

**MAC05079**

**Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Leadership in School  
Renewal Processes**

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### **Introduction**

This paper represents one part of a symposium presented at the annual conference of the Australian Association for research in Education.

This research was part of a mixed methods study that examined teachers' perceptions of principals' roles in influencing changes in teachers' pedagogic practices. Although qualitative and quantitative methods were invoked sequentially at different points in the study, only the qualitative phase of the larger study is reported in this paper.

**Research Objectives** The research question was: What are teachers' views of principals' behaviours in bringing about a renewal of pedagogy within the school? The contingent objective was to empirically develop a conceptual framework of the dimensions of principals' pedagogic, renewist behaviour.

### **Methodology**

The method of data collection was a variation on the qualitative interview, which mixed the *e-interview* (Bampton & Cowton, 2002) and the traditional interview methods in qualitative research. The asynchronous nature of the email communication allowed opportunities for reflection and correction by both parties. The issue of power and disempowerment in the representation of transcripts in traditional interviews is a problem as Nespore and Barber (1995) observed:

We originally used quotes that included hesitations, pauses, false starts and so forth. We now think that far from being markers of "authentic" speech, these are artifacts of interview practice.... We are forcing people to talk extensively about complex issues ... and treating how they said things as reflections of underlying rules and interactional competencies. But it is an arrogance that harks back to the idea of research as an extractive enterprise to act as if only researchers have the right of revision (Nespore & Barber, 1995, p. 56).

With this in mind, there are distinct advantages in terms of validity, ethical concerns and generalisability in using e-interview, with populations that have e-mail connectivity, and the required knowledge and skills to communicate electronically. .

### **Sampling**

The ontological and epistemological drivers of qualitative research are different to those of quantitative, positivist research. In an ontological sense, qualitative research recognises that there can be multiple realities or truths based on the readers' constructions of reality (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002). The reasoning employed in generating generalisations in qualitative research is inductive, compared with the hypothesis testing deductive reasoning of quantitative research. This supported Weber's original distinction between *verstehen* (understanding), and *erklären* (explanation) (Crotty, 1998, p. 67).

Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002, p.45) are correct when they assert that in qualitative research the participants are not a sample representing a larger population:

Samples are not meant to represent large populations. Rather, small, purposeful samples of articulate respondents are used because they can provide important information, not because they are representative of a larger group.

Therefore, the reasons for using this particular population were that the researcher:

- (a) could negotiate access to the teachers, and
- (b) the participants were articulate and knowledgeable about whole-school pedagogic change.

The demographic data in relation to the teaching workforce in Western Australia (Department of Education and Training, 2004) showed that the teaching workforce was continuing to age and this sample was representative of the Western Australian experience. In September 2004, the average age for females was 42.9 years, males 46.0 years, and for all teachers 43.4 years (R. Jones, personal communication, September 6, 2004). The mean age of the teachers interviewed was 41.6 years and the mean of their teaching experience was 15.3 years. The respondents included 8 female teachers and 2 male teachers. The teachers, who were interviewed were teaching primary grade classes in five public schools in Perth, Western Australia and their combined experience covered all primary school year levels (K-7). The schools represented in this purposive sample are all urban schools in the eastern Perth metropolitan area. The schools represented a mix of urban (public housing) and newer, semi-rural housing areas.

#### ***Interview Schedule Development and Administration.***

The interview questions needed to determine the extent to which teachers perceived those principals tentatively identified as engaged in pedagogic change were able to influence teachers' willingness to implement significant whole-school pedagogic change within eleven aspects of renewist, change behaviours identified in pertinent literature (MacNeill, Cavanagh & Silcox, 2003). A draft interview schedule was developed and trialled by a small group of teachers. The open nature of the questions in the first draft made analysis difficult and there was doubt that the interview structure would elicit full and considered responses from the respondent teachers. As a result, many of the questions was re-written to give more direction to the interviewees. On Merriam's (1998, p. 73) continuum, the interviews conducted for this research lay between semi- structured and highly structured.

#### ***Data Analysis.***

The transcripts from the e-interviews were coded and analysed using N6 (QSR NUD\*IST revision 6) (QSR International, 2002; Richards, 2002). In this research each of the transcripts was coded by the researcher. After several exploratory attempts at model building, a node protocol of 2 free nodes and 14 tree nodes was established. The establishment of the nodes protocol is a subjective act by the researcher that is based on trials and best fit. Richards (2002, p. 8) noted that nodes can be created up from the data as meaning are discovered or down from prior theories. Some nodes (e.g. Principals' pedagogic leadership and Principals' change leadership) were created for the structural purpose of organising tree nodes. The coding using N6 (QSR NUD\*IST) enabled all of the transcripts to analysed and assembled under appropriate nodes. The coded transcripts then underwrote the compilation of the results and analysis of this phase of the research.

### **Results and Discussion**

The analysis of the scripts of the e-interviews was based on the nodal structure in the N6 (QSR NUD\*IST) coding. Teachers' voices are used wherever possible to strengthen the readers' understanding of the respondents' answers to the e-interview questions.

### ***(1) Improving Students' Learning***

In this research the *top-level tree node*, improving students' learning, was identified because of its overarching importance and it underwrote all actions in schools. The coding of transcripts was important because this top tree node drew responses throughout the e-interview transcripts. All of the respondents claimed the pedagogic changes, of which they had been a part, had improved students' learning. This was a good starting point for this research because it showed that all of the respondents had personally experienced successful pedagogic change.

#### ***(1 1) Moral obligation***

This dimension of principals' pedagogic leadership behaviours described the moral dimension to change, teachers' practices and principals' leadership. This question elicited responses that indicated that all the teacher respondents felt that they were doing *good* in relation to students' learning, which corresponds to their experiences of successful pedagogic change.

The teachers' responses fell into three groups. In the first group, Mrs Andrews, a teacher at a Middle School, described herself as a teacher who was committed, not only to the goals of teaching and learning, but teaching and learning for students in the lower socio-economic status groups.

I chose to become a teacher because I am idealistic in my motivations and, after a foray into two other careers which interested me greatly, I realised that I couldn't save the world in those areas so I chose to become a teacher with a commitment that I would only teach in the government school system. I believe very strongly in the fundamental human right of equitable access to good education regardless of wealth, race, religion etc. (Andrews, 2004, lines 3-10).

A second group of teachers from smaller schools took a different view. Anne Smith (2004, line 4-5), a teacher who had been a late entry to the teaching profession, made the point that, "I genuinely want to make a difference in children's lives. I hope to be a positive influence and contribute in some way to their education being a rewarding experience". Effie Hellas was a late entry into the teaching profession and she said, "I came to study teaching as a mature age student because I wanted to educate young children. I would say this profession to me is a calling (Hellas, 2004, lines 3-4). Sean Connery (2004, lines 4-5), a support teacher in one of the State's most disadvantaged schools (Bronx) too saw the need to mix the moral aspect of teaching with the personal reward of doing something worthwhile.

The third group of responses was more oriented to teaching as an occupation that had personal benefits. Ms Stone, now a single mother, saw teaching as a job that would give herself a degree of financial security. She responded, "I wanted to have a job that I would enjoy and I wanted to know more about child development as I was a young mother with two young children at the time I started studying" (Stone, 2004, lines 4-5). Only Ms Stone mentioned job and financial security when making a decision about her career choice. Bridget Jones (2004, lines 3-4) did not see a moral reason for teaching but related her choice to enter the teaching profession because of her experiences at school as a student. Julia Roberts at One Nation Primary School came from a farming family that had expectations for their daughter's employment (Roberts, 2004, lines 4-11).

This question also queried teachers' perceptions of the actual roles and strategies that their principals used in ensuring that they discharged their moral duty to society. All of the teachers interviewed saw their selected principals attempting to fulfil this dimension.

All of the teachers who were interviewed saw their principals attempting to discharge their moral obligation to society in varying degrees, covering all six factors of public service with a moral purpose (Fullan, 2005). Only three teachers (San Diego, 2004, lines 13-15; Hellas, 2004, lines 7-8; and Jones, 2004, lines 1-15) thought that their principals used second-order structural and organisational strategies to improve students' learning, the others had witnessed first order strategies.

***(1 1 1) Commitment to school's vision***

A commitment to the shared vision and sense of mission was hypothesised as a key dimension in identifying teachers and schools where pedagogic change would be possible. All of the participants said they knew what the school's purpose statement said, except for Mrs San Diego (2004, line 19), Mrs Roberts (2004, line 36) and Mr Connery (2004, line 24) who said that they did not know but could find out. Mrs Andrews referred to the shared nature of the vision and purpose statement when she noted that she was influenced indirectly: "I focus on good practice and the mission documents inform that. As I have contributed to the makeup of those (as have all staff) they align with what we do and what we strive to do" (Andrews, 2004, lines 51-53). Anne Smith, on the other hand, saw both direct and indirect influence. She argued, "They affect teaching and learning both directly and indirectly. A whole school approach is essential in order to achieve these goals and teachers all strive for the same success. We address our students' individual needs but do not lose sight of the school vision" (Smith, 2004, lines 26-28).

School principals' roles in the development of the purpose and vision statements can be described as first and second order actions. Al Edney's principal engaged in first order actions and showed a commitment to the shared vision that the school developed (Edney, 2004, lines 36-39). Similarly, the principal who was described by Anne Smith also undertook first order actions by ensuring that all staff had the same shared vision (Smith, 2004, lines 31-38). Second order actions were reported by Mrs Andrews, Mrs Hellas, Mrs Roberts, Mrs San Diego, and Ms Stone. Jean Stone (2004, lines 25-27), for example, saw her principal providing information for others to make decisions, while Mrs Andrews (Andrews, 2004, lines 57-61) described her principal facilitating empowerment.

All of the respondents reported that the schools' visions and purpose statements were important but most thought that the statements only indirectly influenced their pedagogic decisions. There was little overt recognition from the respondents that the vision and purpose statements underwrote the foundational aspects of the school culture, which in turn influenced pedagogic choices and practices

***(1 1 1 1) Principal's change leadership***

Under this tree node construction, there are three sub-nodes, each addressing aspects of principals' change leadership:

- Change leadership expertise.

- Reculturing approach to change.
- Engaging and empowering stakeholders.

**(1 1 1 1) Change leadership expertise.**

In a definitional sense, leadership and change cannot be separated because both the leaders and followers are seeking to improve some intrinsic or extrinsic aspect of their lives. In the current climate of change, principals need to be change adept and courageous. For large-scale change to be successful it requires fundamental shifts in teachers' beliefs, values and actions. When asked if the principal involved all staff in pedagogic change, each teacher respondent answered *yes* to this question, which indicated that all of the teachers in this sample were involved in the change processes at their respective schools. As with the previous dimensions, this question drew two types of responses from the respondents depending on whether they saw the principal being engaged actively in whole-school change or micro-level fine-tuning. Mrs Andrews, Bridget Jones, Julia Roberts and Carmen San Diego observed that their principals focussed on micro-change strategies: discussion, information sharing and workshops. This grouping of teachers' responses correlated to the first and second-order actions reported in other dimensions.

Among the whole-school strategies that principals used to support change was the recruitment of either change-adept teachers or teachers who would support the schools' change programs with knowledge and skills that they were already using. Mrs Parker described a process of how her principal recruited a critical mass of teachers and then co-located them in classrooms so that they could support each other (Parker, 2004, lines 50-54). In a similar vein, Sean Connery observed his principal using teachers' expertise to build knowledge and to support change by, "Promoting staff as *experts* and leaders within the school, and using their expertise and knowledge to assist fellow staff members (Connery, 2004, lines 56-59). Connery's observation was supported by research in Chicago (Lowenstein, 2004) that has shown that there are dangers to the successful implementation of change in failing to acknowledge and build on the expertise in schools through District level interventions.

The best measure of the principals' change expertise is to examine changes that take place in the classroom. As can be seen in section 1 1 1 2 4, all of the respondents claimed that their principals had facilitated significant personal pedagogic changes, and Jean Stone ascribed this to her principal's walk-throughs in which he/she engaged teacher in discussion about what was happening in their classrooms (Stone, 2004, lines 50-55). For a change to be successful and become embedded in teachers' practices, it needs to have benefits for stakeholders. A point made by Julie Andrews (2004, lines 94-95) was that often change needs to take place before improvements and failures becomes obvious to the teachers, students and parents.

In this purposive sample of teachers each respondent reported that the pedagogic changes had improved education for the whole school community, except Julia Roberts (2004, line 71). Al Edney (2004, lines 75-79) recorded that in his school the change process was on-going and it was not always uni-directional. Mr Edney's point is highly relevant, and often gets lost in the literature of change, because teachers make changes at varying speeds and under varying conditions. All of the respondents reported that their principals had involved them in change in their

schools. The way that the principals did that ranged from passive discussion to far more active involvement, and at least one principal was involved in classroom visits that provided oversight into how changes were being embedded at the classroom levels. All of the respondents, except one, saw the pedagogic responses resulting in improvements.

***(1 1 1 2) Reculturing approach.***

Re-culturing is a broad, culturally focussed approach that describes a range of strategies used by principals and others to effect whole-school or sub-school cultural change. Reculturing, a school renewal strategy, in a conceptual sense, has a significant overlap with pedagogy, because teachers' and principals' pedagogic actions have a primary influence on school and classroom cultures. Therefore, a concerted change in pedagogy in classrooms will result in a whole-school perception of reculturing and renewal.

The reculturing approach to pedagogic change highlighted the need to address cultural change within the school, not simply structural change. Without exception, all of the respondents indicated that they believed that in bringing about a whole-school pedagogic change, the school culture had also changed. The respondents also attributed these changes to strong, transformative pedagogic leadership. Jean Stone (2004, lines 118-121) declared that in her school:

The (cultural) change has been huge. Through strong leadership, through example, through being passionate and unwavering in his ideas, through re-education of staff and the school community, and for encouraging lively debate on the changing culture within the school.

All of the respondents saw their principals as being actively involved and leading the pedagogic reculturing of their schools. It appeared that the principals being described by the respondents all led by example and they facilitated the changes (Jones, 2004, lines 107-108; Parker, 2004, lines 124-125); modelled good behaviour and pride in work (San Diego, 2004, lines 116-118); modelled student centred learning strategies to teachers, created an environment of openness and problem solving, convinced parents about the changes, and changed the ways that teachers related to students and parents (Edney, 2004, lines 195-206; Hellas, 2004, line 122; Roberts, 2004, lines 165-167). Anne Smith (2004, lines 154-158) summed up the principal initiated changes in her school as: "He has initiated and facilitated a culture of action learning."

***(1 1 1 3) Engaging stakeholders.***

The engagement and empowerment of teachers is critical to the success of change implementation processes in schools (Fullan, 1998; Smylie & Brownlee-Conyers, 1992). Teachers are critical participants in change in schools and many have experienced the waves of change that have affected schools' operations. While there are many power-brokers in a school, the principal remains best placed, in Western Australian government schools, with both the power and authority to bring about change.

This dimension is grounded in teachers' past experiences and required the respondents to discuss a real situation. All of the respondents saw the principals as supporting the engagement and empowering of staff, which reveals something about the experiences that the respondents chose to report. Al Edney (2004, lines 89-93) reminded the interviewer that the idea for the change was the principal's and so it was in the principal's interest to strongly support the engagement and empowering of staff. Sean Connery claimed that in his school: "The principal has been the leader of this process while utilising the expertise and leadership of staff members" (Connery, 2004, lines 70-71). Bridget Jones (2004, lines 59-61) drew the link between student learning and teacher learning: "Giving teachers time to discuss and share ideas, visiting other schools, P.D. courses and motivating us to give things a go – I guess the same way in which we try to motivate the children".

In summary, all of the respondents saw the principals as supporting the engagement and empowering of staff, which revealed something about the experiences that the respondents chose to report. The teachers saw the two alternative roles of the principal in engaging and empowering teachers in pedagogic change as either changing the school culture or more direct interaction, both of which resulted in teacher engagement and empowerment.

***(1 1 1 2) Principal's pedagogic leadership***

This node has six sub-nodes:

- Pedagogic/admin balance
- Expert pedagogic knowledge
- Active sharing of knowledge
- Distributed pedagogic leadership (leadership)
- Develop pedagogic professional community
- High pedagogic standards

***(1 1 1 2 1) Pedagogic/administration balance.***

When teachers were asked if their principals were predominantly administrators or pedagogic leaders, there were two groups of opinions in response to this question. In general it appeared that teachers in the largest schools saw their principals as mainly an administrators, while those respondents in the smaller schools were more likely to see a balance between the administrative and pedagogic leadership roles. The action that identified pedagogic leaders in the larger schools was that they defied the trend of being tied-down by administrivia.

Only one teacher, Mrs San Diego (2004, lines 81-82) perceived her principal as an administrator and his role is to support rather than initiate pedagogic change. Mrs Andrews (2004, lines 127-132) saw her principal carrying out both roles but she noted that he had devolved many of the administrative roles so he could influence teachers' pedagogic practices. Bridget Jones (2004, line 75), who reported on pedagogic leadership in a small school, could not see the administrative role and the pedagogic leadership role as being mutually exclusive. Anne Smith (2004, lines 100-104) agreed with this proposition:

My principal is both an administrator and pedagogic leader and combines the two efficiently. He deals with administrative issues as required but is actively

involved in individual student's needs. In this way, he can have first hand knowledge of pedagogy within the school and its effectiveness.

The teachers were asked if they thought that the changes of the last decade (New Public Management, accountability, outcomes based education) had influenced their principals' positions on the importance of getting the pedagogy right to promote students' learning. Al Edney summed up the majority of teachers' responses well when he noted that, he didn't think that principals' administrative-pedagogic behaviours had changed over the last decade: "The level of conversation with staff has certainly been more substantive but I don't see any other real change within the school" (Edney 2004, lines 140-141).

In summary, it appeared that the teachers in very large schools saw their principals as administrators, which aligned with the precepts of New Public Management (Sachs, 2003, p. 27). However, Julie Andrews had noted that her school had changed when a new principal with an interest in pedagogy arrived. Generally, the teachers in this research, had not seen any changes in their principals' behaviours in balancing the administrative role against the pedagogic role, and most of the principals described were pedagogically focussed.

#### ***(1 1 1 2 2) Expert pedagogic knowledge.***

In analysing the teachers' responses to this question, first and second order actions were discernable among the principals described. Anne Smith (2004, lines 43-48) and Al Edney (2004, lines 44-46) reported first order actions based on expert knowledge from the principals that they described. Anne Smith's description of her principal's actions provide an excellent description of what first order principal actions look like in school settings:

The principal ... provides staff with current readings on the topic to enable us to become aware of current trends and opinions. Open discussion involving pedagogy takes place on a daily basis in both formal and informal settings.

The principal is always open to sharing his knowledge and welcomes discussion amongst staff and parents alike (Smith, 2004, lines 43-48).

Edney's principal was described as having a good theoretical knowledge of pedagogy but was challenged by teachers to show how the knowledge could be applied in the classroom. The principal did this and won a degree of respect from teachers.

Second order pedagogic leadership was seen by a significant group of respondents who reported that the principals had only a general pedagogic knowledge. Julie Andrews, who taught in a large school, noted that her principal had a good, general pedagogic knowledge and she believed that this was all that teachers expected: "I believe that general knowledge and academic knowledge are significant contributing elements to staff perception of ad respect for a principal"(Andrews, 2004, lines 66-72). Jones, Parker, San Diego and Stone all held similar views to Julie Andrews in relation to what teachers expected of principals.

Teachers' and principals' expert knowledge about pedagogy and schooling is problematic as the transcript analysis shows. The hands-on principals need to have the expert knowledge and the credibility that goes with first order change. On the other hand, principals who use second order strategies of changing school culture are

no less effective. In terms of developing distributed leadership, it could be argued that second order, cultural change, which is not based on expert knowledge, may build better professional communities among teachers.

**(1 1 1 2 3) Active sharing of knowledge.**

When teachers were asked how they learnt about their pedagogic craft, teachers indicated that they learned through two types of activities: those that they initiated themselves and those that are facilitated by others. Guskey's theory of teachers' learning (Elmore, 2002) stated that teachers' learning was enabled mainly by practical application in the classroom situation and this was confirmed in the e-interviews. Jean Stone (2004, lines 92-96) supported this view: "We learn from each other and by adapting information to suit the age group of the children we are teaching". Mrs Andrews (2004, lines 145-155) saw herself as a *bowerbird* collecting pedagogic information from other teachers. She wrote, "I love watching other people at work and that is how I have learnt my best teaching.... I brought some innate ability with me to the job and learnt the rest from peers".

In the e-interviews all of the teacher respondents acknowledged the role of the principals in putting into place structures and organisation that allowed teachers time to talk with, and observe colleagues teaching. Not only is this strategy a precursor to effective pedagogic change, but it also facilitates sharing knowledge in the school community. Anne Smith (2004, lines 116-122) observed a link between performance management and creating and sharing knowledge. She said, "My principal is often the person who advises me of new initiatives in other classrooms which I then follow up with conversations and classroom visits". Likewise, Bridget Jones (2004, lines 86-88) in a small school saw the principal engaged in similar activities:

It appeared that cultural change in relation to sharing and creating knowledge may be easier in smaller schools and Bridget Jones, who taught in a very small primary school, claimed that there was "heaps" of sharing and, "... everyone is only too willing to help each other out" (Jones, 2004, line 91).

**(1 1 1 2 4) Distributed pedagogic leadership.**

There is growing evidence that for sustained, embedded school improvement, a wide base of active support for the change needs to be established. At Greenfields Anne Smith explained that the principal encouraged multiple levels of leadership, and she included herself as an informal leader in the school structure:

We have many leaders in our school and I include myself in this category. All members of staff are encouraged, by the principal, to develop and share any area of expertise they have an interest in. The principal sees the benefit and value of using the skills within the school and uses people's strengths effectively. The school administrative team are excellent leaders themselves and model leadership roles. There is a variety of leadership levels within the school, allowing wider participation of staff. Some staff are leaders within their year level, some are leaders in learning areas and some are leaders of whole school issues (Anne Smith, 2004, lines 82-88).

Kath Parker (2004, lines 71-73) agreed but took more of a classroom focus of the teacher leaders carrying out change in their classrooms.

The two factors that separated the teachers' responses to this question were where the change originated (principal or teacher), and the power to influence others. All of the teachers agreed that teachers can influence change but that change needs the support of the principal or administration team to become a successful whole school change:

Pedagogic change has been initiated by teachers and administration team alike. It is possible for a teacher or collaborative team to bring about pedagogic change however the support of the principal would probably be needed (Connery, 2004, lines 81-83)

The strategies used by principals to bring about pedagogic change, could be classified as first and second order actions. First order actions directly affect teachers' practices. For example, ensuring that teachers implement student-centred approaches to learning and teaching is a first order action because it directly affects the way teachers teach. Al Edney described his principal as being able to go into a classroom to show teachers how to involve the students in negotiated curriculum:

I feel that the staff believes he has expert knowledge about pedagogy due to the level of conversation that he engages them in. Some feel it is more theoretical knowledge though and have challenged him to apply his thinking in the classroom, which he did (Edney, 2004, lines 44-47).

Anne Smith and Al Edney both perceived their principals are far more active in pursuing the moral dimension of education. Mr Edney spoke of his principal challenging his teaching practice (Edney, 2004, lines 21-24). A second order strategy or action indirectly influences the way that teachers teach, and is more oriented to the cultural aspects of pedagogy. Mrs San Diego, a Language other than English (LOTE) teacher, described her principal in terms of second order, organisational change actions:

The Principal is well known to the students as he takes an interest in them personally as well as in their education. He is willing to explore and allow staff to offer opportunities for the good of the students (San Diego, 2004, lines 13-15).

#### ***(1 1 1 2 5) Developing a pedagogic professional community.***

To give direction to the respondents, the researcher inserted Little's (2003) seven characteristics of learning community into the question. Each of the respondents claimed that their schools were educational communities or were developing a sense of community.

All of the respondents in the e-interview agreed that principals play a key role in directly establishing relationships in a school, or in establishing a culture that encourages pedagogically enhancing relationships. In small schools, the principals' roles are to keep everyone on track (Jones, 2004, line 99). In larger schools however, the principals must go beyond encouraging teacher collaboration and Kath Parker's (2004, line 114) view represents a starting point. Mrs San Diego (2004, lines 106-108) believed that public relations were the key in developing relationships in a larger school. In addition, in a large school, Mrs Andrews (2004, lines 183-187) claimed that her principal exhibited many strategies in establishing "... very strong relationships with students, staff and the community. He is a role model to the staff in the student centred focus he adopts".

When the respondents were asked if there was a sense of educational community (Collaborative work practices, Identities, Social relations, Socialisation, Mutual engagement in practice, Centrality of participation, Trajectories of learning (Little, 2003) in their schools, Bridget Jones (2004, line 97) answered that she believed that a sense of community was an *a priori* part of any small school. This is not always the case. Small schools can be as dysfunctional as larger schools and the sense of community is even more dependent on relationships than in larger schools.

The principals' roles are critical in forming school communities because the school culture is both a factor of school community and a result of school community.

Anne Smith (2004, lines 136-140) responded to this question:

Yes, there is a sense of educational community in our school as staff are constantly learning and growing, looking for fresher, more updated ways to assist our students. We fully utilise each other's expertise or experience and share knowledge on a regular basis. These practices are encouraged and often facilitated by the principal. He often initiates discussion on current trends and encourages trialling of new strategies.

**(1 1 1 2 6) High pedagogic standards.**

Standards relate to understandings what is acceptable. In schools, standards cover the whole gamut of human endeavour. An important strategy for signalling change is for the school leaders to change a previously accepted standard. The size of the change is determined by the standard being changed. This research examined standards relating to whole-school pedagogy, which directly influenced all members of the school community.

All of the respondents saw the implementation of high standards as a part of gaining commitment to the pedagogic changes that were implemented in their schools.

Standards not only relate to students' work but also refer to teachers' performances, dress and behaviour (Andrews, 2004, lines 210-211). Bridget Jones (2004, lines 114-115) made the point that her school always had high standards but through the pedagogic changes they looked for ways to improve their pedagogic practices.

While Mr Connery (2004, line 140) stated he believed that high standards had been implemented in conjunction with the high moral ground, Al Edney was the only teacher who elaborated on the implementation of high standards as gaining commitment, team building and a sense of agreed direction:

Not in the sense that teachers will work to achieve these standards as individuals. I feel that through the implementation of standards the principal has secured a commitment from the teachers to work towards a common belief/goal. We all work under the belief that if one of us is failing then it is a reflection on us as a whole. I feel that the principal has secured from all the staff a commitment from each of us for each of us to ensure that we are all assisting students to achieve the higher standards (Edney, 2004, lines 211-216).

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There are three developmental aspects to the standards question: the creation of the standard, the maintenance of the standards and the influence that they affect the standard has on students' learning. All of the respondents agreed that their principals played important roles in the implementation of standards in their schools. There was also general agreement from the teachers that their principals created the high standards (Connery, 2004, lines 141-142; Edney, 2004, lines 218-219; Jones, 2004, line 118; Smith, 2004, lines 165-168; Stone, 2004, lines 133-136). The principal had a key role in monitoring the high standards and rewarding success (San Diego, 2004, lines 125-126). A major formal strategy for the implementation of standards involves the principle of accountability and the strategy of performance management. Kath Parker (2004, lines 132-133) reported that teachers' performance management has a key role in the maintenance of standards. Typically, other strategies that principals use include data from standardised tests, supervision of the reporting process, classroom walk-throughs and three-way conferences.

***(F 1) Free Nodes/Changes to teacher's pedagogic practices***

Without exception, all of the respondents replied that they had changed their pedagogic practices because of their principals' influence. Bridget Jones (2004, lines 123-124) replied that she had changed many practices that directly improved "...engaging children in their own learning and taking responsibility for their learning outcomes and the levels they wish to achieve such as negotiated assessments". Mr Edney gave personal testimony of extensive changes in his pedagogic practices in his primary school class as a consequence of the changes that took place in his school:

The most obvious was a shift from the teacher as the focal point in the classroom to the teacher becoming a part of the classroom and only acting as one place in which information could be gained from. I became a facilitator of learning. By this, I mean that I allowed the students the opportunity to become an active part of the learning process. Their knowledge and understanding of the concepts directed the way the learning in the classroom went. I asked the students what it was they wanted to know rather than presenting them with what I thought they need to know. My BMIS (Behaviour Management) changed too. I empowered the students. They were able to help create and develop a risk take and safe environment. They helped develop a process that

enabled them to say to another pupil, "Pull your head in, you're interrupting my learning opportunities" (Edney, 2004, lines 225-235).

In summary, teachers who noted that their principals had led pedagogic change, which the teachers saw as significant and as a result the teachers had embedded the changes into their pedagogic repertoires. It has been hypothesised that the nature of leadership is such that it is guided by the principle of reciprocity (Ciulla, 2003). Bridget Jones (2004, lines 128-129) observed in relation to change, that she received both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards for the pedagogic changes she made in the classroom: "Yes, but it was an enjoyable change as it made sense for the children and me and now it is part and parcel of my everyday teaching".

***(F 2) Free Nodes/Teacher's personal commitment to learning***

The teachers who were interviewed all indicated that they had a personal commitment to learning. Teachers' responses during the interviews fell into two broad categories: personally initiated learning and culturally facilitated learning. In situations where pedagogic change are taking place, teachers made comments about the supportive and educative nature of the school culture. Al Edney (2004, lines 250-254) reported:

I was able to develop as I grew as a teacher and as I matured as a teacher, I was able to cope with and better understand the theory behind the approach. Basically, I was supported and presented with resources that I could access to help me better understand the theory of what I was trying to do.

Anne Smith (2004, lines 188-196) observed that her personal growth came about because she was empowered to believe in herself and "... I was encouraged to try new ideas, not because mine were obsolete or inefficient, but because it may be helpful and exciting. All staff have been encouraged to broaden their views and try new things". For teachers like Bridget Jones at Junction City, the cultural/pedagogic changes were welcomed because they facilitated new learning. Jones (2004, lines 132-135) said that she was bored with her teaching and so was her class, and with the new pedagogy the class became motivated and so did she.

When asked about the principals' influences in enabling teachers to fulfil their motivation to teach. Teachers' responses fell into two broad categories- those where the principal had an active role, and those where the principals' roles were more passive. The active role of the principals' influence could be further subdivided into a structural-organisational influence, or a more direct pedagogic influence. Carmen San Diego (2004, lines 8-9), who taught in a specialist area of a very large school saw her principal's influence as passive because he gave her an opportunity to control her own professional development and pedagogy, while he brought about whole-school cultural changes that directly influenced whole-school pedagogic practices. Kath Parker (2004, lines 11-13), who was working at a different school, said she was given the freedom to experiment and make a difference pedagogically. Yet, later in her response to the questions Mrs Parker (2004, lines 132-133) indicated that the principal had a more direct role in challenging her pedagogic practices. It appeared that when there is broad agreement about teachers' pedagogic practices and the students are achieving, the principals referred to in this research adopt a loose-coupling type of supervisory style. Other teachers interviewed saw their principals as far more pedagogically focussed and involved. Jean Stone (2004, lines 8-11), Sean Connery, (2004, lines 8-11), and Anne Smith (2004, lines 8-11), all of whom

reported strong pedagogic intervention from their principal, found encouragement and stimulation important factors in changing their pedagogic practices. Julie Andrews (2004, lines 13-29) reported that her principal had made strong demands in relation to teachers' pedagogic practices and in a large school this was unusual.

### Conclusion

The e-interview protocol produced rich and accurate information about teachers' perceptions of principals' pedagogic, renewist behaviours. The asynchronous nature of e-interviewing allowed respondents opportunities to review and further qualify responses as the interview unfolded, and unlike audio-taped interviews, the quality of the scripts was excellent, thus overcoming Nespor and Barber's (1995) concerns about the potential belittlement of the respondents' responses.

The information provided in the teachers' responses to the questions in the e-interview provided the researcher with a detailed understanding of teachers' perceptions of principals' pedagogic, renewist behaviours. In addition, using N6 (QSR NUD\*IST) to test a way of organising the data confirmed the presence of the 11 dimensions of principals' pedagogic renewal. These were:

- Moral obligation (1)
- Commitment to school's vision (2)
- Expert pedagogic knowledge (3)
- Change leadership expertise (4)
- Engaging stakeholders (5)
- Distributed pedagogic leadership (6)
- Pedagogic/administrative balance (7)
- Active sharing of knowledge (8)
- Development of a pedagogic. professional community (9)
- Reculturing approach (10)
- High standards (11)

Each of the hypothesised dimensions received substantial support from the respondent teachers. On the basis of the researcher's judgements about the quality of the teachers' responses the hypothesised dimensions were accepted for Phase 2 of this research project.

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