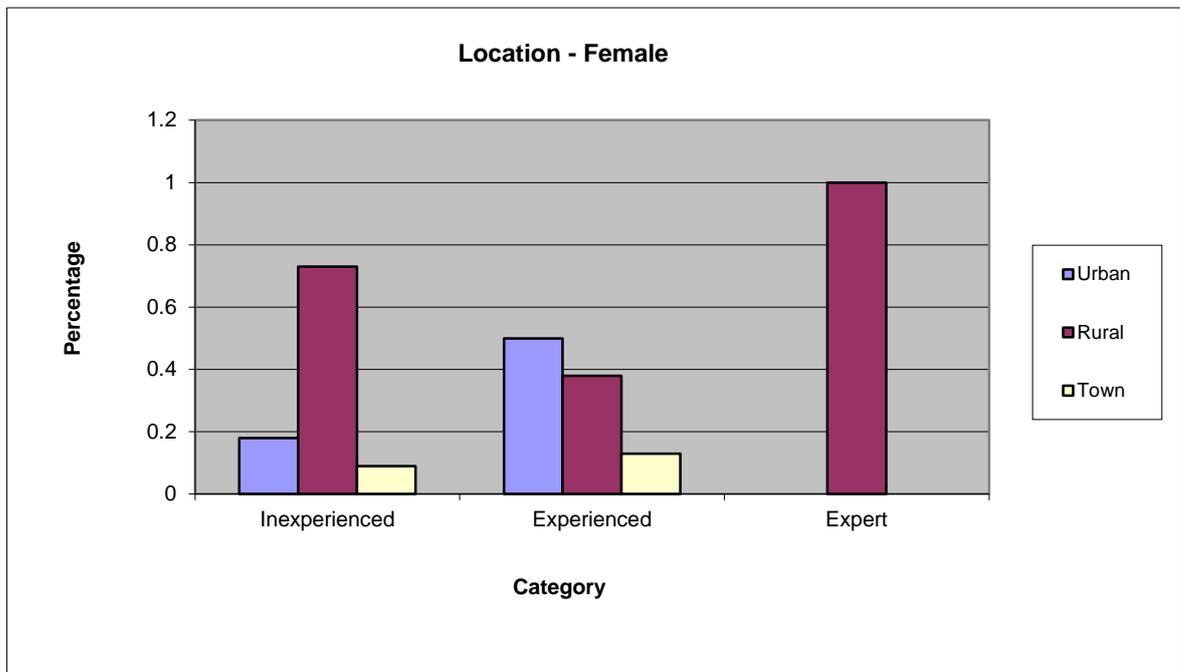


Figure 4: School Location - Female

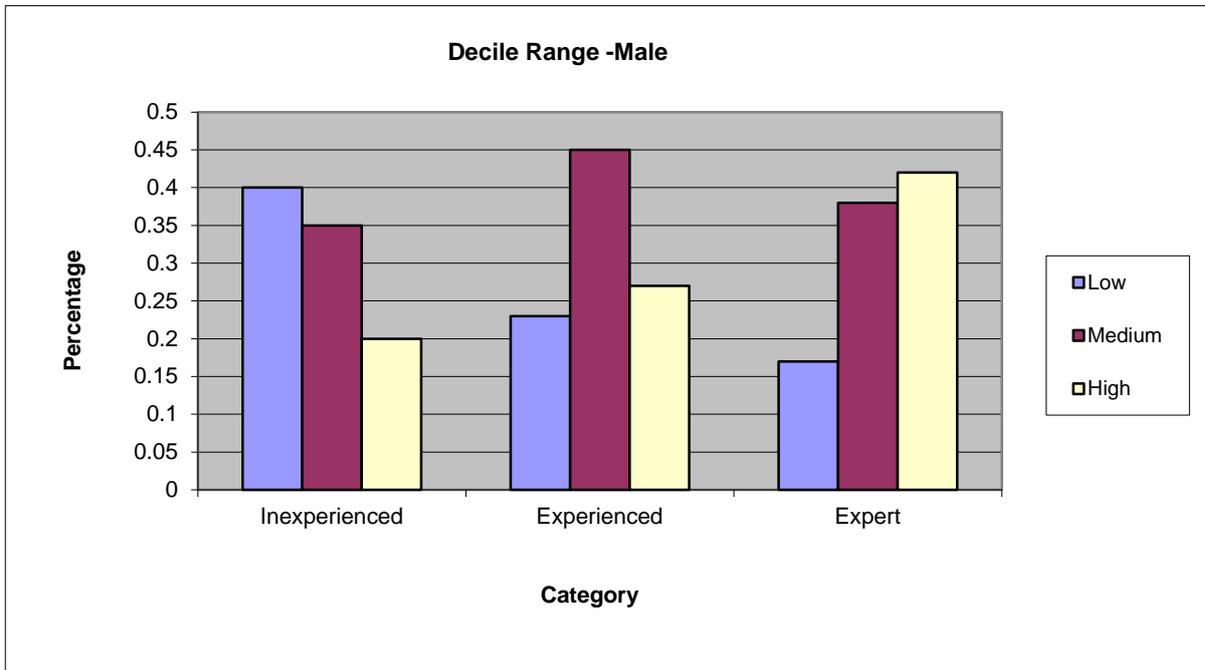


Figure 5: Decile Range - Male

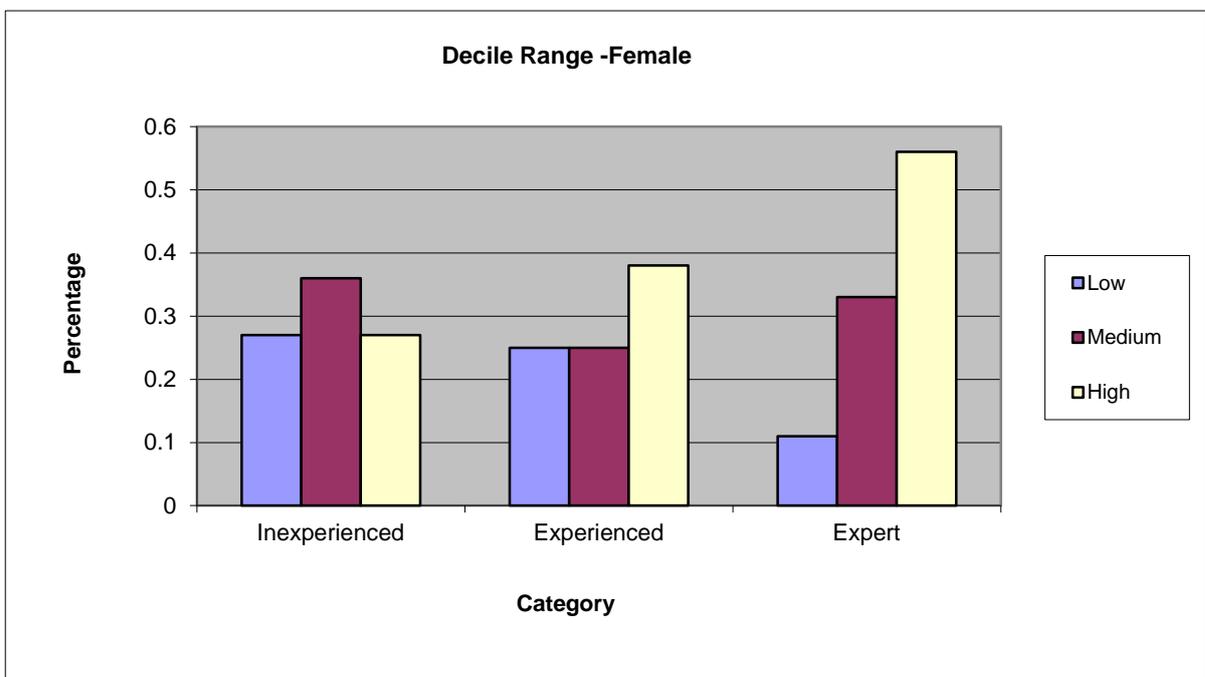


Figure 6: Decile - Female

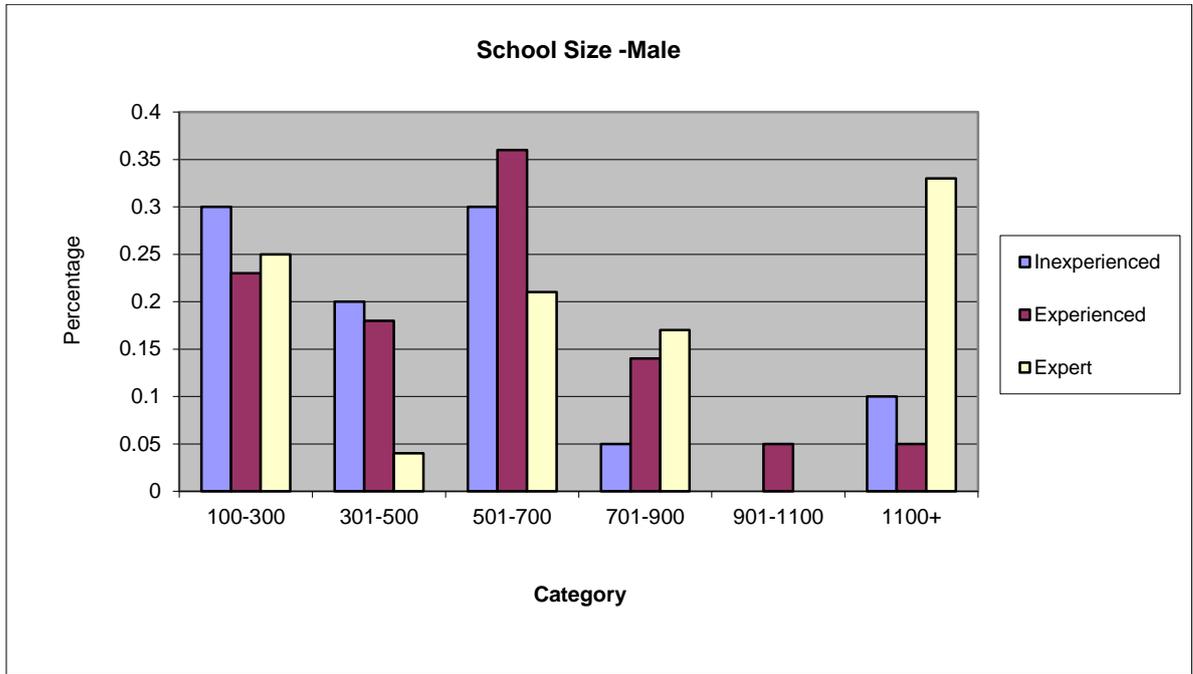


Figure 7: School Size - Male

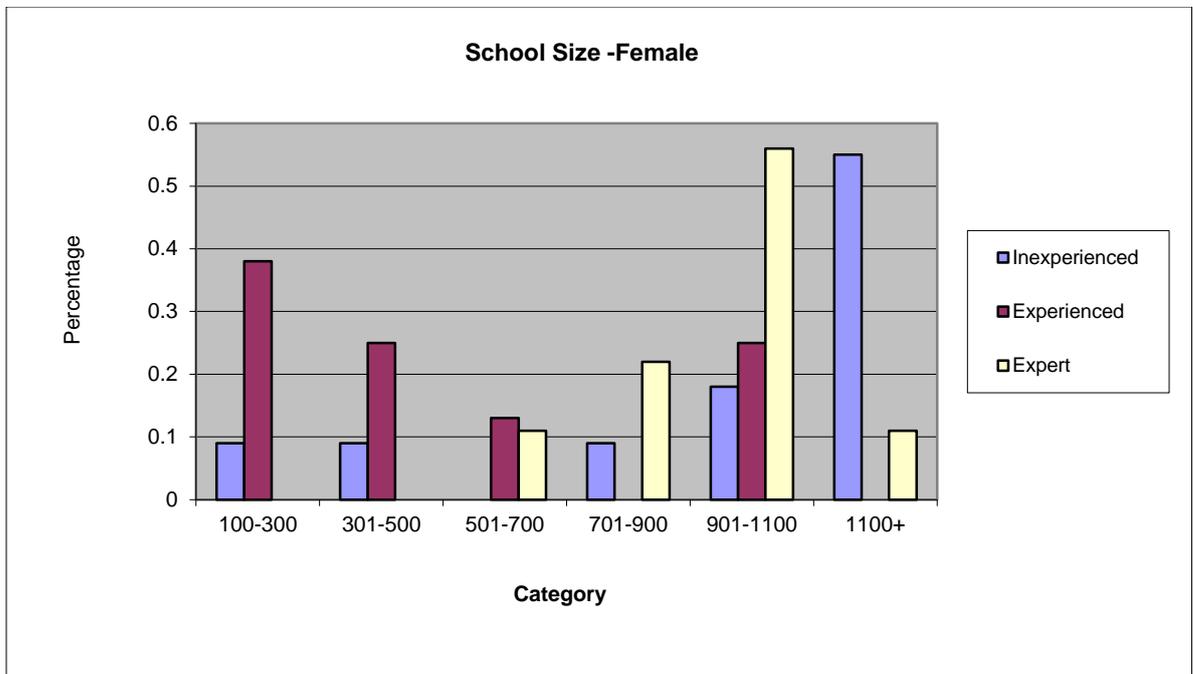


Figure 8: School Size - Female



Figure 9: School Location and Experience - Female

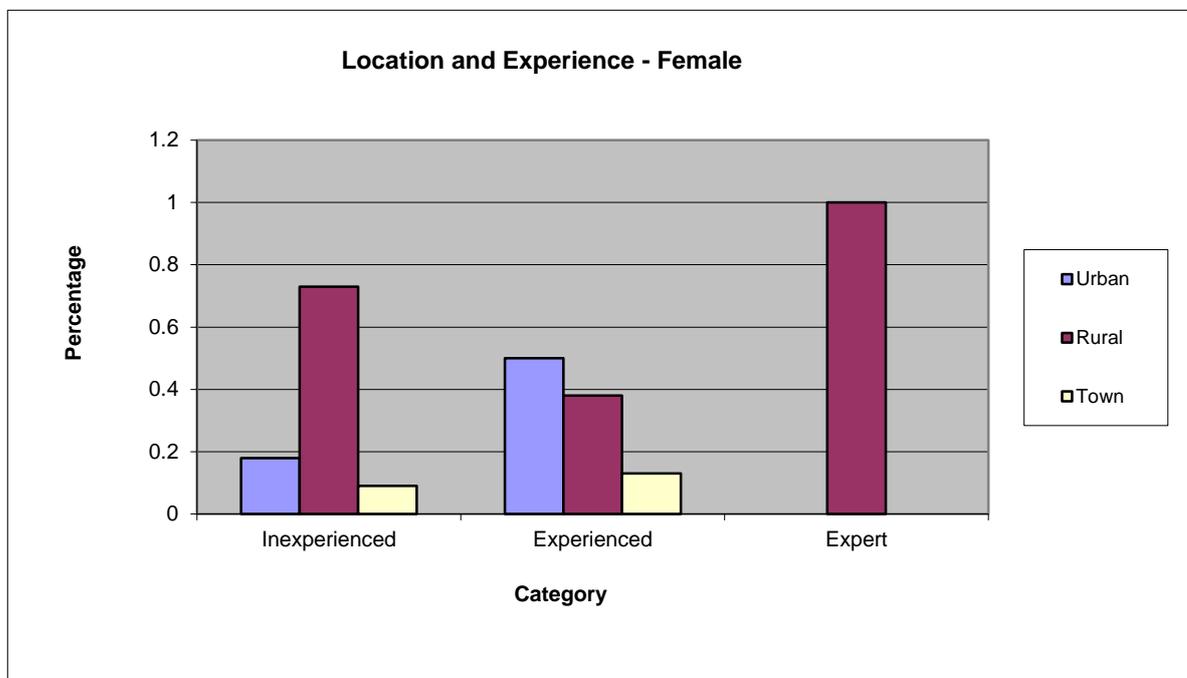


Figure 10: School Location and Experience - Female

Leadership Skills

In the leadership skills section of the survey, participants were asked to respond to a list of leadership skills derived from the literature (Billot, 2003; Cranston, Ehrich, & Lindsay, 2006; Day et al., 2008) and various professional publications (Education Review Office, 1997; Ministry of Education, 1998) using a value range from ‘not important’ to ‘essential’. The percentages of responses under each skill heading are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Importance of Skills, Competencies or Dispositions (expressed in percentages)

Skill	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Essential
Aware of Environment	0.0%	9.5%	28.6%	31.0%	29.8%
Contextual Awareness	0.0%	1.2%	23.2%	37.8%	34.1%
Cultural Awareness	0.0%	1.2%	16.9%	32.5%	49.4%
Strategic Thinking	0.0%	1.2%	2.4%	24.1%	72.3%
Entrepreneurialism	0.0%	13.4%	26.8%	46.3%	13.4%
Managing Info	0.0%	0.0%	16.9%	37.3%	45.8%
Reasoning	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	25.3%	69.9%
Decision-Making	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	19.2%	79.5%
Delivery of Outcomes	0.0%	0.0%	8.4%	25.3%	65.1%
Communication	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	11.9%	86.9%
Relationship Building	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	90.5%
Client Orientation	0.0%	2.4%	20.7%	36.6%	37.8%
Advocacy	0.0%	1.2%	23.5%	45.7%	28.4%
Conflict Management	0.0%	1.2%	10.8%	36.1%	51.8%
Adaptability	0.0%	1.2%	3.6%	19.3%	75.9%
Resiliency	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	10.7%	86.9%

Skill	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Essential
Professional Knowledge	0.0%	2.4%	4.8%	31.3%	61.4%
Vision	0.0%	0.0%	6.0%	11.9%	82.1%
Reflection	0.0%	1.2%	3.6%	27.7%	67.5%
Systems management	0.0%	6.1%	26.8%	46.3%	20.7%
Fiscal Management	0.0%	3.7%	23.2%	52.4%	20.7%
Asset Management	0.0%	9.8%	32.9%	40.2%	17.1%
Staff Management	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	16.7%	81.0%
Change Management	0.0%	0.0%	8.4%	26.5%	65.1%
Public Relations	0.0%	1.2%	10.8%	37.3%	50.6%
Work/life balance	0.0%	1.2%	13.3%	18.1%	63.9%

How principals perceived the role and the nature of the role itself were identified in the responses. From examining Table 1, it can be seen that despite the fact the list contained a mixture of cognitive, managerial, and personal skills, all skills were seen as important. This suggests that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is complex and that there is a wide range of expectation on principals. Looking carefully at the item-by-item results it can also be seen that the principals tended to assign the most importance to relational skills. Relationship Building (90.5%) and Communication (86.9%), in particular, were seen as key skills although Staff Management (81.0%) was also seen as essential. It is interesting to note that 86.9% of the respondents identified Resiliency as a key skill. A third finding from looking at the simple table of responses was that cognitive skills (e.g. Visioning 82.1% and Adaptability, 75.9%) were also seen as important. Finally, technical skills, or those with a business leadership flavour, such as Entrepreneurialism (13.4%), Asset Management (17.1%), Systems Management (20.7%), and Fiscal Management (20.7%), were not seen as being essential. Asset Management was, in fact,

the least important of the skills once the categories of “very important” and “essential” were combined.

The next step in the analysis was to see if there were variables or characteristics of principals or the school they led that impacted on the role perceptions of the principal, for instance, whether female or male principals see the role differently, or whether principal experience or the school’s socio-economic status (SES) impacted on their perceptions of the role. The difference for each of these variables was tested using a chi square analysis. The categories of “not important”, “important”, and “very important” frequently had few or no principals selecting them. Therefore, the responses were collapsed into one category for purposes of statistical analysis. This resulted in three groups of responses: 1= “no importance”, “some importance” and “important”, 2= “very important”, and, 3= “essential”. Tests were conducted using a .05 alpha level for significance. Tables 3, 4 and 5 present the comparisons for gender, experience of the principal, and socio-economic status of the school. For ease of presentation, the responses in the “essential” are reported. These are highly representative of the strength of the category overall.

Table 3. Essential Skill, Competency or Disposition by Gender (expressed in percentages)

	Male (N=66)	Female (N=38)
Aware of Environment	21	46
Contextual Awareness	32	46
Cultural Awareness	48	61
Strategic Thinking	74	75
Entrepreneurialism	11	36
Managing Info	44	64

	Male (N=66)	Female (N=38)
Reasoning	64	89
Decision-Making	82	79
Delivery of Outcomes	62	79
Communication	80	100
Relationship Building	88	100
Client Orientation	27	64
Advocacy	21	54
Conflict Management	48	64
Adaptability	68	93
Resiliency	82	100
Professional Knowledge	59	75
Vision	62	96
Reflection	64	82
Systems management	17	36
Fiscal Management	17	43
Asset Management	15	29
Staff Management	77	93
Change Management	59	82
Public Relations	44	71
Work/life balance	73	54

Note: Using a chi square test, the percentages that are presented in bold are significantly different at alpha=.05

Table 4: Essential Skill, Competency or Disposition by Experience (expressed in percentages)

	Less than 5 Years (N=33)	6-10 years (N=28)	11 Plus Years (N=33)
Aware of Environment	15	39	27
Contextual Awareness	27	29	36
Cultural Awareness	39	61	42
Strategic Thinking	70	75	64
Entrepreneurialism	12	11	27
Managing Info	45	46	48
Reasoning	67	82	64
Decision-Making	79	82	82
Delivery of Outcomes	73	61	73
Communication	94	89	82
Relationship Building	97	96	85
Client Orientation	36	43	39
Advocacy	27	18	36
Conflict Management	52	54	55
Adaptability	70	96	79
Resiliency	82	96	85
Professional Knowledge	61	64	64
Vision	73	89	91
Reflection	52	82	73
Systems management	24	18	27
Fiscal Management	33	14	21
Asset Management	15	11	27

	Less than 5 Years (N=33)	6-10 years (N=28)	11 Plus Years (N=33)
Staff Management	76	86	85
Change Management	61	82	58
Public Relations	48	46	52
Work/life balance	52	71	61

Note: Using a chi square analysis, no differences were significant at alpha=.05

Table 5: Essential Skill, Competency or Disposition by School Decile (expressed in percentages)

	Low Decile (N=28)	Medium Decile (N=35)	High Decile (N=31)
Aware of Environment	21	34	32
Contextual Awareness	35	37	52
Cultural Awareness	70	63	29
Strategic Thinking	87	71	71
Entrepreneurialism	17	20	16
Managing Info	39	43	61
Reasoning	70	77	65
Decision-Making	91	77	84
Delivery of Outcomes	87	66	68
Communication	91	83	87
Relationship Building	91	91	91
Client Orientation	39	34	42
Advocacy	48	31	26
Conflict Management	57	54	52

	Low Decile (N=28)	Medium Decile (N=35)	High Decile (N=31)
Adaptability	70	77	77
Resiliency	87	83	94
Professional Knowledge	65	60	74
Vision	78	89	81
Reflection	65	74	71
Systems management	13	26	26
Fiscal Management	30	23	23
Asset Management	17	20	19
Staff Management	87	80	84
Change Management	70	69	61
Public Relations	65	51	48
Work/life balance	70	63	65

Note: Using a chi square test, the percentages that are presented in bold are significantly different at alpha=.05

A review of Tables 3-5 indicate that, although there are some gender differences in the perceptions of the role of the principal, there are few differences by experience level or by socio-economic status of the schools where the principals are working. This indicated that there was a certain degree of consistency in the perceptions of the role held by principals. As to the differences noted between the perceptions of males and females, these findings seemed to support the belief of Collard (2003) that male and female principals have different leadership perspectives. She believed that female principals were more relational and male principals were more technical in their leadership orientation. In these results, female principals appeared have a more global and cognitive view of the role and identified more skills as important compared to

their male counterparts, who tended to identify a narrower range of functional and personal skills such as Decision-Making, and Work/Life Balance. However, Collard's claim is only partially borne out. For instance, both male and female principals felt Relationship Building and Communication were important.

It could be speculated that a possible cause for this difference in perception was not gender but the nature of the schools the principals in the sample led. In the sample, a large proportion of inexperienced male principals were in low decile and smaller schools where the role could be considered more challenging. This pointed to differences in perception possibly arising from school context rather than from the gender of the principal. There is also the possibility that what was being seen here is a "response bias", with the females in the study generally tending to think more things are important in than males do.

Another claim in the literature, which was only partially borne out in these results, was the belief that as principals grew in experience, they adopt a more global perception of the role. For example, Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Beresford (2000) believed that in the early years principals had a technical focus, but as they grew in experience this focus changed to a more conceptual view. However, experience in the role appeared to have little impact on the skills principals identified as essential. For instance, at least 60% of the principals in all three experience levels rated each of the following as essential: Relationship Building, Communication, Strategic Thinking, Professional Knowledge, Reasoning, Decision-Making, Vision, Delivery of Outcomes, Conflict Management, Adaptability, Resiliency, and Staff Management. The contextually specific nature of these skills seemed to further suggest the most important influence for all principals was school context.

There were, however, some trends that should be mentioned as possible influences related to experience, even though they fell short of statistical significance at $\alpha = .05$. Cognitive skills

such as Vision were less important for inexperienced principals. They also tended to regard Fiscal Management as more important. This seemed to suggest a certain level of focus on the technical aspects of the role in the early years. Principals who were more experienced also assigned more importance to personal skills such as Resiliency and Adaptability; perhaps as a reflection of the personal impact of the role over time. This focus on personal skills was most significant with principals who had six to 10 years of experience. These principals identified Adaptability and Resiliency as important as Relationship Building. This seemed to support the claim by the National College of School Leadership (2001b) that the morale of principal's fall after five years in the role because of stress, but morale is regained after 10 years' experience as they gain more self-confidence. Again it should be noted that these were trends that appear in the data, but they are not statistically significant and can only be regarded as possibilities based on these data.

The school's socio-economic status also appeared to have only a limited impact on perceptions principals had of the role. Little difference was detected between the skills the principals of high decile schools identified as essential as compared to principals of low decile schools. The single significant difference was that principals in low decile schools saw Cultural Awareness as important as compared to principals of high decile schools. This was possibly a reflection of the predominance of Maori and Pacific Island students in these schools. Decision Making and Strategic Thinking were also seen by principals of low decile schools as being more important skills. Again this could be attributed to the more challenging nature of the school. Harris (2007) for instance, described leadership in these types of schools as tending to be more directive in nature.

Therefore, with the exception of the different perspective of male and female principals, the overall conclusions about the role, from this initial set of results, were that principals tended to

view the role in broadly similar terms that conceptually were little different to that identified in the literature on school leadership.

However, there were indications that this broad conceptual view did differ slightly from principal to principal. In almost any given category there was a degree of variance across the responses. While these variations were not large they did seem to point to the possibility that the participants had two views of the role; a broad conceptual view, linked to views of the role found in the literature and a more specific view based on their day-to-day leadership activities within their school.

A simple explanation of this difference in view could also be that the principals had a different interpretation of what each skill in the survey meant and the difference in responses was a product of that individual interpretation. However, a more plausible explanation was that the differences in view were the product of individual experience. This led to the speculation that while principals thought about the role in broadly similar terms, the daily reality of the role produced a differing view which was influenced by the context of their school and the perceptions they had of the role because of that context. This belief is explored in a later section.

Factor analysis of leadership skills.

From the initial data analysis of the skills section of the survey it was determined that individual principals tended to identify groups of particular skills as “essential”. For instance, a principal who identified Professional Knowledge as essential also tended to identify Vision and Reflection. In the same way, a principal who identified Managing Information as essential also tended to identify Systems Management, Fiscal Management and Asset Management. While these links were not clear for all the participants, the level to which they were evident suggested a factor analysis of the skills portion of the survey might yield a reduced ‘set’ of factors that would simplify and enhance the understanding of the principals’ responses. Specifically, such an

analysis might determine whether it was possible to identify sets of skills that could be indicative of leadership style.

To investigate the potential utility of such an analysis, an exploratory factor analysis, using the skills the respondents identified as “essential” was undertaken using a varimax rotation. Several solutions to the factor analysis were investigated, with different numbers of factors being retained for rotation based on the eigenvalues. A scree plot of the eigenvalues is presented in Figure 11.

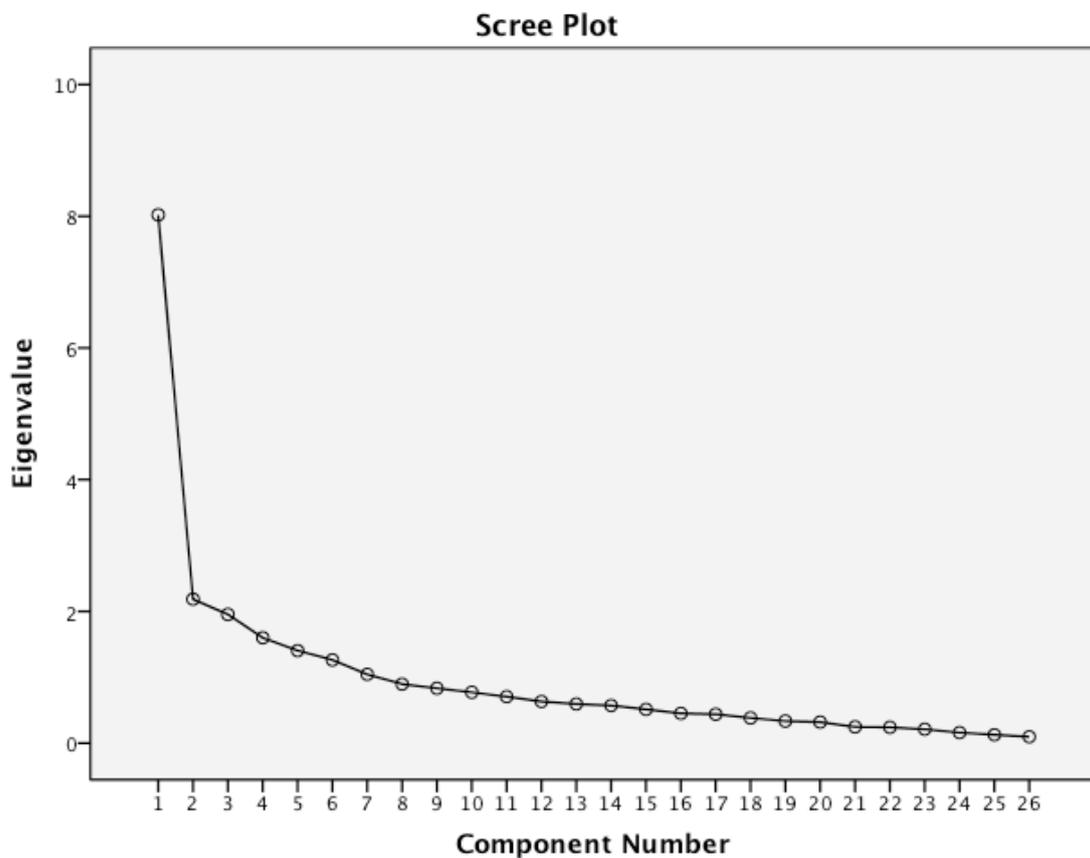


Figure 11. Scree plot

This scree plot suggested that between three or six factors might be retained for rotation. Each of these solutions was then examined to see if the resulting factors were suitable within the context of the research. It was decided that a five factor solution was the best option in terms of

producing results which made sense from a substantive point of view. The varimax rotated results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Skill Relationships (Rotated Component Matrix using 5 variables)

Skill	Cognitive	Technical	Affective	Contextual	Functional
Aware of Environment			.272	.822	
Contextual Awareness				.818	
Cultural Awareness		.251		.545	
Strategic Thinking	.492	.303	-.200		
Entrepreneurialism		.550		.399	
Managing Info		.656			.295
Reasoning	.482	.255	.355	.241	.346
Decision-Making	.384				.551
Delivery of Outcomes	.235	.569		.340	.216
Communication	.294			.247	.632
Relationship Building			.568		.455
Client Orientation		.291		.672	
Advocacy	.207	.401	.609	.413	
Conflict Management	.371	.367	.391		
Adaptability	.212		.734		
Resiliency			.561	.264	.447
Professional Knowledge	.610	.417		.233	.260
Vision	.795		.232		-.298
Reflection	.654	.214	.225		
Systems management		.754			
Fiscal Management	.434	.714			

Skill	Cognitive	Technical	Affective	Contextual	Functional
Asset Management	.237	.788			
Staff Management	.757				.294
Change Management	.638	.255	.323	.273	.207
Public Relations	.454	.236	.423		
Work/life balance					.454

Note: All loadings of .200 or less have been omitted.

Each factor was then closely examined. The first factor showed high loadings on; Vision, Reflection; Change Management; Strategic Thinking; Reasoning; Public Relations; Professional Knowledge and, Staff Management. These skills were identified as mainly cognitive skills and this factor was called Cognitive. The second factor had high loadings on; Managing Information; Delivery of Outcomes; Systems Management; Fiscal Management and, Asset Management. These skills were identified as technical skills and this factor was called Technical. The third factor had high loadings on; Relationship Building; Advocacy and, Resiliency. These skills were identified as personal and this factor was called Affective. The fourth factor had high loadings on; Awareness of the Environment; Contextual Awareness; Cultural Awareness and, Client Orientation. These were identified as contextual skills and this factor was called Contextual. The fifth factor had high loadings on Communication and Decision Making. These were identified as functional skills and this factor was called Functional.

It was accepted that this grouping of skills was only indicative of possible leadership style. It was more interesting to speculate as to why some principals favored particular skills over others, and whether the choice of these skills could be linked to their personal leadership perceptions, their pre-service experience, or school context. The impact of school context and personal leadership perceptions on the leadership are explored in the following section and in more detail using the case study principals.

Following the factor analysis, a new set of variables was created that reflected the factor structure. This was accomplished by taking loadings of .40 and higher on the rotated results, and including them as part of each new variable. There were several items that showed loadings higher than .4 on more than one factor (e.g., Advocacy). In these situations, preference was given to the factor with the highest loading. This loading was checked to see if the item should be associated with the factor with the highest loading, and in each case, that was deemed to be optimal. The survey responses loading on a factor were summed, and then divided by the number of responses to get an average response for each of the factors. This allowed for direct comparison of the factors. Thus, the variables of; Cognitive; Technical; Affective; Contextual and, Functional leadership were created. Cronbach's alpha was estimated for each of the resulting factors. The reliability coefficients were: Cognitive, .85; Technical, .83; Affective, .64; Contextual, .73; and Functional, .31. All the reliabilities except for Functional were appropriately strong for research purposes. The reliability for Functional was too low to give good power in the subsequent analyses, but was included in those analyses for sake of completeness. These were then analyzed in a set of 5 three-way analyses of variance, with gender, experience, and socio-economic status as the independent variables.

The results essentially reflected what was found from the chi square analysis of each item from the survey. There are gender effects for four of the five factors, with no significant effects for experience or school socio-economic status. Additionally, none of the interaction terms were significant. Looking more specifically at the results, statistically significant results were found for gender on Cognitive, $F(1, 71) = 9.705, p < .001$; Technical, $F(1, 71) = 4.297, p = .042$; Affective, $F(1, 71) = 9.971, p < .001$; Contextual, $F(1, 71) = 7.528, p = .008$. No other main effects or interaction terms were significant.

In order to look more closely at the magnitude of the differences where they were found to be statistically significant, Hedges' *g* statistic was calculated as a measure of effect size for each

gender comparison. For Cognitive, the effect size was .87; for Technical, it was .66; for Affective, it was 1.09; and for Contextual, it was .86. Each of these effect sizes would be considered to be large in the social science research literature.

The distribution of response by gender for each of the variables is presented in a box plot in Figure 12. This figure illustrates the mean differences described above, but also indicates that male principals showed substantially more variation in their responses than females. Thus, we see that females responded that four of the five factors were more important to them than to their male counterparts, and that they rated these factors more consistently highly than their male counterparts. This seemed to affirm the assumption made from the skills data section of the survey that female principals had a more conceptual leadership view and a more global view of the role. However, this assumption should be viewed with some caution as a significant proportion of the female principals in the sample were principals from schools which were larger and or middle to high decile. Consequently, this difference between the leadership views could equally be equated to the nature of the schools they led, which it could be assumed, were less challenging than those led by the male principals, a significant group of whom were in smaller or low decile schools

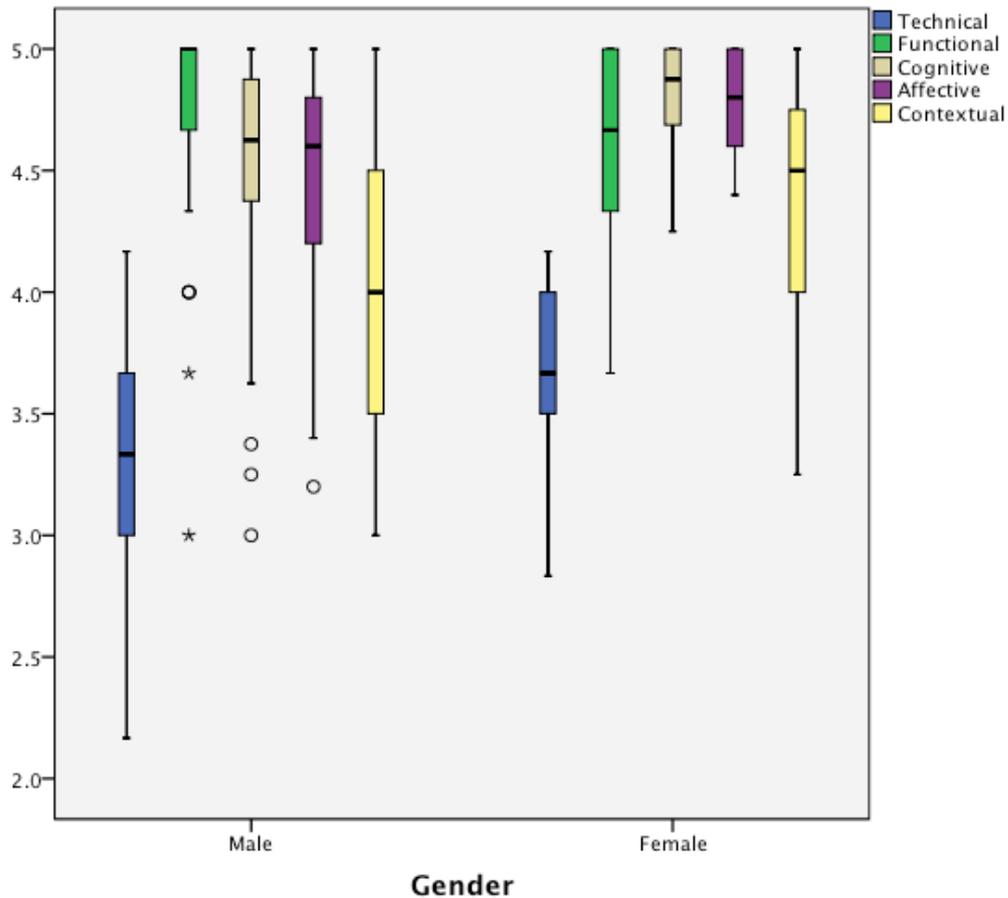


Figure 12. Boxplots of factors from factor analysis.

Leadership Activity

The next step was to explore the impact of school context on the leadership, and to move from the conceptual understanding of the role gained from the skills section of the survey to a more specific understanding of what principals did on a daily basis. To do this, the data from Sections C and D of the survey were analysed.

In Section C of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate how much time they spent on general areas of leadership activity over a “real” week and to identify what they preferred to do in an “ideal” week. The concepts of real and ideal were used so that conclusions could be drawn about the actual leadership activity, and possible differences could be identified between that activity and how principals conceptualised the role. The respondents were supplied with six general leadership activity areas drawn from the literature (Strategic Leadership, Curriculum

Leadership, Management, Students, Parents and, Staff). A three point scale of, “Great Deal of Time”, “Some Time” and “No Time” was also provided.

Because the aim of this initial analysis was to establish trends rather than specific detail, a system of averaging was used to analyse the data. To do this, each of the categories was assigned a value: 3= “Great Deal of Time”, 2= “Some Time”, and 1=“No Time”. The responses for each leadership activity were then totalled and a weekly average for males and females identified. This gender variable was chosen as gender had the most statistical significance in the skills phase of the study. The category, “No Time” was not checked by any of the participants, thereby confirming the understanding gained from the skills section of the survey that the role is complex and multi-faceted. These results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Leadership Focus

Activity	All Males (N=66)		All Females (N=28)	
	Real Average	Ideal Average	Real Average	Ideal Average
Strategic Leadership	2.2	2.8	2.2	2.8
Curriculum Leadership	2.0	2.6	2.0	2.7
Management	2.8	2.1	2.7	2.1
Student	2.3	2.0	2.3	2.2
Parent	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Staff	2.4	2.1	2.5	2.1

These results largely confirmed the belief that the role is substantially similar for all principals. Some minor variations were noted between the responses of the male and female principals but when these differences were tested for statistical significance with t-tests, none were significant at $\alpha=.05$. However, some trends were identified which should be noted.

The first trend was that, despite the low importance principals placed on technical or management skills in the skills section of the survey, these results indicated that principals spent a large proportion of their weekly activity on management. This confirmed the claim by Wylie (1997) and Billot (2003) that management activities are a significant factor in the leadership activities of secondary principals in New Zealand.

The low importance principals placed on management was confirmed by the amount of time they preferred to spend on it in the ideal week. However, even in an ideal week the principals acknowledged its significance in terms of the role by equating its importance with parent and staff management. This seems to suggest that principals accepted that management was a key aspect of the role.

The second trend was that principals spent the least amount of time on Curriculum Leadership compared to all other leadership activities. This seems to confirm the claim by Elmore (2000) and Wylie (1997; 2007) that principals were distracted from issues of teaching and learning and were more contextually responsive or problem-solving orientated. It was accepted that this lack of focus on curriculum could be attributed to the size, the organizational complexity, and subject-specialized teaching in high schools. However, the results seemed to point to two possible conclusions. The first is that secondary school principalship in New Zealand is largely orientated towards systems-management. The second is that principals identify their role as managing the systems which support the teaching and learning and do not identify themselves as educational leaders. The fact that principals do not see themselves as

educational leaders but as systems leaders was also partially confirmed by the preference of the participants for Strategic Leadership in an ideal week rather than Curriculum Leadership. This seemed to indicate that the principals saw the role of the principal as being a broader, organisational leadership concept than educational leadership.

This initial analysis was followed by a more detailed examination of a principal's daily activity by using the data from Section D of the survey. In Section D, the participants were asked to list five stressors using a scale of "most" to "least". No headings were provided and the participants had the opportunity to describe their stresses in their own words. This produced responses which ranged from single words to whole sentences. Responses were then examined in detail to identify common themes or categories. This analysis was very much in line with the approach to analysing qualitative data advocated by Strauss and Corbin (1998), in that open coding was used to identify categories and common themes. While not as detailed an analytical process as that prescribed by Strauss and Corbin, the process nevertheless consisted of a word by word analysis of each of the responses. The results of this approach led to the identification of 20 leadership focus factors containing 50 stress concepts.

Once these categories were identified, the researcher was then able to identify the percentage of those responding to each category and place the focus factors in descending order. These results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Leadership Focus Factors for All Respondents (by percentage)

Leadership Focus	
Factors	%
Staff Issues	61
Students	55
Job Size	45

Leadership Focus	
Factors	%
Parents	30
Staff Competency	30
Compliance	27
Financing	25
Systems Management	22
Personal	17
Staff Conflict	17
Agencies	16
Time	15
Role Conflict	15
Resourcing	13
Teaching	13
Relationships	10
Property	10
BOT	9
PD	4
Change	3
School Events	2
Marketing	2

The key factors impacting on the role of the principal were then identified. Staff issues were clearly a significant factor and this confirmed the importance of the relational skills identified in the skills section of the survey. The size of the role was also seen as a key stressor and this seemed to confirm the findings of Billott (2003) and Wylie (1997) that role complexity was a

major issue for principals. The results also confirmed the contextual nature of the role and the degree to which principals are required to focus on the needs within their own school. Four of the six most important focus factors were seen to be contextual in nature; staff issues, staff competency, students, and parents. The level of concern about staff issues also seemed to confirm the claim of Elmore (2000) that a key function of a principal is to meet the concerns of the staff. It also seemed to confirm the belief found in the literature that teachers play a significant role in defining the leadership of the individual principal.

The results were further analysed using the variables of gender, principal experience, school location, and school socio-economic status to determine whether these factors created different areas of stress. As with the skills section of the survey, the difference for each variable was tested using a chi square analysis with a .05 alpha level for significance. Once again, as the categories of “no importance”, “important”, and “very important” frequently had few or no principals checking them, the responses were collapsed into three categories: 1= “no importance”, “some importance” and “important”, 2= “very important”, 3= “essential”. These results are presented in Tables 9-12.

Table 9. Leadership Focus Factors by Gender (expressed as a percentage)

	Male (N=66)	Female (N=38)
Teaching	15	12
Staff Competency	19	9
Staff Conflict	15	15
Staff Issues	58	58
Compliance	19	19
Marketing	3	0

	Male (N=66)	Female (N=38)
Time	17	12
Change	6	4
Parents	32	27
Students	56	54
Finance	27	19
Property	8	15
Agencies	18	12
Management	19	19
Relationships	23	23
Resourcing	8	8
Events	2	4
Role Conflict	15	15
BOT	9	6
Role Size	42	54
PD	5	4

Note: Using a chi square analysis, no differences were significant at $\alpha=.05$

Table 10. Leadership Focus Factors by Experience (expressed as a percentage)

	> 5Years (N=33)	6-10 Years (N=28)	< 11 years (N=33)
Teaching	29	11	3
Staff Competency	26	32	33
Staff Conflict	13	25	15
Staff Issues	68	50	67

	> 5Years (N=33)	6-10 Years (N=28)	< 11 years (N=33)
Compliance	16	29	36
Marketing	0	4	6
Time	19	7	18
Change	13	11	0
Parents	32	29	30
Students	52	57	58
Finance	32	25	18
Property	13	11	6
Agencies	13	21	15
Management	26	25	15
Relationships	23	4	3
Resourcing	10	11	18
Events	3	0	3
Role Conflict	10	18	18
BOT	0	4	21
Role Size	39	46	52
PD	3	0	9

Note: Using a chi square analysis, no differences were significant at $\alpha=.05$

Table 11. Leadership Focus Factors by School Location (expressed as a percentage)

	Rural (N= 30)	Urban (N=45)	Town (N=19)
Teaching	17	9	11

	Rural (N= 30)	Urban (N=45)	Town (N=19)
Staff Competency	38	23	39
Staff Conflict	10	16	22
Staff Issues	55	66	67
Compliance	28	34	11
Marketing	0	5	0
Time	14	20	6
Change	7	2	17
Parents	52	23	11
Students	66	55	33
Finance	34	23	11
Property	10	14	0
Agencies	17	20	6
Management	21	16	39
Relationships	10	11	11
Resourcing	3	18	17
Events	0	5	0
Role Conflict	10	18	17
BOT	7	5	17
Role Size	52	39	50
PD	0	5	11

Note: Using a chi square analysis, no differences were significant at $\alpha=.05$

Table 12. Leadership Focus Factors by School Decile (expressed as a percentage)

	Low Decile (N= 27)	Medium Decile (N=24)	High Decile (N=32)
Teaching	7	8	22
Staff Competency	19	42	34
Staff Conflict	15	21	13
Staff Issues	59	63	63
Compliance	19	25	34
Marketing	0	4	3
Time	26	17	9
Change	0	4	6
Parents	44	29	25
Students	56	58	50
Finance	22	17	34
Property	4	17	6
Agencies	11	21	6
Management	22	21	17
Relationships	11	4	9
Resourcing	5	25	6
Events	0	4	0
Role Conflict	30	8	9
BOT	11	4	13
Role Size	48	46	47
PD	4	4	6

Note: Using a chi square analysis, no differences were significant at $\alpha=.05$

These results confirmed that, broadly speaking, the role holds many similarities for all principals in that staff, students, and parents are of most concern. However, there were

indications in these results, as there were in the leadership skills section of the survey results, that individual principals viewed the role slightly differently, and there was in almost all of the focus areas, a degree of variance across the responses.

A simple interpretation of this variation could be that principals viewed the role differently because their individual experiences were what impacted most on their view of the role. This seems to suggest that while secondary principals think about their role in a certain way, and this shows some similarity across principals, the daily demands from within their school creates a different view; one that is more based on the contexts and the everyday realities of the role. This seems to argue for school context and the personal response of the principal within that context as key determiners of how principals saw the role, and of the leadership areas of focus they gave priority to within the school. It then became of interest to speculate about the nature of those responses and the degree to which the personality of the principal, their leadership skills, and their leadership perceptions impacted on how he or she performed the role. This was explored in more depth through the study of the leadership activities and interactions of the five case study principals.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY RESULTS

This chapter presents the results from the principal case studies. The use of case studies had two purposes. The first was to test the validity of the tentative conclusions about secondary school leadership drawn from the survey data. The second was to advance an understanding of the nature of the leadership from the conceptual view provided by the survey, to a more grounded understanding based on the leadership activities of principals within their own schools.

The results are presented in two sections. In the first section a detailed description of each case study is provided and emerging themes and leadership concepts from the leadership of each case study are identified. Those factors which impacted on the leadership are also detailed. The leadership model of each principal is also described. In the second section the leadership focus areas of each principal are presented and links are established between the broad leadership model of each principal and the school contexts.

The Case Study Principals

Five principals were chosen as case studies. They ranged in experience from eight years to 18 years. Two participants were female and three were male. One was the principal of a school in a small town while the other four were principals of urban schools. The schools they led ranged from Decile 2 to Decile 10. Three of the schools were co-educational. One was a single-sex boy's school and one was a single-sex, integrated, girl's school. The demographic details of the participants are displayed in Figure 13.

Principal	Greg	Mark	Penny	Marge	Kevin
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male
Years of Experience	18	10	15	13	8
Education	MA, TC, Dip Ed	BA	M. Ed Admin	M. Ed Admin	BSc
School Type	Boys	Co-ed	Co-ed	Integrated	Co-ed
Decile	6	2	9	10	8

Figure 13. Demographic background of the case study participants

In the following section a detailed description of the leadership style of each of the case studies is provided. Following each description emerging leadership concepts or themes are also identified

Case Study Principal 1: Greg.

School context

Greg's school was an urban single-sex boys' school. It had a roll of approximately 640 students of whom a significant number were Polynesian (20%) and Maori (15%). While the area in which the school was situated was largely working class, the school's socio-economic status was decile 6 which indicated its actual intake was in the middle socio-economic range.

Characteristics of the principal's leadership style.

Description

Greg was a very experienced principal having been a principal for 18 years. His style of leadership was non-consultative, low-trust and tended to be largely focused on issues to do with school organization rather than the teaching and learning functions of the school. In particular he had a significant focus on student discipline. This was evidenced in the 26 hours he spent on

student issues in his reflective journal (Table 13). He justified this focus by a need to deal with “difficult discipline issues every day. Every day, again and again”.

This focus on discipline appeared to have arisen from his perceptions of the community’s view of the school which they felt was unsafe, and from his interpretation of the community’s view of the principal’s role; “You have to be known by the community as someone who does that [discipline]”. Community perceptions of the school were especially important to Greg and this was clear in the importance he placed on the community perceptions as comparison to those of the Education Review Office:

Community reaction. We survey our parents. Board members telephone a certain number of people, rate them 1-5. Scores are mainly 4-5. Hear it coming from the community a lot. Because the community knows the school as it was; failing. I’m hearing the school has turned around. I put a lot more stock in that than any ERO visit.

However, his narrow focus on problem-solving could also be linked to Greg’s lack of a clear leadership concept. For instance, he described the role as, “the principal needing to be involved at the fundamental school level”. He also indicated this was a leadership focus he was comfortable with: “I had to do a lot of the day-to-day stuff. I had the advantage. I had just been a DP. I did a lot of the hands on stuff because I knew it”.

Consequently, while Greg could articulate a broad view of education and school purpose, the nature of the leadership activities, identified in his reflective journal and in his interview, tended to be mostly reactive to problems rather than strategic or developmental. Curriculum development and professional development, for instance, were left to small committees which Greg was not a part of.

This meant the leadership of Greg could be described as a narrow, reactive leadership model which was marked by low trust and a tendency to be non-consultative. While he indicated

he had begun to delegate, this appeared to be less a clear leadership philosophy as a form of self-preservation.

This tendency to be non-consultative also gave his leadership a confrontational flavor and certain rigidity. This rigidity was particularly evident when Greg described his leadership style:

Being 100% straight. Working hard. Being a person who listens to people and tries to make the best judgment all the time. Taking into consideration what people say but having a bottom line in terms of performance of both staff and students.

Description:

- Focus on student issues/organisation and functions around discipline
- Small team consultation
- Low interest in technical compliance or management
- Strong personal leadership –hands on, confrontational
- Reactive/problem solving orientation
- Principal remote from the teaching and learning functions of the school

Figure 14. Summary of the leadership style - Greg

Impact Factors

Several key factors impacted on the leadership style of Greg. The first was his limited leadership experience prior to appointment and his limited leadership vision. He described his promotion to principal as a, “logical progression as you move through the school” rather than a self-conscious effort to be a principal. Also, despite the fact he attributed his wish to become a principal to his wanting to be, “more outward looking”, his strongest reason for seeking the promotion appeared to have been dissatisfaction with the role of deputy principal:

I was a DP which I didn't think was a great job. Does all the discipline stuff. I only had a year and a term of that and thought I am not keen on doing all this. It's part of the DP's role to deal with all the rubbish in the school and deal with difficult kids.

The second key factor impacting on his leadership was his early difficulties with staff. Greg described his early experiences in the school as "bizarre":

I dealt with the most interesting and difficult staffing situations. The Ministry wanted to call it bizarre. When I came here the DP had applied for the job twice and not got it. Completely divided staff. The AP wasn't teaching effectively. I took action on the AP; put on competency. At the start of the next year the AP went on sick leave. The DP then went on sick leave. So no DP; no AP.

Tensions with some of the staff had also remained and this was evidenced by Greg's description of several personal grievances. These difficulties gave Greg a sense of isolation in the role and as a consequence he saw the enactment of the role as being individualized by the personal strength of the principal; "There are times when you are on your own. People are going to run away".

Consequently, Greg seemed to have adopted a low-trust, non-consultative leadership style and a tendency towards reactive problem-solving and short-term dilemma management, all of which served to ensure his interactions with staff were limited or were in areas he felt would be seen by the staff as within the role of the principal.

The third factor impacting on his leadership were specific issues within the school to do with the challenging nature of the parents and the students. In his interview, he described having to deal with 171 discipline issues in 30 days in his first year. He also ascribed this need to his sense that the community perceived the school as being unsafe. This focus on student issues was the key focus of his leadership and the time spent on student issues in his reflective journal was far

in excess of all the other case study principals. However, this focus could also be attributed to Greg's limited perceptions of the role of the principal and his belief that principals needed to be involved with discipline.

Impact Factors

- Early leadership experience limited – no attempt to up-skill
- Negative early experience – low organisational acceptance/legal conflict
- Staff conflict/challenges
- School seen as unsafe by community/level of violence in the school/ community challenges to leadership
- Principal isolated

Figure 15. Summary of the impact factors - Greg

Leadership Model

These impact factors meant that the leadership model of Greg could be viewed as a narrow form of contingent leadership. It was also non-consultative, non-distributive and inflexible with a focus on problem-solving and reactive responsiveness to daily problems within the school. The contingent narrowness of his leadership model was confirmed by data from his reflective journal that clearly indicated that his leadership was largely confined to two key leadership focus areas; management and students. Consequently his leadership model was identified as being largely reactive and contextually orientated with a narrow focus on a specific set of organizational and functional aspects of the school.

Leadership Model

- Non-distributive leadership
- Non-flexible – limited skills applied to problem solving
- Leadership perceptions are limited to contextualised problem recognition within the specific school

- On-going preference by the principal for the status quo of school structure and design
- Leadership has little impact on the teaching and learning activity within the school
- Low trust

Figure 16. Summary of the leadership model – Greg

Emerging themes.

From this case study several key leadership themes emerged. The first was that there is a link between tension within the organization and a narrow, reactive and non-relational leadership style. This link pointed to secondary school leadership possibly being a contextualized or contingent form of leadership activity rather than leadership for development or change. This link also argued for the conclusion that organizational approval is a key factor impacting on the leadership of an individual principal.

The second theme was that there is link between community perceptions of the school and the leadership focuses of the principal. In this case study, negative community perceptions had resulted in a narrow, school's functions-based leadership focus. This argued for the conclusion that broadly-held school and school leadership effectiveness expectations were also key factors impacting on the leadership of the principal.

The third theme was that the role is personalized to a significant extent and is largely not based on broad leadership concepts or models of leadership practice but on the personal leadership perceptions and skills of the principal. While Greg could articulate a broad leadership concept, his actual leadership activity was contextualized problem-solving and his leadership focuses and leadership activities were based on a relatively narrow perception of principalship and on the narrow range of leadership skills he had gained prior to his appointment.

The fourth theme was that, because broadly-held expectations of school and school leadership effectiveness make the focus of the leadership contextualized problem-solving to meet

those expectations, the nature of the leadership is not derived from the learning needs within the school. Instead it is derived from the personal leadership skills the principal uses to maintain the interface between those broadly-held perceptions and the school's contexts.

Case Study Principal 2: Mark

School context.

Mark was the principal of a decile 2 co-educational school with a roll of approximately 500 students. The roll was falling and Mark felt the school was not highly regarded in the community. He described it as having, "lost the community". The indications were that the roll would fall further in the next few years. The Board of Trustees wanted the school to be competitive and had a focus on the improvement of results in national qualifications to address this problem. The community the school served was lower socio-economic and was largely Polynesian or Maori. These demographics were reflected in the school roll which had a significant number of Maori (68%) and Polynesian (22%) students. The nature of the community was such that parents and students faced some significant economic and social challenges and these were reflected in some of difficulties Mark faced with some of the parents and the students. Mark indicated that under the previous principal the school was well regarded by the community and by the staff as being well run and well organized. However, there were concerns that this level of organization had declined and Mark felt both the staff and the Board blamed it on his leadership.

Characteristics of the principal's leadership style.

Description

Mark was an experienced principal having been in the role for ten years. His style of leadership was reactive problem-solving and he tended to focus on a narrow range of administration and management functions. Consequently, it could be considered a narrow form

of contingency leadership which was low-trust and largely non-consultative. His reflective journal indicated he spent 24 hours (Table 13) on management activities during the week. However, this specific focus appeared to arise from the demands on Mark from his Board of Trustees for data on student achievement and from perceptions of the staff and the Board of poor leadership. This need to focus on administration had created a level of frustration in Mark and a conflict between his perceptions of himself as a leader and what he was required to do on a daily basis. He described himself as being frustrated by these demands for additional qualifications, “Too many principals and people in society see education as measured by qualifications. I don’t believe that. Ivory tower types devalue the other qualities of education”. Instead, he felt his role was to, “provide every opportunity for kids to succeed” and that the Board was being “data police”.

He had inherited a well-organized school in which he was the Deputy Principal prior to his appointment as principal. However, the Board of Trustees, and the Education Review Office were critical of his leadership style. At the time of the study, Mark was also in conflict with his Board over his leadership style. This meant Mark was largely focused on the nature of his leadership rather than actual leadership activities. This conflict had also created a level of distrust in Mark, particularly with the teachers and this low trust meant he was isolated, reactive and narrow in his leadership focus. Conflict with the staff had also created a tendency not to take risks. His view of the staff was evidenced by his reaction to staff complaints: “Believe a degree of poisoning by the staff. I had advice there was malicious stuff from a member of the staff”.

This lack of trust and the tensions within the school could also explain his lack of personal confidence in his leadership. This lack of confidence was evidenced in his explanation as to why he had not made many changes: “I’ve got some skills but I wouldn’t want to win every argument or insist on doing it my way because I think I am right”.

He also appeared to have no clear understanding of his leadership style. He described himself as a “promotional” and “banner-type leader”. In his reflective journal he indicated that he spent 3.25 hours per week on Strategic Leadership activity (Table 13). However, his interview and the leadership activities described in the daily section of reflective journal indicated his leadership was not strategic but managerial with overtones of reactive problem-solving. Consequently, his comment in his interview that his leadership was “very much flying by the seat of your pants”, was possibly a better description. He also did not have teaching and learning focus and he felt that he, “wouldn’t be confident in leading my staff in educational matters”.

Despite this managerial focus he also did not spend much time on school functions. For instance he indicated he spent little time on matters to do with finance or property. He also had a slightly dismissive view of the managerial aspects of the role. In his interview he described his daily leadership activities as: “Stupid, minor things. Lots of trivia. Compliance stuff . Creating more evidence for the Board”.

Leadership Description:

- Focus on administration and managerial activities
- Little interest in leadership to do with school functions
- Low trust, non-consultative
- Reactive, problem-solving style
- Leadership lacking in focus. He does what is told rather than act individually or develop his own leadership directions
- Isolated from teaching and learning functions

Figure 17. Summary of the leadership style - Mark

Impact factors

Two key factors impacted on the leadership of Mark. The first was the criticisms of his leadership from the teachers, the Board and the community. These made it difficult for Mark to develop a particular style and his leadership activities tended to be focused on meeting those concerns rather than general school concerns. Consequently his leadership was narrow both in his focus and in its contextual reactivity. An example of this narrowness could be seen when he described how staff criticized his voice for being monotone so his prime focus became to change his style of speaking. The degree to which this need for staff acceptance impacted on his leadership style can be seen in his description of his leadership:

With the staff it was to be seen to be approachable. Helped, because in the second week I had a staff rebellion around a sacked staff member. I decided to take a more prominent place in the school. Staff started to like me taking the reins. Balance between empowerment and being seen to be a leader. Staff made me change.

This focus on staff was also identified in his reflective journal which showed he spent 5.25 hours a week on staff issues (Table 13).

The second key factor was the challenging nature of the school, the loss of community support and the falling roll. He was under instructions from his Board to improve the school's results in the external qualifications. He was also aware of community concerns about his school. These concerns, coupled with the challenging nature of the staff meant that Mark spent a large amount of his time in a managerial and reactive-problem role rather than being strategic. For example, his reflective journal indicated, that in addition to staff issues, he spent 9.5 hours a week on student issues and 5.5 hours a week on parental concerns. The time spent on student concerns was the most of all the case study principals. The need for Mark to be responsive to his community was also evident in this description of his leadership activities: "Networking. Just

being open. Parents take up a lot of time. Open door philosophy. Enormous step for Polynesian parents to come to a school and complain”.

Impact Factors:

- Low organizational acceptance
- Lacking clear leadership concept
- Limited leadership training
- School not well regarded by community/falling roll
- Criticism of leadership by BOT/ERO/ community
- Conflict between his leadership perception and imposed leadership activity
- Staff conflict

Figure 18. Summary of the impact factors - Mark

Leadership model.

These impact factors meant that the leadership model of Mark could be viewed as a limited form of contingent leadership using a narrow range of acceptable leadership practices and with a narrow range of leadership areas of focus. It was also a low trust and non-consultative leadership mode with a significant managerial element. School development was of low priority and there was a substantial level of reactive leadership activity to meet concerns in the community and the school that the school was failing and that the leadership was ineffective. Consequently, the leadership model was not strategic or responsive but short-term, problem-solving orientated and the leadership activity focuses and the nature of the leadership activities were largely determined by the need for the principal to gain organizational acceptance or meet personal accountabilities. The principal also lacked leadership independence and had a non-educational, managerial or systems focus.

Leadership Model:

- Non-educational
- Low trust and non-consultative
- Personalized focus because of criticisms of the leadership
- Narrow focus on managerial functions or reactive problem-solving
- Using a narrow range of acceptable leadership activities to gain organizational acceptance
- No clear leadership model because of difference between the principal's leadership perceptions and the needs of the school and the community

Figure 19. Summary of the leadership model- Mark

Emerging themes.

From this case study several of the leadership themes identified in the previous case study, were also identified. The most significant was the link that exists between tension within the school and a narrow, reactive leadership style. In this case study, tension between Mark, the staff, the Board of Trustees and the community were high. This had created a non-strategic leadership focus and a non-consultative, low-trust, reactive leadership style. The tensions with the staff had also created a narrow range of solutions being applied to problems. Consequently, this case study also pointed to the impact on the leadership of the personal accountabilities and compliance demands from within and outside the school. The impact of these accountabilities on the person of the principal also pointed to the degree to which the role is personalized by the personal leadership skills and perceptions the principal uses to meet those accountabilities.

This case study also supported the belief, from the previous case study, that community perceptions of school and school leadership effectiveness impact on the leadership focus of the principal. In this case, the Board of Trustees wanted more achievement data so the school could be more competitive and the roll decline reversed. This meant Mark had adopted a narrow managerial focus as the basis of his leadership, despite having a conceptual view of the role as a “banner type” leader. Again, this argued for the conclusion that principals lack leadership

independence. It also argued for principals being largely non-educationally orientated because their prime role is not to meet the learning needs of the students in the school but to maintain the interface between community perceptions of school effectiveness and the school's contexts.

Case Study Principal 3: Penny

School context.

Penny was the principal of a relatively large, central city, co-educational school with a roll of approximately 1200 students. This roll was growing and the school was generally regarded as being successful although Penny felt that it still struggled to attract academic students because of its reputation as being "alternative". It was a decile 9 school and the student intake was largely from upper middle class families living in the central city. The student roll was predominately European (59%). It was different to other schools in the city in that the students had no uniform and the approach of the school was to provide students with a level of independence, both in their learning and their conduct. The teaching and learning was primarily academic in its focus and the school had a reputation for success in the arts and technical subjects.

Characteristics of the principal's leadership style.

Description

Penny was a very experienced principal having been a principal for 15 years. She had a Master in Educational Leadership and considerable experience as a Deputy Principal in another school. However, the leadership style she had adopted tended to be systemic in its focus, low trust and non-consultative. This was evidenced by Penny's described her leadership:

I see myself as to set up systems so everyone else can fly. Someone who makes sure the people in the school have everything to do their job as well as they can. I do believe I am a

good navigator of this place, have a vision of this place and I am able to set up systems so we can achieve that vision and get everyone going the same way.

She also described her leadership focus as, “Not the teaching programmes but in the running of the place; the buildings and everything”.

A key feature of her leadership style was that it was non- relational and there were few direct interactions between her and the majority of the staff. This style of leadership could be linked to tensions between Penny and the staff. Consequently, rather than consulting the staff she used a small management team whom she described as her “dream team”. This meant Penny was isolated and in her interview she described herself in those terms and small group consultation being a key aspect of her leadership. There was, however, some evidence of limited distributed leadership. For instance, she used the management team to discuss issues and then the members of this team were responsible for implementing the outcomes of those discussions.

Penny’s distrust of her staff was evidenced in her refusal to be appraised by them. It was also evidenced in her reflective journal which showed Penny spent under an hour a week (.75) on staff issues. This was the least amount of time all the case study principals.

However, she did consult the students and her focus was clearly on the school doing the best by its students. She described the importance of students in her interview: “I always ask people, have you talked to the kids. What do the kids think?”

Her lack of interaction with the staff and her low-trust, non-consultative leadership style had two origins. The first was her personality which was strong. For instance, she described her personality as “bossy”. She also felt proper change needed to be complete not a “rejjig” and the description she gave of some changes indicated they were undertaken despite staff opposition: “I changed the way things were organized, which they [the staff] didn’t like”. She also described

herself as not tolerating fools gladly and her view was that the staff had to be, “in step” with her. This same view she applied to parents and the students.

The second reason for the low-trust model was conflict with the staff. In her first few years, she claimed they “did not like me”. This conflict was on-going and as a consequence the original non-relational approach she adopted in her first two years appeared to have become cemented as her leadership style.

Consequently her leadership was system orientated and her overall concept of leadership was managerial. She felt she would be, “a really good operational manager for a transport firm or an airport” and that she was, “good at systems”.

Leadership Description:

- Systems and school organisation focus – sees role as creating systems so teachers can teach
- Low trust
- Not relational
- Non-consultative – decisions made in a small team
- Top down leadership- ‘bossy’/confrontational

Figure 20. Summary of the leadership style - Penny

Impact factors.

Several factors impacted on the leadership of Penny. The first was the nature of her pre-service experience which appeared to have provided her with a relatively narrow view of school effectiveness. She had worked in a school with good systems and when that principal was replaced with a less well-organized one she developed the understanding that the basis of a good school was good organization: “He [previous principal] was really good at teaching me and he ran a really efficient school. Operations were excellent”.

She also had a personal view that the role of the principal was to create systems for teachers to teach. Her early conflict with the staff had also created a focus on those managerial aspects of the role where she felt she “could not ever be faulted”.

The second impact factor on her leadership was negative staff reactions to her leadership. These reactions were very strong early in her early years as principal and they were on-going. In her interview she described her first year:

They did not like me. One of them told me I was just another (an insulting description for someone from Auckland). It was a very difficult year that year. I could have walked away many times.

Her non-consultative leadership style was evidenced by her description as to how she dealt with change: “I had some real heads to head with them, but in the end, I was the boss. We didn’t have any PG’s or anything untoward like that, but it was real pressure on”.

The third key reason for her systems focus was her lack of confidence in her ability to be an educational leader. In her interview she expressed a concern about her capacity to tell teachers how to teach: “I was primary trained. I don’t see myself as great educationalist. I don’t see myself as having great curriculum leadership”.

Impact Factors:

- Perception that a good school was well organized and had good systems from pre-service experience
- Strong , abrasive personality meant low relational skills
- Negative staff reactions created low level of interactions with staff
- Personal leadership view was business orientated
- Strategic system skills
- Lack of confidence in ability to tell teachers how to teach

Figure 21. Summary of the impact factors-Penny

Leadership model.

These impact factors meant that Penny's leadership could also be viewed as a narrow form of contingent leadership with a focus on school organization and school systems. Its systems focus also meant it was non-relational, limited in terms of its consultation and largely low-trust. Much of the leadership activity was confined to areas which could be seen as part of the principal's role, such as administration. While there were some elements of distributive leadership in that Penny used a leadership team to facilitate change in the school, this distributive aspect of the leadership model was not primarily focused on staff enhancement but on allowing Penny to distance herself from the relational aspects of the role. Consequently, her leadership style could also be described as a form of strategic reactivity, in that the strategic activity she undertook was designed to meet quite specific leadership problems rather than for school development or for meeting the broad needs of the school.

Leadership Model:

- Non –consultative
- Low trust
- Non-relational
- Contextual orientation
- Managerial and systems focus
- Low level of immediate reactivity but a level of strategic reactivity
- Strategic use of systems to problem-solve
- Focus on systems which supported the teaching

Figure 22. Summary of the leadership model- Penny

Emerging themes.

This case study supported some of the key themes, already identified in the previous two case studies. The first was that there is a link between tension within the school and a narrow, systems-based or managerial leadership focus. In this case study there was considerable tension between the principal and the staff and this had contributed to her systems focus. This link also supported the conclusion that the staff plays a significant role in determining the nature of the leadership of an individual principal. The link also argued for the conclusion that the leadership expectations from within the school are a key contingent factor impacting on the leadership style of the individual principal.

The specific nature of the leadership in this case study and the links between it and the personal leadership perceptions of the principal also supported the belief that the role is largely not based on broad leadership models, but on the links the principal draws between the school contexts and his or her personal leadership perceptions and leadership skills. For instance, Penny had adopted a systems focus because her perceptions of the role were that principals should provide the systems so that teachers could teach. She also believed she was good with systems and her perceptions of school effectiveness were based on her experience of good systems in a previous school. This link between Penny's leadership style and her leadership experience prior to appointment also provided the basis for the belief that pre-service leadership experience of a principal is a key factor in determining the leadership perceptions and skills a principal brings to the role.

Case Study Principal 4: Marge

School context.

Marge was the principal of an urban integrated, girls-only Catholic school. The school had a roll of approximately 600 students and was a decile 10 school. The student intake was predominately

upper-middle class. Students came to the school from all over the city and surrounding suburbs because of its reputation for academic excellence. The ethnic make-up of the student intake was mostly European (52%) and Asian (18%). The school had a full roll and a waiting list as indications of its popularity. The ethos of the school was traditional and it was proud of its history and of its reputation for high standards. The key focus of the school was on teaching and on academic achievement. The students performed well above average in national qualifications and this success was a key recruiting tool. The school also had few discipline issues and there were few changes in the staff year-to-year. Marge indicated that parental expectations of the school's on-going success were high and that the views of ex-students about the school were taken seriously by the Board of Trustees and the staff.

Characteristics of the Principal's Leadership Style

Description

Marge was very experienced having been a principal for 13 years. She had a Master of Educational Administration though only limited leadership experience prior to her appointment. Her leadership concepts were not broadly based and her leadership activities and perceptions were more closely linked to the nature of the school and the expectations the community had of the school. The importance of the influence of parental approval of her leadership was evident in the pride Marge had about the comments made about her leadership.

The personalized nature of the role and the degree to which the parents determined the nature of the leadership was also evidenced in Marge's description of how parents felt the principal should know everything and promote the school: "You are expected to know everything. You have to promote the school. You have to be positive all the time".

Consequently, the leadership of Marge was very much focused on maintaining the status quo and ensuring the traditional aspects of the school were maintained. This focus on school

image could be linked to her narrow view of school effectiveness: “I judge effectiveness by the fact we have a full roll. Students choose to come to the school. None leave and go to other schools”.

The community expectations that the school should not change also meant that the leadership activities of Marge were largely system monitoring and her leadership focus was largely organizational maintenance rather than development. There was evidence in her reflective journal (Table 13) which showed a significant managerial component (23 hours a week) and her description of her leadership activities which were not reactive problem-solving or strategic school development orientated. Therefore, the leadership of Marge could be described as a narrow, contingently-responsive form of leadership with a focus on the managerial aspects of the role and on school functions such as finance and property. It was also not focused on teaching and learning per se because Marge was aware of the success of the school in that area. Instead the daily activities of Marge were more concerned with monitoring the systems which supported the current teaching and learning model within the school.

Marge did not have a clear view of her leadership. She described her leadership as relational though this was only partially borne out in her reflective journal and the description of her leadership in her interview as being less open-door and more authoritarian. There was also evidence of a degree of distance between her and the staff because of changes in staff attitude:

“We don’t have huge staff changes but staff attitudes have changed. A lot of staff are not as willing to do the co-curricular things they used to do. People want management units for doing things.

However, there were no specific areas of tension with her staff and did express a concern for the workload of the teachers:

The New Zealand Curriculum could be so exciting but then we have all the changes for NCEA[the National Certificate of Educational Achievement] to follow. I'm concerned I am going to have staff leaving.

Consequently, much of the leadership activity of Marge consisted of a series of meetings in which she monitored existing school organization or the functional elements of the school such as property or finance. Despite mentioning in her interview that she needed to stand-down students for smoking, there was also little evidence in her reflective journal that she needed to adopt, on a daily basis, a reactive approach to problems, to dilemma management or to student discipline.

Leadership Description:

- Broad range leadership activities
- Responsive or monitoring leadership activity
- Few reactive, problem-solving activities
- School organizational focus
- Focus on maintaining positive community perceptions of the school
- Focus on maintaining the status quo
- Not innovative or strategic

Figure 23. Summary of the leadership style - Marge

Impact factors.

Two key factors impacted on the leadership of Marge. The first was the high level of community expectations about the nature, purpose and focus of the school. The school was highly regarded, and Marge stated in her interview that this was because of its traditional organization and its academic focus which appealed to its upper-middle class parents. Marge

pointed out that these expectations were so strong that they forced her to change her leadership style when she first arrived in the school. She had wanted to adopt a collaborative leadership model but this did not suit the character of the school:

I didn't take into account the community of the school which was very conservative. I didn't appreciate the whole nature of the history of the school and the fact it had not moved.

Consequently, the daily leadership activity identified in Marge's reflective journal was mostly monitoring the current systems in the school, managerial to meet compliance requirements or meetings on organizational aspects of the school, such as property or finance. A significant amount of her time was also meeting with parents. In the week of her reflective journal she spent 10 hours meeting with parent. There were no activities in the week of her reflective journal which were reactive or short-term problem solving in nature.

The second impact factor on the leadership of Marge was the nature of the school itself. Marge described the school as traditional and it was her belief that there was no wish, either in the school or the community that the school should change because it was regarded as successful in its present form. Staff was also stable and there was no tension within the school. Marge described the students as well behaved and keen to succeed. This stability and the perceived success of the school created a high level of organizational approval. This meant the leadership of Marge was not contextually intensive. The stability within the school and the community perceptions it was successful also meant the leadership was not school-development orientated but current systems and school organization maintenance orientated.

Marge's leadership style was also largely non-consultative. However, this lack of consultation was not because of tensions in the school. Instead it was more to do with Marge not feeling the need to consult widely because of the lack of expectations for change. It also arose from the fact that much of her leadership activity was confined to areas of leadership activity

which did not require consultation, such as property, finance, or meeting with the Board of Trustees and parents.

The nature of the school's intake also meant there were few challenging students. As a consequence, Marge spent only 4.75 hours per week on student issues. The nature of the school and the focus on academic achievement did, however, give Marge's leadership an educational focus. This was evidenced by her reflective journal which indicated she spent 4.75 hours a week on teaching and learning. This was more than any of the case study principals.

Impact Factors:

- Current school very successful in terms of academic achievement
- Nature of the intake –academically orientated females
- Conservative and traditional organization seen as contributing to the school's success – no need to change
- Parental perceptions of the role important
- Limited staff conflict and a high level of organisational acceptance of the leadership
- Staff stable

Figure 24. Summary of the impact factors - Marge

Leadership model.

The impact factors on the leadership of Marge suggested that her leadership could be regarded as an organizationally responsive form of contingent leadership. The orientation of the leadership was towards maintenance of the status quo rather than being strategic or developmental. While the leadership model could be considered to be highly contextually sensitive in that the aim was to maintain the current school systems and organization, the leadership activities in response to that contextual sensitivity were largely non-reactive in character. Consequently, the model consisted of a wide range of leadership focus areas but the leadership activities within those areas were largely limited to non-reactive monitoring of current systems, systems maintenance or

managerial activities for compliance. The leadership model had a focus on student outcomes but this arose from the expectations on the principals from outside the school and the leadership in this area was also largely confined to monitoring the systems which currently supported the teaching and learning functions of the school rather than seeking enhancement. This systems focus suggested that the leadership model could also be regarded as a technical or organizationally responsive form of limited contingent leadership.

Leadership Model:

- Leadership focus areas broadly-based
- Little reactive leadership activity
- Leadership not innovative or seeking organisational change
- Managerial or systemic focus
- High trust
- Leadership effectiveness determined by a narrow range of measurable outcomes or competency in a narrow range of leadership skills

Figure 25. Summary of the leadership model – Marge

Emerging themes.

The leadership in this case study supported some of the key themes identified in the previous case studies. In particular, this case study supported the conclusion that broadly-held expectations of school and school leadership effectiveness have a significant impact on how principals perform the role. This case study, pointed to a link between positive community perceptions and a leadership that was focused on maintaining the status quo and a tendency towards conservatism. This link reinforced the belief, gained from the previous case studies that the prime role of the principal is to maintain the interface between broadly-held perceptions of school effectiveness and the school's contexts.

The focus of Marge on monitoring the systems within the school also argued for the belief that these powerful expectations of effectiveness from outside the school tended to distract the principal from the learning needs within the school. In the case of Marge positive community perceptions had created a broad-based leadership that had as its focus the monitoring of the current systems. This meant the leadership was largely managerial, non-strategic and centered on the systems that supported the running of the school and the teaching within the school. The strength of the link between community perceptions and the leadership style in the case study also supported the conclusion, gained from the previous case studies, that principals lack leadership independence and have as their prime role the maintenance of the interface between broadly-held perceptions and expectations of school effectiveness and the school's contexts.

Case Study Principal 5: Kevin

School context.

Kevin was the principal of the only secondary school in a small, relatively prosperous, rural town. It was a co-educational school with a roll of approximately 600 students. It was also a school which catered for intermediate aged-students (aged 11 to 12) as well as secondary students. Its intake ranged from students from wealthy farming families to students from relatively disadvantaged families. However, it was a decile 8 school, which indicated that the intake was largely middle to upper middle class. Kevin indicated that it was generally well-regarded as a school within the community. This, he believed, was evidenced by most students in the community attending the school and by the growing roll in recent years. The school was also stable with few staff changes and as a consequence it was also relatively conservative in its organization and its curriculum. Many students left to work in the community and, while Kevin felt success in the national qualification was an important measure of school effectiveness, he felt community support and satisfaction with the school were the key indicators. There was a

tendency for most students to work in the community and this was reflected in the school having a relatively small group of students in the senior school.

Characteristics of the principal's leadership style.

Description.

Kevin was the least experienced of the case study principals. His leadership experience was also more limited. He had been a principal for 8 years, having been promoted from the role of Acting Principal within the same school. Prior to his appointment as Acting Principal he had been the Deputy Principal and a Head of Department in the same school. This meant his leadership style was known in the school before he became the principal. Kevin felt his appointment to the role indicated there was a level of acceptance of his leadership and a level of trust. This trust was reflected in the consultative and relational leadership style identified in his reflective journal and his interview.

His leadership style was also low-key. Community approval of the school meant he felt there was little need for change and his leadership focus was orientated towards maintaining the status quo to retain that approval and for school stability. Consequently, the nature of his leadership activities could be described as being responsive rather than reactive. This was evidenced by the few problem-solving activities in his reflective journal and by the lack of urgency about change he expressed in his interview. His reflective journal also indicated his leadership foci were quite diverse and he spent substantial amounts of time a week in each of the leadership focus areas; curriculum (12 hours), management (10 hours), students (7.75 hours), parents (5.5 hours), community (8 hours) and, staff (6 hours). In his interview he described good leadership as a non-reactive activity: "Good planning and analytical skills to make sure improvement comes about and to be able to monitor them".

He had completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and he felt that had helped him to develop his reflective leadership style:

It has helped. Some use for the day-today but there have been a number of initiatives that have arisen out of the reflective thoughts from that course. More importantly it has given me a greater depth and perspective on educational change.

He regarded his leadership as relational and felt his key leadership skill was the ability to, “work with others and being able to relate to others”. Consequently his leadership was marked high trust, and a willingness to have the staff involved in change. His description of the introduction of rest breaks for teachers indicates this:

I was aware that there was potentially an issue that would come back to bite me. I wrote a discussion paper which I discussed it with the Senior Management Team. In it I expressed the concerns and implications for the school. I put this out to all staff with the intention of it being discussed by all the staff.

This trust was also reflected in a distributive leadership style: “I don’t give someone a job then tell them exactly what to do. I have an outcome in mind but keep a casual eye on what is going on and discuss it with people”.

His view that the staff was important was also seen in his active promotion of professional development for staff and encouragement of the staff to take on leadership roles:

I have actively encouraged and promoted PD of the staff and encouraged people to take risks. I want them to be more innovative, knowing they have my full support.

There was, however, some evidence in his interview that his reflective and consultative style of leadership was partially created by some concerns about possible negative staff reactions to his leadership. He described himself as a “sitting duck” and he believed principals needed to put

up with a lot of “crap”. He indicated this feeling of isolation had changed his leadership approach somewhat:

Certainly more cautious about employment. Not changing my style. If I know I trust and understand a person I am talking to, I like to sit down and talk through the issue and reach mutual agreement to solve problems. That has changed. Where I don’t trust a person, then I always get a lawyer.

He had an interest in teaching and learning and his reflective journal indicated he spent 10 hour a week on curriculum leadership and two hours a week on teaching. He also believed a good principal should have a sound pedagogical knowledge. In his interview, he expressed regret that the administrative demands of his role had inhibited his capacity to visit the classrooms: “I have become more and more removed from the classroom. I never take formal visits to classrooms”.

He also felt the growth in administration had altered his leadership style and his capacity as a leader:

It[leadership style] has changed in that I have found myself more and more tied up on a daily basis in the paperwork. When I started as principal I used to do things like go out to camps and spend the whole day to get to know a number of kids. I now have a much smaller insight into what is going on.

Description:

- Limited interest in change
- High trust

- Consultative and distributive
- Leadership focus areas quite diverse
- Few reactive leadership activities
- Curriculum and teaching focus
- Relational

Figure 26. Summary of the leadership style - Kevin

Impact factors.

Two key factors impacted on the leadership of Kevin. The most significant of these was that his leadership style was formed by much of his leadership experience being gained in the same school he was the principal of. This meant the leadership style he had developed was a product of his perceptions of the nature of the school and of his perceptions as to the leadership the school wanted. The limited nature of his leadership experience was evidenced in his description of his promotion:

I certainly was never ambitious. It just sort of happened. I had been a Head of Department and the Deputy Principal in the school. The principal left and I was acting principal for seven to eight months. I found I enjoyed the job and I decided I would seek the principal's job.

This strong link between school context and leadership style had two effects on the leadership. The first was that Kevin saw little need for change in his leadership and his leadership style was orientated towards maintenance of the on-going acceptance of that leadership. The second was that there was a significant level of trust and this had meant there was low tension between Kevin and the staff and consequently, little reactivity or dilemma management identified in his reflective journal. He described the view staff had of him:

Staff appreciates the open door. They see me as someone who is professionally knowledgeable and open to other people's ideas but not someone who is going to trial difficult things randomly.

The second key factor impacting on the leadership was the nature of the school and its location as the only secondary school in a small, relatively conservative, rural town. Kevin believed that this gave the school a particular community focus and the need for a high level of community responsiveness. In his reflective journal Kevin spent 8 hours a week on community issues. Kevin also believed the nature of the community gave the school a conservative flavor and a reluctance to change. This importance of the community perceptions to the school was evidenced in Kerry's concepts of school effectiveness:

Increasing roll and we are getting a high proportion of the kids on the edge of our out catchment. Also confidence in the community about getting kids to the local school.

This need for community responsiveness was also shown in Kevin's justification of the school's relatively conservative curriculum:

Some of the programmes pre-date me. Though in time they have been extended and I know they are highly valued by the kids and the parents.

Together these factors; leadership developed within the school and, conservative community perceptions of school purpose and school organization, meant that the leadership of Kevin was also conservative, low key and non-confrontational. It also meant that it was orientated towards maintaining the status quo of school organization and more broadly focused on the culture of the school, rather than being contextually intensive.

Impact factors:

- Single school in a small town therefore little impact of interschool competitiveness

- Leadership experience in the same school
- School responsive to the community
- Community support
- School settled and staff stable
- Little staff tension and high level of trust

Figure 27. Summary of the impact factors - Kevin

Leadership Model

These impact factors suggest that the model of leadership Kevin could be considered a form of responsive contingent leadership. There was high trust in the school and a significant level of organizational approval. Few tensions within the school also meant the leadership was relational, consultative and, to a limited extent, distributive. The leadership style of Kevin was low-key and the focuses of his leadership activities were largely orientated towards maintaining the status quo and ensuring the school and his leadership met the expectations from inside and outside the school. Consequently, lack of tension plus a broad view of leadership meant the leadership model was broadly-based and responsive, rather than a narrow, managerial or reactive leadership model.

Leadership Model:

- Responsive rather than reactive
- Wide range of leadership focus areas
- Conservative – not seeking change but to maintain the status quo
- Community and organizational approval orientated
- Few reactive problem-solving leadership activities.
- Consultative
- Relational
- Distributive

Figure 28. Summary of the leadership model – Kevin

Emerging themes

The leadership in this case study largely confirmed the leadership theme, identified in the previous case studies, that the link between broadly-held perceptions of school and school leadership effectiveness and the school's context determined the focus of the leadership and the nature of the leadership activities. As with the leadership of Marge, positive community perceptions of the school had created a tendency towards maintenance of the status quo and leadership activity centered on monitoring the existing systems within the school. This, once again supported the conclusion that principals lack leadership independence and that their prime role is to maintain the interface between broadly-held perceptions and expectations of school effectiveness and the school's contexts.

This case study also supported the conclusion that low tension within the school and positive community perceptions gave the principal the opportunity to adopt a broader, more consultative leadership style. It also pointed to the strong link, identified in the leadership of Penny, between the leadership style of a principal and his or her personal leadership perceptions. For instance, while the consultative and semi-distributed leadership style of Kevin could be partially attributed to positive community perceptions of the school it was more likely a result of his personal view of leadership and with his personality. The identification of this link supported the conclusion, already gained from the previous case studies that the leadership of an individual principal was more likely to arise from his or her personal leadership perceptions and skills rather than from broad, conceptual leadership models.

Reflective Journal Data

In this section the data from the reflective journals is presented. For the reflective journal, the data gathering and analysis process was in two phases. In the journal, the principals were asked to identify the time spent on a range of leadership activities over one week. This was then

analyzed by quantitative methods which included the use of star graphs. In the second phase, the lists of tasks the participants enjoyed or did not enjoy were analyzed using a method similar to the grounded theory method of carefully examining each response and identifying common categories or themes. The results from this second phase were used to develop the guiding questions for the semi-structured interview of each principal.

Leadership activity.

In the first part of the journal the principals were given a list of leadership areas, identified from the survey, as being key leadership activity areas; Strategic, Curriculum, Management, Student, Parent, Staff, Teaching and, Community. They were then asked to indicate how much time they spent on each of those areas on a daily basis. These times were then totaled to determine the time each principal spent on these leadership activities per week. These results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Hours per Week the Participants Spent on Leadership Activity Areas

Principal	Greg	Mark	Penny	Marge	Kevin	Weekly Average for all principals
Strategic	1	3.25	9	7	2	4.44
Curriculum	2	1.25	2	4	12	4.25
Management	13	24	18.5	23	10	17.7
Student	26	9.5	4.75	4.75	7.75	10.55
Parent	8	5.5	2.5	10	5.5	6.3
Staff	4	5.25	0.75	3.8	6	3.96
Teaching	0	0	0	4.75	2	1.35
Community	0	5.25	7.5	1	8	4.35
Total Hours	54	54	45	58.3	53.25	52.91

A number of conclusions can be drawn from these results. First, all the participants spent a significant amount of time on management. This confirmed the understanding, gained from the survey, that role was largely managerial. The second was that, while principals may have a broad leadership concept that differs little principal-to-principal, the weekly leadership focus of the principals differed and this was possibly related to contextual factors they had to deal with on a daily basis. It then became interesting to speculate as to the nature of those factors.

To do this a detailed analysis of the reflective journals and the interviews was undertaken (Appendix F) to determine any relationships between the leadership model of an individual principal and any particular factors within or outside the school. From this detailed examination, three key leadership factors were identified as impacting on the leadership; the attitude of the staff; the community perceptions of the school and, the leadership skills of the principal. While the impact of these factors were not equally strong for all the principals, sufficient links between these factors and the leadership of the principals were established to indicate they each had a significant impact on the leadership of an individual principal. These factors are discussed in the following section.

Key leadership factors.

In the survey data there were indications that staff had a significant impact on the leadership of an individual principal. The importance of staff attitudes to the principal was also confirmed in the interviews of each principal. Together, these seemed to confirm the understanding gained from the literature, that organizational approval was a key leadership factor. These data also seemed to support the belief that there was a direct link between tension with the staff and the leadership style of an individual principal. From the case studies there was evidence that where there was significant tension the principal tended to adopt a non-consultative, reactionary leadership model which focused on limited areas of leadership activity, as in the leadership of

Greg, Mark and Penny. Where there was low tension, as in the cases of Marge and Kevin, the principal tended to adopt a more global leadership model or was more consultative.

Several conclusions were drawn from this understanding. The first was that organizational approval is a significant factor on the leadership of an individual principal. The second was that the nature of the daily leadership activity of an individual principal is significantly influenced by the leadership expectations from within the school. Together, these understandings argued for school contexts being the key determiner of the nature of the leadership of a principal. This supported the belief that the role of a secondary principal is a form of contingency leadership.

The second factor was the importance of community perceptions on the leadership of the individual principal. From the data from the survey, reflective journals and interviews it was evident that community perception had a significant impact the leadership activities of an individual principal. For instance, in the cases of Mark and Greg a negative perception had created a reactive, problem solving, leadership model in which the focus was to ensure the school met the community's concerns. In the cases of Marge and Kevin, whose schools were well regarded by the community, there was a tendency towards conservatism and the maintenance of the status quo to maintain that regard. Where no clear community view could be detected, as in the case of Penny, there was, nevertheless, strong leadership focuses to ensure that the community saw the school in a positive light. In her reflective journal, Pru spent 7.5 hours a week on activities she described as, "selling the school". This understanding led to the conclusion that principals saw a key aspect of the role was maintaining the interface between the school and community perceptions of school.

The third factor was the leadership skills the individual principal gave priority to. A detailed examination of the leadership of each principal using the data from their reflective journal, their interview, and their individual survey responses suggested that each principal tended to give

priority to a particular set of leadership skills. For instance, Penny gave priority to functional skills such as decision making and communication. Greg and Mark gave priority to contextual skills such as client orientation and awareness of the environment. Marge gave priority to technical skills to do with managing systems. Kevin favored cognitive skills such as vision. While this was not exact in all cases, it did appear to support the belief, gained from the survey, that the leadership of the principals could be categorized according to the set of skills they gave priority to. In particular, it seemed to argue that principals fell into two broad leadership categories; the reactive leader, and the responsive leader. For instance, the reactive leader was distinguished by a narrow range of skills and short-term problem-solving leadership activities. In comparison, the responsive leader was distinguished by a more broad set of leadership skills, which had as their basic aim school stability and maintenance of the status quo. In essence, the two leadership types could be distinguished by the contextualized intensity of their leadership activity.

To further determine the validity of this belief, a picture of the leadership of each participant was created using star graphs. To create these graphs, the leadership activity areas provided to the participants in the journals were divided into two broad leadership categories depending on assumptions made about the nature of the leadership mostly associated with that leadership area. Those categories were identified as; responsive (systemic or strategic leadership) and, reactive (problem-solving, issue-management). Each of the leadership areas identified in the reflective journals was then allocated a letter. The categories of; Strategic (A), Curriculum (B), Management (C), Teaching (D) and, Community (E) were identified as responsive because they were seen as addressing broader issues. The categories of; Students (F), Parents (G) and, Staff (H) were categorized as reactive leadership activities because they were seen as addressing more immediate, day-to-day concerns.

By using the hours in the reflective journals indicating how much time individual principals spent on each leadership activity area in a week, differences in leadership focus could be identified. These graphs are presented in Figures 29 and 30.

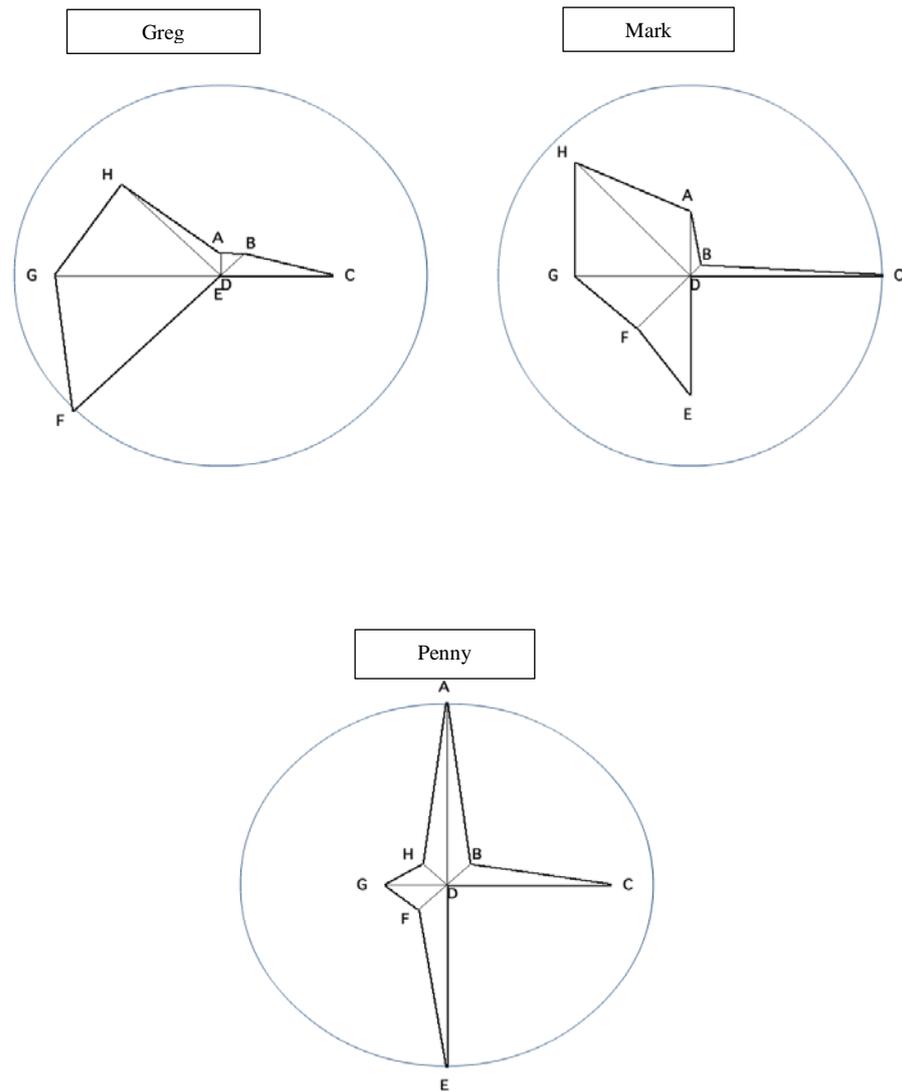


Figure 29. Reactive leadership models of the case study principals.

Figure 29 presents the dominant “reactive” leadership style of Greg, Mark and Penny. By relating the information from the graphs, the data gained from the second part of the reflective journal and the interview of each participant, links between the leadership of each principal and,

the school context could then be established. For instance, Greg had a limited focus on student, parent and staff issues. He was the principal of a school with a low community perception and a high level of tension. The same narrow leadership focus was also true of Mark. He also was in a school with a low community perception and high levels of tension. The graphs of both these principals are marked by a relatively narrow range of peaks, and the leadership was mostly confined to the reactive area of the graphs.

Penny's leadership was especially narrow in focus having only three key areas. While on the surface it appeared to be broader than that of Greg and Mark in that it was not confined to the reactive area of the graph, Penny had only three major focus areas; strategic, management, and community. This narrow range of leadership focus could then be related to her leadership model, which was based on avoiding tensions within the school.

In comparison, the graphs of Marge and Kevin (Figure 30) show a more global leadership style in that their leadership areas covered more of the graph. Marge and Kevin were in stable schools in which there was a low level of tension with staff and high community approval.

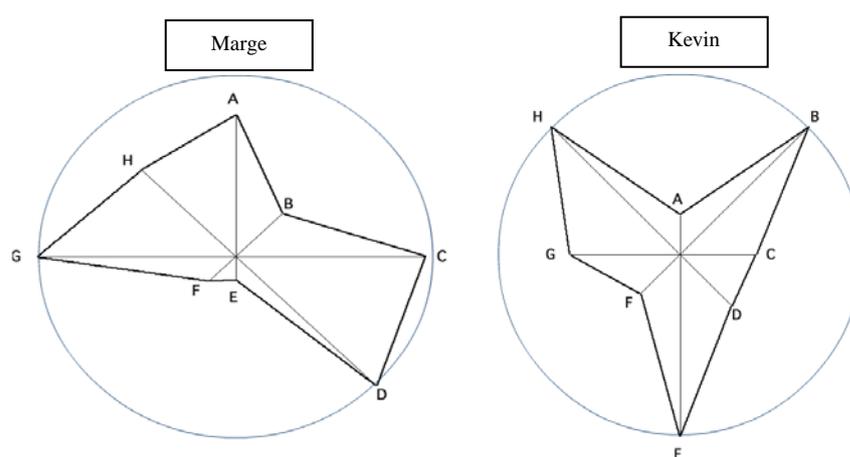


Figure 30. Responsive leadership models of the case study principals.

From these results several conclusions were drawn. The first was that the leadership of the secondary principal is different for each principal, and that difference is more likely to arise from the contextual needs of the school, and the skills the principal brings to bear to meet those needs. The second was that the links between the leadership of the principal and the context of the school seems to confirm the contingent nature of the role. In particular, the links between tension within the school and the leadership seemed to confirm the belief, gained initially from the survey, that the leadership could be partially likened to that of the contingency leadership identified by Fiedler and Garcia (1987). Fiedler and Garcia argued that tension, in particular social stress, negatively impacted on the quality of the decisions by limiting the capacity of the leaders to consult with other members in the organization. As a consequence, stress within the organization resulted in a contextually intensive leadership model. Low tension meant the leader adopted a relational and consultative leadership model. High tension meant the leader adopted a more reactive and non-consultative leadership style.

The third conclusion was that these results seem to support the belief that leadership in secondary school in New Zealand has two origins. The first is the market in which the principal is responsive to community expectations and perceptions of themselves and the school. The second is the context of the school in which the principal needs to be responsive to the needs within the school. In this dimension, the nature of the leadership activities is determined by the leadership perceptions of the principal, and the skills he or she uses to meet those needs. This seems to support the belief, identified in the literature (Cardno and Collett, 2004), that the leadership of the secondary principal in New Zealand consists of two leadership dimensions, each of which impact on the role in contrasting and conflicting ways. These findings are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In this chapter the findings of the study are discussed. To some degree, the results confirmed the argument found in the research literature that the role of a principal is complex, multi-faceted and contingent (Day et al., 2009; Leithwood et al., 1999). However, the study also indicated that the role of a secondary principal in New Zealand is *especially* complex, and that complexity can be largely traced back to specific features of the self-managing schools' system in New Zealand. In particular, the findings indicate that because of the nature of that system, secondary principals in New Zealand need to be responsive to a wide range of expectations from within and outside the school. The findings also indicate that, because of the nature of those expectations, principals need to be differently responsive in two key leadership dimensions (a symbolic, ritualistic dimension, and a problem-solving, contextualized dimension), both of which define and limit the role in contrasting and conflicting ways. The nature of these dimensions and how they impact on the leadership are discussed in more depth in a later section in this chapter.

The findings also describe a leadership that is not educational in its orientation but one that is problem-solving focused, contextually responsive or reactive, and that has as its prime aim to maintain the interface between the school contexts and broadly-held perceptions of an effective school.

In the following sections, the nature of that leadership and the factors that impact on it are discussed. The first section addresses the research question: What is the nature of secondary school leadership in New Zealand? This section details key features of the principals' role the participants identified in the responses to the survey, in the reflective journals and in the interviews of the case study principals. The next section examines the impact on the role of specific factors from within and outside the school. In so doing it addresses the second research

question: What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals? The chapter ends by providing a detailed discussion of the two key leadership dimensions identified in the study.

The Nature of Secondary School Leadership in New Zealand

The nature of the leadership identified in this study is that of a limited form contingent leadership in which a principal has to be responsive to a wide range of expectations from within and outside the school. Caldwell (2006a) likened the principal's role to that of a surfer; "It is work that is difficult, complicated and sometimes risky, calling for purposeful and often daring activity. Imaginative leadership is thrilling in execution, calling for a high level of commitment and extensive preparation" (p. ii). This study found that, because of the nature of the self-managing school system in New Zealand and the expectations on the principal generated within that system, secondary school principals do not have the leadership independence this view suggests. Instead, results from the study, which consisted of a detailed examination of the leadership of the case study principals, and a survey of a reasonable large group of secondary school principals, indicated that, because of the expectations imposed on the principal from within and outside the school, the nature of his or her daily leadership activity is primarily one of contextualized problem-solving and systems management to meet those expectations.

In this way, the findings of the study support some of the understandings about the nature of school leadership identified in the literature. For instance, the complexity of the role identified in the survey responses, the reflective journals and the interviews of the case study principals supported the claims of Cranston, Ehrich, and Billot (2003) that the role is "complex and diverse" (p.164). The degree to which the principals in the study focused on the managerial aspects of the role supported the claims of Smyth (2011) and Wylie (1997) that the role is largely managerial in orientation. The findings also supported the concerns, expressed in the literature,

about the impact of the self-managing school concept on school leadership, including a lack of leadership independence. Four key features of the role which support these understandings and concerns were identified. These features and the impact of the self-management concept on the role are discussed in the following sections.

Management orientation.

The first key feature was that the principals in the study regarded the role as managerial or administrative in orientation rather than educational. Penny, for instance, described her role as one of “creating the systems so others can fly”. Greg, Mark and Kevin spoke of being distracted by a substantial increase in administration and compliance. Marge identified her role as one of monitoring systems within the school. Also, none of the case study principals indicated they were educationalists and the details of daily activity of the case study principals gained from the reflective journals supported this claim. This managerial and non-educational focus was also evident in the survey results which identified that the principals spent most time during the week on management and placed a lower priority on curriculum leadership than management (Table 7).

These findings are reinforced by Elmore (2000) and by Smyth (2011), that the role of the principal had become one of maintaining or creating the systems which supported the teaching and teachers rather than dealing with teaching and learning itself. They are also supported by the argument of Smyth (2011) who described teaching and learning as a “significant casualty” (p.108) of the self-managing schools’ system because principals were distracted by managerialistic requirements. Cranston et al. (2003) also argued that the role of the principal was managerial in focus. Robinson and Ward (2005) and Wylie (1997;2007) believed that that managerialism was a particular feature of the New Zealand self-managing schools’ system because its adoptions had resulted in a significant level of administrative devolution. Leithwood

(2001) agreed with this claim. He believed the New Zealand system was “substantially influenced by the philosophies of new managerialism” (p.223).

Yukl (2010) however, believed that a focus on management did not constitute a lack of leadership. He argued that leadership and management were not mutually exclusive and that leadership pervaded all management roles. Kotter (1990) saw leadership and management as two different functions. However, he argued both were necessary in an organization and that the situation determined the balance of leadership and management functions. He saw management as a process for creating order and leadership as a process for driving change. Dessler (2002) argued that although leadership and management were different, they needed to be intertwined to be effective and that management skill, such as planning and structuring, are necessary for the leadership of human activity. Consequently, it could be argued that the focus on management activities, identified in the study, indicated that the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand was largely a product of the expectations that the role was organizational leadership rather than leadership for change. However, the emphasis of the principals on the community perceptions of the school indicated that the focus was more likely to be a product of the perceived need to create or maintain systems that ensured the school met external expectations of school effectiveness rather than arising from the learning needs of the students within the school. This was evidenced by the focus Mark had on developing systems to ensure the school had proof of student achievement. It was also indicated in Marge’s emphasis on systems maintenance to maintain the positive community perceptions of the school.

Contextually responsive leadership.

The second feature of the role identified in this study was the degree to which it is contextually responsive. The reflective journals and interviews of the case study principals, in particular, described leadership activities which were short-term, problem-solving, dilemma management and contextualized in orientation. This supported the understanding, gained from

the survey, that the principals were mostly concerned with contextual matters rather than broad leadership issues. Although all the respondents to the survey could demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the role (Table 2), the areas of leadership focus they identified (Tables 8-12) were staff, students and parents. This understanding was also supported by the link, identified between the leadership of the case study principals and school contexts. For instance, both Greg and Mark had a reactive leadership style which could be traced back to specific contexts within the school. Greg had a focus on school discipline because of the community perceptions the school was unsafe. Mark had a focus on problem-solving and data gathering because of perceptions the school was failing. All case study principals identified incidents of negative staff behavior as a particular reason for a leadership activity or for the leadership focus he or she had undertaken. All the principals pointed to increasingly difficult parents as a factor in the leadership focus he or she had adopted. This latter factor was particularly important where the school was seen by the community as not being effective. The consequence of this was that, in the main, the daily leadership activity of a principal identified in this study was contextualized problem-solving and short-term, reactive or responsive activity to a specific problem.

These findings that the role is contextually orientated were supported by Day et al., (2001), Dinham et al. (1995) and Leithwood (2001). Day et al. (2001) for instance, described the role as “a highly contextualized and relational construct” (p. 40).

Market philosophies.

The third aspect of the role identified in this study was the degree to which the role is influenced by free market philosophies. Smyth (2011) and Codd (1993) identified this as a key aspect of the self-managing schools system. Smyth (2011), for instance, described the system as a product of the “fearful middle classes” (p.115), ensuring their ascendancy in the privatization of public education. Codd (1993) also described this aspect of the system as giving the principals

a moral dilemma which, in essence made them “blind to social reality” (p.80).

Leithwood (2001) argued that principals need to have marketing or school imaging skills. He also pointed to the “unpredictable” (p. 222) effects of the market on school leadership that this study identified. For instance, the findings of this study indicated that poor community perceptions tended to create a reactive leadership and a focus on systemic change, while positive community perceptions created conservatism and a focus on the status quo.

The degree to which marketing impacted on the leadership of the participants in this study could be seen in the concerns they had for ensuring they met community perceptions as compared to the actual learning needs within the school. So, for instance, comparative data was important to Mark because the community felt his school was failing. Market measures of effectiveness, such as a full role or high passes in external qualifications, were important to Marge because these were perceived by the community as indications of school effectiveness. Marketization could also be linked quite closely to the level of tension in the school. A, so called, ‘good’ school, as in the case of Marge’s school, tended to attract students who were less challenging and who were therefore less difficult than a, so called, ‘poor’ school such as Mark’s. Consequently, Marge’s leadership had a lower contextual intensity (Figure 30) than the leadership of Mark (Figure 29). Mark and Greg also had a leadership focus which was driven by poor parental perceptions of the school. Marge had a leadership focus on maintaining the status quo because of positive community perceptions. These links between the leadership activities of the principals and community expectations supported the claims of Codd (1993), Smyth (2011), and Thrupp (2006) that market philosophies were a key factor in limiting the leadership independence of principals. In New Zealand there is also a strong link between success in the market and the capacity of the principal to gain additional resources for the school as schools are resourced on a per-pupil basis. The understanding of these links between community perceptions and the nature of the leadership led to a key conclusion of this study that the market philosophies

within the current self-managing schools system in New Zealand delimitates the role of the secondary school principal to a form of contingent leadership.

Personal accountabilities.

The fourth feature identified in the study was the degree to which the principals were subject to personal accountabilities and the impact of those accountabilities on his or her leadership. The findings also indicated that systemic accountabilities, such as those imposed by the government, had less impact on the leadership than the personal accountabilities. For instance, the survey results (Table 8) indicated that external agencies were of lower priority to the principals than parental, staff or student issues. The reflective journals and interviews of the case study principals also indicated that the more direct the forms of accountability, as for instance, the reactions of the staff or of the community to a specific leadership action, were very important in determining the nature of future leadership activities. Even where the tension was low, staff attitudes were important. Kevin, for instance, felt he was a “sitting duck” because of staff attitudes and his leadership was cautious. Marge also indicated she had become more “authoritarian” because of the attitude of her staff. However, where the tension was high the staff attitude was especially important. Mark, for instance, had changed his leadership quite markedly, to a short-term, problem-solving leadership style because of staff criticism. The leadership of Greg, Mark, and Penny also demonstrated the degree that accountabilities impact on the role by pointing to a link between negative staff and community attitudes and a reactive leadership style (Figure 29).

The degree to which staff and community attitudes impacted on the principal’s leadership was supported by the claim of Richardson et al. (1996) that organizational approval is a key factor in determining the nature of the leadership of a principal. The importance of these attitudes on the leadership was also supported by Codd (1993), Lauder and Hughes (1999), Robinson and Ward (2005) and Wylie (1997;2007) who argued that these personalized

accountabilities were especially strong in New Zealand as principals operated in a consumerist education system in which market concepts of effectiveness had come to be equated with school and school leadership effectiveness concepts.

Consequently, rather than being the “purposeful” and “daring” leadership described by Caldwell (2006), the findings of this study identify that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is more akin to a form of contingent management and that the nature of the leadership of an individual principal is not derived from broad leadership concepts but is largely managerial and contextualized problem-solving in orientation. More importantly the nature of the leadership can be traced, in part, to the leadership concepts within the self-managing schools’ system. The links between these self-managing school concepts and the leadership identified in this study are discussed in the following section.

The impact of self-management.

The findings of this study point to the role of the secondary principal being far removed from a type of leadership which would enable schools “to overcome dull uniformity ...and become leading edge institutions or beacons of excellence” (Halpin, Power & Fitz, 1997, pp.59-60). Instead, they point to a role which is closer to the, “complicit managerialism” identified by Smyth (2011, p.104) in that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is not one in which the principal exercises genuine leadership independence. They also point to the principal being more of an active agent of systems over which they have little control and that the prime function of the principal is to ensure the school is obedient to broader political and societal agendas rather than meeting the learning needs of its students.

This delimited nature of the role can be seen in the managerial and administrative focus identified by the principals (Table 7) and in the contextualized focus identified in the survey (Tables 8-12), the reflective journals and the interviews of the case study principals. The case

study principals also expressed concerns of feeling powerless, alienated and excluded from the discourse about the resolution of educational issues because of the managerial pressure the system placed on them. These feelings of powerlessness and alienation were supported by the research of Billot (2003) in her study of the role conflict being experienced by secondary principals in New Zealand.

Consequently, the findings of this study indicate that the nature of the educational environment in New Zealand is a significant factor in limiting the role of the secondary school principal to a form of contingent management. In particular, the results of this study indicate that rather than being teaching or learning-focused, the leadership is more about designing or managing systems, creating school structures or problem-solving to ensure the school meets broadly-held expectations of school effectiveness. For instance, none of the case study principals claimed to be educationalists. In the list of leadership activity areas identified in the survey, curriculum leadership also had a lower priority than management (Table 7).

The findings also identified that the nature of the self-managing schools' system in New Zealand which has as its basis marketization and inter-school competitiveness, meant that the focus of the principals tended not to arise from the learning needs within the school but to be linked to his or her perceptions of school need in relation to the position of the school in the market. This meant that much of the focus of the leadership and the nature of the leadership activities the principals in this study undertook were centered on the divergence between the school's contexts and broadly-held expectations of school and school leadership effectiveness from within and outside the school. This study also identified that there was a direct link between the degree to which the leadership of the principal was contextually intensive and the level of that divergence. Where, for instance, a principal identified a significant level of divergence; as in the cases of Mark and Greg, then the leadership tended to be reactive and problem-solving orientated (Figure 29). Where a principal detected a low level of divergence (Marge and Kevin),

then the leadership tended to be orientated towards being responsive and systems maintenance (Figure 30).

The need to focus the leadership on this divergence also led to conclusion that a key characteristic of the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is for the principal to be differently responsive to leadership expectations in two leadership dimensions; a symbolic leadership dimension which has its origins in broad-held expectations of school and school leadership effectiveness and, an administrative leadership dimension in which the principal is the day-to-day manager of a complex organization. For instance, the results of the survey (Table 2) indicated that the principals had a conceptual view of the role which differed little from that in school leadership literature and from broadly-held perceptions of school leadership. The skills section of the survey also indicated that principals held a broadly similar view of the role in that most of them identified relational skills as being very important and that this view did not greatly differ according to gender or experience (Tables 3 and 4).

However, the results from the section of the survey which asked principals to identify his or her daily leadership activities (Table 7) and his or her leadership foci (Tables 8-12), as well as the results from the reflective journals and the interviews of the case study principals, showed a different view of the role which was derived from the context of the school. The survey, the reflective journals and the interviews of the case study principals also indicated that principals tended to associate his or her leadership style most closely with this contextualized leadership activity. These results also led to the conclusion that the nature of the leadership of an individual principal is a complex mixture derived from their conceptual views of school leadership, theoretical views of leadership, their perceptions of school need, leadership task, such as administration, and the experiences the principal has within the school.

This belief that the principal's leadership perceptions and experiences within the school were key factors in determining the leadership style of an individual principal was supported by the survey results and by the leadership descriptions provided by the case study principals. From the skills section of the survey it was determined that a principal tended to have a set of skills he or she gave priority to. It was also determined that these sets of skills could be used to broadly define leadership types (Table 6). For instance, a principal could have a broadly cognitive or technical leadership style according to the nature of the set of skills they gave priority to. When the leadership of the case study principals was examined, this use of a particular set of skills was confirmed. For instance, Mark mainly used contextual skills, while Marge mainly used technical skills.

However, while this study identified that the leadership skills and perceptions of the principal were important in determining the nature of leadership style of an individual principal, the findings also identified that the stronger link was more likely between the leadership style of the principal and the context of the school. For instance, Mark was in a school in which there was a significant amount of tension. His leadership style was reactive and contextually intensive (Figure 29). Marge, on the other hand, was in a school with a low level of tension. Her leadership style was responsive and systems monitoring in orientation (Figure 30). Consequently, while individual principal tended to use a set of skills they gave priority to and this set of skills broadly defined the nature of his or her leadership style, the actual nature of the leadership of an individual principal was most likely to be the product of the links that principal drew between his or her personal leadership perceptions and the needs within the school created by external expectations of school effectiveness.

This contingent interpretation of the role is discussed in the following section

A Contingent Interpretation

A key finding of this study is that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is a form of contingent leadership. In this section those findings are discussed. In so doing the section addresses the second research question; What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals?

The findings of this study were that the leadership activity of a secondary school principal in New Zealand is only partially based on the assumptions of leadership gained from leadership models or leadership theories. Instead, it is mostly derived from the links an individual principal draws between his or her leadership perceptions and the school context. Bearing in mind the contingency leadership concept of Fiedler and Garcia (1987), in which the nature of the leadership is determined by the needs within the organization, this link between context and the leadership of an individual principal pointed to the role being a form of contingency leadership. Fiedler and Garcia argued that social stress negatively affected the quality of decisions by reducing the capacity for consultation. However, the complexity of the links, and the variety of the expectations identified in the study suggested the role is not a simple form of contingency leadership. Instead, it is a multi-leveled contingency leadership in which principals need to be differently responsive to a variety of expectations from within and outside the school.

The belief that school leadership is a form of contingency leadership is not new. Boon and Stout (2004), for instance, pointed to the need for principals to be contextually responsive. Nor is it a new belief in terms of school leadership in New Zealand. Robinson et al. (2009), Robinson and Ward (2005), Thrupp (2006), and Wylie (1997; 2007) found that principals in New Zealand have to be responsive to multiple expectations from within and outside the school. However, the results of this study support the argument that the role of the New Zealand secondary school

principal is especially contextually orientated because of specific features of the self-managing school system in New Zealand.

In New Zealand, broadly-held perceptions of school effectiveness are especially powerful factors in determining the nature of school leadership. This is because of the strength of the political expectations and of the market philosophies in the self-managing schools' model adopted by New Zealand in 1989 (Codd, 1993; Thrupp, 2006). In New Zealand also, schools and principals are isolated entities and, as a consequence, the principal bears significant administrative and systems management responsibilities within the school (Robinson & Ward, 2005; Wylie, 2007). Wylie (2007) pointed out that, unlike most self-managing school systems elsewhere, schools in New Zealand were not placed in clusters of schools with administrative support. This isolation, together with the personal accountabilities created by the school effectiveness perceptions from outside the school, has meant that school contexts and the leadership capacity of the principal are significant factors in defining the nature of the leadership of an individual principal (Wylie, 1997). Consequently, the nature of the leadership tends to be derived from the personal leadership perceptions of the principal and the perceptions the principal has of the needs within the school to meet those broadly-held perceptions of school effectiveness. The nature of this leadership is illustrated in Figure 31.

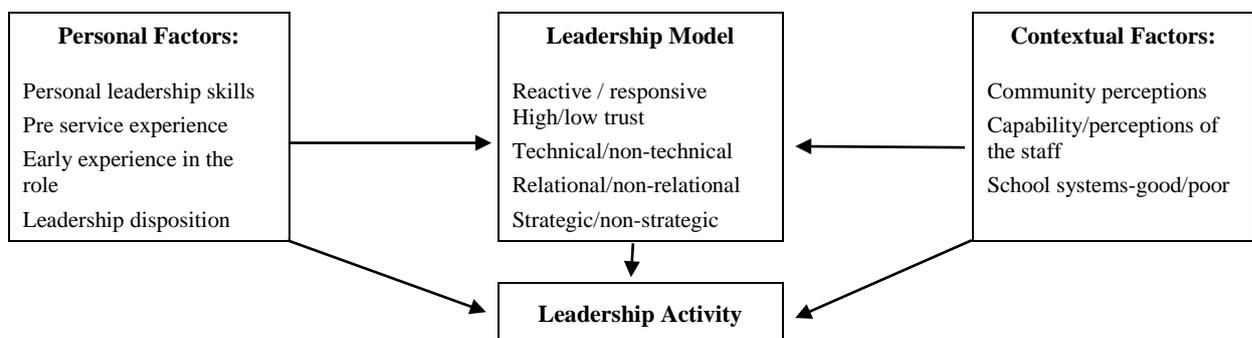


Figure 31. Contingency leadership model of New Zealand secondary school principals.

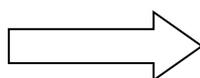
In this study, personal factors were identified as those leadership skills the principal brought to the role, and his or her personal leadership perceptions including pre-service or early-service leadership experiences. In this factor, staff expectations and reactions to the leadership were identified as important. Results from the case studies pointed to a link between the leadership of a principal and the positive or negative reactions of the staff to that leadership. Contextual factors were determined to be those elements within the school that the principal identified as leadership focus factors (Table 8). These included the staff, student and parent issues. They also included school organizational and functional issues. Community perceptions of the school and levels of tension within the school were also contextual factors.

The identification of the links between the leadership activities of the principal and the contexts of the school led to the conclusion that the leadership is a form of contingent leadership. The identification of the links between the leadership and the tensions within the school also led to a conclusion that the impact of social stress on the capacity of the principal to be consultative is similar to that identified by Fiedler and Garcia (1987). In their Cognitive Resource Theory of Leadership (CRT) Fiedler and Garcia argued that the nature of the leadership was derived from the capacity of the leader to use his or her intellectual resources, skills and knowledge to meet the contingent needs within the organization. In other words, the form of the leadership was determined by the nature of the organization. For instance, where there was tension, Fiedler and Garcia believed the leadership would be less consultative and more systemically orientated. If there was little tension, they believed the leadership would be more relational and less contextually intensive. This view was supported by Richardson et al. (1996) who argued that, in a school where there was a level of concern about the school, the teachers were more inclined to accept a directive form of leadership.

While the links between this leadership model and the nature of the leadership identified in this study are not precise, there are similarities. For instance, the leadership of the case study

principals (Mark and Greg) indicated that tension within the organization created a reactive and contextually intense leadership (Figure 29). Low tension within the school; as in the cases of Marge and Kevin, created a responsive leadership which was orientated towards systems maintenance (Figure 30). However, the school leadership identified in this study is more complex than the single organization leadership discussed by Fiedler and Garcia. The findings of this study were that principals needed to be responsive to expectations from outside the school as well as from inside the school. This meant principals need to be responsive to multiple contingent factors and to contingent factors which have different leadership expectations. As a result, the leadership identified in this study is a complex contingency leadership, the nature of which is derived from links the principal draws between his or personal leadership perceptions and his or her perceptions of the expectations of the leadership from within and outside the school. For instance, in the leadership of Greg, negative staff reactions and poor community perceptions, coupled with his perception of the role of the principal as being that of a functional leader, had resulted in a reactive, low trust, non-consultative and contextually intensive leadership model (Figure 29). On the other hand, in the leadership of Marge, low tension and a positive community perception coupled with a more managerial view of the role had resulted a responsive, high trust and contextually low-key leadership style (Figure 30). The leadership styles of Greg and Marge and the impact of the personal and contextual factor of the leadership are illustrated in Figures 32 and 33.

Contextual Factors	Personal Factors
Low community	Poor start-up experience



Leadership Model	Leadership Activity:
Focus on functional	Problem-solving

perception of school	ongoing staff issues	aspects of the role.	orientation
Tension with staff	No clear leadership concept	Non-educational	Responsive to community expectations.
Low skill level of staff	Isolated	Low trust	Narrow range of leadership areas of focus
	Low relational skills	Narrow range of leadership skills used	

Figure 32. Contingency leadership of Greg

This figure illustrating the leadership of Greg indicates how links between personal factors and school context led to his low-trust, non-consultative and problem-solving leadership model. The reflective journal and interview of Greg indicated that he had limited leadership experience prior to appointment and he had a narrow perception of leadership and a limited range of leadership skills which he did not extend by undertaking leadership training. His personality was strong and he described himself as having a “bottom line”. His early experience in the role was that of conflict with his staff, and this conflict was on-going. Greg also described the school as difficult. The community also had a low perception of the school which they regarded as unsafe.

In comparison, the leadership of Marge was higher trust and more distributive. It was also systems management-orientated, and focused was on maintaining the status quo in terms of school organization. There was a low level of problem-solving activity. Unlike Greg, she was the leader of a school with a positive community perception. Her early experiences in the role were positive and she had a capable staff. While there was some tension, this was limited and not on-going. Marge was also a strong personality but was less abrasive and she had a more global concept of leadership. The contingency leadership style of Marge is illustrated in Figure 33.

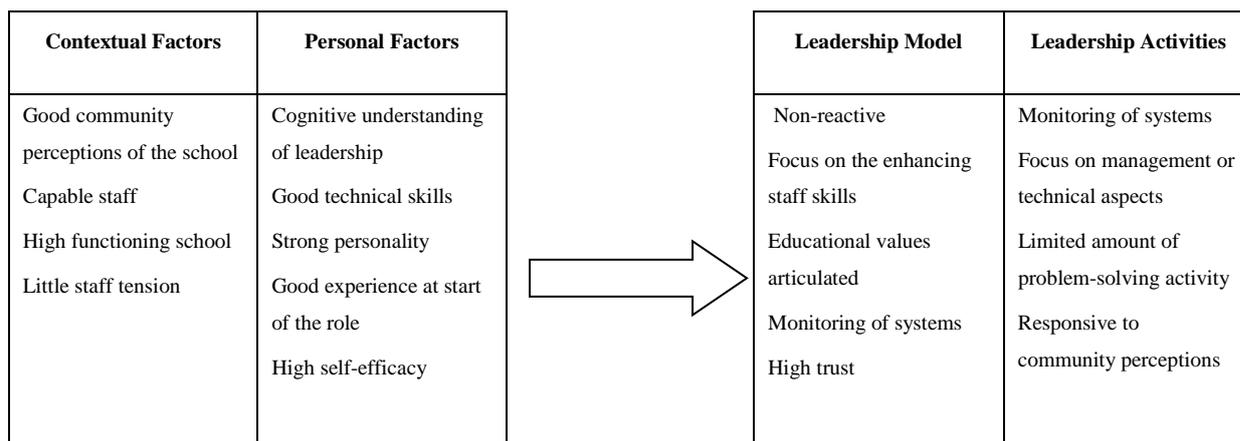


Figure 33. Contingency leadership of Marge

This understanding that the leadership of an individual principal is derived from a complex series of links between personal perceptions of leadership and of the external perceptions of school effectiveness emphasized that the role is not a simple form of contingency leadership but a form of multi-leveled contingency leadership. This multi-leveled contingency leadership will be discussed in the following section.

A Multi-Leveled Contingency Model

The understanding that principals have to be responsive to leadership expectations from within and outside the school led to a conclusion that the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand is a form of multi-leveled contingency leadership. This conclusion is also supported by the identification of the complex links which exist between the nature of the leadership activities a principal undertakes within the school and the expectations of school effectiveness from outside the school. These links require a principal to be differently responsive to two broad sets of leadership expectations; leadership effectiveness expectations from outside the school which are derived from a conceptual leadership view and, leadership expectations within the school which are derived from the contexts of the school.

This duality of view pointed to the possibility that the leadership perceptions of an individual principal were a mixture of the leadership concepts in two leadership dimensions; a conceptual leadership dimension and a contextual leadership dimension. It also pointed to another possibility that the degree to which the expectations from one dimension impacted on the leadership perceptions of the principal as compared to the expectations from the other dimension, determined the nature of the leadership activities of that principal. For instance, in situations where the external leadership expectations were strong, as in the case of Marge, the leadership of the principal tended to be orientated towards meeting those expectations. Where, the external expectations were not as strong as the contextual needs of the school, as in the case of Mark, the leadership tended to be orientated towards problem-solving. The influence of these leadership dimensions is illustrated in Figure 34.

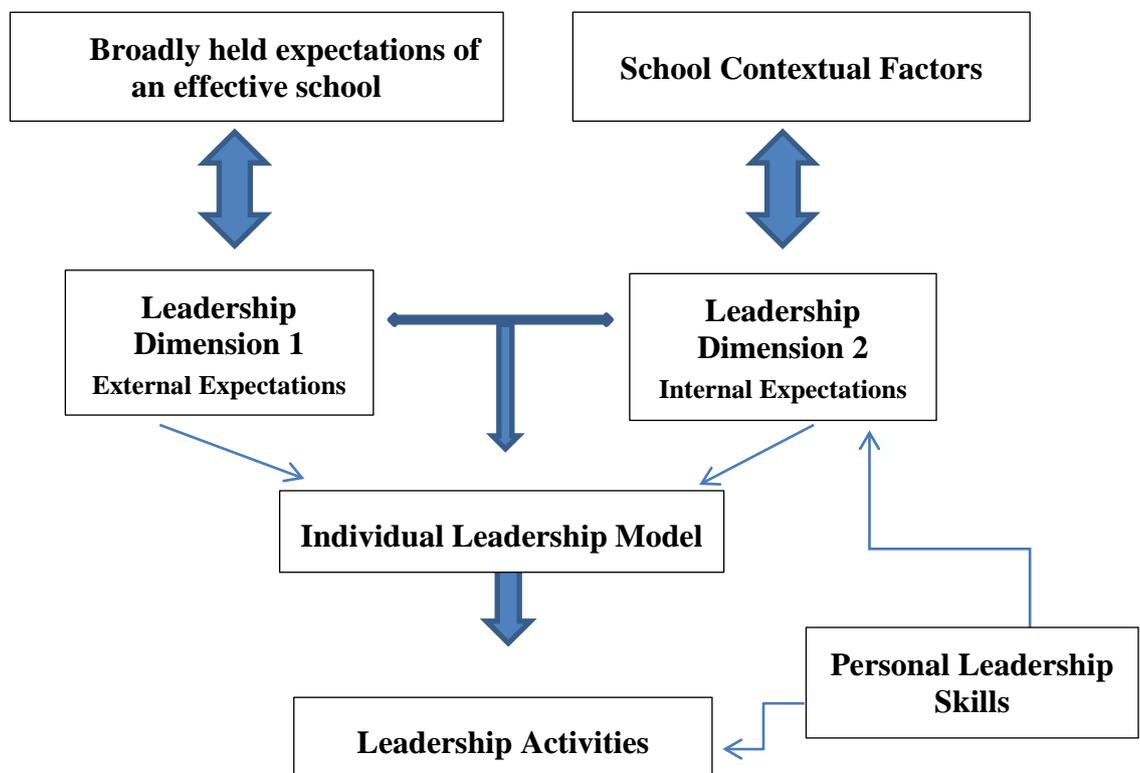


Figure 34. Multi-levelled Contingency Leadership Model

The Leadership Dimensions

The first dimension consists of the broadly-held expectations of an effective school and an effective school leader, and defines the leadership in conceptual terms. In this dimension, terms such as “transformational” (Leithwood et al., 1999), “moral” (Sergiovanni, 1993) or “values-driven” (Day et al., 2000) are frequently used to describe the style of leadership. Leadership is also defined as being high order as opposed to systems or organizational management. This is not to say there that there are no significant technical compliance and management aspects imposed on the principal from outside the school in this dimension. External expectations require the principal to be competent in a set of generally accepted leadership skills that can be managerial as well as organizational. They are also expected to have acceptable leadership dispositions such as being “relational”.

The capacity of the principal in this dimension is monitored by a variety of external audits, and the competency of a principal is also recognized in the generalized reports of ERO, financial auditors, and the views of the Ministry of Education about the capacity of the principal to meet technical compliance demands. The capacity of the principal in this dimension is also linked to the success of the school in the market. Because the leadership in this dimension is derived from broadly held societal perceptions of effective school leadership, such as those listed in the leadership models identified in the literature, this dimension also forms a theoretical basis for the leadership models that individual principals adopt.

The principals’ responsiveness to the requirements of this dimension can be recognized in the generalized leadership descriptions supplied by the participants in the leadership skills section of the survey (Tables 2-5) and in the leadership ethos each case study principal articulated as part of their interview. Kevin, for instance, described his leadership as “being well-

organized”, while Mary described herself as being “good with people”. Mark described his leadership as, “I am an ideas’ person. I lead from the front”.

The second leadership dimension is the contextualized, reactive, or responsive activities of the principal to specific needs within the school. It was this dimension that the participants in the study mostly identified as leadership. This dimension has a significant managerial focus and it appears to be specifically organizational, systems management, or problem-solving in orientation. Consequently, the leadership in this dimension is recognized as those activities the principal undertakes to problem-solve, dilemma-manage, or systems-manage within their school. The leadership activities are also personalized by the leadership skills the principal gives priority to and by the leadership expectations from within the school. In this way, organizational approval is important, and the lack of it impacts significantly on the focus and form of the leadership activities. The leadership function in this dimension was also more clearly defined by the participants in the study as the need to ensure organizational stability and to position the school in the market to gain students. Consequently, school image is important, as is data collection and statistics that demonstrated achievement. The contextualized and personalized nature of the leadership in this dimension was most evident in the leadership descriptions of the case study principals. For instance, all of the case study principals indicated that they had altered their leadership style to a greater or lesser extent because of the reaction of the staff to their leadership.

The impact of the differing leadership expectations of these dimensions on a principal can be seen in the leadership of Kevin. Kevin was the principal of a small school with a high community regard. His was the only school in a small, rural, and relatively conservative community. Expectations of the community regarding the school and of his leadership were that the school should not change and that his leadership should ensure the school maintained a role based on quite specific community expectations of what a school should be. The school was also

stable with only a limited amount of tension within it. Consequently, Kevin described his leadership style as, “steady as she goes”. He did not seek to make changes to school organization and his leadership activity was mostly monitoring the current systems so that the school continued to meet community expectations.

Thus, the results of this study support the conclusion that the leadership of a secondary school principal in New Zealand is derived from two sources which contrast and conflict to some extent. The first is essentially broadly held perceptions and expectations of an effective school and effective school leadership. The second is the contextual needs within the school. The results also suggest that the degree to which these two sources diverge determines the degree to which the leadership of the individual principal is contextually intensive. For example, a principal in a school that is perceived by the community as being an effective school tends to have a less reactive leadership, or be less inclined to make systems adjustments, as compared to a principal in a school with low community approval (Figures 29 and 30).

The recognition that principals have two different views of the leadership is not new. These two views were identified by Billot (2003) in her findings about the role conflict being experienced by secondary principals in New Zealand. However, the findings of this study point to this conflict not being as strong as Billot’s research suggests. Instead, they indicate that the leadership perceptions of an individual principal is a mixture of these two views and the nature of the leadership activities of the principal is determined by the degree to which each of these dimensions impacts on those perceptions. This study also brings an additional insight into the reasons why principals hold this dual view by identifying that it exists because of specific responsive factors within the self-managing schools’ model in New Zealand. Those factors have given significant weight to societal perceptions of an effective school and have also created the need for principals to be especially sensitive to the contexts of the school. As a result, secondary school principals lack leadership independence. Instead the leadership resource has been diverted

into various aspects of managerialism, and into the requirement for principals to meet broadly-held expectations of school effectiveness. The argument for the capacity for principals to be “imaginative” leaders, suggested by Caldwell (2006, p. ii), is, at best, illusory.

Summary

From the results of this study, several conclusions were reached. The first was that the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand is a complex form of multi-leveled contingency leadership, which is derived from a wide range of expectations from within and outside the school and from the personal leadership perceptions of the principal. The study also identified that the role is made more complex because of specific factors within the current system of self-managing schools in New Zealand that require principals to be responsive to the expectations of two different leadership dimensions. The study also determined that, because the self-managing school system in New Zealand has given particular strength to broadly-held perceptions of an effective school, the prime role of the secondary school principal is that of maintaining the interface between the school contexts and those broadly-held perceptions. As a result, principals lack leadership independence and the leadership tends to be non-educational, managerial, problem-solving and contextually orientated. It was this understanding that led to a conclusion that, for secondary school principals to become educational leaders and to meet the imperatives for change in the 21st century, key aspects of the current self-managing school system in New Zealand will need to change. More importantly, these understandings led to a belief that such changes cannot be achieved by principals acting alone in the school. Instead the changes can only be achieved through a paradigm shift in the thinking of school purpose and school leadership, whereby principals will be provided with the necessary independence to be responsive to the learning needs of students. This paradigm shift will be discussed in the following chapter, preceded by a conceptual critique of the current self-managing school system in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 7

DELIMITING EFFECTS OF THE SELF-MANAGING SCHOOLS

CONCEPT

The findings of this study support concerns, expressed by some researchers (Codd, 1993, 2004; Lauder & Hughes, 1999; Robinson & Ward, 2005; Smyth, 2011), that elements of the self-managing schools system, in New Zealand and elsewhere, are key factors in limiting the capacity of principals to be educational leaders. In this chapter those concerns are discussed and elements within the New Zealand self-managing schools system, identified as impacting significantly on the role of the principal, are outlined. A different direction for secondary school leadership thinking in New Zealand is suggested and the potential impact of this paradigm shift on the self-managing schools' system in New Zealand is discussed. In so doing the chapter addresses the third research question; What are the implications of the findings for a conceptual understanding of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?

School Self-Management

The self-managing school model that New Zealand and other countries adopted in the late 1980s had, as its basis the concept that responsibility should be devolved to schools and monitored through personalized accountabilities (Caldwell & Spinks, 1988). Caldwell and Spinks described school self-management as a system in which there is:

a significant and consistent decentralization to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources. This decentralization is administrative rather than political, with decisions at the school level being within a framework of local, state or national policies and guidelines (p.5).

In theory, the system was designed to ensure educational delivery would be enhanced by more effective allocation of resources; decisions about resources being made that suit the needs of the students; collaborative school management and, a greater focus on learning outcomes. The system, as originally envisaged, was not intended to create a significant administrative burden on principals (Smyth, 2011) but to provide them with the capacity to make localized and focused decisions in relation to the learning needs of the students (Codd, 1993). Caldwell and Spinks (1998) argued that the concept of self-managing was not, “synonymous with school-based management” (p. 5).

However, the reality of school self-management has been quite different and despite different models being adopted throughout the western world, there has been commonality in the criticisms of the concept. These criticisms are mostly focused on the non-educational purpose of the reforms, the impact of the reforms on the leadership of principals and the capacity of principals and schools to enhance the learning of students. Smyth (2011) described self-management as a:

phenomenon that was ideologically warehoused out of the broader structural adjustment agenda of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development which was part of a wider agenda of downsizing government resourcing of public education, opening the way for the privatization of facilities, but more importantly, instituting the mentality of enterprising self (p.112).

Codd (2004), Lauder and Hughes (1999), Smyth (2011), and Wylie (1997) also pointed out that the outcome of self-management has not been improved educational delivery but schools and principals being deflected from the teaching and learning by the need to be concerned for aspects of managerialism and organizational function, such as property or finances. Codd (1993), Lauder and Hughes (1999), Smyth (2011), and Thrupp (2006) believed self-management was

also a system which encouraged educational inequity by placing the right to determine whether a school was effective or ineffective in the hands the middle class who then manipulated the system for its own gain. Smyth (2011) also felt that the system had not given schools the right to make independent decisions. He described the claims of the empowerment of educationalists as a “a sequined accompaniment of the market glitter speak of SMS” and a “vacuous notion” (p.109).

In New Zealand, it could be argued that these criticisms are even more powerful because the system adopted by New Zealand in 1989 was a more extreme form of self-management than elsewhere (Wylie, 1997) and the speed of the implementation was greater than in most other countries. Codd (1993), for instance, described the haste of the implementation in New Zealand as a “travesty of democracy” (p.88). Robinson and Ward (2005), Thrupp (2006) and Wylie (1997; 2007) felt that, because of its extreme nature, the New Zealand system had mired principals in a swamp of administration and inter-school competitiveness. Codd (1993; 2004), Lauder and Hughes (1999) and Thrupp (2006) also wrote that the New Zealand system had given undue weight to the views of broadly-held perceptions of school and school leadership effectiveness.

Codd (1993; 2004), Robinson and Ward (2005) and Wylie (1997; 2007) identified two specific elements of the New Zealand self-managing schools systems which, they believed were at the heart of these concerns. The first was that the extensive nature of the reforms has meant schools and principals in New Zealand are not part of a cluster schools but are isolated entities with a significant range of administrative responsibilities and personal accountabilities which are monitored by the government through an increasingly complex range of compliance demands (Wylie, 1997). The second was the strength of market philosophies in the system. A key selling point of the system in New Zealand by the government was that there would be greater community consultation to education (Robinson & Ward, 2005). The basis of this belief was,

however, not educational but designed for economic efficiency. It was based on a belief that a school that was perceived as being effective by parents would grow while a school that was not perceived as being effective by the parents would close. These closures would reduce the resource allocation by the government. The reality of this philosophy has seen success in the market place has become closely linked to concepts of school effectiveness, increased inter-school competitiveness and the notion of a “good” school coming to rest in the hands of a small, influential, and conservative group in society that has manipulated the system to ensure its ongoing benefit (Codd, 1993; Thrupp, 2006). This aspect of the system has also meant community perceptions of school and of school leadership effectiveness have assumed undue weight in the school leadership concepts in New Zealand and principals have become overly responsive to community perceptions. Both these elements; school isolation and market philosophies, have meant that the role of the secondary school principal in New Zealand is significantly managerial, administrative and systems orientated, rather than educationally orientated and principals have become contextually sensitive and problem-solving focused. This, focus is however, not unique to New Zealand. A comparative study of school leadership in Korea and the United States by Kyung and Miskel (1989) found principals developed their leadership model based on community expectations of the role. The study also found that principals in the United States and Korea spend less time on educational matters than they believed they did.

This outcome has been supported by the findings of this research study. All participating principals indicated the prime function of the role was management rather than teaching and learning focused (Tables 7 and 13). The reflective journals and interviews of the case study principals indicated that broadly-held perceptions of school effectiveness were significant factors in determining the nature and the focus of the leadership of an individual principal. The findings also indicated that the contextual intensity of the leadership of a principal was determined by the level of divergence between the school contexts and the populist views of an effective school.

Thus principals were required to be responsive to the leadership expectations in two different leadership dimensions, and as a consequence, lacked leadership independence.

Therefore, while the calls by the Ministry of Education (Fancy, 2005) and by some researchers (Caldwell, 2006, Robinson et al, 2009) for a school leadership review were possibly quite timely in the face of the growing concerns about student learning outcomes (Robinson et al., 2009; Smyth, 2011), this study demonstrates a need for the underlying concepts of school self-management to be challenged and for the current self-managing concept to be revised.

Changes to the Self-Managing Schools System

The findings of this study suggest that the role of a secondary principal is too complex and that principals are distracted from the teaching and learning functions of the school by multiple demands on them from a variety of stakeholders within and outside the school. For a principal to be able to change his or her leadership focus, the role of the principal would need to alter from a multi-leveled contingency leadership, to a single dimension contingency model which has the learning needs of the students as paramount. To accomplish this, there needs to be a reduction of the managerial aspects of the principal's role. From this study, it is evident that much of the work of a secondary principal consists of duplicated, managerial, or technical compliance activities arising from external expectations of schools and school leaders (Table 7). Such duplication needs to cease and a different system needs to be put in place which moves principals away from a focus on managerial functions and school organizational concerns such as property and finance.

At the same time, this study makes clear that if principals are to focus on the learning needs of the students, schools and principals should no longer be compelled to be market-sensitive. To achieve this, schools and principals should no longer be isolated and individually subjected to powerful political and societal perceptions of effectiveness within a market environment.

Instead, it is argued that individual schools should be part of a wider cluster of schools, and that principals should be learning leaders within the school and his or her leadership effectiveness is linked to the learning outcomes of the students rather than external leadership or school effectiveness concepts.

These changes, however, represent a significant shift in educational thinking from schools that are driven by market forces or political agendas, to schools that have the learning needs of the students as their key focus. As a conceptual underpinning, there would need to be a paradigm shift in thinking about school function and school leadership and principals would need support to be educational leaders rather than school managers. Calls for principals to be educational leaders are not new. Robinson et al. (2009) in *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why. Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration* pointed to the links between school leadership and enhanced student outcomes: “School leaders make a critical difference in the quality of schools and the learning of young people” (p.35). Caldwell (2006a) also argued for the need for a new educational leadership “imagining” (p. 64) to meet the changing learning needs of the 21st century. In particular, he argued that educational leadership transformation needed to go hand-in-hand with a new concept of learning. An OECD (2004) report also called for principals to be educational leaders. This report argued that this could only be achieved if principals and schools were not isolated and schools were able to:

- organize themselves around the learning needs of their students;
- work in synergy with other schools and organizations in society;
- focus on the learning process rather than outcomes;
- adapt, change, and experiment.

However, for such changes to take place in New Zealand, key aspects of the self-managing schools model in New Zealand would need to change. Secondary schools and their leaders would need to be given the freedom to be part of clusters of schools and the system would also need to

be based on equity and on principles of social justice rather than free market

philosophies A proposed school self-management model in which the conceptual underpinnings change from a systems orientation to a learning focus is illustrated in Figure 35.

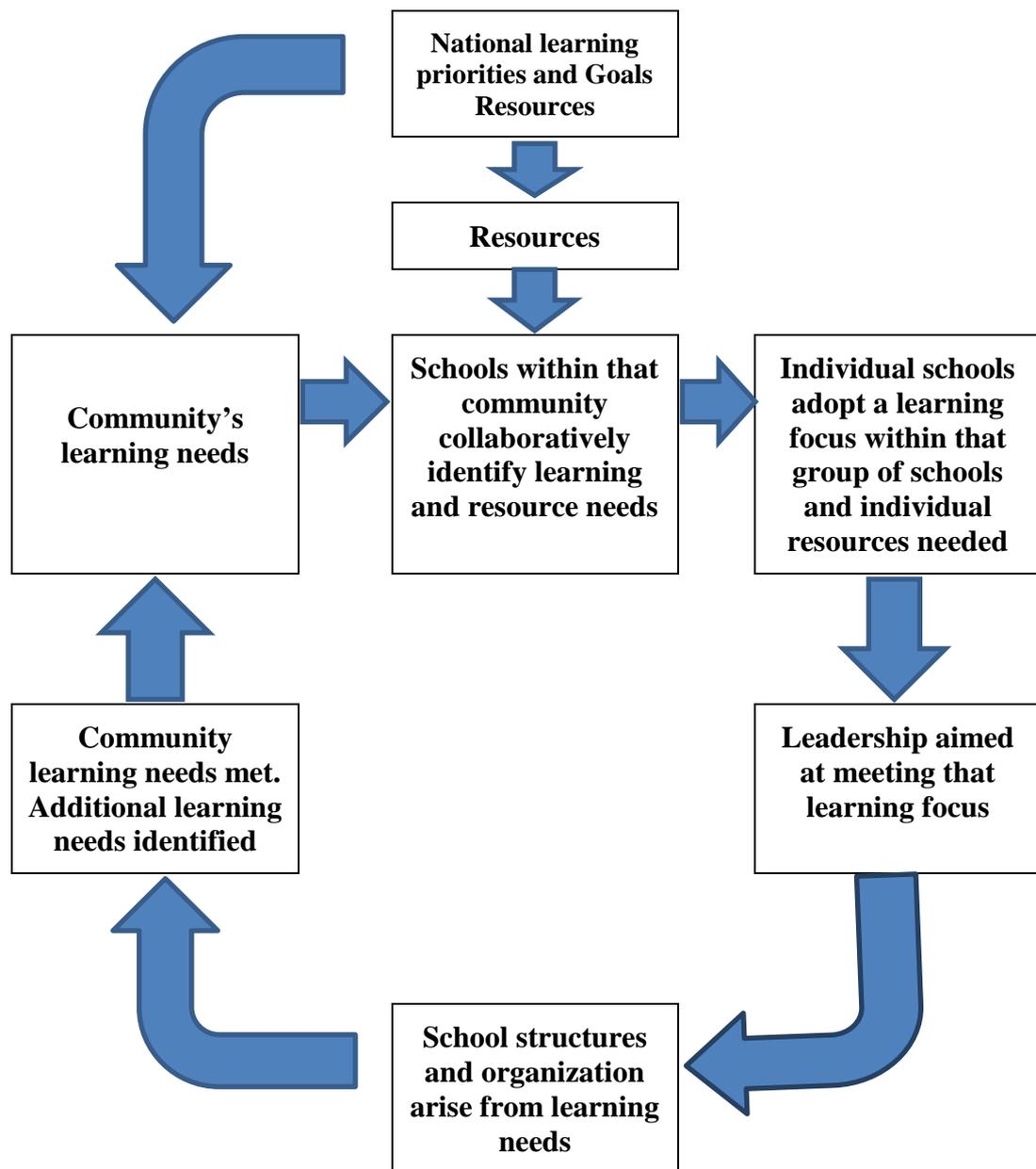


Figure 35. A learning –focused model of school self-management

The school self-management model in Figure 34 was drawn, from this study, research findings and, to some extent, from the self-managing school model in Edmonton, Canada, and

the research by Wylie (2007) about that system. While this system is not perfect, it nevertheless provides an impetus for a paradigm shift in New Zealand school leadership thinking and school self-management that this study advocates. In Edmonton, for instance, the self-managing schools system is based, to a large extent, on the allocation of resources to meet student needs and on schools working cooperatively to achieve community learning goals (Wylie, 1997). Individual schools are in a cluster of schools and the role of the individual school is to achieve learning goals within that cluster. The principals are educational leaders and administrative functions are largely performed elsewhere. This is similar to the system in Finland which is seen as the most successful of the school systems in the OECD and has consistently out-performed most countries which have advanced the neo-liberal concepts of self-management. Finland has largely resisted the marketization of education and league tables, school audits and inter-school competitiveness do not exist. Instead the system is based on equity of educational opportunity (Smyth, 2011). Codd(1993), Lauder and Hughes (1999) and Robinson and Ward (2005) identified these elements; isolation of schools and interschool competitiveness, as a key factors for the failure of the current self-managing schools system in New Zealand to enhance student outcomes.

The model, which is proposed in Figure 35, is a non-consumerist model of school self-management. In this model, schools work collaboratively and are not isolated or subject to market forces. National learning priorities and goals are still determined by the government, and the government still provides resources. However, the focus of the system is on schools being part of a wider community but having the freedom within that community to create school structures or develop systems which will enhance the learning needs of the students and support the learning needs of the community. For example, one school could be a school catering for technical or vocational education and the principal could structure the school to suit that role. The role of the principal is, therefore linked to the development of systems or monitoring

systems within the school that will enhance learning in the school. There is also to be a clear link between resource allocation and the learning needs of the school.

Summary

The major findings of this study were that an appropriate model for describing secondary school leadership in New Zealand is a form of multi-leveled contingency leadership that gains its shape and its purpose from the need of principals to maintain the interface between societal perceptions of an effective school and the school's context. In this way, the study supported the claim by Thrupp (2006) and Gunter (2001), that within the current self-managing school model, there is an inherent tendency towards conservatism and conformity, and that the system is designed to satisfy free market economic principles.

The concept that the prime role of the current principal is to ensure their school meets broadly held views of school effectiveness is not new. Nor is it unique to New Zealand. Both Gunter (2001) and Elmore (2000) identified it as a key aspect of the principal's role in the United Kingdom and the United States respectively. Caldwell and Spinks (1988) described it as the key aim of the self-managing school philosophy. However, the argument presented in some of the leadership literature that principals can fulfill this role and be educational leaders is questionable. Despite persistent of the claims that school leadership is a "purposeful and often daring activity" (Caldwell, 2006a. p. ii), the results of this study suggest that because there is a need to meet external expectations of school effectiveness, secondary school leaders in New Zealand lack leadership independence. The results of this study also indicate that the leadership focus and leadership activities of a secondary school principal are not defined by the learning needs within the school but by broadly-held expectations of an effective school.

As a consequence, for secondary principals in New Zealand to be true educational leaders, and for there to be educational enhancement in secondary schools, the conceptual thinking

behind the current system of self-managing schools needs to change. A new paradigm needs to be developed in which principals and schools are given the freedom to focus on the learning needs of the students in the school, and school organization arises directly from those learning needs. The implications of these findings for future research, school leadership literature and government policy development will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter the findings of this study are summarized. The limitations of the study are also considered along with possible future implications for school leadership scholarship, educational policy and practice, and research activity.

Three major research questions formed the basis of the study:

1. What is the nature of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?
2. What factors determine the nature of the role of individual principals?
3. What are the implications of the findings for a conceptual understanding of secondary school leadership in New Zealand?

Overview of the Study

In order to answer these questions, the study examined school leadership from the perspective of 94 secondary principals in New Zealand. It then undertook a detailed examination of the leadership actions and interactions of five of those principals. The findings of the study led to the conclusion the role of a secondary school principal in New Zealand is a limited form of contingency leadership, the prime function of which is to maintain the interface between broadly-held expectations of an effective school and the school contexts. As a consequence, rather than being educationally orientated, the role has become a contextualized, short-term, problem-solving and dilemma-management orientation. The findings of the study also identified that specific elements within the self-managing schools' system in New Zealand are key factors in delimiting the nature of the role. Thus, it is argued that a paradigm shift is needed in the thinking about school purpose and school leadership in New Zealand if secondary school

principals are to become educational leaders and to meet imperatives for educational change for the 21st century.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations of the study are acknowledged. The first is that, while data from 94 principals was used, this group represented only 30% of all the secondary principals in New Zealand. Also, within that group, while the leadership activities of five principals were studied in detail, the findings based on those activities may not be representative of the range of leadership activity of all secondary school principals. Consequently, the conclusions from the study cannot necessarily be generalized to New Zealand secondary school principals as a whole, particularly for the five case studies. However, taken together, the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data provide a contextualized, data-based, picture of the issues under investigation. This enables the reader to apply their own generalizability to the findings and theorize their own ideas by applying them to their particular educational context. The findings also provide some in-depth insights and raise questions about the enactment of the secondary principal's role and the impact of the self-managing schools' system on that role.

The reader should also recognize that, even though the study used both quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis methods that provided a level of triangulation, inherent limitations within the approach remain. Although a survey format was used to make initial identification of the key concepts or themes, this accumulation of objective data was used to only partially explain the reality of secondary school leadership in New Zealand. A case study approach was the prime method used to draw conclusions. This meant that some conclusions, especially those from the examination of the leadership activities of the case study principals, were drawn from the unchallenged perceptions of those participants. It was also acknowledged that the use of case study could create a narrow view because of the limited nature of the sample

(Yin, 1994). However, Rowley (2002) pointed out that the use of case studies provided insights that other approaches did not and were useful “in providing the answers the ‘How’ and ‘Why’ questions”(p.16).

Finally, this research study is potentially constrained by the experiential bias of the researcher. To overcome this possible bias, mixed method of data collection and analysis were used and emerging themes or theories were checked with the participants and the advisory group of principals.

Implications of the Research Findings for Leadership Literature

The study points towards a need in the literature for a greater awareness of the limitations imposed on school leadership in New Zealand by the current system of school self-management. Researchers need to be aware that, in such an environment, school leadership is more limited than some have suggested. To this degree, the study argues against the literature that seeks to describe current school leadership in highly inflated terms or that uses generalized models of best practice as a means for current principals to improve their performance. It also argues against the literature which extols forms of marketization or inter-school competitiveness as the basis for educational enhancement. Instead, this study suggests that a more grounded perspective of the nature of current school leadership needs to be developed. It also suggests that consideration for new models of school leadership need to be developed based on the more inclusive models of leadership such as those found in Bolman and Deal (2008) and Hoy and Miskel (2013).

In so doing, the findings of the study give strength to the arguments of Day et al. (2009) and Southworth (1998a) that a true understanding of school leadership can only be gained by examining it in its context. The findings also support the argument by Elmore (2000) and Gunter (2001) that any literature which seeks to identify school leadership in terms of non-

contextualised models of practice is an unsuitable vehicle to create leadership development. This study also suggests that there needs to be more empirical data about the nature and the effects of the self-managing schools' system in New Zealand on school leadership and on the nature of schools.

Implications of the Research Findings for Policy and Practice

Findings from this study have shown that current policy and self-managing practices are inhibiting the capacity of educational leaders to focus on the learning needs of the students in the school. Consequently, there are two key interrelated implications for policy and practice arising from this study. These relate to school self-management and school effectiveness.

Review of the self-managing school system.

The first key implication of this study for policy and practice is that there needs to be a review of the current system of school self-management in New Zealand so that principals can have the independence to be educational leaders. The findings of this study argue for the need for a new perspective on school purpose and school leadership in New Zealand. They also argue for the need for a greater understanding of inter-school competitiveness on school leadership.

However, such a review cannot be undertaken by educationalists alone. What is needed is a broad review which will take into account the views of all stakeholders, but especially the views of school leaders. A key understanding arising from this study is that secondary principals feel alienated from the discourse around educational policy and regard the claims by the government about leadership independence to be a form of deception for political ends. Consequently, the focus of the review should not be to identify new forms of leadership which can be imposed on the current system. Instead it would need to consider the nature of learning and the purpose of schools. In this way, any new leadership understandings or models could arise from broadly-

based understandings of learning, not from broader social and political agendas. In this way also, school leaders would be enabled to contribute to the discourse on educational policy.

New perspectives on school effectiveness.

The second implication from the study on policy and practice is the need for new perspectives on school effectiveness. Throughout the study, the leadership focus and activity of the individual principal were constantly linked to broadly-held expectations of school and school leadership effectiveness. The study also identified that these broadly-held expectations imposed limitations on the role by diverting the leadership focus of a principal into various aspects of managerialism, image management, as well as finance, staff and property management. Consequently, the findings of this study highlight the need for a new concept of school effectiveness to be developed which is linked to the learning needs of the students within the school. This will mean school and school leadership function will need to be reconsidered that enable principals to align the structures or systems within a school to the learning needs of the students in the school rather than external expectations of school purpose or function.

To achieve this shift in perspective, the current system in which schools are subject to effectiveness concepts based on free market policies or community expectations should be changed. A move should be made towards a view of education which places a high premium on learning for all groups and has as its basis the belief that education is a key factor for social enhancement and should be accessible to everyone, not just elitist groups in society. In this way the role of the school would be to meet the learning needs of the students and school effectiveness would be determined by their capacity to meet those needs rather than societal views of school effectiveness or the demands of inter-school competitiveness. This would possibly enable schools to work within clusters of schools. It would also reduce the capacity of groups within the community to determine school focus or form. This, in turn, would enable

principals to have the freedom to adopt practices within the school which were linked to the learning needs of students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Three areas are recommended for future research. The first is the need for on-going research into the social and educational impact of the current model of school self-management. The second is for research into new forms of educational leadership to meet the learning needs of the community. The third is for on-going research about the nature of learning and new forms of school which are based on those understandings of learning. Each of these areas is discussed briefly in the following sections.

The impact of the concept of self-management.

Previously in this chapter, the need for a revision of the current model of self-management was discussed. It was suggested that a new model needs to be devised that is free from neo-liberal political and economic agendas and has, as its basis, educational enhancement. For such a model to be devised it is recommended that on-going research into the impact of the current model of self-management be maintained and research into new models of learning-focused self-management be undertaken. Such research would need to go beyond existing models of self-management to ones that are grounded in concerns for the community. This research could then form the basis of a more socially activist view of future educational reform.

New models of secondary school leadership.

This study highlights significant concerns about the current role of the secondary school principal. In particular it highlights the current role of the principal is that of an active agent for systems which are essentially non-educational. It is recommended that research be continued into new forms of school leadership which have as their focus the leadership of learning. These forms of leadership would not necessarily be based on the current model of the single school

leader but on a distributed leadership concept in which leadership is linked to educational delivery. To support this research, the whole concept of secondary schooling and the purpose and function of secondary schools would need to be reviewed.

A new understanding of learning.

This study argues that the current educational system is not based on understanding about the nature of learning, but on political and economic agendas. In so doing, the concept of learning has been largely neglected as the basis for educational reform. It is therefore recommended that on-going research be maintained on the nature of learning and on the future learning needs which will arise from the social, economic and technological changes in the 21st century. These understandings could then form the basis of discussions on the nature of future schools, new forms of school leadership and provide directions for possible future educational reform.

Future Directions

One aim of this study was to suggest possible future directions or changes in leadership perceptions that would enable current secondary school principals in New Zealand to meet the educational demands of the 21st century for a new educational perspective. While calls for changes in educational delivery are possibly timely in the face of concerns about educational achievement, the solution lies not with calls for new models of leadership practice. Change is not real change if it just consists of putting new clothes on an old body. Instead, this study points to the need for a paradigm shift in thinking about the organisational foundations of schooling. To do that there needs to be a review of the system of self-managing schools in New Zealand that is more informed by educational considerations than by economic or political considerations. For such a review to be instigated there would also need to be a wider acknowledgement that any failure in educational achievement lies not simply with schools and school leaders but with an

educational system that has been diverted towards managerial systems rather than the core business of teaching and learning.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Colleague

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and I thank you for considering our request.

What is the aim of the project?

This project is being undertaken as part of a PhD study on the role of the secondary principal in New Zealand. The role of the principal, with its pressures and concerns is not well understood by policy makers and Ministry officials therefore this project seeks to clarify the actual nature of the role and to provide an insight into the changing nature of that role. It will also look at how principals learn their leadership skills and whether this acquisition is affected by career stage and school type.

Who will be part of the project?

All secondary principals in New Zealand will be invited to be part of the project

What will you be asked to do?

Should you are willing to take part in this project, you are asked to complete the enclosed questionnaire. It is anticipated it will take 20 minutes. You will also be asked to indicate on the front cover of the questionnaire if you would be willing to take part in an in-depth interview, which will take place later in the year, and also whether you would be willing to maintain a journal of a typical week's activity. The data you supply will be confidential and the questionnaire is designed so that no-one will be able to identify your school or yourself. To ensure confidentiality your response should be mailed directly to me in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope. I will email you to remind you of the project within a fortnight of you receiving the questionnaire.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Can You Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

The data being collected is designed to give a detailed and accurate picture of the actual role of a secondary principal in New Zealand and to identify those activities you do most in terms of administration and management. It is also designed to identify the pressures you feel are being placed on you which may impact on how you perform your role.

This data will then be collated and from this an accurate picture of what principals actually do, will be established. It is hoped this picture may go some way to informing policy makers and the Ministry of education just how complex and multi-faceted secondary school principalship in New Zealand is and of the nature of the pressures which are impacting on the position.

To ensure the data provides a complete a picture as possible, some of you will be approached and asked to take part in in-depth interviews and maintain a journal of your day-to-day activities for a week.

At all times the confidentiality of your responses will be respected and no person other than the researcher will have access to the data. You are also most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

To ensure confidentiality the data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only the researcher will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

What if I have any Questions?

If you have any questions about this project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact me using the address details on the questionnaire

Denis Slowley

Student Researcher

Department of Education

Phone: (03) 4791100

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee

CONSENT FORM FOR

PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
1. Personal identifying information will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed
2. At any time I feel that the information I may have supplied might result in my discomfort or risk I am free to withdraw that information or seek to have it amended
3. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the library but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

.....

(Signature of participant)

.....

(Date)

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee

Appendix B: The Self- Managed Survey

Dear Colleague

This project is part of a PhD. study into the role of the New Zealand secondary principal. As a secondary principal myself, I am aware of the complexity of the job and the pressures there are upon you. It is clear that detailed information is needed to develop an improved understanding of the needs of principals. New Zealand secondary principalship is seen, internationally, as one of the more complex principalships amongst those countries who adopted the self-managing school's model. Yet, the little research on its unique nature has resulted in a lack of understanding of that role.

This project, therefore, aims to identify the current role of the secondary principal in New Zealand, as well as the pressures and issues you face while performing the role, and suitable forms of professional development.

I appreciate that you receive many research-based requests throughout the year. However, I feel that the findings of this project will have a benefit for all principals. Therefore, your cooperation in completing the survey is requested so that your views can be represented.

The survey is divided into four sections. Each section is designed to draw out specific information. It is expected that it will take no longer than 20 minutes. There are six sections labeled A-F. Section F is to be completed only if you wish to be part of the on-going project.

When you have completed the questionnaire please place it in the enclosed, reply-paid envelope with the yellow acceptance form. **Please be assured the full confidentiality of your response will be respected.**

If you have any queries or questions, please contact me at the following email address:

dslowley@ihug.co.nz or my supervisor, Professor Jeffery Smith

Once again, thank you for your interest in this project.

Denis Slowley

Ph.D.Student, University of Otago

Ph 03 453 0266

The Role of the New Zealand Secondary Principal

Section A

Background Information

A1. Male Female

A2. Years as Principal

A3. Years in current school

A4. School location

Rural

Urban

Small town (under 10,000)

A5. School decile

A6. School type

State Integrated Private

Co-Ed Boys only Girls only

A7. School size

100-300

301-500

501-700

Staff management	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Change management	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Public relations	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Work/life Balance	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Section C

This section is designed to determine the nature of the role of the principal

What do you devote most of your time to?

C1. In a typical week how much time would you dedicate to:

	Great deal of time	Some time	No time
Strategic leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management and Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent and community issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C2. In an ideal week how would you like to devote your time?

Comment _____

D2: Please indicate whether you think the role has changed over the last five years.

Not been a principal for five years (Go to D3)

Not at all

A little

A great deal

D3: Current Level of Satisfaction

Very high High Low Very Low

D4: Approximate hours worked in a typical week

Less than 44 45-55 56-65 66-75 76-85 85+

D5: Where do you think you will you be in five years time?

Still a principal Retired Not in education

Not a principal but still in education Unsure

D6: Do you see the role changing in the next five years?

Yes (Please comment below) No (Go to Section E)

Section E

Professional Development

E1: List the types of professional development or professional development themes you would find most useful in helping you perform your role

-
-
-

E2: List the types of professional development or professional development themes you would find least useful in helping you perform your role

-
-
-

E3: Please make any additional comments about professional development models.

Section F

If you are willing to be part of the ongoing project and take part in the interviews and the journal keeping, please complete the following section:

I am willing to take place in the interview and journal completion exercise

Name: _____

School: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

Phone /Cell phone: _____

Ethnicity : NZ European Maori Pacific Island Other

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Thank you for your much-appreciated support

Please tick this box if you would like a copy of the results sent to you.

Denis Slowley

Ph.D. Student, University of Otago

Appendix C: The Reflective Journal

Secondary School Principals in New Zealand: An Investigation of the Nature of the Role

Principal's Reflective Journal

Thank you for your willingness to be part of this project. This is the second stage of the project. It consists of principals completing the Reflective Journal below and then later in the year being interviewed for approximately 45 minutes. You are reminded that you are free to withdraw from the project at any time.

Completion of the Reflective Journal

Please choose what you anticipate will be a **typical** week rather than an extreme week. Please complete this Journal at the end of each day. You should spend no more than 10 minutes on it. The Journal is designed to last for 5 days but not include weekends.

Each day is the same. You are asked to identify what you do and comment on the day overall.

You can complete the enclosed, hard copy or use the email version

Day 1

What time did you start work?

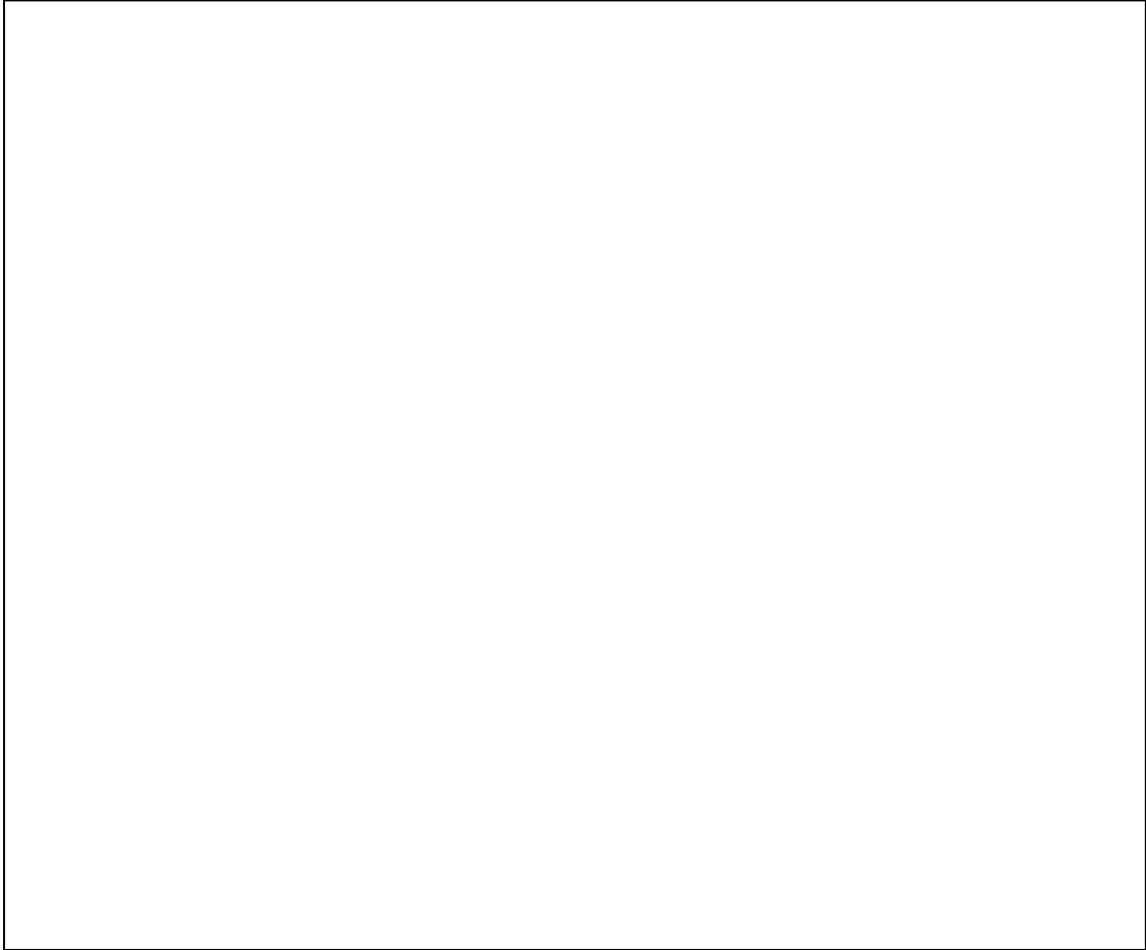
What time did you finish work?

Estimate the time (hours) for each of the activities below:

Activity	Time
Strategic Leadership	
Curriculum Leadership	
Management and Administration	
Student Issues	
Parent and Community Issues	
Staffing Issues	
Teaching	
Other(Specify)	
Non work related activity	

Comment on the Day.

What problems did you experience, what did you enjoy etc. No more than 30-40 words



Day 2

What time did you start work?

What time did you finish work?

Estimate the time (hours) for each of the activities below:

Activity	Time
Strategic Leadership	
Curriculum Leadership	
Management and Administration	
Student Issues	
Parent and Community Issues	
Staffing Issues	
Teaching	
Non work related activity	

Comment on the Day.

What problems did you experience, what did you enjoy etc. No more than 30-40 words

Day 3

What time did you start work?

What time did you finish work?

Estimate the time (hours) for each of the activities below:

Activity	Time
Strategic Leadership	
Curriculum Leadership	
Management and Administration	
Student Issues	
Parent and Community Issues	

Staffing Issues	
Teaching	
Other(specify)	
Non work related activity	

Comment on the Day.

What problems did you experience, what did you enjoy etc. No more than 30-40 words

Day 4

What time did you start work?

What time did you finish work?

Estimate the time (hours) for each of the activities below:

Activity	Time
Strategic Leadership	
Curriculum Leadership	
Management and Administration	
Student Issues	
Parent and Community Issues	
Staffing Issues	
Teaching	
Other(specify)	
Non work related activity	

Comment on the Day.

What problems did you experience, what did you enjoy etc. No more than 30-40 words

Day 5

What time did you start work?

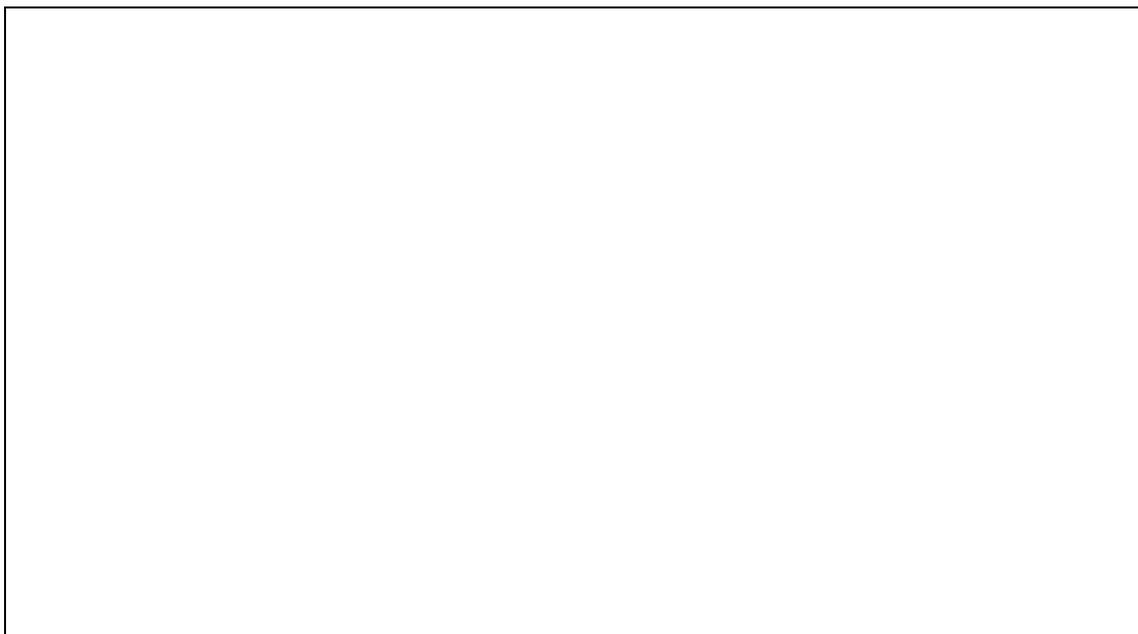
What time did you finish work?

Estimate the time (hours) for each of the activities below:

Activity	Time
Strategic Leadership	
Curriculum Leadership	
Management and Administration	
Student Issues	
Parent and Community Issues	
Staffing Issues	
Teaching	
Other (Specify)	
Non work related activity	

Comment on the Day.

What problems did you experience, what did you enjoy etc. No more than 30-40 words



Thank you for completing the Journal. Please place it in the reply-paid envelope or email a copy to dslowley@ihug.co.nz.

Any queries to Denis Slowley 0272459786

Appendix D: Guiding Interview Questions

Personal

- How long have you been a principal?
- What is your educational background or degrees?
- Why did you become a principal?
- What leadership positions have you held before becoming a principal?
- What training have you had or undertaken? Which sort of training did you find the most useful?
- Do you have a particular view of education?
- Has it been easy to get that view into your school?

School

- Describe your school- talk of the ethos or spirit rather than size etc
- How much do you feel you are responsible for that spirit or ethos? Why?
- Has the school changed since you became principal? How or in what way? What problems did you meet? How did you meet those problems?
- Do you think your school is effective? Why? What do you feel is your part in that? How do you know?
- From a principal's point of view which element of a school do you think is most important?
- On a day to day basis what activities do you think you spend the most time on? Has that changed?
- What would you prefer to spend the most time on? Has that changed?

- On an on-going basis what are your greatest challenges - inside the school and from outside the school?
- Do you think your leadership style is affected by the nature of the school in any way? How? What way?
- Do you feel your leadership style has changed from when you began? Why?

The Role

- How would you describe your leadership style?
- What do you feel are the qualities of a good principal? List three of them in some form of hierarchy or describe a principal you most admire
- What gives you the most satisfaction as a principal?
- What gives you the least satisfaction?
- What changes would you like to see in the role of a principal?
- Do you think the role has changed?
- Are you more/less satisfied with the job? Say why or why not?
- What advice would you give a beginning or aspiring principal about the role?
- What are your plans? What would/does keep you in the role?
- What on-going PD do you do? What is most effective?
- What training do you feel you would like/need to undergo?

Any Other Comment

Appendix E: Transcript and Coding Analysis – Semi Structured Interview –

Principal 3(Sample page)

complacent and they could do a lot better than this. They did not like me for it. One of them told me I was just another Jaffa. It was a very difficult year that year. I could have walked away many times. I'm sure everyone felt that about the job. The first year is always difficult.

I

Apart from the staff, what else was wrong? What sort of things were you struggling with in that first year?

P

Lack of organization in the school. There were very few efficient systems. They had a (obscure) place, horizontal system and a vertical system overlapping and the overlapping was so big the kids were falling through the gaps. You could never find a kid. It was about the teachers more than the kids

It was a good place but everything about it could have been better, the fact that I said those sort of things. I still feel we could be a lot better. I suppose when you stop feeling like that it is time to give up.

I

Did you have to get rid of any staff?

P

Some of them got rid of themselves. There was quite a big turn over. But it was possibly the time. It wasn't necessarily me. It was the age and stage of the school.

Key Words:

Emotive, confrontational

Complacent, difficult, efficient, better, overlapping

Key Themes:

Systems and students

Contextualized

Could do a lot better, lack of organization, systems overlapping, about teachers not about students, good place but....

Personalized:

Isolated, lack of approval

'They' /'me' / "I", used

Staff depersonalized

Key phrases:

I could have walked away.

They did not like me

I said that

I suppose

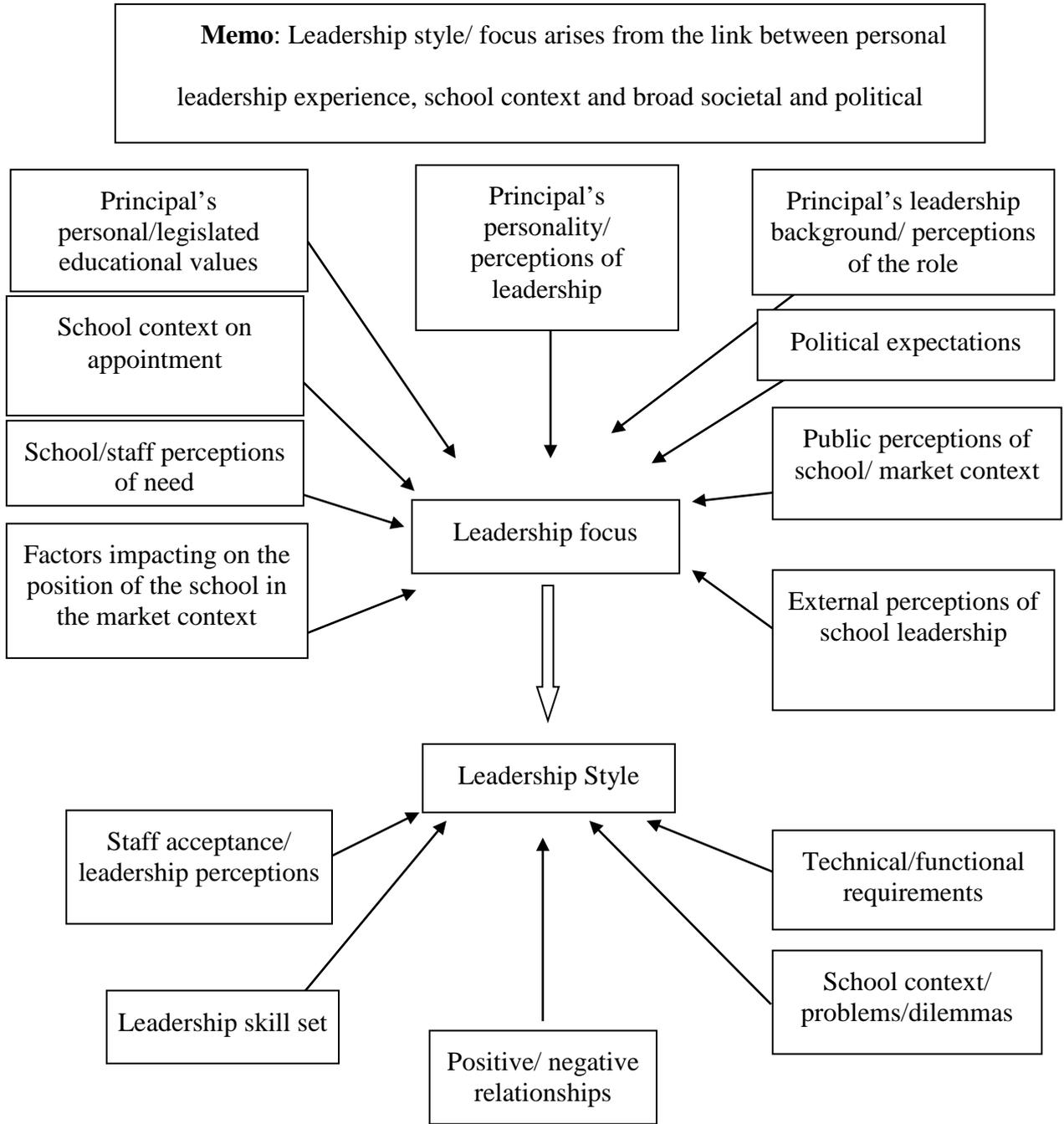
Appendix F: Sample Analysis Coding Matrix

Principal 3

Reflective Journal Leadership Daily Activity Focus by Broad Category	Themes or Categories from Interview	Transcript Line Reference	Leadership Elements/Style	Major Theme or Concepts
Day 1 Management Admin	Limited experience	2,21,30,36,39	Low trust, conformity Non consultative	Staff acceptance determine leadership focus
Staff/ student behavior	Not relational/isolated	16,28,56,72,92,117, 130	Systems focus	Low staff trust linked to non- relational and non- consultative style
Marketing	Systems focus	62,162,164,219,238, 242,268	Contextual focus	Trust grows with staff conformity to systems
Day 2 Management Admin	Systems for student learning, not learning	63,95,153,231,235,2 52	Low relational/ isolated	Role is to devise systems to support the learning process
Staff behavior	Attracts staff of similar view of school/vision	110,145,195	Limited responsiveness to community perceptions	Leadership is top down, non- consultative (use of inner circle or team)
Marketing	Impact of negative staff behavior	57,58, 76,81,133	Technical management Focus	Low trust leads to contextual leadership focus- limited innovation
Day3 Management Admin	Staff conformity to systems but freedom of teaching/thinking	78,153,145,194,197, 202,210,235	Not directly involved with teaching process	Community perceptions determine leadership focus
Marketing	Modeling work ethic	113,114,209,215		Little direct control of individuals within the organizational - systems
Short term problem solving	Contextual focus	238,257		Personal leadership perceptions important in leadership focus
Day 4 Management Admin	Community/parent perceptions	120,171,174,178,26 1,272		Skill set determines leadership focus/style

Marketing	Trust of staff	87,212		
Short term problem solving	Non educationalist	216,225,249		
Day 5 Management Admin	Operational focus	216,229,242,247		
Strategic planning	School chosen to match leadership skills/perceptions	28,43,53		
Parent behavior				

Appendix G: Coding and Memo Diagram – Sample

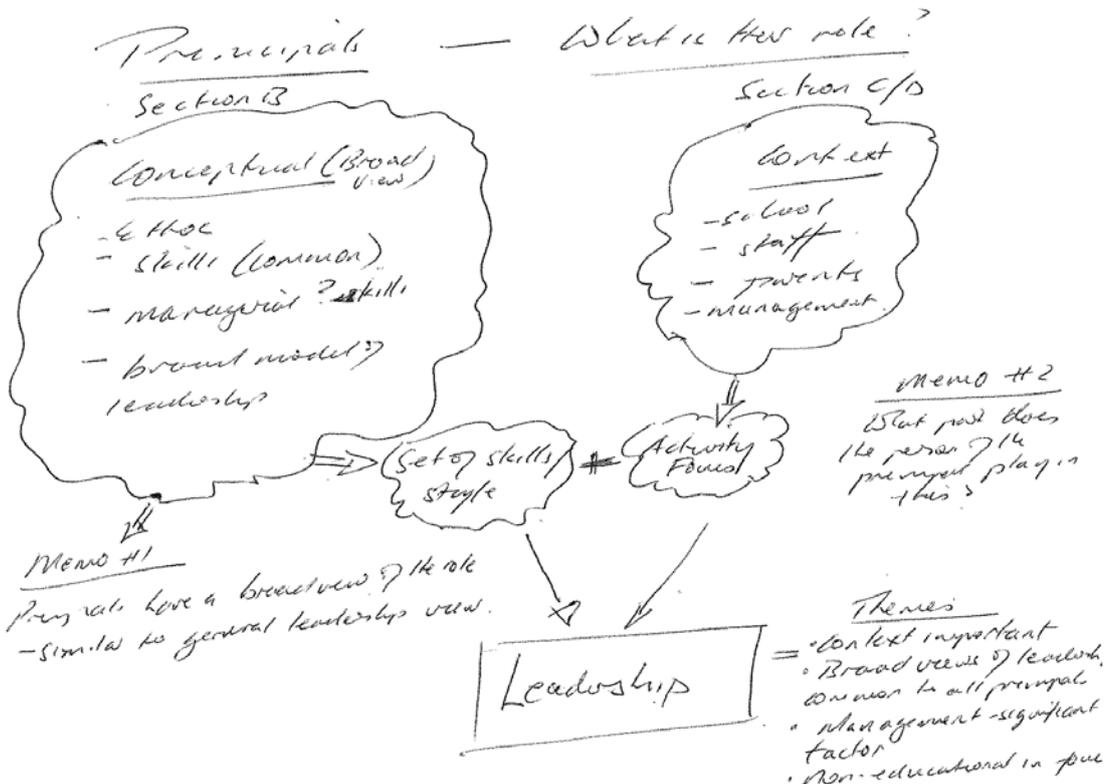


Appendix H: Axial Coding Sheet

Broad concepts/ perceptions identified	Shown by:	Memos/ Probe Questions	Emerging Themes	Emerging Categories
Survey Data				
1.Principals have a common perception of the role	The same skills seen as essential/not essential	External perceptions and expectations have broadly defined the role – do these limit the role to context responsiveness?	Principals have little freedom of action in terms of broad leadership concepts. Work within a broad leadership framework	Political and societal expectations Technical compliance External perceptions
2.Principals operate within a broad framework of leadership expectations from external factors	Majority of the leadership activity is technical management/admin	External expectations of school leadership are powerful factors – what is the impact of pre-service leadership experience on the role	School context determines the difference in leadership focus and style –contextual responsiveness	Leadership framework Broad leadership concepts
3.The leadership focus of the principals is broadly the same	Common range of factors impacting on the role for individual principals – staff, students, parents	Context is the different factor - Do key contextual factors define the actual nature of the individual leadership?	Nature of the school leadership context is determined to a large extent by the staff – positive /negative reactions	School context/ staff perceptions Problem solving orientation
4.Stress factors define the leadership focus/style difference between individual principals	Relational skills essential Stress factors not the same – points to a different leadership responsiveness/methods/ school context	Staff is a key context factor .How important is the impact of staff perceptions, negative or positive behavior on the individual leadership model/ activities	To determine the nature of school leadership the actions of individual principals to the contextual issues of their school is important	Limited pre-service experience Perceptions of the role already intact
5.Sets of skills define the broad leadership type	Groups of principals identify particular skills as essential	Key skills define the nature of the leadership activity – where do these skills come from?	Specific leadership activity takes place at the interface between the broad conceptual understanding of the role/ school and the contextual needs	Administration and management focus Systems management
6. Mismatch between skills seen as essential and leadership activity	Most principals identified relational skills as important but indicated work was mostly admin or management	Technical management is important – to what extent does it define the leadership?	The role is a systems management role Focus is on the systems around the teaching, rather than the teaching process	Relational skills Contextual reactiveness
7. Principals do not see role as educationally specific leadership	Preference is for strategic leadership not curriculum leadership	To what extent do principals control the teaching/ learning process?	Leadership is not about the core school activity – technical compliance	

Appendix I: Example of a coding and memo page –research journal

Page #2 Survey



- Questions
- Where do principals get their skill sets from?
 - How important is their person in terms of their leadership?
 - organizational acceptance: How important to the individual?

- Case Study
- What do they do on a daily basis - nature of the role
 - What training (if any) have they had? - Where did they get their leadership perception?
 - Is there a clear link between school context and person of the principal / skills of principal?

Appendix J: Interview Responses Matrix

Question					
Participant	1	2	3	4	5
Why did you become a principal?	Progression wanted more than DP	DP when principal left	DP but moved when new principal appointed Wanted to be a boss	Progression, wanted a challenge	Acting principal
What leadership training did you have?	DP	DP, Dean, HOD, AP	SM,DP, M Ed Dean	HOD, M RE, M Ed Admin	DP Acting Principal
What is your view of education?	Students reaching aspirations	Learning for life, not just for qualifications	School should be lively and for students	Everyone should get the possible education	Preparation for life beyond school.
What was the school ethos?	Helping students succeed to the best of their ability, safety, pride	School is to provide qualifications	Students have the chance to do their best and leave the school confident	Very traditional	Preparing students for life beyond school Comfortable fit with principal
What changes have happened in the school?	The school is safer. Better school spirit	Focus on learning Falling roll	Staff now willing to work for students More organization Cohesive	Less traditional – more inclusive	Better professional culture More PD
What are the signs a school is effective?	Good community reaction. Not ERO	Good results Respect, pride in students	High achievement	Positive community feedback Full roll	Confidence of the community Improving NCEA results
What problems have you faced?	Staff, external expectations Dysfunctional families	Staff Poor ERO review	Complacent staff. Staff criticism Conflict with staff Dysfunctional Management Team Isolated	Complacent staff Leadership style didn't fit the school	Staff bullying Growing workload Other principals
What do you feel is your key leadership style?	Demonstrating a bottom line of performance Listens to people Hard worker Not involved with finance	A focus on learning and teaching Listens to people Mover and shaker Relational Little time on property of finance	Building Relationships System management Not an educational leader	Relational Strategic Hard working	Professionally knowledgeable. Open door

Has your style changed?	More inclined to delegate, better at managing time	Staff involvement Staff have caused style change Has lost confidence of BOT	More willing to delegate	More authoritarian	Less hands on. More distributive
What makes a good principal ?	Resilience and wisdom	Staff building Personal skills, visibility	Systems management	Optimism, energy, ability to get on with people, listener	Relational Adaptable. resilient Sound pedagogical knowledge Good planning analytical skills Determined and patient

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