Strategy and the Principal

Mr Scott Eacott

BTeach/BSocSci GradCertPTT MLMEd MACEL

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Education

Faculty of Education and Arts

The University of Newcastle

Newcastle, Australia

November 2008

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research, the greater part of which was completed subsequent to admission to candidature for the degree.

Scott Eacott, 19 November 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This thesis builds on and contributes to work on the strategic role of educational leaders, and particularly public primary school principals. Although some in the field (Bell, 2002; Forde, Hobby, & Lees, 2000; Kelly, 2005) have questioned the utility of strategy as a concept, particularly with its ties to economics, marketing and capitalist ventures, there has not been an explicit research focus of what strategy means in educational leadership. As such, this thesis provides additional insight by taking stock, assessing and integrating the existing body of literature on strategic leadership and management in schools and by going beyond what is already known and setting forth new frameworks, perspectives and researchable questions. The analytical focus on the strategic role, and not merely strategic management or strategic leadership enables another contribution. Multiple modes of inquiry were used in constructing the arguments of this work.

Through a theoretical and methodological analysis of the discourse on the strategic role in 18 prominent educational leadership journals over a 27 year period (1980-2007), a model for the strategic role was developed. This model was tested on a sample of public primary school principals in the Hunter / Central Coast region of New South Wales, Australia. The results of this questionnaire based study prompted further inquiry as to what the 'strategic role' means to practitioners. A framework was developed from the transcribed texts of interviews with principals. Many similarities existed in this framework and the literature derived model, however the framework developed from practitioner responses gave greater attention to the social forces that act upon the strategic role, supporting the criticism directed at the utility of the narrow view of strategy as planning to the educational context.

Theoretically informed by the work of Michel Foucault, a proposed alternate lens for the analysis of the strategic role of school leaders is presented, showing that as a result of increased participation in school governance and accountability regimes, principal actions are constantly under surveillance. While not being the first to bring Foucault into the educational leadership discourse, the proposal of the strategic role within a social space is something that has been missing from the discussion on the strategic role within the field. The Foucauldian frame sheds need insight into the strategic role of the public primary school principal and highlights the significance of the role within the field of educational leadership. Overall, this thesis is intended to provide a new platform for theory and research on the strategic role of school leaders. As with Anderson and Grinberg (1998), this thesis argues for Foucault's concept of disciplinary practices as a metaphor for the field of educational leadership. It is argued that by positioning the strategic role within the broader social space, further inquiry can help provide a fundamental understanding of how and why educational institutions behave the way they do.

CHAPTER ONE

Strategy and the Principal

Over the past few decades the use of the term strategy, and implicitly 'strategic', has experienced a series of intellectual ebbs and flows within the field of educational leadership. However, one of the greatest weaknesses in the literature has been the striking lack of precision in the use of the term, and even what constitutes the concept. As a result, the term strategy remains frustrating (Quong, Walker, & Stott, 1998), elusive (Fidler, 2002b), and considerably misunderstood (Eacott, 2008b). The phenomenon of strategy within educational leadership is of interest for two reasons. First, as governments encourage an 'enterprising culture' (McWilliam, 2000) in the delivery of education, built on a market ideology and explicitly linking economic prosperity with student achievement, the relationship between individual schools and society moves beyond the mere instruction of children. Second, scholarship on the strategic role of the school leader has tended to follow 'practitioner trends', such as legislative changes which have mandated that schools produce strategic plans, and this has stifled the conceptual development of the term 'strategy' within the field.

The discussion of strategy and the principal requires a view of the big picture of educational leadership and the influence of governments and business on the school. The debate concerning government and business intervention in education is nothing new. In his seminal work, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, Raymond Callahan (1962) portrayed educational leaders in the early twentieth century as vulnerable to the whims and desires of the business community. He forcibly argued that education is not business and that the

1

school is not a factory. In the preface to the book, Callahan argues that the adoption of business values and practices might be explained simply by the process of cultural diffusion in which the flow of ideas and values is generally from high status or power groups in a culture to those with less status and power. He conceived business and industry groups as those with top status and power and educators with relatively low-status and low-power.

However the view that education should prepare students for the world of work, the underlying logic of business and industry values, can be dated back much further. In fact, many of the debates around the origins of mass schooling in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries centered on what was appropriate for children to learn given their social circumstances, and many believed that for working class children, the three R's was enough (Walsh, 2006). Arguably, in the contemporary political environment of education, the three R's remain the basis for which external accountability regimes are based.

Historically, schools have been considered a primary social mechanism for ensuring that all members of society received an education that would enable them to take their place maintaining and improving a complex, democratic and free society (Lutyen, Visscher, & Witziers, 2005; Molnar, 2006). The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu viewed the school as replacing the church as the major agency for socialization and legitmation in modern societies, appearing to him to play an essential role in the symbolic reproduction of the social order, the school's institutional frames acted as both imposition and acceptance frames (Wacquant, 1997). His writings on education have developed a coherent, evolving theory on school autonomy as a deceptive device that helps legitimize domination by dissimulating the relation between school process and the aims of the state and dominant groups (van Zanten, 2005). Bourdieu concluded that the major role of education in society

is the contribution it makes to social reproduction, the reproduction of the relationships of power and privilege between social classes.

On the other hand, practitioners and scholars alike would argue that schools should reflect what is in the best interests of students, which in many cases, is not the reproduction of existing power relationships. While work has demonstrated that the behavior of principals is influenced by a regard for students interests (Stefkovich & Begley, 2007), what constitutes students best interest lack clarity and more importantly, who decides what is in the best interest of students? Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), arguing from a legal-education lens, state:

> Not all those who write about the importance of the study of ethics in educational administration discuss the needs of children; however, this focus on students is clearly consistent with the backbone of the profession. Other professions often have one basic principle driving the profession. In medicine, it is 'first, do no harm.' In law, it is the assertion that all clients deserve 'zealous representation.' In educational administration, we believe that if there is a moral imperative for the profession, it is serve the 'best interest of the student.' Consequently, this ideal must lie at the heart of any professional paradigm for educational leadership (p. 23).

Education is fundamentally different from other human transactions (Oplatka, 2004a) by the very nature of the product, and some have argued (Heller & Paulter, 1990) that the role of educating students is in direct conflict with other managerial and political functions of educational leadership. For some, the purpose of education is the notion of "freeing people from the authority of others" (Marshall, 1996). Jeffreys (1955) states:

> If we believe that education is the growth of free and responsible persons, we must believe that education is more than conditioning. The purpose of education is to help children to become persons in the sense to take rational and moral responsibility for one's own life, and the method of education must be to give children suitable opportunities for exercising

3

responsible choice. The supreme task of education is clear – it is to build up human personality in a world in which powerful forces are at work to break it down (p. 15).

The ultimate purpose of education is to develop the person to a point where they exert the majority of influence over their own life (although it is recognized that some scholars such as Foucault have questioned the notion personal autonomy). This view is in tension with view of schooling taken by Bourdieu and his work on cultural reproduction and the maintenance of status and power relationships. This tension also highlights the difference between what 'is' and what 'ought' to be the purpose of schooling.

Therefore, the strategic role of the school leader is rooted firmly in the realm of continuous emotional and intellectual tension. On one hand, any effort made by the school is largely at the mercy of socio-political circumstances, with the school embedded in society and needing to react to economic and cultural changes and development (Greenfield, 2005; Huber, 2004). On the other hand, is the protection and development of the school's teaching and learning programs, the quality of which lies not in the results of standardized tests, but in the process itself, a process that defies simple linear measurement.

A similar tension can be found in the scholarship of the strategic role of the school leader. Research has tended to follow practitioner trends (Eacott, 2008a), for example the considerable spike in activity following the 1988 *Education Reform Act* in the United Kingdom which required all schools to have a school development plan. For a considerable period of time the primary focus in the literature was on the planning process and meeting the evaluative criteria set by governments and education departments. Frequently, educational policy derived largely from the political field tends to deal with levels of funding, funding models, structural organization, rather than the core aspects of schooling,

4

teaching and learning (Lingard, Hayes, Mills, & Christie, 2003), and while attractive to those outside of education for their apparent rational, systematic and progressive mechanisms for improving educational quality, the innocuous surface hides the essential nature of these schemes as technologies of repression and violence (De Lissovoy & McLaren, 2003). Ball (2001; 2003) has written explicitly on the role of applying performance related measures on the work of teachers and how these mechanisms shape the actions of those they are measuring. Through the employment of judgments, comparisons and displays as a means of incentive, performance related schemes encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgment (Ball, 2003). Under such contexts, the apparent worth of activities which do not lead to higher performance become of little value to those beyond the school.

Since the turn of the century, the study of school leadership has undergoing both rejuvenation and metamorphosis simultaneously. A renewed emphasis in the educational leadership literature has been on the centrality of teaching and learning in schooling and not just for external accountability purposes. While we continue to live in what has been labeled an 'audit society' (Power, 1999), or 'performative' society (Ball, 2001), and some have argued that public accountability has been strengthened to the point where it is no-longer a instrument or component of the system, but the system itself (Ranson, 2003), the renewed focus has led to developments such as teachers as leaders and pedagogical leadership (although the difference between 'pedagogical' and the traditional 'instructional' is not always clear).

Concurrently, a metamorphosis in the field away from studies of leadership rooted in Taylorism toward the study of ethical and moral leadership of schools. This shift in

5

thinking moves the work of school leaders away from rational management models and frequently involves terms such as vision, soul, mission, transformation, passion, delight, inspiration and emotion. Emotional management is now deemed to be necessary in order to revitalize and re-motivate those whose characters and work-commitment have been eroded by corporate capitalism and public management models (Hartley, 2004). This rejection of models of corporate capitalism and public administration has significant influence on the strategic role of the public primary school leaders, particularly in regards to purpose and process.

The Evolution of Strategy in Education

One point of reference for the origin of strategy can be found in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (c320BC). This work is taken to represent a timeless set of principles that can be applied to any challenge, whether it is personal or organizational. Though written in the context of warfare, its techniques for meeting challenges while minimizing conflict remain invaluable. Tzu delineated five factors that shape the skill of an effective military commander, they included: 1) philosophy; 2) climate; 3) ground; 4) leadership; and 5) military methods. Military philosophy was considered to be commanding your people in a way that gives them a higher shared purpose (not that dissimilar from contemporary leadership models). Climate required the understanding of the weather conditions and the timing of the seasons. The ground refers to the physical terrain that needs to be passed. The combination of these two factors is not to dissimilar to Bourdieu's 'feel for the game' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986) and the need to understand the social space in which events are occurring. Finally,

understanding your military methods, which shape your organization, derive from your philosophy and which you must master in order to achieve success. As a leader, Tzu considered the traits of trustworthy, caring, brave, smart and strict to be paramount. Many of the principles from *The Art of War* are present in contemporary leadership thought.

Etymologically, the modern word 'strategy' has its roots in the Greek word *strategos* meaning 'general'. Closely aligned though is the French word *stratagime*, meaning to 'trick, or especially to outwit an enemy'. Despite its military roots, strategy is frequently considered part of a rhetoric and lexicon borrowed from business and economics. In fact, strategy is now considered as a field of inquiry (B. Boyd, Finkelstein, & Gove, 2005). The birth of this field came from the work of Hofer and Schendel (1978) in their re-christening of business policy as strategic management. Since that time, the field has grown exponentially. The flagship journal *Strategic Management Journal* celebrated its silver anniversary in 2004 and its content now influences the *Academy of Management Review*, arguably the leading journal in the greater management discipline.

As an educational administrative concept, the term strategy first began to appear in the literature in the 1980s. However, there was very little prior to 1988 (Fidler, 1989) when the United Kingdom passed the *Education Reform Act*, making it mandatory for all schools to have a development plan. This legislative change in the UK led to a voluminous literature for the scholar and practitioner on 'how to' create a development plan.

A significant limitation in this literature was that the word 'strategy' evolved so many meanings that it became debased and overused (Beaver, 2000). A large proportion of work claiming to be 'strategic' in fact represented tactical areas and means to secure operational effectiveness (Drejer, 2004). The planning and programming of the

supplementary activities appears to have emerged as 'the whole' of strategy (Bell, 1998; Mintzberg, 1994). Practitioners, consultants and academics applied the term 'strategic' to almost every management activity. Franklin (1998) observed:

> The word strategy is bought out under the cover of darkness when writers and speakers, theorists and managers are looking for a more impressive word than 'important'. The idea of strategic objectives sounds much more impressive than the idea of business objectives on their own. The idea of a business policy sounds second-rate to the idea of a business strategy. The idea of strategy and its common usage has reified the term so that no self-respecting scholar or manager fails to engage in strategy to other apparently more mundane issues (p. 320).

Many have raised concerns, primarily based on the notion that schools as institutions are significantly different to corporate organizations in a market-based economy and on the unquestioned adoption of term from the corporate world into educational leadership (Bell, 1998, 2002; Forde *et al.*, 2000; Griffiths, 1985; Kelly, 2005; Thomas, 2006). Building on from Weick's (1976) work on loosely-coupled organizations, schools have been traditionally viewed as under-led and under-managed organizations characterized by their core business of teaching and learning (Bain, 2000; Dimmock, 2000; Dimmock & Walker, 2004). The traditional view of organizations and strategy is to see the organization as the machine that turns resources into products, and strategy as the instrument for positioning the focal organization in the industry and marketplace (Løwendahl & Revang, 1998). Unfortunately the self-taught educational leader or even the teaching of strategy within the academy and through consultants is generally from a mechanistic perspective or what Levačić and Glover (1997; 1998) term 'technicist-rational' approach. This approach presents strategy to school leaders as a mechanistic pursuit towards the production of a plan. The underlying assumption of strategy and the strategic

leader of schools are viewed as rational decision making. The rationality paradigm is the basis of theories in planning, public policy making, microeconomics, organizational learning and even contingency theory (Scheerens, 1997). From this perspective, the leader's task is to identify techno-economic opportunities and problems, systematically search for alternatives and make choices that maximize the performance of the organization. This perspective forms the basis of the criteria from which school development plans in the UK are assessed during inspection (Broadhead, Cuckle, Hodgson, & Dunford, 1996; Cuckle & Broadhead, 2003; Cuckle, Broadhead, Hodgson, & Dunford, 1998; Cuckle, Hodgson, & Broadhead, 1998).

The Purpose of this Thesis

This thesis is meant to serve two purposes. The first is to take stock, assess, and integrate the body of literature on strategic leadership and management in education. As we shall see, the fluctuating interest in the topic has not yielded a particularly orderly, cumulative, or concise set of findings. In fact, the literature on the strategic role of school leaders is immensely diverse in methods and perspectives. The aim of this thesis is to help the reader navigate and make sense of this profuse domain.

The second objective is to go well beyond what is already known and set forth new frameworks, perspectives, testable propositions, and methodological recommendations for the study of strategic leadership and management in education. In places, the ideas are clearly speculative, meant to stimulate debate and systematic testing. The thesis is intended to provide a new platform for theory and research on the strategic role of school leaders,

consolidating what is already known, identifying the high priorities for what next needs to be known, and proposing how scholars might fruitfully conduct their inquiries.

What, Who, How, When and Where to Study?

Researchers strengthen the validity of their work when they can show the consistency among research purpose, questions and methods (Newman, Ridenour, Newman, & De Marco, 2003). The alignment of these three features was vital to the success of this thesis. The intent of this research was to undertake an empirical study on the strategic role of the public primary school principal. Building on previous research, the specific objectives were to:

- Identify the key elements of the strategic role in an educational institution;

- Using those key elements, investigate the current level of strategic leadership and management displayed by public primary school principals;

- Discover what practicing principal perceive as their strategic role; and

- Position the findings within the broader sphere of educational administration, leadership and management.

The selection of a unit of analysis was a critical conceptual choice that had implications for the theoretical development of the work. Each of the four objectives required a slightly different point of analysis. To adequately identify the key elements of the strategic role in an educational institution required an analysis of the knowledge base for the topic. Using 1980 as a starting point (taking into consideration the re-christening of

business policy as strategy by Hofer & Schendel in 1978), the table of contents and abstracts of 18 leading journals in the field of educational leadership were searched. Any published work which linked school leadership and strategy (however theorized) was reviewed. This process produced a list of 77 works. These works were then subjected to analysis through a range of conceptual (definition; unit of analysis; conceptual perspectives; causal logic; and underlying assumptions about strategy) and methodological lenses (data sources; sample size; theoretical model and time frame; and statistical techniques). Following this analysis, five elements of the strategic role of school leaders were identified: envisioning, engaging, articulating, implementing and monitoring.

Having established the key elements of the strategic role based on research literature in the field, investigating current practice required the study of practicing school principals. A questionnaire was chosen as the data source because it was capable of producing the necessary data to meet the project objective. Investigating the current level of practice required a snapshot (hence the static / cross-sectional approach) of practice. However, recognizing the limitations of self-reporting studies and the role of respondent bias, it was decided that principals needed to have raters beyond themselves. This process is common in leadership studies as a means of triangulating the measurement of leadership behavior (Gurr, 2002). Recognizing the literature bases arguing leadership differences based on gender (Biklen & Brannigan, 1980; Blackmore, 2005; Blackmore & Kenway, 1993; Collard, 2002; Johansson & Davies, 2002; Ortiz & Marshall, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1987), career stage (Day & Bakioglu, 1996; Earley & Weindling, 2007; Oplatka, 2004b; Ribbins, 1999; Weindling, 1999), and length of tenure (Hambrick & Fukutomi, 1991; Miller & Shamsie, 2001; Simsek, 2007), just to name a few, further analysis was undertaken to

compare the means between different groups. Analysis of the data involved the use of statistical techniques such as means, frequencies, *t*-tests and ANOVA.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) argue that "to understand social behavior requires interviewing or intensive field observation, with these the only two methods of data collection sensitive enough to capture the nuances of human living" (p.28). To further investigate the strategic role of the public primary school principal, a semi-structured interview schedule was used. The questions and probes encouraged the participants (school principals) to give specific, detailed examples of experiences, behaviors, actions and activities that characterized their strategic role. The opinions and values of the principals not only provided insight into what they thought about past experiences, but also what they would like to see in the future. Using the same procedures of lexicographic analysis as Nag, Hambrick and Chen (2007), the distinctive vocabulary of the responses was identified. Moving iteratively between prior definitions of the strategic role and an interpretation by the researcher of how the distinctive vocabulary could be placed into conceptual categories, four elements that constitute the implicit definition of the strategic role were outlined: purpose; context; direction; and leadership.

While demonstrating considerably conceptual overlap with the literature derived model of the strategic role, the understanding of practicing principal provided the ideal lead in to discussing the strategic role within the broader socio-political education discourse. At this point, the focus of the study became positioning the findings within the field. The purpose here, is to move the discussion beyond existing empirical research and alert others to future research opportunities presently either unanticipated or unseen. This thesis develops a theoretical, and empirically verified, contribution to the study of the strategic

role of school leadership. In doing so, it addresses the four essential elements of theory as articulated by Durbin (1978): 1) *What*: The discourse analysis, questionnaire and interviews all sought to identify the key elements or factors that should logically be considered as part of the explanation of the strategic role of the public primary school principal; 2) *How*: Having identified the key elements, the next stage was to investigate how they were related. This was an implicit goal of both the questionnaire and interview phases of the project; 3) *Why*: Whereas what and how describe, only why explains (Whetten, 1989). The placement of the findings within the boarder socio-political education discourse identified some of the underlying economic, political and social dynamics that impact on the elements and tentatively propose causal relationships. This constitutes the theory's assumptions; and 4) *Who, Where, When*: These conditions set the boundaries of generalizability and the range of the theory. While brief in description (as these topics will be further explored in later chapters), the discussion establishes the inherent merits of the theoretical argument of the thesis and the explicit links between theory and methods.

In conclusion, the theory-development process undertaken in compiling this thesis has been evolutionary. The route taken has not been about filling voids in the literature, but through an engagement with problems in the world (Kilduff, 2006). As cited by Hambrick (2005), influential theories derive from the observation of real-life phenomena and not through the struggle to find holes in literature. Bacharach (1989) suggests that for theory building there is a "fine line between satisfying the criteria of the internal logic of theory and achieving a creative contribution" (p. 513). It is hoped that this thesis walks that line carefully.

Additional Matters of Scope

This thesis has a theoretical, predictive, explanatory focus. Prescription will not be ignored, but it will be secondary. Until the basic phenomena of strategic leadership and management in schools can be understood and explained, prescription is premature. This is why Kets de Vries (1994) believes that the normative literature on leadership has resulted in so much confusion and skepticism.

Secondly, the thesis is meant primarily for students of educational leadership and organizational behavior, particularly those who strive to assess and understand the phenomena of strategic leadership and management. In discussing the evolution of the concept within the field of educational leadership, the research designs and results on the topic, the aim of this thesis is primarily to stimulate and guide future thinking and research on this significant topic.

An Overview of Succeeding Chapters

This thesis synthesizes what is known about the strategic role of school leaders and suggests new research directions. Although each chapter focuses on a relatively well defined aspect of strategic leadership and management, many of these topics are interconnected. Where a particular research contribution has been placed in the text was based on an assessment of where it could provide the most meaning to readers. In aiming for a synthesis of the strategic role of school leaders, the adopted approach has the effect of creating a series of overlapping research domains that build upon, as well as inform,

previous chapters. As new frameworks and research direction are suggested, it is important to consider them in relation to the underlying assumption of strategy proposed by Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996), that the intersection of cognitive, social, and political perspectives greatly informs strategic leadership and management.

The discussion of the strategic role of the school leader begins in chapters two and three with an examination of the research design of this project. These chapters present a comprehensive analysis of contemporary research on strategic leadership and management in schools. Drawing upon research since 1980 on the strategic role of school leaders in 18 prominent educational leadership journals, leading contributions to research on strategy in education are identified. This work is analyzed through a variety of theoretical, although the term is used generously, (definitions, unit of analysis, theoretical perspectives, causal model, underlying assumptions) and methodological lenses (data sources, sample size, theoretical model and time frame, statistical techniques). These chapters had two goals: first, to gain an appreciation for what has been done in the scholarship of strategy in education, and second, provide the knowledge base to inform a conceptual framework for investigation. Careful attention was paid to demonstrating how the theoretical lens of the strategic role in educational institutions is explicitly linked with the chosen methods of the study. Through this interwoven description, the methodology of the study emerges.

Chapter Four builds directly on the previous chapter, since our understanding of strategic leadership and management is governed by practice. Using a conceptual framework developed from analyzing key contributions to the topic, this chapter articulates the findings of a quantitative study using a questionnaire as a data source. Using the model developed in chapter two, the study had two distinct foci; 1) to what extent do school

leaders exhibit strategic leadership and management; and 2) do demographic variables moderate strategic behaviors? The inquiry based on demographic variables was born out of the literature base indicating that personal demographics such as gender, tenure, experience and school based demographics such as school size and socio-economic status influence the behavior of school leaders. This study revealed that using a framework derived from the literature on the topic, practicing principals exhibit high levels of strategic leadership behaviors. However, these findings raised concerns as to whether or not respondents had a shared understanding of what it meant to be strategic in an educational institution.

Chapter Five explores practicing principals understanding of their strategic role. Using a semi-structured interview schedule, principals were asked to explain what strategic leadership meant to them in their current role, what the key aspects of the role are and give explicit examples of when they demonstrated strategic leadership. Additional information was sought as to whether or not they felt that strategic leadership was a term that was misunderstood by their peers and whether they had undertaken any training in strategic leadership and management. Through textual analysis of the transcripts of interviews, four key elements of the strategic role of public primary school leaders are proposed (purpose, context, direction, and leadership). This framework allows for comparison with the one developed in chapter two and the broader educational leadership literature.

Whereas previous chapters have weaved a continuous inquiry on the strategic role of school leaders, Chapter Six focuses on moving beyond what is already known and setting forth a new frame from which to view the strategic role of public primary school principals. Building from the findings of the previous chapter, this chapter further expands the strategic role to include a greater influence from contextual factors beyond the

immediate school. Using Foucault's discussion of the panopticon as a theoretical frame, this chapter discusses how the current regimes of surveillance, primarily operationalized through increased participation of stakeholders in the formulation of policies and decision making process, creates an internalized power relationship in principals and that the effect of such processes influences the behaviors of principals. By proposing an alternate theoretical frame to investigate the strategic role of school leadership, it is here where the second key purpose of the thesis, to provide a new platform for theory and research on the strategic role of school leaders, consolidating what is already known, identifying the high priorities for what next needs to be known, and proposing how scholars might fruitfully conduct their inquiries, is achieved.

Chapter seven provides a brief overview of the discussion from each chapter and puts out the challenge for the reader to take up the ideas proposed in this thesis in the continual quest to better understand the nature of the strategic role and on a wider scale, the leadership of educational institutions.

In sum, the thesis is optimistic, portraying the strategic role of school leaders as a stream of research within educational leadership that will help provide a fundamental understanding of how and why educational institutions behave the way they do. It is clear that there is still very much more we need to know. This challenge poses a great opportunity, for a better understanding of strategic leadership and management in education. The more we know about the essence of strategy, the better we will understand how and why schools undertake the strategies they do and perform the way they do.

CHAPTER TWO

Theory on the Strategic Role of the Educational Leader

The advancement of any scientific field of inquiry depends on the soundness of the research methodologies employed by its members (Ketchen & Bergh, 2004). Reflecting on papers presented at the 2005 Australian Council for Educational Leadership Conference and his role as Editor at the *Journal of Educational Administration*, Ross Thomas (2006) states

> The phenomenon of leadership is, once again undergoing one of its periodic, sustained examinations: definitions of leadership, components of leadership, correlates of leadership, and so on, are occupying more and more journal space and more and more conference time. Yet, therein, lies an emerging danger. Just as the trait approach to leadership in decades past succeeded in identifying a plethora of individual attributes or characteristics fundamental to successful leadership, contemporary studies threaten to engulf us with their own tidal wave of descriptor (p. 11).

The strategic role of educational leaders is no exception. A wide range of methodologies have been used to study the strategic role in educational institutions, however, most are retrospective (Elliot, 1999), conducted after the outcomes were known. Van de Ven (1992) points out, it is widely recognized that prior knowledge of the success or failure of a strategic change effort invariably biases a study's findings.

However, researchers carefully design their studies to observe strategy / the strategic role in such a way that is "consistent with their definition and theory" (Van de Ven, 1992, p. 181) of strategy / the strategic role. Therefore while criticism remains that strategic leadership research relies on sterile archive and survey data (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996) if investigators' concept of strategy and the strategic role is limited to the

mechanistic pursuit of a plan, then document analysis of the plan and survey of the planning process is arguably most appropriate.

Research is inextricably linked with theory; therefore, the misconceptions and ambiguities surrounding theory are reflected in the "interpretation of the meaning and purpose of research" (Hoy & Miskel, 2001, p. 6). Considering that research has tended to follow practitioner trends (e.g. the spike in research following the *Education Reform Act, 1988* in the UK), strategic leadership research has been limited in its selection of unit of analysis to that of a plan or a planning process. Recent trends seem to suggest a move towards an integrative perspective of strategic leadership in education, yet there still remains a number of content and methodological refinements required (e.g. a move away from small-scale case studies; the analysis of strategic leadership behaviors and practitioner perspectives) to further inform the debate.

In this chapter, a knowledge base is identified which informs the theoretical and methodological features of the empirical work undertaken to construct this thesis. In addition to establishing a knowledge base, scholarship which has informed the knowledge base is investigated and some frequently cited works reviewed. Prior to analyzing the conceptual features of the knowledge base, a series of significant theoretical positions which may have influenced the work are discussed. The knowledge base for the empirical work of the thesis is then analyzed through a conceptual lens focusing on; how strategy is defined; the unit of analysis; the theoretical perspective of the work; the causal model; and any underlying assumptions about the strategic role. Through a critical engagement with the knowledge base, and drawing on the significant theoretical positions which may influence the work, a series of possible theoretical developments are proposed. In

collaboration with the series of methodological developments proposed in the following chapter, the design of the empirical work explored in subsequent chapters is clearly articulated.

Establishing a Knowledge Base

To establish a knowledge base, the table of contents and abstracts of each issue of 21 different educational leadership and management journals were searched. Unlike other fields such as strategic management, where regular studies by MacMillan (1989; 1991; 1987) have identified 16 journals as offering appropriate, significant or outstanding quality as a forum for the publication of research, there is no such list in educational leadership. Mayo, Zirkel and Finger (2006) produced a list entitled 'Which journals educational leadership professors are choosing?', however, the list contained both refereed and professional journals, and only those from the USA. To overcome this situation, early analysis of the 'Journal Banding study' conducted by the Centre for the Study of Research Training and Impact (SORTI) at the University of Newcastle, Australia, and the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) was used. In this study over 900 education journals were identified. The journals were broken into 26 different fields. The most appropriate field for this thesis was 'administration, leadership, educational management and policy'. It consisted of 48 journals. For each journal a QScore (quality score) was calculated from three sources of information; survey responses (esteem measures, N=628, 83% Australian, 82% employed by universities), the journal's ISI score (if it had one) and whether the journal has an international editorial board (for more information on the study

see http://www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/sorti/). While this project has been criticized for its parochial sampling strategy (drawing from an Australian based research association) and the subsequent Australian-centric nature of then findings, as the studies conducted for this thesis took place in Australia, it was an appropriate means of establishing the boundaries of the search strategy. The sub-field of 'Administration, leadership, educational management and policy' had 123 responses (representing 7.4% of the total population).

The survey of literature to establish the knowledge base is not exhaustive. Rather, it is meant to be illustrative of the kinds of work relevant to the main arguments of the thesis. To make the survey of journals more manageable for analysis, it was decided to break down the list of journals into tiers. Using the same terms as MacMillan (outstanding, significant and appropriate) the list was broken into tiers (see Table 1). The highest scoring journal in the field was the *Journal of Education Policy* with a QScore of 18.56. The five highest ranking journals in the discipline were the *American Educational Research Journal (29.33), British Educational Research Journal (29.30), Review of Educational Research (29.21), Teachers College Record (28.54)* and *Harvard Educational Review (26.04).* The *Journal of Educational Policy* while being the number one in the field was 56th overall in the discipline. This would be considered consistent with the work of others who have suggested that educational leadership has a relatively weak quality profile within the already weak quality profile of educational research (Gorard, 2005; Griffiths, 1959, 1965, 1985; Immegart, 1975). However, it is to be noted that the *Journal of Education Policy* was ranked second (behind *Oxford Review of Education*) in a ranking study conducted in the United Kingdom by Wellington and Torgerson (2005).

Table 1. Quality forums for educational leadership scholars, adapted from SORTI (2008)

Journals	QScore	Location
Outstanding Quality Educational Leadership Journals		
Journal of Education Policy	18.56	UK
International Journal of Educational Management	15.84	UK
Educational Administration Quarterly	15.74	USA
Educational Management, Administration and Leadership	15.31	UK
Journal of Educational Administration	15.31	Australia
Significant Quality Educational Leadership Journals		
School Effectiveness and School Improvement	14.10	The Netherlands
Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management	14.08	Australia
Educational Policy	13.95	USA
International Journal of Leadership in Education	13.31	USA
School Leadership and Management	12.37	UK
The Australian Educational Leader	12.30	Australia
Journal of Educational Change	12.01	The Netherlands
Appropriate Quality Educational Leadership Journals		
Education Policy Analysis Archives	11.61	USA
Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis	11.61	USA
Educational Leadership	10.53	USA
International Studies in Educational Administration	10.14	Cyprus
Policy Futures in Education	10.14	UK
Leading and Managing	9.70	Australia
International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning	9.52	Canada
Journal of Educational Administration and History	9.52	UK
Education Leadership Review	9.36	USA

NOTE: A further 28 journals were identified with scores ranging from 7.90 to 0.00

The *International Journal of Educational Management* was not included in the field in the SORTI / AARE study. Rather it was included in the field of 'Economics, accounting, business and management'. The decision to include it in this study was based on the journal featuring prominently in two previous studies, Eacott (2008a) on the publication of work on strategy in education over 25 years in 14 prominent educational leadership journals and Bates and Eacott (2008) on the teaching of educational administration in Australia.

Seven of the twenty one journals on the list are published in the USA. Six and four are published in the UK and Australia respectively, two in the Netherlands and one in both Cyprus and Canada. Interestingly no journals from the sub-continent or Asia (such as the *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration*, India) appeared in the SORTI / AARE list. Due to the nature of this thesis being on the strategic role within school leadership, the *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* was omitted from the sample.

Using the journals identified in Table 1, the table of contents and abstracts were searched for any reference to the strategic role of the school leader. Any published work which linked school leadership and strategy (however theorized) was reviewed. Two types of studies were excluded. Despite appearing in the SORTI / AARE study, articles from *The Australian Educational Leader* (*n*=13) and *Educational Leadership* (*n*=3) were omitted because they had not been subject to peer review processes. Further, some apparently relevant studies were excluded because the same data set had been used in previously published work (*n*=7). Removing these two types of articles reduced the total sample from 100 to 77. Several patterns emerge from the data. Three journals standout as the dominant outlets for work on the strategic role of educational leaders; *School Leadership and Management (SLM)*, *International Journal of Educational Management (IJEM)* and *Educational Management Administration and Leadership (EMAL)*, all published in the UK. *SLM* has dedicated two special issues *24*(1) and *18*(4) to strategic leadership in schools; both were edited by Brent Davies (the 1998 issue was co-edited by Linda Ellison). However, if you remove those two issues, the most consistent forums have been *IJEM* and

EMAL. However, the actual percentage of articles identified as being about the strategic role of school leaders is still only 3.19 and 2.51 percent respectively.

Figure 1 shows how the representation of published works has changed over time in the three previously identified tiers of journals. Due to the low and inconsistent numbers, the time periods are broken into five year intervals. The data is presented as a percentage of the total number of articles published in the respective journal tiers. A pattern to emerge from the data is that the majority of works on the strategic role in educational leadership have appeared in outstanding and significant forums for educational leadership scholars. Although it should be noted that even at the highest point, articles about the strategic role of the school leader never constituted more than 3.10 percent of articles published. That being said, there has been a decline in the total percentage of works since 2000.

The time period 1996-2000 represents a spike in interest in the topic. The heightened output in the period 1988-2000 has previously been referred to as the 'formative years' of our understanding of strategy as an educational leadership construct (Eacott, 2008a). A major contributing factor for this increase in interest was legislative changes in England, most notably the *Education Reform Act, 1988*. This act made it mandatory for schools to have a 'school development plan'. This legislation gives particular emphasis to rationally planned strategic choices (Law & Glover, 2003). A number of works have investigated the impact of this legislation on practice (Bunnell, 2005; Davies & Coates, 2005; Giles, 1995; Lumby, 1999; McNarmara, O'Hara, & Ni Aingleis, 2002; Saker & Speed, 1996). As the majority of works in the sample originated in the England (61.04%, *n*=47), the impact of this legislation cannot be overlooked. A recently released special issue

of *Educational Management Administration and Leadership 36*(2) was devoted to the legacy of this legislation on the practice of educational leadership.
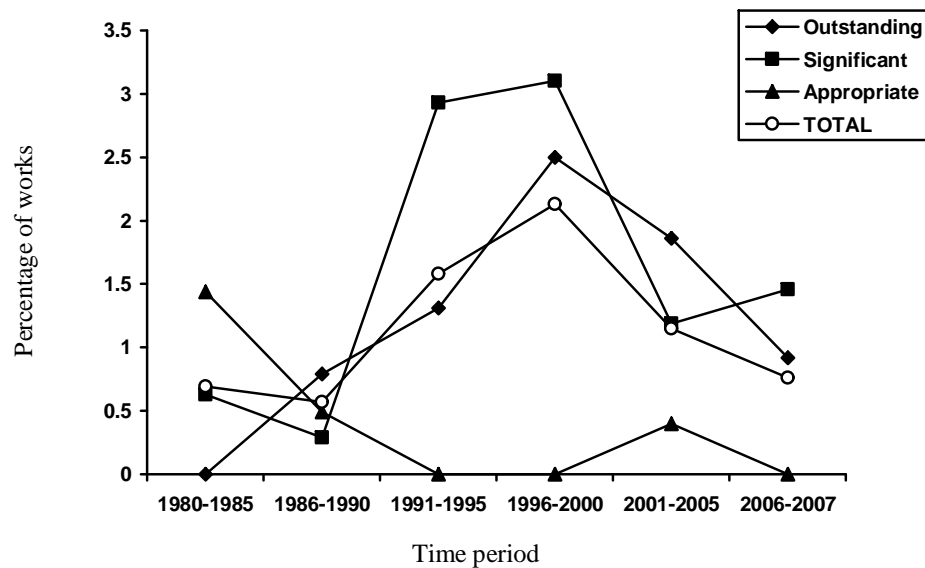
Figure 1. Percentage of works on strategy by quality of forum

However, did this increase in interest lead to empirical research? The nature of a study (conceptual or empirical) is a basic choice made by the researcher. Of the 77 articles identified, 42 (54.55%) were empirical and 35 (45.45%) were conceptual. In similar studies in the field of strategy, Hambrick (1986) reviewing works from 1980 to 1985 found 46 percent empirical, Schwenk and Dalton (1991) found 60 percent, and Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) found 75 percent. This trend would generally indicate that theory development and theory testing were occurring simultaneously. Although this notion is

contentious due to the nature of the studies being undertaken and the considerable conceptual overlap of the work. Whereas in scientific communities, theory is developed, tested and then further theory developed, educational leadership as a field remains the domain of loosely coupled studies with little systematic testing and further development of theoretical propositions. Work by both Mulford (2007) and Bates and Eacott (2008) suggest that Australian scholars fail to acknowledge the contributions of each other to the field and continue to produce work that is blinkered. Table 2 displays the incidence of empirical works over the time frame of the surveyed sample for education. The data indicates that empirical work on the strategic role of educational leaders spiked during the period of 1996-2000.

Table 2. Incidence of empirical / conceptual works over time

	Time Period					
Type	1980-1985	1986-1990	1991-1995	1996-2000	2001-2005	2006-2007
Empirical	2	1	7	20	9	3
Conceptual	0	4	7	10	12	2

A final point of interest was who is writing about the strategic role of school leaders. Of the 77 works in the sample, a total of 105 individual authors are represented. While some authors consistently work together (e.g. Davies & Ellison; Cuckle & Broadhead, later including Hodgson; Levačić & Glover) it is of interest to investigate the most frequently published authors. The majority of authors were responsible for less than two articles (in most cases, one). Brent Davies was the most published author, linked with

26

six works. Derek Glover had four and Rosalind Levačić, Petros Pashiardis and Brian Caldwell each had three. This data was complied with the multiple articles removed, otherwise Derek Glover would have been credited with six and other authors such as Pat Cuckle, Pat Broadhead (four each) and Janet Hodgson (three) would have joined the list.

The five most frequently published authors are responsible for a total of 16 works in the sample, representing 21 percent (Glover & Levačić worked together on three). While the sample drew on a large number of authors, from a variety of journals, the bulk of works on the strategic role of school leadership came from a relatively small set of academics, published in a small set of journals.

Scholarship Informing the Knowledge Base on the Strategic Role

Further to the aim of this chapter, this section sought to identify scholarship that has had an important influence on the topic of the strategic role of the school leader. For this analysis, the previously identified sample was subjected to an analysis of their reference lists. The goal was to identify articles and books that were heavily cited. Self-citations were deleted. Table 3 provides a listing of articles (by lead author) cited more than three times, absent self-citations. While Wallace's article *Flexible planning: a key to the management of multiple innovations* tops the list, it is only referred to seven times. Having deleted the self-citations, there was very little reference to previous work on the topic with most authors either calling on previous work they had completed or the broader literature of educational leadership and the leadership and management of organizations in general. The fourth column in Table 3 lists the first and last year in which the work was cited. For example,

Wallace was first cited in 1993 and last cited in 2000, so authors found his work useful throughout a seven year span. Very few articles however were cited over any extended period of time. Two conclusions are drawn from this analysis: 1) educational leadership scholars investigating the strategic role of school leaders make limited (if any) use of the work of other educational leadership scholars on the topic (or limit their reference to their own work); and 2) scholarship on the topic blurs the boundaries of disciplines and topics to adopt a pluralistic perspective.

Table 3. Articles cited more than three times in the sample

Cites	First Author	Reference	Years
7	Wallace, M.	Flexible planning: a key to the management of multiple innovations, *Educational Management and Administration, 19*(3), 180-192, 1991.	1993-2000
4	Broadhead, P.	Improving primary schools through school development planning: building a vision, exploring the reality, *Educational Management and Administration, 24*(3), 277-290, 1996.	1998-2000
3	Glover, D.	Towards a school development plan: process and practice, *Educational Management and Administration, 18*(3), 22-26, 1990.	1993-1997
3	Hargreaves, D.	Self-managing schools and development planning – chaos or control, *School Organization, 15*(3), 215-228, 1995.	1996-1998
3	Hutchinson, B.	The effective reflective school: vision and pipedreams in development planning, *Educational Management and Administration, 21*(1), 4-18, 1993.	1995-1998
3	Lumby, J.	Strategic planning in further education: the business of values, *Educational Management and Administration, 27*(1), 71-83, 1999.	2001-2004

Books however maintained a far greater share of citations. Table 4 provides a listing of the books, with lead authors, that were referenced at least five times. What is interesting

among the most frequently cited books is the balance between discipline specific examples (e.g. Hargreaves & Hopkins, MacGilchrist *et al.*, Hargreaves *et al.*) and those from beyond educational leadership (e.g. Mintzberg, Johnson & Scholes, Porter). Mintzberg's *Rise and fall of strategic planning* was the most cited book, with a citation period extended from 1997 through to 2006. With the exception of Kaplan and Norton (2002), the books listed on Table 4 were first cited in the 1990s and continued to be cited post 2000 (although Ansoff was only cited from 1990-1997). Kaplan and Norton (2002) was the most recent edition to the list with the title *The strategy focused organization* (which is remarkably similar to Brent Davies' 2006 book *The strategically focused school*). Kaplan and Norton are better known for their work on the 'balanced scorecard' which has been the focus of attention in works by Bell (2003), Kettunen (2005) and more recently McDevitt *et al.* (2008).

Table 4. Books cited more than 5 times in the sample

Cites	First Author	Reference	Years
17	Mintzberg, H.	The rise and fall of strategic planning	1997-2006
14	Hargreaves, D.	The empowered school: the management and practice of development planning	1995-2005
13	MacGilchrist, B.	Planning matters: the impact of development planning in primary schools	1996-2005
11	Hargreaves, D.	Planning for school development – advice to governors, headteachers and teachers	1993-2002
11	Johnson, G.	Exploring corporate strategy	1998-2006
11	Porter, M.	Competitive strategy	1991-2006
10*	Boisot, M.	Preparing for turbulence	1998-2006
9	Caldwell, B.	Leading the self-managing school	1991-2005
9	Davies, B.	School development planning	1995-2006
6	Ansoff, H.I.	Implanting strategic management	1990-1997
6	Senge, P.	The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization	1998-2006
5	Bryson, J.M.	Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations	1997-1999
5	Kaplan, R.S.	The strategy focused organization	2003-2006

* A chapter from Garratt, B. (1995). Developing strategic thought, London: McGraw-Hill.

While it is acknowledged that the choice of a reference for those other than the author, is of limited meaning, and work can be cited due to its importance or quality as much as it can be for its lack of, because the most popular texts in this list have a long life span, their enduring value to the study of the strategic role of the school leader cannot be overlooked. To appreciate these identified works, five have been briefly reviewed. An overview of the key issues and central arguments of each work is provided. Debates that emerge within and between the works are also discussed. This is designed to assist in understanding the theoretical and methodological choices made in the literature base of this chapter.

Mintzberg's Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning

In what is described as a definitive and revealing history (bookcover), Henry Mintzberg explores the apparent rise and fall of strategic planning in organizations. He considers strategy to be a word that is defined differently to how it is practiced. While frequently it is defined as a 'plan', in the reality of organization life it appears as a 'pattern' that blends intended responses with responses that emerge out of the changing organizational environment. Central to this work is the distinction between 'planning' and 'strategic thinking'. For Mintzberg, planning is about analysis and breaking down a goal or set of intentions into steps. In contrast, strategic thinking is about synthesis and involves intuition and creativity. The outcome of which is an integrated perspective of the enterprise.

Mintzberg also outlines what he sees as the three fallacies of strategic planning. Initially the very notion that prediction is possible, secondly that a strategist can be detached from the subjects of their strategies, and finally that the strategy-making process

can be formalized. He argues that the goal of those who promote strategic planning is to reduce the power of managers in the strategy making process.

Hargreaves and Hopkins' The Empowered School

This book was compilation of reports and advice provided by the authors as a direct result of a UK Department of Education and Science funded project in 1989-1990. The intended audience was anyone involved in development planning and it was structured as a practical guide for action. The book is divided into five parts, each with a different focus. Part one provides a rationale for school development planning in the post *Education Reform Act* environment. Building from this, part two provides a step-by-step guide to the process of development planning. Chapter three explores the relationship between schools and local education authorities. Part four (which consists of only one chapter) positions development planning in the literature on school effectiveness and school improvement. This chapter represents the only one with an academic focus in the book. The final section is a resource file that school leaders could use to help inform and structure staff meetings and discussion on development planning.

Johnson and Scholes' Exploring Corporate Strategy

Pearson Educational (http://wps.prenhall.com/) describe Johnson and Scholes' *Exploring corporate strategy* as the leading strategy textbook in Europe with sales exceeding 500,000 copies. The book is divided into three main parts, the strategic position, strategic choices and strategy into action. This is the framework adopted by many others authors, including Fidler (2002b) and Tsiakkiros and Pashiardis (2002). Davies (2004a) argues that this model

of strategic management has become orthodoxy in educational institutions. In many respects, it is an extended version of the SWOT model (Andrews, 1971). Since its release (it is currently in its sixth edition) Johnson and Scholes have written chapters in educational leadership texts (2003).

Kaplan and Norton's The Strategy Focused Organization

In this book, Kaplan and Horton draw on over ten years of research in over 200 companies that have implemented the 'balanced scorecard'. Through the use of over 20 case studies, they outline how the balanced scorecard has improved the quality of operations in organizations. The balanced scorecard which was introduced in an article in *Harvard Business Review* (1982), uses the language of measurement to more clearly define the meaning of strategic concepts like quality, customer satisfaction and growth. Bishop and Limerick (2006) provide an example case of a public school system (Queensland, Australia) adopting the balanced scorecard or a close derivation of it in the management of schools. Building on from Lingard *et al.* (2003) who state that schools now operate in a neo-liberal capitalist society, requiring the need for market share and earlier work by Kaplan and Norton (1996) citing the heightened need for the balanced scorecard in not-for-profit organization, Bishop and Limerick (2006) conclude that such models have a place in education, but not all the answers.

Wallace's Flexible Planning: A Key to the Management of Multiple Innovations

This paper drew on exploratory work by the author following the *Education Reform Act, 1988* in England and Wales. The paper had two purposes: 1) to put forward a model of

strategic planning that was consistent with the chaotic situation that existed at the time; and 2) to suggest how this model may inform action. By describing the experiences of a few case studies, Wallace concludes by suggesting that management development and training (interesting for the choice of word 'training' as opposed to 'learning', arguably suggesting an underlying assumption about the role) needs far greater attention to strategic planning in a turbulent environment.

Emerging Themes

The five selected works briefly reviewed provide an interesting, yet similar overview of literature on the strategic role. Whereas Mintzberg challenges the very nature of strategic planning, Johnson and Scholes, Hargreaves and Hopkins, and to a lesser extent Kaplan and Norton provide a set by step guide to the process. This arguably represents the two different audiences of research and literature on the strategic role of school leaders. Mintzberg provides a thought provoking (albeit cynical) take on the role of strategic planning that can, and has been, taken up by fellow scholars. The other examples serve practitioners with a guide book for implementing strategic formulation processes. Mintzberg considers the strategic planning movement to have done to organizational hierarchies what Taylorism did for routinization and systematization of manual labor in American industry. He contends that sometimes strategies must be left as broad visions, not precisely articulated to enable adaptation to changing environments and that strategic change requires not merely re-arranging the established categories of the organization, but through the invention of new categories. While the very value of strategic processes in an educational setting are raised and to some extent questioned, the perception of market ideology and the interpretation of

educational policy appears to have provided sufficient rationale for a plethora of books on 'how to do' strategic management.

Theory and Strategy in Education Research

Theory development's importance to scholarly research is unquestioned (Ireland, Webb, & Coombs, 2005). However, what constitutes theory and a theoretical contribution is far less certain (Bacharach, 1989; Kilduff, 2006; Whetten, 1989). Further complicating the efforts is the high levels of disagreement about theory and methods within the field of educational leadership (see *EMAL 33*(2) for a special issue on the matter). The inability to specify a theory and theoretical contributions captures the current state of research on the strategic role of school leaders.

Although a significant portion of early inquiry into the strategic role of school leaders lacked effective theory development and subsequently, appropriate empirical tests, the results of these studies remain valuable for the construction of knowledge about the strategic role of school leaders. In fact, consistent with the growth of sophisticated research methods in other disciplines, "the results from primarily case-oriented, anecdotal, and topic-driven work reflect interest in examining a particular phenomenon" (Ireland *et al.*, 2005, p. 114). Many of the early investigations into the strategic role of the school leader provided the foundations from which further activities could have occurred. Mulford (2007) among others have commented on the apparent aversion of educational leadership scholars to build on or reference previous research on a topic. While there existed some evidence of cross referencing in the sample articles, the majority of works continue to forge ahead with

their own ideas opposed to building on previous works and testing models and conceptualization posed. Furthermore, the complexity of the strategic role has been lost in the narrow focus of research devoted solely on the planning process. Building on from the work of Davies (2004a), Dimmock and Walker (2004) and Caldwell (2004), among others, the complexity of the phenomenon and the quantity of existing scholarly work suggests a current need for theory development.

A number of theoretical issues are addressed in this section of the chapter. First, theory is defined and discussed in relation to its importance to the scholarship of educational leadership. A series of theoretical contributions that have the potential to inform theory development and research designs related to the strategic role of the school leader are described. Having established this basis, the conceptual features of the knowledge base (the 77 previously identified works) are examined. Finally, recommendations and directions for theoretical development on the strategic role of school leaders are outlined. This work is vital, as Ireland, Webb and Coombs (2005) forcibly argue, "a scholarly discipline cannot stand on its own without an epistemological foundation comprised of its own distinct theories for predicting and explaining phenomena" (p. 114). Further support for this notion can be found in Busenitz *et al.* (2003) and Shane and Venkataraman (2000).

Theory Development and Strategic Role

One may argue that the term theory is used too often and is not always clearly defined. Theories, by their very nature are abstract and educational research is often considered irrelevant to practitioner needs (Laferriere, Lamon, & Chan, 2006; Place & Lindle, 2006)

and many difficulties exist in translating abstract theoretical principles into actions (Chan & Fai Ping, 2006; Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Shulman, 2002; Willower, 1980). Many see the divide as academics developing and refining theory and managers engaging in practice (Bush, 2007; English, 2002). However, most seem to agree that the integration of theory and practice is a desirable if elusive goal (Fullan, 1991).

Willower (1975, p. 78) defines theory as "a body of interrelated, consistent generalizations that serves to explain". Hoy and Miskel (2001, p. 3) define theory as "a set of interrelated concepts, assumptions, and generalizations that systematically describes and explains regularities in behavior in educational organizations". They add that this definition suggests three things:

- Theory logically comprises concepts, assumptions, and generalizations;

- The major function of theory is to describe, explain, and predict regularities in behavior; and

- Theory is heuristic; that is, it stimulates and guides the further development of knowledge.

Theory, and implicitly theorizing, is more than a linguistic device used to organize data, typologies and metaphors. Bacharach (1989, p. 497) contends that "much of the work in organizational and management science should not be thought of as theory", as the mere process of description or categorization characterizes much of the work in these fields. When applied to the strategic role of school leaders, theorizing means going beyond the statement of factors that work and also beyond modeling of relationships between these factors in order to lay bare underlying explanatory principles. Trim and Lee (2004) argue

that if management researchers aspire to provide new insights into complex managerial matters, they need to think innovatively, have the confidence to challenge basic assumptions relating to interpreting research outcomes, and question what constitutes appropriate research. Ireland *et al.* (2005) describe the objective of theory development as:

> ...... an acceptance, rather than rejection, of an elucidated (how, why and when) logic, thereby creating a common ground from which empirical and conceptual studies can stem with a consistent basis for further theoretical developments through extensions and criticisms (p. 121).

Contributions to the theory development process should aim to advance the underlying logic into new areas that are not as clear. These contributions further enhance our understanding of leaders and leadership.

Building on from Hoy and Miskel (2001), the goal of the theory development process undertaken in this thesis is to move beyond the mere description of the strategic role of the school leader to build a logical basis from which further studies can seek to confirm, reject, support or criticize.

Streams of Influential Theory

Scholarly interest in the phenomenon of leadership has been around since antiquity (Bass, 1990), yet the systematic social scientific study of leadership did not begin until the 1930s (House & Aditya, 1997). While few topics have captivated social scientists, philosophers, observers and people in general the way leadership has, and despite the volume of literature, there remain many unanswered questions. Fundamental questions such as: what

exactly is leadership, and how can we come to understand it better, provide a constant point of tension for theoretical development.

The *raison d'être* of research on the strategic role of school leaders is to increase understanding about the determinants of organizational performance and explain how leaders can create superior performance. To do so, a number of theoretical positions, including those associated with business management, economics, sociology, psychology, marketing and organizational behavior can inform theoretical development. Despite their disciplinary origins, theoretical contributions to the study of the strategic role of school leaders can be classified into two categories; one based on the individual leader; and secondly, a focus on the organization. In addition to presenting a brief overview of these two research domains, a further two specific examples are also discussed; the school-based management movement and the upper echelon perspective (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). The outcome of this overview is a specification of research issues intended to provide some new directions for the development of future strategic role theory and empirical research.

Leader-centric approaches: The initial focus of systematic research concerned with leadership sought to differentiate the characteristics of leaders and non-leaders (House & Aditya, 1997). These studies emphasized leader attributes such as personality, motives, values and skills. The underlying assumption was that leaders are born and not made. During the 1930s and 1940s many hundreds of studies sought to discover elusive leadership qualities that would guarantee success. The predominant research design looked for significant correlations between individual attributes and some criteria for leadership

success (Yukl, 2006). This mode of inquiry failed to produce any conclusive data as it failed to examine the intervening variables that could explain variance in performance.

The disenchantment of scholars and practitioners with the trait-based approach gave rise to the behavior-based approach in the 1950s. This movement took the focus from who the leader was, to what the leader did. However, as with the trait-based approach, there was no pattern of leader behavior found to consistently meet any criteria of managerial effectiveness or subordinate satisfaction.

Despite ambiguous findings leading to a wane in interest in early trait and behavior based approaches, current orthodoxy in management in education theory suggests a return to the past. Transformational leadership is merely a re-dressing of behavioral approaches. While Leithwood and Duke (1999, p. 48) describe it as focusing on "the commitments and capacities of organizational members", the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ (the most frequently used instrument to measure transformational leadership) is a behavioral based checklist completed by subordinates. There has always existed considerable theoretical overlap between transformational and charismatic leadership (Felfe, Tartler, & Liepmann, 2004; Hunt & Conger, 1999). This renewed (or arguably continued) focus on leadership traits and behaviors has evolved in recent times to new levels of leadership such as moral, ethical or values-based.

Moral leadership (or approaches such as ethical, servant and authentic) focuses on the values and human agency of leaders and followers. The need for a moral purpose and ethical values reflects a move back towards a trait oriented approach to leadership. This focus is arguably a rejection of the clinical rational efficiency focused leader which is portrayed as the opposite of humane orientated models.

39

Frequently studies into the transformational or moral leadership of school leaders adopt a 'positive organizational scholarship' stance. Positive organizational scholarship involves the study of organizations (in this case, school) that perform higher on any given number of criteria than the 'average' organization. This type of study poses two separate, yet inter-related problems. First, by only studying the highest performers, it is impossible to drill down to uncover what it really is that distinguishes performance. As a result, the list of descriptors (whether they be traits or behaviors) fails to meet the criteria of parsimony. Secondly, who defines the criteria for successful performance? How are the underlying assumptions of such criteria articulated and presented in the research reporting? Does it make sense to argue against the rational decision-making favored by OfSTED in their reporting but use the reports as the criteria for sampling?

This brief overview has not sought to comprehensively outline the historical developments or contemporary discourse on the topic of trait or behavior based leadership models, however it suggests that the study of educational leadership through a trait or behavioral approach has undergone both rejuvenation and metamorphosis – assuming that you prescribe to the belief that it ever left. For many in the field, rejuvenation in the study of leadership behaviors and traits will feel like an old friend in which for a period, the field had lost interest. At the same time though, the study of educational leadership from this perspective had also under a metamorphosis away from the study of 'supervisory' leadership to models of 'participation, empowerment and collective responsibility'. Whereas the rejuvenation had primarily methodological implications, the metamorphosis represents theoretical development towards a greater diversity of leadership behaviors and traits.

Social-organizational perspectives: While trait and behavior based approaches adopted a leader centric position, frequently attempting to produce a context (e.g. educational institutions) specific model, alternate views blur boundaries of disciplines and take a more discursive view of social reality. Drawing from the scope of the social sciences (including anthropology, history, philosophy, psychology, sociology) and research traditions, scholars from this perspective view the school within the wider society. Historically, schools have been considered a primary social mechanism for ensuring that all members of society received an education that would enable them to take their place maintaining and improving a complex, democratic and free society (Lutyen *et al.*, 2005; Molnar, 2006). Although it is frequently argued that schools are at the mercy of socio-political circumstances (Huber, 2004; Jeffreys, 1955). As such, the norms and values of the larger social sphere mediate and shape what transpires among the people within the school (Greenfield, 2005), rendering the strategic role of the school principal as one which blurs the boundaries of the school and wider society.

Blurring those boundaries, schools, and all other educational institutions for that matter, have been a major focus of government policies and reforms in recent times and consequently studying schools as features of wider political, economic and social movements would arguably benefit our understanding of the strategic role of school leaders. However, the study of the strategic role of school leaders has not traditionally drawn from or built on the work of leading scholars in this area. Foucault (1971) noted that every education system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them. Bourdieu, like Foucault, sees power as diffuse and often concealed in broadly accepted, and

frequently unquestioned, ways closely intertwined with economic and political power (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Bourdieu viewed the school as replacing the church as the major agency for socialization and legitimation in modern societies, appearing to him to play an essential role in the symbolic reproduction of the social order, with the school's institutional frames acting as both impositions and acceptance frames (Wacquant, 1997). His writings on education have developed a coherent, evolving theory on school autonomy as a deceptive device that helps legitimize domination by dissimulating the relation between school process and the aims of the state and dominant groups (van Zanten, 2005). Bourdieu has been used to study educational policy, see *Journal of Education Policy 20*(6) for a special issue on this topic, and Foucault has been used in the study of power in broader educational topics, yet neither has been used in the study of the strategic role of school leaders. This is noteworthy because both Foucault (1983) and Bourdieu (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986) wrote explicitly about the role of strategy or strategies. The most frequent utilization of Bourdieu has been in the relationship between schools and social reproduction and not explicitly educational leadership (Lingard *et al.*, 2003), although there are some exceptions, Gunter (2001), Fitz (1999) and Thomson (2001a; 2001b; 2002). Anderson and Grinberg (1998) and Perryman (2006) both drew on Foucault in their discussions on educational leadership. Lingard *et al.* (2003) work with both Bourdieu and Foucault in positioning their discussion on educational leadership, yet the field in general and more specifically inquiry into the strategic role of principals has not made use of their work.

The scholarship of educational leadership, and particularly the strategic role, remains narrowly focused on the school as opposed to the broad and complex view of

various social institutions as they influence organizational actors. Much of the writing in the field is functional rather than critical. When drawing on organizational level theory, much of the discussion is built around bureaucratic models of organizational management and the constant tension between centralization and decentralization. Weber's work is often referred to in texts on educational leadership, yet frequently only to the level of outlining the 'bureaucratic model' as opposed to a more holistic reading of his work. Weber's work was set in the context of modern capitalist society and its consequent "rational, functional organization of social relations" (1968, p. 556). His contribution to the understanding of education institutions and the leadership and management of such institutions can, and should be, much more than merely defining the bureaucratic role of leadership and management.

Similarly the principles of Taylor's (1911) scientific management, while deeply resented by many in the field, are still evident in contemporary strategic management actions and literature. The management plan, school improvement plan, school development plan or whatever nomenclature given to such documents frequently exhibits the division of labor, tools and resources, training of workers and role of supervision as outlined by Taylor. In some ways, the strategic management of a school demonstrates the very essence of scientific management. While school leaders, or educational leadership scholars for that matter, have yet to formerly conduct any 'time and motion studies' (at least that the author is aware of), planning documents frequently outline the key actions of the specific role of actors within the school (e.g. teachers, aides, assistant principals). The underlying assumption is that all things can be manipulated (in the case of Taylor, improved efficiency) through a series of linear rational steps (a hyper-rationalist approach).

Theories from the scope of the social sciences remain applicable in explaining the complexity of the leadership role within schools and the school as an organization, as well as the environmental factors that affect the development and decision making patterns of school leaders.

The Romantic decentralist approach: Classical management theory argues that there should be a single chain of command within an organization and that every individual should have one, and only one boss (Fayol, 1930). Significant contributions to classic management theory include the previously highlighted works of Weber and Taylor. Both of these perspectives focus on chain of command and the principle of centralization. Wexler (1991) contends that "post-industrial definitions of education are centralizing (despite the rhetoric of flexibility) and naturalize the self's disappearance into the performance" (p. 76). Despite this, the rhetoric of flexibility remains alive and well in the field of educational leadership. A substantial voice in the rhetoric of flexibility is the decentralist movement in school management. The Romantic decentralist believes that "relief from stultifying mediocrity lies in deregulation and local control of schools" (Timar & Kirp, 1988, p. 75). This deregulation and local control are the pillars of School-Based Management (SBM). Gamage (1993) contends that SBM alters the way schools are managed by transferring the authority for decision making to individual schools and secondly by calling for the participation of all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, alumni and the local community) in decision making at the school level. However, the notion of localized decision making for public schools is more rhetoric than realization (Hartley, 2004) as the broader scope, aims and purpose of school reforms and initiatives continue to be set by

those in higher positions in the chain of command (e.g. district, regional or state office). Consistent with the work of both Foucault and Bourdieu, the role of power in this situation is concealed and rarely called into question, and therefore serves a legitimating function. From a Marxist perspective, the "innocuous surface hides the essential nature of these schemes as technologies of repression and violence" (De Lissovoy & McLaren, 2003, p. 140). The substantial rhetoric around the local management of schools serves to partially distract from the specific mechanisms that proponents seek to introduce in its name, the cover for the implementation of large scale systematic procedures to reproduce the social stratification of society. While much of the hype of SBM centers on the localization of decision making and priority setting, it is this localization which serves to reproduce the current social order.

The continuum of involvement for stakeholders in school level decision making is an aspect of any form of leadership and management and not the exclusive feature of SBM. While advocates of SBM will cite examples from education systems all over the world that have adopted SBM, the only common feature of many is the involvement of stakeholders in decision making. Yet the involvement of stakeholders in decision making can also be found in education system without SBM. In many cases, what scholars argue for as SBM is little more than participatory models of leadership and management.

The strategic leadership and management of the school is an essential element of the SBM model. It is not surprising that the devolution of decision making to the school level coincided with the increased need for school leaders to begin to act in more strategic ways, such as developing organizational visions, strategic planning, marketing, listening to customers and observing market trends (Eacott, 2006b, 2008b). The principal acts as a CEO

or director of a board, working in collaboration with other board members (e.g. teachers, parents, community members and possibly students) in shaping the future direction of the school. Arguably SBM is a mechanism for transforming the principal's role from the 'leading educator' to a more corporate or business orientated role. While advocates for SBM would reject such a claim, the devolution of decision making authority to the school level has implications for the nature of the role. This opens two potential lines of inquiry in relation to the strategic role of the school leader: 1) the role of power in decision making process and whether the localized control of decision making results in governance by consensus, community empowerment or dictatorship; and 2) the penetration of corporate ideals into educational leadership and the move towards the 'educational entrepreneur'. Both lines of inquiry have potential for exploring the strategic role of the public primary school principal. Although anecdotal evidence suggest that SBM is argued for under the assumption that by localizing decision making, schools improve, in both students achievement and teacher satisfaction. Nevertheless, inquiry into the strategic role of the school leader though a Romantic decentralist approach has the potential to offer new insights if a critical approach is taken as opposed to a functional.

Upper Echelon Theory

The upper echelon perspective brought a newfound sense of excitement (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000) in the field of strategy (formerly business policy) when it was first proposed by Hambrick and Mason (1984) in their seminal article *Upper echelons: the organization as a reflection of its top manager* in the *Academy of Management Review*. The central argument of their paper was that organizational outcomes, both strategies and effectiveness, need to

be viewed as "reflections of the values and cognitive bases of powerful actors in the organization" (p. 193). Since its publication, there has been progress in exploring the linkage between strategic leaders' demographic characteristics and organizational strategy within the upper echelon perspective (Bantel & Jackson, 1989; Enns, Huff, & Golden, 2003; Thong & Yap, 1995). Some would argue that research and theory has demonstrated that the choices made by executives are influenced by the personal background and prior experience of top managers (Westphal & Fredrickson, 2001).

However upper echelon theory has not been without criticism. Elenkov *et al.* (2005) suggest that our understanding of the phenomena is still lacking, while Cannella and Monroe (1997) criticize it for not directly studying actual strategic leadership behaviors. Preim *et al.* (1999) and Lawrence (1997) critique upper echelon theory for creating an 'organizational black box' or 'causal gap' by linking manager demographics with organizational performance.

The core problem with this theory is similar to that of the study of instructional leadership, is a correlation between leadership behaviors and organizational (or student) performance an association reflecting a cause and effect or merely a coincidental relationship? This leads to ambiguity and conflicting results in the literature. Considering that Bergh *et al.* (2004) believe that scholars often use a sample where they will find support for their propositions, studies along this line of inquiry have considerable limitations.

However this is not to say the upper echelon perspective offers little to the study of educational leadership and more particularly the strategic role of school leaders. The origins of the theory were developed for the corporate world where the success of a

company can be measured in economic terms (increased profits, new markets etc). The measurement of success in education are far more complex, although government officers and politicians may believe otherwise, than straight out numerical figures, not to mention the time lag between education and success as a result of that education. As such, a potential application of the upper echelon perspective within the field of educational leadership is to apply its principles of demographic variance to strategic leadership and management behaviors. That is, do leaders of different personal or school based demographics enact their strategic role differently? This removes the concerns that the upper echelon perspective creates an organizational black box or causal gap by directly relating demographics to behaviors. With appropriate methodology and design, research on demographic proxies in the enactment of the strategic role of public primary school principal can be applied further enhance our understanding of the phenomenon.

Conceptual Features of the Knowledge Base

Having identified a knowledge base on the study of the strategic role of the school leader and highlighting some potential streams of influential theory, it was important to further delve into the knowledge base to uncover the conceptual features of the work. To undercover such features provides the epistemological basis from which the study and methodological evolutions of the topic have emerged. The key conceptual features identified and explored in the following text center on defining the strategic role, the unit of analysis, the theoretical perspective, the perceived causal model, and the underlying assumptions of the strategic role. Each of these features will be discussed before a conclusion is drawn leading to the proposal of a possible means for theory development on

the topic of the strategic role of the public primary school principal. This proposal forms the basis of the studies undertaken and reported on in chapters four and five.

Defining the strategic role: Although it maintains strong ties with planning, the practice and concept of strategy has many varied meanings in the educational leadership literature. Fidler (1996) wrote that the word was beginning to appear in educational management literature in the 1990s, but it was not clearly defined and appeared to mean little more than a general reference to the longer-term. The word 'strategy' is now applied to almost every management activity to add misleading rhetorical weight (Beaver, 2000), just as the current rash of simplistic 'adjectival leaderships' (e.g. authentic, parallel, democratic, instructional, teacher, transformational, sustaining, breakthrough) have bedeviled the wider field (Mulford, 2007). This had devalued and misrepresented the concept and is damaging to both theory and practice. In addition, it has cast doubt over what constitutes strategy.

Very few scholars within the field of educational leadership seek to define the concept of strategy. It remains elusive (Fidler, 2002b) and somewhat abstract (Ansoff, 1965). Quong *et al.* (1998) describe it as one of the most frustrating, paradoxical and misunderstood concepts in leadership literature. Frequently the term is used to describe a range of activities (Davies, 2004b) but most often it is explicitly linked with planning (Bell, 1998, 2002). Many of the definitional concerns with strategy begin with its use in the corporate sector. Bush (1998) argues that schools are too different to commercial companies in the nature of their business for the direct sharing of concepts. Kelly (2005) argues that business leaders develop strategy, while principals develop people. However

there has been some discussion relating to the definition of strategy within the educational context.

Tsiakkiros and Pashiardis (2002) draw attention to the word strategy and its origin from the Greek word *strategos*, which means "a general and the leader of the army" (p. 6). This is arguably why much of the literature assigns strategy and strategy development with an individual within an organization.

Watson and Crossley (2001) describe strategy from an alternate perspective, emphasizing that how a school's strategy is put together and operated, reinforces or challenges meaning among organizational members. They state that:

> Strategy is not neutral or valuefree, but emerges from a melee of organizational vested interests, personal agendas and ambitions, and the utilization of power. From this perspective a reliance upon the concept as an inherently rational and logical process, and a bulwark against the ambiguity of organizational life, is not only problematic but highly questionable (p. 117).

Davies (2003) stated that strategy was "a specific pattern of decisions and actions taken to achieve an organization's goals" (p. 295). He emphasized however, that strategy and strategic planning are not synonymous activities. In 2004a he added that strategy may consist of two sub-concepts, one concerned with the broad major dimensions of the organization and the other with the medium to longer term. He suggested that instead of being associated with a linear plan, strategy might usefully be thought of instead as a perspective, as a way of looking at things. It provides the template against which to set short term planning and activities. Leader (2004) adds, that strategy is a proactive rather than reactive means of translating decisions into actions.

Returning to the conceptual definitions of strategy, Kettunen (2005) states that strategy implies the movement of an organization from its present position, described by the mission, to a desirable, but uncertain, future position, described by the vision.

There has simply been no agreement on a single definition of strategy within education. This is arguable because strategy in education research is multidisciplinary (R. Brown, 1997) and interdisciplinary (Schendel, 1994; Watson, 1997) as indicated by the diverse literature base that informs the discussion. This pluralistic position inherently is subject to the criticism that it does little to foster any paradigmatic development. However, strategy in the educational leadership context is an area of practice and application, where practitioner trends have led the way and scholars are left to play catch up to understand the continually changing context. A limitation of this context is that occasionally practitioner trends can take a very narrow or incorrect focus. This renders the construct unlikely to ever be governed by a single definition. However, what is needed is a conceptual understanding and articulation of the fundamental dimensions of strategy to refocus research.

Table 5 contains a sample of definitions of strategy within the fields of educational leadership and strategy. This table enables the reader to compare those definitions which occurred in the literature sample of this study with those also present in the field (primarily appearing in books and book chapters) and against the actual field of strategy.

The very nature of strategy draws on numerous disciplines. Recent work by Nag *et al.* (2007) drew on a sample of boundary-spanning scholars (those who primarily publish in disciplines other than strategy, yet regularly contribute to the field of strategy) and asked them to define what constituted the field of strategic management. Table 6 contains the responses from participants.

51

Table 5. Representative definitions of strategy from the fields of education and strategy

Author/s	Definition
Education	
Jones, A. (1987)	[a need for strategy] the ability to articulate a coherent framework or philosophy, a set of overarching goals which mean something to the members of the whole school community.
Sanyal and Martin (1992)	… the determination of the basic, long term goals and objectives of an educational system, the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.
El Hout (1994)	Strategy is very much a state of mind, a way of addressing and making important organizational decisions on a daily basis. [strategic thinking] is not just concerned with what, but with why, not objectives, but paths and relationships, not checklists but processes.
Fidler (1996)	The long-term future of an organization
Quong *et al.* (1998)	Selecting a destination, figuring out the best way of getting there, then explaining how you have arrived.
Johnson and Scholes (2003)	[a strategic leader] an individual upon whom strategy development and change are seen to be dependent. They are individuals personally identified with and central to the strategy of their organization: their personality or reputation may result in others willingly deferring to such an individual and seeing strategy development as his or her province.
Strategy	
Learned *et al.* (1965)	[This definition is of business policy, the precursor of strategic management] Policy is the study of the functions and responsibilities of general management and the problems which affect the character and success of the total enterprise.
Schendel and Hofer (1979)	Strategic management is a process that deals with entrepreneurial work of the organization, with organizational renewal and growth, and, more particularly, with developing and utilizing the strategy which is to guide the organization's operations.
Van Cauwenbergh and Cool (1982)	Strategic management deals with the formulation aspects (policy) and the implementation aspects (organization) of calculated behavior in new situations and is the basis for future administration when repetition of circumstances occur.
Schendel and Cool (1988)	Strategic management is essentially work associated with the term entrepreneur and his function of starting (and given the infinite life of corporations) renewing organizations.
Rumelt *et al.* (1994)	Strategic management is about the direction of organizations, most often, business firms. It includes those subjects of primary concern to senior management, or to anyone seeking reasons for success and failure among organizations.
Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996)	The study of strategic leadership focuses on the executives who have overall responsibility for an organization – their characteristics, what they do, and how they do it; and how they affect organizational outcomes.
Bowman *et al.* (2002)	The strategic management field can be conceptualized as one centered on problems relating to the creation and sustainability of competitive advantage, or the pursuit of rents.

Table 6. Representative definitions espoused by four sets of boundary-spanning scholars
(taken from Nag *et al.*, 2007, p. 946)

Field	Espoused definitions
Economics	1. The strategic management field is – positively – the scientific study of the plans that firms build to implement in order to achieve and maintain competitive advantage, and – normatively – the attempt to identify optimal plans for achieving and maintaining competitive advantages.
	2. A field aimed at understanding competitive heterogeneity.
	3. Strategic management is the interdisciplinary field that studies the behavior of companies and other market parties, in terms of their strategic behavior, the choices they make with regard to organizing their production, their interrelationships, and their competitive positioning. All of this set against a thorough understanding of the broader environment in which companies have to operate.
Sociology	4. The study of firms' performance from a platform of tangible and intangible resources in an evolving environment that includes their market and value network.
	5. I think of the field relatively broadly. I would say that it encompasses the definition and implementation of an organizational course of action. Central to the determination of those actions is an understanding of the relationship between choices available to a manager and firm performance (which I would define far more broadly than profitability to include dimensions such as innovation and survival). Hence, most research in the field either concerns understanding the links between organizational actions (routines) and performance outcomes, or considers how one actually goes about changing these routines.
	6. The study of how organizations create value, including not only 'the plan' but also the organizational configuration that it is combined with.
Marketing	7. It is a field about what drives performance of certain businesses and which strategy works.
	8. I view the field of strategic management as eclectic, involving all the various business functions such as finance, marketing, supply chain, economics, psychology, statistics, etc. More specifically, it involves firm boundaries, market and competitive analysis, strategic positions and dynamics, and internal organizations.
	9. The field looks at substantive and process issues such as strategy content, governance mechanisms, strategy choices, market driven strategy, choices of market, advantage, value propositions, configuration, reacting to markets, and structure, Governance, CEO, leader, strategic choices.
Management	10. Developing an explanation of firm performance by understanding the roles of external and internal environments, positioning and managing within these environments and relating competencies and advantages to opportunities within external environments.
	11. Strategic management is the process of building capabilities that allow a firm to create value for customers, shareholders, and society while operating in competitive markets.
	12. The study of decisions and actions taken by top executives/TMTs for firms to be competitive in the marketplace.

Central themes to emerge from reading the definitions of boundary spanning scholars include competition, course of actions, environments or markets, firm performance and to a lesser extent, key actors (e.g. CEO, top executives). Strategy scholars were more inclined to align the field with organizational renewal (including contextual issues) and managerial actions (including entrepreneurship). In both cases, emerging themes could be linked with either leader-centric or social-organizational perspectives. Educational leadership scholars too used goals / direction setting and pro-activity (arguably aspects of organizational renewal) with leadership patterns, philosophy and meaning making (leader centric). What was however notably absent in the definitions from the educational leadership scholars was the notion of competition or market ideology, a central element of the strategy and boundary spanning definitions.

Unit of analysis: For research on the application of strategy in education, the selection of a unit of analysis is a critical conceptual choice that has implications for the theoretical development of an argument. Research on the strategic role of school leaders is concerned with individual decision makers, management teams, departments, divisions, firms, populations of like-firms and whole industries and organization fields (St John, 2005). However, unlike other research fields that may successfully isolate their unit of analysis from contextual influences, strategy researchers must consider their unit of analysis within a larger context, arguably a rationale for the use of theories from the wider social sciences. The unit of analysis proved a difficult lens through which to examine the literature in the identified knowledge base. In the corporate world, the unit of analysis used in strategy research may include chief executive officers, executive teams, board of directors or entire

firms. In contrast the works surveyed in the sample primarily focus on plans or the linear rational process of constructing a plan. This represents a significant flaw in research on the strategic role of educational leaders. Focusing solely on a plan or the planning process implies that strategy is merely the formulation of a plan or priorities (commonly referred to as 'strategic process' or 'strategic choice' research). This excludes other aspects of strategy such as implementation, evaluation, cycles and the subtle ebbs and flows of power in relationships. This limited scope in the research commits what Mitroff (1974) refers to as a Type III error, it may be interesting to some, although this could be debated elsewhere, but it fails to develop and contribute to the debate of what is strategy. With the exception of Davies and Davies (2004) and other sporadic examples (Dimmock & Walker, 2004; Leggate & Thompson, 1997; Murgatroyd, 1991; Neumann & Neumann, 1999) the focus on a plan as if it were an inanimate object restricts strategy research and teaching to a mechanistic perspective.

Theoretical perspective: The vast majority of works in the sample make no explicit links to the four perspectives discussed earlier in this chapter. Caldwell (2004) and Glover (1990) who used transformational leadership and SBM respectively were exceptions. Alternate conceptual perspectives, the choice of the word conceptual as opposed to theoretical is deliberate, used include the balanced scoresheet (Bell, 2003; Kettunen, 2005), whole school design (Dimmock & Walker, 2004), Johnson and Scholes' (1988) strategic management model (Tsiakkiros & Pashiardis, 2002), control theory versus chaos theory (Hargreaves, 1995), marketing (Bunnell, 2005) and entrepreneurship (McWilliam, 2000; Woods, Woods, & Gunter, 2007).

The literature on the strategic role of the school leader is arguably written for an audience of practitioners. The theoretical perspectives taken in the identified works serve the knowledge requirements of school leaders as opposed to fostering any form of theoretical evolution of the construct. The managerial, practical orientation of the literature is atheoretical, non-rigorous, jargonistic and commonsensical. In what can only be described as a rejection of logical empiricism, scholars investigating the strategic role of school leaders have reduced their work to that of description. While not advocating that researchers adopt one theoretical perspective to the exclusion of others, as such a dogmatic approach will offer little to the topic, there is a call for greater theoretical underpinnings in the scholarship on the topic. Rather than urging researchers to retreat to a state of disciplinary isolation or specialization (Thomas & Pruett, 1993), building on from Thomas and Carroll (1992), it is more sensible to adopt the viewpoint the phenomenon of the strategic role of the school leader can be, and often should be, viewed through more than one lens. In the spirit of a balanced discussion and theoretical pluralism, the clashes of different perspectives may stimulate thought and help to extend existing theories and / or develop new ones.

Causal models: Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) define causal logic as "the underlying set of relationships among major constructs that form the basis for propositions tested, generated, or implied" (p. 333). Causal models present predicted relationships between administrator behaviors and outcomes variables in a variety of ways (Pitner, 1988). These are present in both conceptual and empirical works, as most works either propose a relationship or test a particular relationship. Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) use four

56

constructs (strategic leadership, environment, firm performance, organization form or conduct) to conceptualize causal models in strategy research. For this analysis, strategic leadership refers to any aspect of leadership by the principal (whether characteristics or behaviors). The environment is defined as any external stimulus on the school (e.g., contextual changes, legislation, market place uncertainty). Organization form and conduct includes all aspects of the school that are not from the strategic leadership construct. Performance refers to the school's effectiveness, as indicated by such factors as enrolment, exam results and student learning.

Using these four constructs to distinguish the causal models used in strategy research, it is possible to classify causal models into four categories: as an independent construct, dependent construct, moderator construct, or both an independent and dependent construct (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996). Strategic leadership as an independent construct implies that strategic leadership has an effect on performance or organization form or conduct. When portrayed as a dependent construct implies that the environment, organization form or conduct or performance affects strategic leadership. Strategic leadership as a moderator construct implies that strategic leadership when linked with a second construct affects a third construct. When portrayed as an independent and dependent construct simultaneously implies that strategic leadership effects strategic leadership. Weick (1995) explains, strategist act, and in doing so they create the constraints and opportunities they encounter. Pondy and Mitroff (1979) define strategic leadership as an "enacted phenomenon" (p. 17). One where the strategist plays a major role in producing the market they face. Table 7 provides a breakdown of the different types of relationships examined or proposed in the works identified in the sample.

Table 7. Types of causal models

Types of causal models			No. of works
Strategic leadership as an independent construct			16
Strategic leadership	→	Organization form or conduct	7
Strategic leadership	→	Performance	9
Strategic leadership as a dependent construct			19
Environment	→	Strategic leadership	14
Organization form or conduct	→	Strategic leadership	4
Performance	→	Strategic leadership	1
Strategic leadership as a moderator construct			11
Environment and Strategic leadership	→	Organization form or conduct	1
Environment and Strategic leadership	→	Performance	4
Organization form or conduct and Strategic leadership	→	Performance	6
Performance and Strategic leadership	→	Organization form or conduct	0
Strategic leadership as an independent and dependent construct simultaneously			5
Strategic leadership	→	Strategic leadership	5

Note: Some works were assigned to more than one category.

It is evident that strategy has been most frequently modeled as a dependent construct, especially as dependent on the environment. This analysis shows that the research on strategy in the sample with a clearly identifiable causal model viewed the environment and strategic leadership as closely aligned. Unfortunately it was unclear what causal model was used in some of the works as many simply describe / propose a strategic planning process. Analysis such as this has the potential to broaden our understanding of how strategy affects and is affected by organizational constructs.

Underlying assumptions: The final conceptual attribute analyzed was the underlying assumption about strategic work. Although most authors fail to explicitly identify and outline the core assumptions that underlie their work, "virtually all researchers make such assumptions" (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996, p. 337). It is significantly important for the development of the topic and the field in general that the underlying perspectives of works are uncovered as they assist others to understand the author's point of view and by implication, the complexity and sophistication of the field's collective research. As stated earlier, planning and the planning process has been a major feature of strategy research within education. This had lead to a situation where the management of such processes, usually referred to 'strategic management', has been limited to a model of rational decision making. Levačić & Glover (1997; 1998) label this as a 'technicist-rational' approach. This approach is consistent with what Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) call 'strategic rationality', where the manager's task is to "identify techno-economic opportunities and problems, systematically search for and weigh alternatives, and make choices that maximize firm performance" (p. 337). Frequent reference is made to models of collaborative leadership and involving others in the process, implying that strategic leadership and management is a shared responsibility. Some articles make explicit reference to political or legal contexts (such as the *Education Reform Act*) shaping the strategic process (Bell & Chan, 2005; Giles, 1995; McNarmara *et al.*, 2002; Radford *et al.*, 2003). Symbolism is not explored as a form of strategic leadership and management in the literature. This possibly suggests an instrumental bias in the collective perceptions of what educational leaders do. Assumptions concerned with linear rational planning and decision making are based on the simplistic model of strategy such as the one proposed by Johnson

and Scholes (1988) which includes strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategic implementation and change. Davies (2004b) argues that Johnson and Scholes (1988) is a significantly overused perspective of strategy in the field of educational leadership. The work of Bryson (2004) in the public and not for profit sector is also becoming increasingly popular in some parts of the world. For strategy to continue to develop as an educational leadership construct in its own right, scholars must begin to see strategy as more than the rational process of writing and implementing a plan.

In summary, the analysis indicates that the conceptual characteristics of research on strategy in schools have yet to exhibit considerable stability during the last 27 years (Table 8 provides an overview of the previous discussion). The concept of strategy remains misunderstood and is commonly poorly applied. However, recent works indicate a shift towards a more integrated conceptual model of strategic leadership in schools. The elusiveness of strategy as a concept has posed considerable issues for researchers when selecting a unit for analysis. The conceptual framework provided by Davies and Davies (2004) should signify a shift towards the strategists who make strategic decisions rather than the eventual document they produce. This will allow for better analysis and testing of causal models in the area within a more integrated view of strategy in education. When these themes are brought together, the picture of strategy in education that emerges is far more complex than the prescribed rational model of strategic management. Instead, the strategic role is characterized by constraints, limitations, flaws and biases similar to those faced by the practicing strategists on a daily basis.

Table 8. Summary of conceptual features as present in the knowledge base.

Conceptual feature	As present in the knowledge base
Defining strategy	There is no agreement as to what strategy is. Practitioner trends (such as the *Education Reform Act*, 1988 in the UK) have led developments on the topic. There has been a tendency to produce lists of traits or characteristics that strategic leaders / managers display or exhibit rather than conceptually developing the features of the strategic role.
Unit of analysis	Primarily limited to a 'plan' or a planning process.
Theoretical perspective	Limited use of theory. Much of the work would be considered descriptions of practice or 'how to' rather than advancing the theoretical understanding of the strategic role.
Causal model	Most frequently a model of 'dependence', usually on the school's environment / context. Despite the rhetoric of the field calling for participative leadership, the strategic role was rarely portrayed as inter-dependent. Work discussed the role as dependent, or independent in 35 out of 40 cases (see Table 7).
Underlying assumptions	Strategy was most often explicitly linked to planning or a plan.

Possible Theory Developments within Strategy in Education

The fragmented nature and diverse scope of previous research on the strategic role of school leaders suggests that it would be a complex and difficult task to develop a theoretical framework for the strategic role within the unique context of educational institutions. This complexity and difficulty calls for scholars to initially focus on integrating specific elements of the strategic role to establish a common framework from which future theoretical contributions can be derived. However, our knowledge of the strategic role of school leaders is limited and is mostly based on normative or descriptive studies and on assumptions most of which remain untested.

Establishing such a theoretical framework from which scholars can draw specific testable relationships is a critical task for inquiry into the strategic role of school leaders. The development of such a theoretical base would facilitate the efforts of scholars to create significant streams of research as part of the pathway to legitimacy for research on the strategic role of school leaders and the development of a widely recognized research tradition. Adapting Ireland *et al.* (2005) work on entrepreneurship research to the strategic role of school leaders, Table 9 summarizes the main recommendations following from the points covered in the previous discussion.

Table 9. Theory recommendations for research on the strategic role of school leaders (Adapted from Ireland *et al.*, 2005).

Aspect	Recommendations
General theory development	• Explicate the how, why and when of relationships among a set of variables
	• Specify necessary assumptions for testable relationships
Definitional issues	• Define strategy in the way it is being used in schools
	• Specify the boundaries of the chosen definition of the strategic role in schools
Applying theories from other disciplines	• Articulate main assertions and assumptions of the theory
	• Discuss applicability to the strategic role in schools
	• Discuss how the assertions / assumptions remain the same or change when used to form theory-driven testable relationships dealing with strategy in schools questions
Strategic leadership in education -specific theories	• Expand on theories of the strategic school leader and of strategic opportunity
	• Continue to focus on ways to appropriately develop specific theories about strategy in schools

A preliminary step within theory development should be establishing a model or framework for the strategic role of school leaders that can be empirically tested. Developing such a model requires the identification of a set of coherent dimensions of the role that are at least somewhat shared in the current literature base. That being said, it is a

frequently acknowledged fact that there exists a conceptual incoherence in literature on leadership in education inquiry (Leithwood & Duke, 1999; Richmon & Allison, 2003; Stogdill, 1974).

The primary concern was to develop a suggestive model that identifies major, yet wholly distinct dimensions of the strategic role of school leaders. In developing this integrated framework, an attempt was made to balance epistemic criteria such as simplicity, explanatory power and comprehensiveness. It is believed that the model reflects and captures the breadth and depth of the diverse landscape of the strategic role of school leaders. To construct the model, the literature base was analyzed for the explicit or implicit dimensions of the strategic role being described.

Five broad conceptual dimensions of the strategic role were derived from an analysis of the literature base. While it may be possible to find similar distinctions in the literature, there does not appear to be any concerted effort to organize the topic in this way. The five dimensions are *envisioning*, *engaging*, *articulating*, *implementing* and *monitoring*. Although the majority of models propose strategic leadership or management to be a linear process, the core logic of this model is that the strategic role is iterative and cannot solely be confined to a linear model.

Envisioning: This requires the school leader and greater school community to think about the future of the school. When an enrolling parent walks through the school gate, the staff and other key personnel within the school should be able to articulate what the school is striving for and what parents can expect throughout their child's time at the school. To undertake this process requires critical reflection and reflective dialogue. This reflection

needs to form the foundations of strategic thinking, moving the debates from the day to day to the future of the school and in time, to discuss where the school is heading. Essential to this process is building metaphors or images of a desire future and ensuring that there is a shared conceptual or mental image of how to get there. There are many different versions of how a school can establish a strategic direction/vision (Cheung & Cheng, 1996, 1997; Eacott, 2006a; Jordan & Webb, 1986; Kundu, 1991; Milliken & Gallagher, 1998; Petridou & Chatzipanagiotou, 2004; Sallis, 1990; Tsiakkiros & Pashiardis, 2002), however what is important is the meaningful involvement of key stakeholders. The underlying assumptions of this dimension are consistent with the work of Mintzberg (2003) and the notion that strategy is about seeing as much as it is about thinking. He believes that the strategic role is best described by the analogy of 'finding the diamond in the rough'. Mintzberg argues that strategy is not about a big picture at all, rather lots of hard and messy digging (in the form of critical reflection). Each strategist then needs to construct (strategic thinking) his or her own perspective from the details dug up (mental models of the future). The involvement of others, in the form of stakeholders, leads into the discussion of the next dimension, engagement and the underlying notion of social space, present in Bourdieu's work on strategy.

Engaging: Research on effective schools has shown that parental involvement in decision making and activities positively correlates with increased satisfaction and support for the school (Gamage, 1998). Similarly, staff participation is linked to job satisfaction, increased morale and building trust and confidence in leadership (Timperley & Robinson, 2000). Engaging requires the school community to have a strategic conversation, often led by the

principal, but this does not have to be the case. These conversations build on critical reflection, establish purpose for actions and encourage a culture of reflection and dialogue on strategic matters and the future direction of the school. Involving as wide a group as possible provides richer sources of data on the school to inform discussion and debate. If done well, it can give others the feeling that their contribution is important, recognized and can make a different. The effective engagement of others allows for the support, development and / or mentoring of other strategic leaders within the school.

Once the school has a strategy, it becomes the guiding framework for all decisions within the organization. Decisions made at the organizational, staff, student and community levels need to align with the overarching strategy of the institution. The systems and structures designed at the organizational level, for example, meeting structures, communication systems and decision making models, need to reflect the institution's strategy. The professional learning opportunities offered to staff, pedagogical practices and annual reviews need to meaningfully reflect the overarching strategy (Eacott, 2004). The expectation of students and their role within the organization needs to reflect the basic premises of the strategy. In essence, the school's strategy becomes the blueprint for action (Fidler, 1989) or the touchstone to keep the school focused (Eacott, 2007c).

Bourdieu's notion of strategy has three underlying assumptions, socio-cultural space, materials/resources and timing. Of particular interest in the discussion of engagement is his take on the concept of membership:

> Membership is constructed, negotiated, bargained over, ventured. Here again, one must transcend the opposition between the voluntartistic subjectivisim and the scientistic and realistic objectivism that coexist in the Marxist tradition. In some societies, such as ours, distances are measured in amounts of capital, just as, in other societies, genealogical space

defines distances, proximities and affinities, aversions and incompatibities, in short, probabilities of entering into truly unified groups, families, clubs, or mobilized classes. It is in the struggle over classifications, a struggle aimed at imposing such and such a way of carving up this space, at unifying or dividing, etc., that real rapproachments are defined (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 120).

The manner in which the school leader goes about their strategic role, who he or she engages with and how they engage with them is of vital importance in understanding the role of the school leader. The nature of the social space, significantly influences the strategic role, in both its conceptual development and its implementation.

Articulating: The articulation of strategy has been the primary point of focus in the literature, generally through the perspective of written articulation, most often in the form of a plan. However there exists other means of articulation such as oral and structural. There three inter-related levels of articulation allow for the school's strategy to be witnessed in a broad range of activities. Oral articulation involves not only articulating the institutional vision / direction, but also bringing it to life through conversations and dialogue (Davies & Davies, 2006). Written articulation involves distinguishing between daily operations and strategic operations and articulating, in writing, a small set of deliverable objectives that the institution can achieve and on which it can focus its efforts. Structural articulation requires the school to be aligned (e.g. curriculum teams, strategic priority teams) in a manner that is consistent with the strategic direction, and integrated into all aspects of organizational life. Dimmock and Walker (2004) discuss this concept from the perspective of a 'learning-centered' organization. An alternate lens for this is purposeful infrastructure (Eacott, 2007c).

Implementing: This dimension is primarily concerned with how the school's strategy is enacted. Its central aspect is translating strategy into action, establishing frameworks and ensuring that they become actions (Davies & Davies, 2006). Building on from other dimensions, implementation requires that staff understand the school's strategy and maintain a commitment to enacting that strategy. However, as with the debate in change management discourse about change versus quality improvement, it is imperative that strategic actions aim to significantly improve current operations by developing the capabilities of others. The timing of implementation is also important, actions may be sequential or parallel, but it is desirable that the school initiate changes when the school needs them and before external constraints or conditions dictate them. This is consistent with Bourdieu's discussion of the 'feel for the game' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu, strategy is not conscious, individual rational choice, rather appropriate actions taken without conscious reflection. Strategy entails moves in the game that are based on mastery of its logic, acquired through experience, part of habitus (Bourdieu, 1990a). This allows for actions to be "guided by constraints, as well as for improvisation, different levels of skill, and different choices to be made in particular situations" (Lingard *et al.*, 2003, p. 67).

Monitoring: Public trust and dependence on professional judgment has been replaced with trust in "mechanisms of explicit, transparent, systematic public accountability" (Ranson, 2003, p. 468). Schools, and implicitly, school leaders experience strong demands for school performance and improvement from government agencies, parents and the business

community (Heck, 1992; Molnar, 2006; Witziers, Bosker, & Kruger, 2003). As such, monitoring and evaluation are two crucial elements of the strategic role. Educational leaders need to be constantly asking themselves and others, Where are we now? Where to next? How will we get there? How will we know when we get there? There is a need for a transparent system of data collection (this is evident in the ever expanding literature on evidence based practice) to enable effective monitoring and pre-determined points of evaluation, which should align with the schools chosen strategic direction. Vital to the success of this dimension is developing the analytical skills of others to ensure thorough evaluation. Essential elements of this dimension include systematic monitoring procedures, continuous monitoring, evaluative judgments, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy.

Table 10 displays a sample of the works from the knowledge base used in this chapter and their alignment to the identified dimensions. Prior to finalizing the model, additional works on the strategic role of school leaders (Bush & Coleman, 2000; Davies & Ellison, 1992, 1999, 2003; Fidler, 1996, 2002b; Fidler & Bowles, 1989; Kaufman, 1992b; Middlewood & Lumby, 1998) were consulted. The purpose of this consultation was to ensure that the proposed dimensions were consistent with a wider scope of works in the field. The proposed dimensions were consistently evident in the wider scope of literature.

To further test the proposed dimensions, they were compared with work from the field of strategy. Again the dimensions were analyzed against those present in works on the strategic role of corporate executives. While recognizing that schools are different to businesses, it was assumed that the broad dimensions of the strategic role would be relatively consistent across all forms of leadership and management. Once again, the broad

dimensions were consistently evident in the literature (Boyd *et al.*, 2005; Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996; Lengnick-Hall & Wolff, 1999; Lowendahl & Revang, 1998; Papadakis, Lioukas, & Chambers, 1998; Rumelt, 1979; Schendel, 1994; Westphal & Fredrickson, 2001).

Table 10. A sample of literature and its conformity to the proposed model of the strategic role of the public primary school principal

Lead Author	Envision	Engage	Articulate	Implement	Monitor	Other
Broadhead (1996)	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Bunnell (2005)	✓	✓	✓		✓	Marketing
Crandall (1986)	✓	✓	✓			
Davies (2006)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Davies (1998)			✓	✓	✓	
Davies (1998)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Futures
Dimmock (2004)			✓			
Fidler (1998)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Giles (1995)			✓			
Glover (1990)		✓	✓	✓		
Hatton (2001)		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hutchinson (1993)				✓	✓	
Jones (1991)		✓				
Jones (1996)		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kettunen (2005)			✓	✓		
Lantz (1984)		✓		✓	✓	
Leggate (1997)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MacGilchrist (1997)		✓	✓	✓		
Mawhinney (1994)	✓	✓				
McNarmara (2002)	✓				✓	
McTavish (2006)				✓		
Milliken (1998)	✓		✓			
Neumann (1999)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
O'Donoghue (1996)	✓	✓	✓			
Pashiardis (1996)	✓	✓	✓			
Radford (2003)		✓				
Sallis (1990)	✓	✓	✓			
Thody (1991)	✓	✓	✓			
Tsiakkiros (2002)	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Wallace (1991)	✓	✓	✓			
Warnett (1994)	✓	✓	✓			
Wong (2005)	✓	✓	✓	✓		Identity

Additional literature consulted included work on strategic thinking and actions (Boisot, 2003; Caldwell, 2006; Fullan, 1993; Mintzberg, 2003) and criticisms of the application of strategy in education (Bell, 1998, 2002; Bell & Chan, 2005; Mulford, 1994; Ponting, 2005; Rice & Schneider, 1994). Again, the broad dimensions of the model were consistent with contemporary understanding of the strategic role and sufficiently broad to not conform to the key criticism (not focused on teaching and learning) of the concept of strategy in education.

The broad dimensions also represent an evolutionary process of the current research program of the author based on previously published works (Eacott, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008a, 2008b), analysis of work based practice while a school executive and the outcomes of workshops conducted with over 300 principals, school executives, teachers and graduate students on the strategic role of educational leaders.

A key feature of the proposed model of the strategic role of school leaders is that it is not about strategic leadership or strategic management. Rather than becoming involved in a debate over leadership and management, this model suggests that the strategic role of the school leader is just that, a strategic role. An examination of popular leadership theories leads to an array of strategic actions. Further to this argument is the notion of the 'educational strategist'. Having moved beyond the strategic leader or strategic manager construct, it is possible to see the role of the school leader as one of educational strategist, where leadership behaviors and management processes are targeted towards the enhancement of the school's educational programs (addressing the concerns of major critics of the role of strategy in education) and most importantly towards student development (the choice of the word development is deliberate, as it represents a more holistic view of the

student as opposed to 'achievement' which is frequently used and synonymous with test scores). This suggests that the principal can draw on knowledge, understandings and skills from anywhere (including the corporate sector) as long as they are implemented in a manner that is consistent with the purpose and core values of the school. This is where a school leader can have the most significant influence on the development of students.

The underlying assumptions of this model are theoretically informed by Pierre Bourdieu and his writings on strategy. Of particular relevance are the notions of social space, evident in the engagement of others, physical materials, evident in the implementation and structural articulation of strategy, and the temporal aspects of strategy, primarily evident in the timing of implementation.

Of course, methodological issues are as important in the theory development process, especially with respect to the continuing evolution of research on the strategic role of school leaders. Having now established a model for testing, the next chapter turns the discussion to identifying the key methodological choices that have been made by scholars when investigating the strategic role of school leaders.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodological Issues and Strategy in Education Research

Although the topics of educational leadership have generated a great deal of scholarly interest internationally over the years, reviewers have generally suggested it has not been an area given to rigorous empirical investigation and knowledge accumulation (Bridges, 1982; Erickson, 1967). Gorard (2005) suggests that the difference between educational leadership research and other education research is the uniformity of methods used, mainly small scale qualitative work with little transparency and no comparison groups. He further adds that the lack of inclusion in the Social Science Citation Index of the majority of educational leadership and management journals is perhaps itself an indicator of the non-impact of research in the field. Lumby, Foskett and Fidler (2005) add that there is a dearth of literature which deals with the nature, adequacy and possibilities of methodology specifically in relationship to educational leadership and management. Despite producing a special issue of *EMAL* on 'Researching educational leadership and management', edited by Lumby, Foskett and Fidler, very little, if any, attention is given to defining what is meant by the term 'methodology'. For the purpose of this thesis, methodology is defined as the bringing together of theory and research methods. This has significant implications for research. It positions research as inquiry into questions derived from an understanding of theory and the selection of the most appropriate methods to answer those questions.

As a field of inquiry educational leadership is dominated by a pragmatic empirical approach (Scheerens, 1997). The cognitive development of the field is still at the 'discovery orientation' not empirically oriented studies (Eacott, 2008b). Despite support for a science

of educational administration (Allison, 2001; Griffiths, 1985) since the 1990s the vision of educational administration has shifted from the search for a quantifiable scientific fact to the qualitative study of school leadership, dedicated to a socially responsive practice (Maxcy, 2001; Scheurich, 1997). Donmoyer (2001) argued that educational leadership is not well served when academics think of it as an academic discipline like theoretical physics, or even applied sociology or engineering. Drawing on the work of Toulmin (1972; 1993), Donmoyer argued that educational administration should be thought of as a 'public policy field' as opposed to a discipline. This poses a major struggle in selection of research methods and the links with theory. Educational administration in public policy terms builds on Aristotle's (1932) and more recently Schon's (1983; 1991) distinction between theoretical and practical problems. Theoretical problems are about general truth, usually linked to disciplines, whereas practical problems are about particular choices and actions. While in disciplines or sciences, overtime the superiority of one theory over another is recognized and the members of the field rally around the theory that is most useful in achieving the purpose of the field, in public policy both values and facts must be taken into account when deciding on a course of action (Donmoyer, 2001). There can be no one general theory and members must adopt theoretical pluralism within the field.

The theoretical evolution of a concept can be enhanced or constrained by the selection of methods. The alignment of theory and research method is pivotal to the success of a project and the significance of its findings. Only by having an understanding of the methods applied in the past and present study of the topic can we truly understand the conceptual development of the topic under investigation. In this chapter, the knowledge base identified in chapter two is subjected to a systematic review of research methods.

73

From the analysis, a series of methodological recommendations are proposed which serve to position the work of this thesis in the broader field and more specifically, previous work on the strategic role in educational institutions.

<center>*Current State of Empirical Strategy in Education Research*</center>

As might be expected, a variety of design and research methods have been made across studies of the strategic role of school leaders. As with the theoretical issues discussed in the previous chapter, the focus is on a small set of key characteristics that describe the methods employed in the work. The key characteristics are sampling (both size and strategy), data sources, statistical techniques and the time frame of the study. This selection of characteristics is consistent with previous work by Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) and Eacott (2008a) and represents the most commonly found methodological choices reported on in empirical journal articles. As this section is focused on the details of research methods, it only examines empirical studies ($n= 42$).

Sampling

The sample of a study operates at two inter-related but distinct levels: the first being the strategy for selection; and the second, the size. Investigating the knowledge base for sampling strategy provided additional insight into the nature of knowledge on the topic. Bergh *et al.* (2004) believe that most researchers' natural inclination is to use samples where they expect to find support for their hypothesized relationships. The most frequently used sampling strategy was that of 'convenience' (see Table 11). One potential reason for

that occurrence is that educational research is frequently not well supported or funded by external agencies, making it difficult to conduct large scale studies. Alternatively, although somewhat negative, educational leadership researchers may not conform to conventional scientific approaches of sample selection. This is also evident in the relatively low attention given to statistical power and effect sizes in educational leadership research.

Table 11. Sampling strategy applied in the literature on the strategic role

Strategy	n
Convenience	14
Population	4
Purposive	9
Random	1
Representative	4
Unclear	10

The sample size used in the empirical research on strategic leadership in schools varied immensely. The largest sample size in the sample was a questionnaire returned by 505 participants. The smallest sample was a single participant. A moderating factor on sample size was the data source. As data sourced through observation is generally more difficult to obtain, the expectation would be for smaller sample size. In contrast, data sourced through document analysis or questionnaire is easier to obtain and consequently a larger sample size might be expected. Table 12 displays the examples of sample size cited in the sample. Some questionnaire based studies made reference to the response rates. These ranged from 37%-94%, with an average response rate of 69.42%.

Table 12. Sample size by data source

Data Source	Smallest Sample	Largest Sample	Unclear	Average Sample
Archival / document analysis	1	124	0	62
Observation	1	5	2	5
Interview	5	47	2	16
Questionnaire	30	505	1	135

Data Sources

Data sources have been categorized into four types – archival / document analysis, observation, interview and questionnaire. Each empirical work was assigned to at least one of the four types of data sources. Data derived from questionnaires was the most frequently employed (42.86%; n=18). Observation was the least frequently employed data source (16.67%; n=7). Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) acknowledge the difficulty in studying strategy through observation primarily because strategic leadership / management behaviors and their results are only evident after a time delay. They also infer that strategy research may suffer from a reliance on sterile archival and survey data. However, interviews were used to collect data in 35.71% (n=15) of studies, and interviews were often used in collaboration with questionnaire or archival data (26.19%, n=11) to provide a richer picture in some studies. Table 13 shows the frequency of data sources used in the sample.

Table 14 provides a comparison of the results from similar studies within the field of strategic management and one from education. Although each of these studies does not cover the same sample or deliver the same detail, several interesting findings emerge. Work from the field of strategic management has a higher frequency of data derived from

archives and questionnaires whereas education based work (using both the sample of this thesis and Eacott, 2008b) indicates a far greater propensity for interviews and even observation. This is a positive of educational leadership based work on strategy as Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) stated that despite the attraction of archival data (relatively low cost of obtaining and superior reliability), it does raise concerns of research becoming sterile with considerable leadership activities being lost in a 'black box'.

Table 13. Data sources over time

| | Time Period | | | | | | |
Data Source	1980-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-00	2001-05	2006-07	Total
Archival / document analysis	0	1	4	6	2	2	15
Observation	0	0	1	1	5	0	7
Interviews / focus groups	0	0	1	5	7	2	15
Survey / questionnaire	1	0	3	10	3	1	18
Unclear	1	0	2	3	1	0	7

Table 14. Comparison of similar studies of data sources in strategy research

	Saunders and Thompson (1980)	Hambrick (1986)	Shrivastava and Lim (1989)	Schwenk and Dalton (1991)	Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996)	Eacott (2008a)
Period reviewed	1979	1980-1985	1960-1982	1986-1987	1980-1994	1980-2005
N	18	23	98	91	109	36
Sources						
Archival	39%	65%	28%	49%	68%	25%
Questionnaire	39%	39%	28%	32%	33%	44%
Interview	50%	43%	33%	5%	22%	42%
Observation	28%	0%	0%	0%	2%	8%
Experiment	11%	0%	11%	3%	6%	0%

Measurement

The use of statistical techniques in the works was examined to develop an understanding of how researchers have investigated the phenomenon of strategy in education. Very few studies made use of statistical techniques beyond reporting on percentages, frequencies or means (n=6). Of the 42 empirical works, 19 drew on quantitative techniques. The dominant mode of analysis was reporting the frequency or percentage of activities. Some examples did draw on more complex analysis. Brock (1997) used a z-test, Kriemadis (1997) used a chi-square, Goldring and Pastnerack (1994) used discriminant analysis, Leithwood *et al.* (2004) called upon correlations, Levačić and Glover (1998) used ANOVA and Midthassel *et al.* (2000) called on the greatest number of techniques using t-test, correlations, path analysis, and parameter estimates.

Overall, statistical techniques were rarely used in the interpretation of data. This is not to prescribe the use of statistical techniques in the study of the strategic role. In many cases, the specific research question/s of the work (e.g. How do school leaders go about school development planning?) does not require the use of statistical techniques. Despite a variety of alternate methods (e.g. cluster analysis, event history) no analytical techniques have gained prominence. The conservatism of approach (mere description) counters the complaint that researchers use more complex statistical techniques than necessary (Daft, 1986). While it remains unclear as to whether different techniques would yield better insights, the move toward a wider set of statistical methods, assuming that they are empirically appropriate, "would at least help ensure that we are not unnecessarily

constrained to established approaches, and it might even help establish the robustness of our findings" (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996, p. 349).

In addition, despite calls for statistical reform in educational leadership (Byrd, 2007), education as a discipline (Thompson, 1996) and other disciplines such as marketing (Sawyer & Ball, 1981) and strategy research (Mazen, Hemmasi, & Lewis, 1987), not to mention the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA), the use of confidence intervals and effect sizes was not reported in any study in the sample.

Time Frame

The empirical works from the sample were examined in relation to the dynamism embedded in the research. They have been viewed as to whether the data used in the research was cross sectional or longitudinal. Of the 42 works, 32 were cross-sectional (76.19%) and 10 were longitudinal (23.81%). This pattern is consistent with previous work by Hambrick (1986), Schwenk and Dalton (1991)**,** Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) and Eacott (2008a). Cross sectional methods have remained the pre-dominant mode of analysis in empirical strategy research since its inception (Bowen & Wiersma, 1999).

Possible Methodological Developments on the Strategic Role of School Leaders

The evidence presented in this chapter portrays a topic of inquiry that is constrained by the choices of methods made by those investigating. The sampling strategies applied by researchers have primarily been limited to that of convenience. As such, research on the topic can not always be generalized beyond the target population. When this is combined

with the notion that researchers in the field do not acknowledge one another's work, it is easy to see that cumulative knowledge and theory testing has been limited. The data sources used by scholars were diverse, with greater use of removed modes of study (e.g. questionnaires and archival / document analysis) than engaged or interaction based modes (interviews, observation). Although the greatest area of weakness in the study of the strategic role has been the area of measurement (this is arguably a field wide issue rather than a topic specific). The limitation of measurement models to that of description and frequencies lacks sufficient academic rigor to adequately inform the future scholarship, or practice for that matter, on the strategic role. This may in part be the result of the atheoretical / practice orientated nature of works. Table 15 provides an overview of the key recommendations for methodological reform in the scholarship of the strategic role of school leaders.

Table 15. Methodological recommendations for research on the strategic role of school leaders (Adapted from Ireland *et al.*, 2005).

Aspect	Recommendations
Sampling	• Greater use of sampling strategies • Appropriate sample sizes • Better alignment of sample to research questions
Measurement	• Reliability and validity to be established • Where possible, use multiple indicators for constructs • Cross-validate with secondary data • Cronbach's alpha and p are not sufficient • Report and discuss effect sizes • When possible compare effect sizes across studies
Time frame	• Strategic actions have a time-lag, suggesting the need to factor a time-lag into studies • Longitudinal studies are needed to establish causality

An initial step in the methodological reform for theory development process is the alignment of research purpose with sampling strategy. Building on from the proposal in chapter two to test a model of the strategic role, the primary goal of sampling is to get a sample for testing the model. As such, a sample of convenience is a logical choice. Whereas the use of convenience sampling was criticized earlier, in this case the choice is clearly aligned with the purpose of testing a model that once tested can be applied in other settings, which may lead to modification or rejection of the model, and may then require random or stratified samples. The notion of linking the sampling strategy with the research questions could be sufficient to make the case that the sample is purposive, but in the interest of making the underlying assumptions of the work clear, the sample represents a convenience strategy.

The further development of theory is dependent of future testing and discussion on the model, but an essential first step is testing the proposal. As one of purposes of this thesis was to investigate the current level of strategic leadership and management displayed by public school principals it was important to move the study beyond a mere case study. The decision was made to use the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET) as the school system to investigate the model. However both financial and logistic constraints made an analysis of the entire system unworkable. The DET is divided into a system of regions ($n=10$) and it was decided to use one region. Combined with the selection of one region was the desire to obtain a large enough sample size. An analysis of the size of each DET region revealed that the Hunter / Central Coast was the largest region containing 14.19 percent of the systems primary schools.

In the contemporary educational leadership and management context, the possibility of valid generalizations from studies is somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand you have advocates of large scale studies and on the other, arguments relating to the highly contextualized nature of school leadership. What is arguably most important in this discussion is the need to conduct quality research using appropriate theoretical and methodological considerations. It should be noted that this thesis is not an exhaustive or complete study of the strategic role of public school principals in the DET. This completeness is neither necessary nor valued, rather, the selected sample was chosen to be illustrative of the arguments of this thesis.

Additional to the selection of a region was the choice of which level of school to study, high schools, primary schools or both. It is recognized that there exists different organizational governance structures in high schools and primary schools. There are fewer high schools than primary schools and they have higher student populations and catchment areas. In many cases, the leadership and management of high schools is similar to that of small to medium sized businesses. In contrast, primary schools are smaller organizations and governance models tend to have the principal closer to the day to day functions of the school, namely instruction.

To ensure that a theoretically informed decision was reached, the literature on the strategic role was once again consulted. While a substantial portion of the literature is generic and not aimed at any specific institutional level, there is a body of literature that is focused on a specific context. Some have focused on international schools (Bunnell, 2005; Leggate & Thompson, 1997), special education settings (Radford *et al.*, 2003) and various forms of continuing and further education (Brown, 2004; Kettunen, 2005; Lumby, 1999;

Mather, 1998; Neumann & Finlay-Neumann, 1994; Neumann & Neumann, 1999; Petridou & Chatzipanagiotou, 2004; Sallis, 1990; Wong, 2005). There has been some interest in secondary schools (Glover & Levačić, 1996a, 1996b; Levačić & Glover, 1998; Wilson, 1999a, 1999b), but the greatest area of context specific study has been the primary school setting (Bell, 2004; Bell & Chan, 2005; Bennett, Crawford, Levačić, Glover, & Earley, 2000; Broadhead *et al.*, 1996; Cuckle & Broadhead, 2003; Cuckle, Broadhead *et al.*, 1998; Glover, Bennett, Crawford, & Levačić, 1997; Hatton, 2001; Jones, 1996; MacGilchrist & Mortimore, 1997; MacGilchrist, Mortimore, Savage, & Beresford, 1995; Midthassel *et al.*, 2000; O'Donoghue & Dimmock, 1996). As a result of the higher focus of empirical attention on the primary school setting, the larger number of primary schools (as opposed to secondary schools), the governance structures and the higher likelihood of primary principals engaging in educational strategic leadership, the primary school setting was selected as the focus of this study.

With the model for testing established and the sample chosen, the next decision to be made involved the choice of data source. At this early stage of the conceptual model's development, a questionnaire from which statistical analysis could be conducted was the most appropriate data source. This would enable factor analysis of the proposed model to be undertaken. In addition, the choice of a questionnaire is empirically appropriate for the research question of investigating the enactment of strategic leadership and management behaviors of school leaders. The use of a questionnaire allowed for data to be collected on the reported enacted of strategic leadership and management behaviors that could be analyzed using a variety of statistical techniques. In addition, the use of a variety of statistical analysis (e.g. confirmatory factor analysis, *t*-text, ANOVA), and the reporting of

effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's (1988) *d* and / or Hays' (1981) omega square) adds to the rigor and robustness of the study. The alignment of data source and research question has been previously highlighted. Questionnaires have been consistently called upon as a data source in the study of strategy both within and beyond the field of educational leadership. Building on the work in the field concerning the role of context in shaping leadership and management actions and Hambrick and Mason's 'upper echelon perspective' it was considered appropriate to build into the questionnaire a series of items to acquire information pertaining to the demographics of the principal respondents. This allowed for analysis of the current level of strategic leadership and management being displayed by public school principals and analysis as to whether there existed any variance in that performance based on personal and school based demographics. All statistical tests untaken required the reporting of effect size to be consistent with the calls for statistical reform made both elsewhere and in this chapter. Also in recognition of the need to acquire multiple sources of data, it was decided that in addition to having principals self report using the questionnaire that other members of the school community (e.g. teaching staff, ancillary staff, parents, community members) and those who work with the principal beyond the school (e.g. other principal and school education directors) complete the same questionnaire (minus the demographic items) to provide a richer insight into the principal's strategic actions. This approach allows for a higher level of rigor in the statistical investigation of the principals' strategic leadership and management behaviors and sought to address the previously discussed issues in relation to the use of statistical techniques.

Further to the sample size for the study, the time lag between strategic actions and consequences posed a problem for the selection of participants. To allow for the time lag,

principals who had been at their schools for less than one year (as it would be difficult for raters to accurately assess their performance) and relieving principal as they were yet to fully engage in the position over a long enough period, were excluded from the sample.

As the purpose of this thesis is theory development and in recognition of the need to obtain multiple indicators for a construct a concurrent study was undertaken. To counteract the removed nature of the questionnaire based study, the second study focused on discovering what principals perceived their strategic role to be by interviewing practicing principals. Drawing from the same convenience sample principals were interviewed at their place of work to gain an understanding of the practitioner perspective (as opposed to the literature developed model being tested).

The purpose in evaluating research methods in education leadership and specifically inquiry on the strategic role, is not to merely highlight the shortcomings of previous research. Rather, the interest has been to pinpoint some theoretical and methodological issues that may be stifling the efforts of scholars to develop a systematic body of knowledge about the strategic role of the school leader. Through the combination of theoretical and methodological choices made on the basis of the analysis of literature on the topic over the past 27 years, this thesis is positioned to make a contribution to the knowledge base and most importantly, make a significant contribution to theory development on the strategic role of the public primary school principal.

As with any study, this is not without its limitations. However rather than taking a deficit model approach to discussing the limitations, I will instead argue for what you can done with the findings and conclusions of this work.

In presenting this thesis, I argue that the developments, findings and proposals offered have a significance that lies beyond the study itself and beyond inquiry on the strategic role within the field. I suggest that the theoretical and methodological implications of this study are illustrative of tensions that exist in the field of educational leadership and management at large.

To the academy, the reviews, studies and proposed research agendas in this thesis pose questions and challenges of theoretical and methodological importance. While offering a blueprint for further inquiry, it remains with the reader to accept the challenge. In their first editorial in the *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, Helen Gunter and Tanya Fitzgerald wrote:

> … we are interested in how in particular contexts decisions are made in particular ways. We see purposes as inevitably political, and hence we are interested in issues of social justice in regard to diversity and the postcolonial legacy. Such positioning is urgent and vital because in the current drive for what works and utility, we are striving not to be caught in the situation described by Inglis: 'the abominable failing of social science in its positivist mode was to kill the life it studied; the corresponding sentimentality of those who exalted a so-called phenomenology of experience was to suppose that such representation permitted understanding. We would agree that the demand for evidence is stifling understandings and explanations of practice, and at the same time the self-reverence of a person's story of their victory in turning round a failing school does little to explain who determines whether a school is failing and for what purposes. We would go further than this, and at a time when establishing personal identity has never been so popular for individuals to know who they are and where they come from as a 'family history', we are sympathetic to concerns raised by Fielding that collective and shared memories are being erased. It seems to us that the process of modernization is making historical analysis of educational administration not

only 'uncool' but positively dangerous, and those who try to link reform to the ongoing patterns of development are often marginalized as condoners of poor standards and performance. It seems that the past is disconnected from the current and the future, and again following Fielding we need to reclaim our radical past if we are to make a difference to how we make decisions now to create the future: 'our capacity to interrogate the present with any degree of wisdom or any likelihood of creating a more fulfilling future rests significantly on our knowledge and engagement with the past and with the establishment of continuities that contemporary culture denies (2008, pp. 7-8).

Working from Gunter and Fitzgerald, I contend that this thesis highlights the need to see the strategic role, and educational leadership in general for that matter, as a political process, and therefore warranting of sociological analysis. The overarching desire of scholars and practitioners alike to find 'what works' in relation to the strategic role has limited work on the topic to case studies and personal narratives of success stories. In contrast, this thesis seeks to describe and explain the strategic role in a broader sense and pose frameworks to inform critical reflection on practice. This is the primary point of departure of this thesis from other texts on the strategic role of the educational leader.

Building from the 'what works' movement, leadership preparation programs are littered with models and processes packaged into ring-bound folders for school based implementation. As will become apparent when reading through this thesis, the strategic role of the school principal is a social activity, with ever present struggles for power, it is difficult, if not impossible to capture such social practices in a folder. As such, the leadership preparation for the strategic role of educational leadership, at both systemic and university levels, needs to move beyond a focus on technicist-rational perspectives of strategic planning (dominate in the literature) to a more sociological analysis of the role.

The frameworks in this thesis can be used to inform such teaching and the chapters can serve as background reading for critical reflection on practice.

For the practitioner, those who grapple with the enormous practical complexities posed by the strategic role, I argue that educational leadership, and this study in particular, is a field of study and practice. This position does not separate theory from practice. The goal was not to apply a conceptual framework to a practical context, because the context of schools is not static, neutral nor controllable. The purpose of this thesis was to ask scholarly questions about practical situations, and "engage with disciplinary knowledge to create meaning about those situations, and to develop descriptions and explanations" (Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 12). As such, this thesis provides practitioners with evidence and information to encourage critical engagement with their practice regardless of their location in space and time.

In this light, it should be clear that while this study is but one small investigation, its findings, discussions and proposals have implications and applicability to the field of educational leadership, in both its practical and theoretical form.

CHAPTER FOUR

Testing a Model of the Strategic Role of School Leaders

Many studies have set out to describe what strategic leaders and managers do (Brock, 1997; Caldwell, 1998; Davies, 2004a; Davies & Davies, 2004; Davies & Davies, 2006; Neumann & Neumann, 1999), however a significant flaw in the conceptual development of strategy in education has been the lack of continuous knowledge construction. Although this is not a topic specific issue, Hoy (1978) argued:

> There are virtually no significant programmatic efforts in the study of educational administration. The research is fragmented and lacks a systematic attack on a series of related problems. There is little in the way of replication, improving or building on others' work … critical analyses and scholarly exchanges on research are conspicuously absent from the literature (p. 5).

The field of educational leadership (as it is now known) is far removed from 'normal science' characterized by organized forums and scientific journals facilitating communication between researchers (Eacott, 2008b). Some 30 years after Hoy, research in the field is rarely concerned with replication or improving or building on others' work. Mulford (2007) highlights the aversion of researchers to reference previous works.

During the peak period (1988-2000) of interest in research into strategy in schools, scholarly interest was concerned with understanding how organizational strategies were formulated and implemented. The needs of practitioners to apply knowledge to problems of practice and policy, such as the *Education Reform Act 1988* in the UK and the subsequent need for school development plans, significantly shaped the research agenda. For the

aspiring and practicing educational leader this provided a plethora of strategic management models to choose from, yet for the scholarship of strategy in education it did little to foster any paradigmatic development. The lack of any building on or critiquing of studies has significantly hindered the development of an empirically verified or theoretical base and the underlying logic of strategy in education has not moved beyond the initial formulation and implementation process. This is not to suggest that studies should seek to take up where others have finished, rather, better informed and better conceptualized, they should seek to "plunge more deeply into the same thing" (Geertz, 1975, p. 25). In recognition of the lack of an established base and the previously identified issues, this chapter reports on a quantitative study on a sample of public primary school principal testing the model derived from the current knowledge base (see chapter two). To further enhance the value of this study, the analysis also includes a demographic lens to identify any potential variances in performance. The selection of personal (e.g. gender, age, tenure, career path and formal education) and school based (e.g. school size, socio-economic status and students from disadvantaged backgrounds) demographics reflects contemporary literature in the field and provides for a better understanding of variance in principal behavior.

Research Question

The purpose of the study reported in this chapter was to undertake an empirical investigation on the strategic role of the public primary school principal. Building on previous research, this study examined the key question: To what extent do public primary school principals display strategic leadership and management behaviors?

To investigate this research question, a static / cross-sectional questionnaire based study on a 'convenience' sample of principals was undertaken. The majority of empirical works on strategy have employed a static / cross-sectional timeframe. This has been consistently demonstrated by reviews by Hambrick (1986), Schwenk and Dalton (1991), Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996), Eacott (2008a) and the analysis presented in chapter two. Cross-sectional methods have remained the predominant mode of analysis in empirical strategy research since its inception (Bowen & Wiersma, 1999). The cross-sectional model was chosen to reflect the research question's goal of investigating the enactment of the strategic role and use of a static approach enabled a snapshot of the strategic leadership and management of public primary school principals.

Chapter two demonstrated that the use of questionnaires has been the most common data source in the study of strategic leadership and management in educational institutions. A questionnaire is a key feature of survey research and aims to collect a substantial amount of data in order to draw conclusions about the phenomenon under investigation (Bush, 2002). Survey research is the most frequently used educational administrative research method, most of which are static and cross-sectional (Fogelman, 2002). The choice of questionnaire is consistent with the notion that quantitative research is an "inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured by numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures" (Creswell, 1994, p. 2). The strategic role of the public primary school principal was the focus of inquiry and the model developed in chapter two was the theory to be tested. Using a questionnaire enabled the collection of data that can be entered as numbers for analysis using SPSS. As previously cited, the use of

statistically techniques and the appropriate reporting (e.g. the inclusion of effect sizes) of such analysis increases the robustness of the study.

The rationale for a convenience sample was based on its significance to the research question. While logistically it was not necessarily viable (financially or physically) to conduct the study across an entire system, the purpose of the study sought to investigate the strategic role of school principals. As stated in the previous chapter, this thesis is not an exhaustive or complete study of the strategic role. This completeness is not necessary, rather, the sample is illustrative of the research question.

Theoretical Features of the Study

Building from the framework provided in chapter two, the theoretical features of the study are explicitly articulated to allow the reader to understand the perspective adopted by the researcher and critically read the findings and conclusions. Chapter two highlighted the many inconsistencies yet similarities in the definitions of strategy used in the literature. Having used the literature to develop a model for the strategic role, it is appropriate to adopt a definition that this consistent with the model. As such, for the purpose of this study, the strategic role is defined as *choosing a direction within a given context, through leadership, and articulating that direction through management*. While this definition may appear somewhat cumbersome, it was written to cover the scope of what has been traditionally separated into strategic management or strategic leadership. Using the framework provided in chapter two, 'choosing a direction within a given context' refers to the *envisioning*, *engaging* and to some extent *articulating* dimensions. These dimensions

are most frequently linked to leadership behaviors as they are change orientated. The second part of the definition, 'articulating that direction', refers to the *articulating*, *implementing* and *monitoring* dimensions. The focus on the structural articulation and subsequent implementation and monitoring are activities most frequently aligned with managerial or operational functions. This definition does not prescribe any one form of leadership to socially construct the direction for the school, nor does it prescribe any one form of management to structurally bring that direction to actions. As best a definition can, it embodies the notion that no one form of leadership or management is more effective than any other.

The unit of analysis for the study was the public primary school principal. While alternate perspectives of educational leadership and management have stressed the importance of distributed and participative models, the principal is generally viewed as the primary decision maker, facilitator, problem solver or social change agent in the school setting (Adams, 1987; Barth, 1991; Kim & Kim, 2005; Thomson, 1993). Organizational management and strategy are processes that call upon every individual within an organization but it is ultimately directed by the manager (Leithwood *et al.*, 2004; Trim, 1997). Strategy research as a field is primarily concerned with the individual decision makers (St John, 2005). However, unlike other research disciplines that may successfully isolate their unit of analysis from contextual influences, strategy researchers must often consider their unit of analysis within a larger context. Noting the inter-disciplinary nature of inquiry into strategic leadership and management in education, it was appropriate to evaluate a number of theoretical contributions beyond the field of educational leadership and the discipline of education. Aligning with the difficulties of separating the principal

from the larger context, the upper echelon perspective (Hambrick & Mason, 1984) was employed as an overarching theoretical perspective for this study as it would allow for the study of the strategic role taking into account demographic conditions.

To overcome the weaknesses of the upper echelon perspective identified in chapter two, particularly those concerning the organizational black box or causal gap, this project used principal demographics to investigate variance in self-reported strategic leadership and management behaviors and not school performance. This was an important dimension of the study in light of the current and predicted turnover of senior school leaders in the coming decade. With evidence that over half of Australia's school leaders are 51 years and over (McKenzie, Kos, Walker, & Hong, 2008), potential insights into variance in leadership performance based on demographic conditions (age, tenure, career track) will enable school systems to better prepare for the turnover of school leaders and the preparation of future leaders. In addition, the analysis of the strategic role of educational leaders through demographic conditions has been somewhat omitted from previously discussion.

The next decision involved what demographics to include. In their original proposal of the upper echelon perspective, Hambrick and Mason (1984) included; age, functional track (the term career path is used in this study), other career experiences, formal education, socio-economic background, financial position, and group heterogeneity. Some of these are directly transferable to the educational leadership context (age, formal education) and others less so (socio-economic status, financial position, group heterogeneity). Table 16 displays an overview of the demographic variables used in the study, how they were

measured, and a rationale for the measurement. Following is a brief rationale behind the

selected demographic for this study.

Table 16. Overview of demographic variables and their measures

Demographic	Measure	Rationale
Personal		
Gender	Male or female	Binary measure
Age	< 30 31-40 41-50 51+	Conforms with previous research by Scott (2003) in the New South Wales public school system and is similar to the categories used in the literature of the field.
Tenure	1-3 4-6 7-10 11+	Measures the years served in the current school at the current position. Reflects general trend in the literature of the field in relation to leader tenure (e.g. Earley & Weindling, 2007).
Formal education	Undergraduate Diploma of Education Masters EdD PhD Other	Lists commonly held qualifications for education in Australia.
Career path	Teacher Assistant principal Deputy principal Small school principal Medium school principal Large school principal	Measures the time spent at each level of school governance. Reflects the steps of public primary school governance in New South Wales. It also included an option for 'other'. Small school included by P6 and P5 (see school size). Medium included P4 and P3. Large included both P2 and P1.
School based		
School size	P1 (701+) P2 (451-700) P3 (301-450) P4 (160-300) P5 (25-159) P6 (< 26)	School size based on student enrollments. Conforms with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training classification of principal's based on school size.
Socio-economic status	PSP[a] Low Average Above Average	Loosely based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics census information and used by the NSW DET for data collection and annual reporting.
Students from disadvantaged backgrounds	ATSI[b] NESB[c] ATSI and NESB Other	Loosely based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics census information and used by the NSW DET for data collection and annual reporting.

[a] Priority schools program. A government funded program granting additional financial and personnel support to schools with particularly low socio-economic status.
[b] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
[c] Non-English speaking Background

Gender: Gender is a well documented area of research in educational leadership (Collard, 2002) and warrants consideration as an element of research and understanding of context. Biklen and Brannigan (1980) published one of the first major collections on issues surrounding educational leadership and gender in their collection of essays *Women in Educational Leadership*. Seminal work on women in educational leadership by Shakeshaft (1987) used a woman-centered approach to describe difference in male and female work environments, styles of leadership, communication, decision making and conflict resolution. Her work proposed that a 'female world in schools' had five essential features: relationships with others were central; teaching and learning were the major foci; building community was an essential part of their style; sexism marginalized them; and in their daily work the line separating the public world from the private was blurred. In a synthesis of research on women in leadership, Ozga (1993) wrote:

> Women's leadership styles are less hierarchical and more democratic. Women, for example, run more closely knit schools than do men, and communicate better with teachers. They use different, less dominating body language and different language and procedures. Women appear more flexible and sensitive …and there is less distance from subordinates … Women emphasize cohesiveness. They are much less individualistic and spend time on fostering an integrative culture and climate … Group activities are much more highly valued by women than men (p. 11).

Blackmore (1999) adds that the popular discourse about women's leadership being flexible, democratic, valuing others, openness, trust and compassion is convergent with 'new' management discourses that focus upon people and relationships as the source of productivity. Interestingly, work by Johansson and Davies (2002) showed that advertisements for principals' positions over the previous decade began to contain a higher proportion of stereotypical 'female' management techniques.

In contrast, Helgesen (1990) describes men as: working at a constant speed, without taking breaks; their work days are characterized by discontinuity and interruptions; no time for activities outside of work; preferring short and directed conversations and meetings; complex social networks outside of the working environment; no time for reflection; total identification with their work; and rarely passing on information.

There is a significant body of knowledge addressing the differences in leadership and management based on gender with some supporting differences (e.g. Shakeshaft, Helgesen) and other not (Wodak, 1995), and it was important to include gender as a variable, as the key features of a 'female world of schools' have the potential to significantly influence the strategic role of principals.

Age: The association between the age of the school leader and leadership and management has not been the subject of many studies, but it may offer new insights into the management of educational institutions. There is a growing body of national and international evidence suggesting a shortage of qualified educational leaders. Examples cite anywhere between 40-90% of educational leaders retiring in the next five years. Consequently, an important characteristic of the educational leader to consider in context is his / her age. Do younger leaders exhibit behaviors differently to older leaders? Is there an age range that appears to perform better? It is of course difficult to separate the age of the educational leader from their tenure or career path, but nevertheless, it is an important feature of the context of strategy in education.

Tenure: For the purpose of this study, tenure was used to reflect the amount of time the principal had been at their current school. The concepts of tenure and age are often viewed together in the perspective of career stages. However, they are two distinct characteristics of the educational leader. The relationship between CEO tenure and organizational performance has interested strategic management researchers for decades (Simsek, 2007). However, the relationship between tenure and performance is much more complex than originally thought (Hambrick & Fukutomi, 1991). Oplatka (2004b) argues that educational leadership theories are not applicable to all stages of a person's career and that the underlying assumptions of different leadership styles (e.g. managerial, participative, transformational, instructional, moral, contingent) are more likely to be appropriate for a particular stage than universal. Numerous models have been proposed to demonstrate the career cycle of educational leaders (e.g. Day & Bakioglu, 1996; Ribbins, 1999; Weindling, 1999) all indicating a degree of flexibility and dynamism rather than stability and permanency (Oplatka, 2004a). While these studies and models have focused on the career stage, tenure is a similar construct. Drawing from strategy research, Simsek (2007) suggests:

> Short-tenured CEOs may lack sufficient awareness to effectively notice and assess strategic risks. They are also unknown, untested and lacking legitimacy, which might limit their performance in execution … Long-tenured CEOs, however, accumulate a track record, attain a deeper knowledge of the firm's environment, and acquire firm – and job specific – skills. Moreover, a long tenure reflects the extent to which the CEO has been integrated into the networks of key stakeholders and establishes the resources and coalitions that enable the CEO to orchestrate, nurture, and support risky initiatives (p. 654).

However, research by Miller & Shamsie (2001) suggests that long tenure may give rise to risk avoidance and aversion, traditionally referred to as 'maintaining the status quo'. Hambrick and Fukutomi's (1991) model argues that long tenured managers become committed to their paradigm, avoid information that disconfirms that paradigm, lose interest in their position, and ignore calls for change. These findings are consistent with the 'prospect theory' which has the core idea that people place a higher value on avoiding loss than realizing gain. As with age, the turnover of school leaders in the coming decade makes tenure an important variable to be investigated.

Formal education: Many international and national school systems having introduced leadership training for aspiring school leaders. In some cases it is mandatory (e.g. England) and others voluntary (e.g. Australia). Information regarding a person's formal educational background has to potential to yield rich yet complex information. This information assumes that education is equal regardless of what institution and time it was undertaken. Mindful that people frequently make their educational decisions at an early age, with limited information. But, on average, it could be expected that graduates of masters or doctorate program are somewhat different from those with bachelor degrees or diplomas. Building from this thesis, it may be possible to begin mapping the educational leadership of schools through a formal education lens. It may be possible to explore performance of school leaders (or even the frequency of school leaders) and their association with specific programs and institutions. This would provide insight into which institutions and programs are shaping the education system within the state.

Career Path: Although school leaders are presumed to have a 'generalist perspective', each individual brings his / her job orientation – usually developed from experience in a primary functional area. Hambrick and Mason (1984) proposed that this 'functional track' orientation influences the strategic leadership of top executives. While schools differ from the corporate world, as all school leaders come from teaching ranks (at least at this point in time, as opposed to diverse backgrounds within the organization such as marketing, accounts, human resources), it is that time spent at different levels within the school (e.g. classroom teacher, assistant principal, deputy principals) that is of interest within this analysis. Again, in consideration of the expected turnover of staff, the analysis of the strategic role through the lens of career path may allow for a differentiation of performance based on time spent at different levels of the hierarchy.

School Size: In 1988, Boyan wrote "students of administrator behavior in education have not yet systematically incorporated school level differences into their conceptual models and research design" (p. 86). In addition to the personal demographics two school based demographics were included; school size and socio-economic status. Some have cited that new managerial models adopted in public school administration have sought to make the principal into CEOs or entrepreneurs (Cranston, 2002; Gamage, 2005; Law & Glover, 2003). If this is the case, it is possible that the size of the school will have an impact on the strategic role played by the principal. There are numerous means of establishing a school's size, number of staff, students, buildings, campuses, just to name a few. As one of the primary features of a school is students, for this study, the school size will be based on the

number of enrolled students. This enabled alignment with the New South Wales Department of Education and Training's classification of principals.

Socio-economic status: The socio-economic status of an educational institution has occasionally surfaced as a factor that shapes administrative behavior (Boyan, 1988). Studies into the effect of socio-economic status have been conducted by Feldvebel (1964), Boyd (1974), and Hallinger and Murphy (1983) among others. Hallinger and Murphy (1983) summarize their report as:

> The difference between high and low SES schools was primarily in the extent to which principals influenced or controlled classroom instruction through their direct actively. Principals in the lower SES schools were more forceful in asserting themselves in making instructional decisions and in intervening in classrooms where teachers were not meeting their expectations. In upper income schools principals tended to orchestrate more from the background, actively coordinating the educational programs of their school, but not exercising as much control as principals in the lower SES schools (pp. 3-4).

In the Australian context, government initiatives attempting to address the disparity gap between different socio-economic groups, provide schools in low socio-economic areas with additional funds to support their programs and schools are actively encouraged to engage with their community in their school improvement efforts. For some, there exists the belief that schools in higher socio-economic areas have more involved communities and higher expectations of involvement in the policy formulation and planning of the school. Both of these urban myths need to be explored in relation to the strategic role of the school leader.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds: Considerable political attention has been given to the plight of minority or disadvantaged groups in Australia, such as the Indigenous community. Education departments across Australia collect information on the number of students enrolled in schools who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI), Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and English as a Second language (ESL). What is missing from the scholarship of educational leadership in Australia is the investigation of whether significant student enrolments of these groups have an affect on the leadership of the school. *Educational Administration Quarterly* frequently publishes work on the impact of race and race relationships in the administration of schooling, primarily (almost exclusively) out of studies based in the USA. In New South Wales public schools, to be classified as having a significant student enrolment requires either 20 percent of the school population to identify with one of the groups or more than 20 students who identify with one of the groups enrolled in your school. This is a controversial issue with some principals arguing that the issue of significant should be tied to some tentative benchmark numbers. While it was beyond the scope of the thesis to investigate the implications of this conjecture, principals were asked to nominate as to whether their school confirmed to the DET classifications for significant student enrolments to allow for an exploratory analysis as to whether this makes a difference in performance. It should however be noted that due to the demographic make up of the Hunter / Central Coast region, both NESB and ESL were expected to be low.

Throughout this discussion, primary emphasis has been placed on observable characteristics of educational leaders. In this approach, some important yet complex psychological factors are bypassed. The cognitive bases, values and perceptions of

managers are not easy to measure or even amenable to direct measurement (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Additionally, educational leaders are probably quite reluctant to participate in psychological testing, at least in the sample size required for a meaningful study. Fidler's (2002a) chapter in the *Second International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration* attempts to discuss the role of cognition in strategic leadership. However, the conceptualization of strategy that he uses is still constrained by the linear-rational models of strategic management. As such, much of Fidler's chapter conforms to the same paradigmatic thinking he is said to be challenging. Figure 2 recognizes that psychological characteristics play a role in the strategic behavior of educational leaders, but for the reasons stated above they are not explored further in this study.

Figure 2 portrays the underlying framework of upper echelon perspective as applied in this thesis. On the left hand side is the strategic situation or 'stimulus' for action – the myriad of events and trends inside and outside of the school. Toward the right hand side are the leadership behaviors. Building from both Child (1972) and Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996), the term behavior is used to encompass both inaction as well as action, formal and informal choices, and other competitive actions usually associated with the term 'strategy'.

The centerpiece of the model, however, is the educational leader and the process by which he or she arrives at an interpretation of the strategic situation or stimulus. Finkelstein and Hambrick (1996) conceive this as an 'executive's orientation', consisting of an "interwoven set of psychological characteristics and observable experiences" (p. 41). This orientation serves as the basis on which interpretations of stimulus and decisions regarding subsequent actions or inactions are made. Situated between the stimulus and actual

behaviors are human factors: bias, blinders, egos, aptitudes, experiences, fatigue, and other human factors (Hambrick, 1989) which greatly affect what happens to schools.

The logic of bounded rationality, an underlying assumption of upper echelon theory, is built from the premise that organizational leaders are "confronted with far more stimuli, from both within and outside the organization, than they can possibly comprehend" (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996, p. 41). Educational leaders, in arriving at their own version of stimulus, distill and interpret available information. This process occurs through a three stage filtering process, limited field of vision, selective perception and interpretation, as depicted in Figure 2.

Educational leaders cannot be looking in every direction all of the time, as a result, they are only ever exposed to a subset of stimuli. Researchers of environmental scanning have suggested that executives vary widely in how much they can scan, while some suggest that top managers may not even fully stay abreast of events and conditions in their own organizations (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996). It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to be looking and listening for every possible piece of information, and therefore, the educational leader has only a limited field of vision in relation to stimuli.

Not all of the information within the leader's field of vision will register equally. While some information will be "vivid, meaningful, and engaging; some will slide into the executive's subconscious; and some will escape the executive's attention entirely" (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996, p. 44). The central aspect of selective perception is that a strategist, whether they be an educational leader or corporate executive, only see a portion of what they are watching, and they only hear a portion of what they are listening to.

Figure 2. Upper echelon theory, adapted from Hambrick and Mason (1984)

105
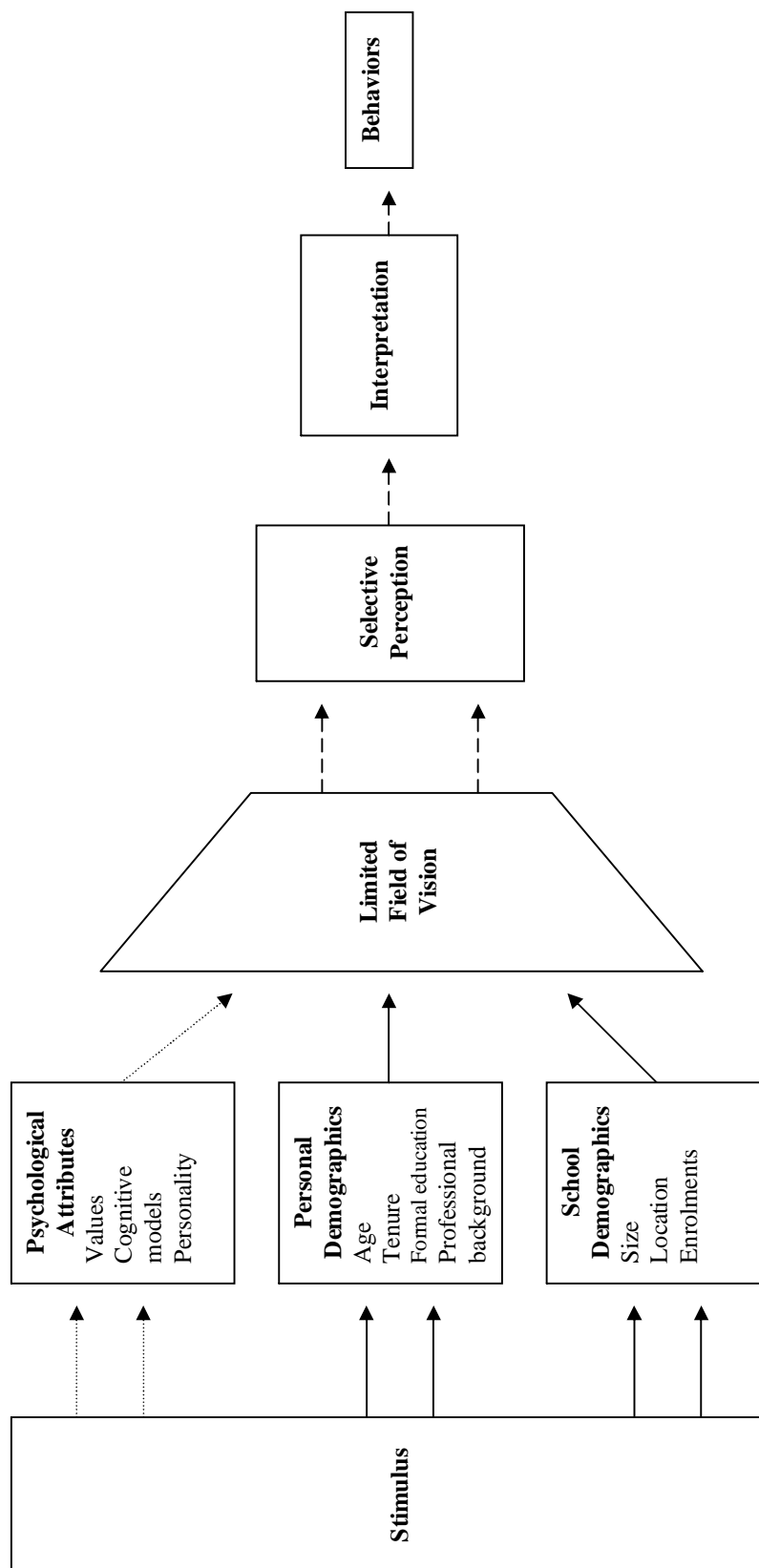
As a third step in the process, the educational leader interprets or attaches meaning to the stimuli. The contention of this process is that in the context of ambiguity and substantial information, no two leaders will necessarily identify or take the same options. It is the 'executive's orientation', that engages the filtering process, in turn giving rise to the interpretation of a situation that ultimately shapes leadership behavior. Therefore, as applied to this study, upper echelon theory holds that variance in the strategic leadership and management behaviors of public primary school principals is influenced by their personal and school based demographic conditions.

Methodological Features of the Study

As with the theoretical features of the study, in recognition of the limitations in the knowledge base on the topic, it was considered important to clearly articulate the methodological features of the study to allow for critical and informed reading of the findings and conclusions. Using the same framework from chapter three, this section will explicitly outline the methodological features of the study.

Data source

Considering the notion that a researcher should not choose an appropriate instrument for their study, but rather select the best instrument (Gay, 1987), it was decided to construct a project specific instrument (the Strategic Leadership Questionnaire – see appendix 1 and 2) from the conceptual framework that guided the study.

The Strategic Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ) consisted of 36 items divided into five scales (consistent with the conceptual framework of the study), each consisting of between six and eight items (see appendix 3 for a scale breakdown). To overcome issues relating to self-reporting, participating principals were asked to distribute 12 questionnaires to raters within the school community. Raters could come from four categories, organizationally above the principals (e.g. school education directors), at the same level as the principal (e.g. other principals), organizationally below the principal (e.g. deputy principals, assistant principals, teachers) and other (e.g. administrative staff, parents, school council members). This is the same procedure used by Gurr (2002) when conducting a similar study focused on the transformational leadership behaviors of school principals in Victoria. The desired intention was to acquire multiple perspectives on the principal's enactment of their strategic role. Participants were asked to rate the level of performance of the principal (or in the case of the principal, themselves) on a six point Likert scale ranging from 1 'strongly disagree' to 6 'strongly agree'. Building on from the discussion in chapter two on the development of the elements of the strategic role, the five scales of the SLQ were:

i. ENVISIONING: Designed to measure the principal's behavior towards the creation of a desired future position for the school. Sub-themes included the encouragement of reflective dialogue, strategic thinking and building conceptual or mental models of the future.

ii. ENGAGING: This scale focused on the active involvement of a wide range of participants in conversations, discussions and decisions regarding the strategic direction

107

of the school. In addition it included valuing the contributions of others and building the capacity of other strategic leaders.

iii. ARTICULATING: Divided into three sub-scales based on the different forms of articulation: oral; written and structural. Specific items included: orally articulates the school's strategic direction to others; has a limited number of strategic objectives in writing that are deliverable;' and creates structures to support the implementation of the school's strategic direction.

iv. IMPLEMENTING: Concerned with the translation of the school's strategic direction into action and particularly the alignment and timing of the implementation.

v. MONITORING: Focused on the processes of continuous, systematic monitoring with appropriate adjustments being made and the in-depth value judgments applied to the implementation of the strategic direction through evaluation.

Pilot Study / Instrumentation

Prior to conducting the main study, the instrument was trialed and piloted. Initially the instrument was presented to a group of school executives and principals (n=12) through the researcher's affiliation with the local Primary Executive Network and a group of high school principals (n=10) through the local public high school principals' association. This resulted in a few minor layout changes (e.g. boxes as opposed to lines for ticks relating to demographic variables and the addition of titles for the columns on the second page) and updating acronyms to reflect systemic changes (PSP as opposed to PSFP). All the participants indicated that the questionnaire was appropriate (language, structure, and length) for the target audience.

Following the trial, a pilot study was conducted in the Illawarra / South Coast region. Using a mail out list from the region's Primary Principals Association (PPA), 30 personal invitations were made to principals who had indicated a willingness to offer their services and expertise to others on the PPA's website (www.nswppa.org.au). All of the invited principals had been at their schools for longer than one year (as per main study criteria) to reflect the time lag in strategic actions and consequences. Of the 30 invited to participate, 10 agreed (33%). Nine principals returned questionnaires (90%) and a total of 46 rater questionnaires were received. This represents an average of five raters per principal, with a range of three to seven. The data from the questionnaires was coded and entered into SPSS for analysis. Once the data was entered it was subjected to analysis using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test for sphericity prior to factor analysis. The KMO value was .86, and the Bartlett's test was significant ($p=<.01$), demonstrating an appropriate sample to proceed to principal component analysis. Each scale was investigated using principal component analysis. Having established that the questionnaire behaved in a desired manner, scale statistics (responses, mean, and standard deviation) were calculated. In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the reliability of the scales. The alpha coefficient ranged from .84 to .95, well above the .70 which Nunnally (1978) considered as a lower acceptable bound for alpha. DeVillis (2003) adds that an alpha of .85 is "probably perfectly adequate for use in a study comparing groups with respect to the construct being measured" (p. 96). Table 17 shows the factor loading and scale statistics based on the pilot study responses. As the data showed that the instrument behaved in the desired manner, the study moved into the main data collection phase.

Sample

Survey research requires careful attention to sampling techniques (Blacklock, 1970; Hoinville, Jowell, & Associates, 1978). The first decision that needed to be made for the study was the target population. As this project had limited funding, it was not viable, both financially and logistically to conduct the study across an entire system. Considering the difficulties in acquiring adequate response rates in Australian education systems (Scott, 2003), and as discussed in the previous chapter, a single geographic region, the Hunter / Central Coast, within the state of New South Wales was selected.

The Hunter / Central Coast is the largest of the ten school region in the state with 232 primary schools out of a total of 1635 (14.19%). This enabled initial invitations to be made at each district (*n*=4) principals meeting through a presentation by the researcher and any questions that potential participants had to be answered. It also put a face to the research with the goal of improving the response rate and linked educational leadership research at the local university with the region's schools.

Further criteria were applied to ensure that the sample was appropriate for the research. Removed from the population were relieving principals (*n*=35) and principals in their first year (*n*=28), in recognition of the time lag between strategic leadership and management and outcomes (Van de Ven, Angle, & Poole, 1989). This reduced the total population to 169 principals. Following an oral presentation at district principal meetings (*n*=4), principals were invited to participate in the study. The principals were asked to rate their own strategic leadership and management and to distribute 12 rating questionnaires to others (as per instructions previously outlined). Of the 169 principals, 77 returned useable

Table 17. Factor loading and scale statistics from SLQ pilot study

Items	Component 1	2	3	4	5	N	x̄	σ	α
Envisioning									
17	.81								
1	.81								
11	.81						55	4.52	.79	.87
33	.79								
8	.76								
21	.74								
Engaging									
36		.91							
26		.90							
31		.90							
27		.90					55	4.72	1.03	.95
10		.82							
14		.82							
5		.79							
18		.78							
Articulating									
32			.84						
6			.80						
3			.77				55	4.72	.72	.84
24			.76						
13			.70						
20			.58						
Implementing									
23				.87					
34				.87					
16				.86					
28				.84			55	4.64	.83	.94
30				.82					
12				.82					
4				.81					
7				.78					
Monitoring									
35					.89				
19					.88				
29					.85				
9					.85				
25					.84	55	4.61	.81	.94
15					.81				
22					.80				
2					.71				
Eigenvalues	3.71	5.84	3.36	5.56	5.52				
R^2	61.76	72.97	56.01	69.48	69.02				

Extraction method: principal component analysis

questionnaires (45.56%). However, the number of rater questionnaires received was 186. This represents an average return rate of less than three raters per principal (although the range was between zero and ten). In addition to the original invitation, a further two reminders and fortnightly reminders in the regional e-newsletter were used to enhance the return rate.

Of the 77 principals represented in the sample, 75 responded to the item relating to gender. There was a relatively even spread of males (n=38, 50.67%) and females (n=37, 49.33%). The age distribution demonstrated a trend towards older principals (51+ years, n=42, 56.00%), with less principals under 50 (41-50 years, n=29, 38.67% and 31-40 years, n=4, 5.33%). Tenure proved a more consistent spread with 30.14 percent (n=22) of principals in their first three years at their school. A further 32.88 percent (n=24) had been at their schools between 4-6 years, 23.29 percent (n=17) between 7-10 years and an additional 13.70 percent (n=10) had been at their schools greater than ten years.

The age distribution of the sample had an impact on the level of formal education. As qualification requirements have altered in the past 30 years as teacher training moved from teachers' colleges to universities, bachelor level degrees became the minimum. Due to the large percentage of principals over 40 it is understandable that a diploma in education was the most frequently cited highest level of formal education (58.57%, n=41). Bachelor level was less represented (4.29%, n=3). Post graduate qualifications were indicated by over a third of participants holding a masters degree (35.71%, n=25) and one participant holding a doctor of education (1.43%, n=1).

A relatively unexplored demographic of educational leaders in the literature of the field is that of career path. Table 18 displays the descriptive statistics for the career path of

112

the principals in the sample. With the exception of the teacher level, the minimum tenure at any level of the organization was one year. As deputy principals are only present in large schools (over 524 students), it was expected that this level would not be highly represented. As career path is concerned with the time spent at individual levels in the organizational hierarchy, the mean has been rounded to the nearest half a year. What is interesting in the descriptive statistics is the consistency of the mean time spent at each level of the hierarchy post-teaching. The majority of the principals in the sample would have come through the system during the inspectorate era, where after serving for a period of time, teachers would indicate a desire to be observed and evaluated, with success leading to being available for higher levels on the hierarchy. While to some degree the underlying assumptions of rewarding service remains, more recent initiatives for promotion have focused on a merit (although the term is loosely applied) systems of interview. As a result of this and the impending exodus of senior school staff, the nature of a principal's career path may considerably alter over the coming decades.

Table 18. Descriptive statistics of respondents' career path

Position	N	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{x}$	σ
Teacher	59	3	22	11.50	4.46
Assistant principal	46	1	11	6.00	2.80
Deputy principal	18	1	21	5.50	4.60
Small school principal	36	1	22	6.00	4.06
Medium school principal	43	1	20	7.00	4.63
Large school principal	14	1	14	4.50	4.21
Other	11	1	15	3.50	3.88

School based demographics added further insights into the composition of the sample. Using school size, as indicated by student enrolment, the study sample is compared with the regional distribution (see Table 19). The DET uses a category system where large schools (deemed to be primary schools with over 700 students) are classified P1 through to small one teacher school with less than 26 students classified as P6. As the study was conducted in the DET, the same categories were applied in the analysis. The final column of Table 19 shows the total difference between the study sample and the regional make up.

Table 19. Distribution of sample and region by school size

	Student Enrolments	Study Sample		Region		Total Difference
		Frequency	Percent*	Frequency	Percent	
P1	700+	2	2.63	10	4.31	-1.68
P2	450-700	13	17.11	40	17.24	-0.13
P3	301-449	14	18.42	48	20.69	-2.27
P4	160-300	28	36.84	67	28.88	+7.96
P5	27-159	16	21.05	56	24.14	-3.09
P6	≤ 26	1	1.32	11	4.74	-3.42

   * includes 2.6% (n=2) missing data

While most school sizes (with the exception of P4, 160-300 students, +7.96%) were underrepresented in the sample when compared with the regional distribution, all were within 3.42 percent. Further elements of the school enrolment data that the DET reports on are socio-economic status (SES) and significant student enrolments. Socio-economic status is a regularly reported on variable in political and departmental statistics. In the sample over a third (34.21%, n=26) were Priority School Program (PSP) participants. The PSP system is a targeted program where additional funds are distributed to schools to target literacy, numeracy and community relationship through strategic planning and target setting. This will be further explored in the research questions section of this chapter. A

further 15.79% of schools (*n*=12) were reported as low SES. Over a third (35.52%, *n*=27) were reported as average SES and 10.53% (*n*=8) were identified as above average. A small percentage (3.9%, *n*=3) failed to identify their schools SES.

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds or Significant Student Enrolments (SSE) as the DET refer to them, is used to produce data distinguishing schools with significant levels (either 20 students or greater than 20%) of enrolments representing minority or disadvantaged groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI), Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and English as a Second Language (ESL). While ESL was not present in the sample, special education units (one or two classes of students not integrated into mainstream classes) were present. Only 29 (38.16% of the sample) schools identified having a SSE. ATSI was the most frequently cited (23.69%, *n*=18). NESB (5.26%, *n*=4), ATSI and NESB (6.58%, *n*=5) and other (2.63%, *n*=2) which included the special education units were less represented. Although as noted earlier, the demographic profile of the Hunter / Central Coast region is such that low representation of these groups was expected.

The Instrument Statistics

Before moving on to specific statistical analysis to investigate the key research question, it was important to ascertain whether or not the model behaved appropriately in the study. Initial inquiry focused on redoing the factor analysis. As with the pilot study, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure for sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test for sphericity were used to establish the adequacy of the sample. Both supported the sample size, the KMO value was .86 and Bartlett's test was significant (*p*=<.01). The next form of analysis was principal

component analysis. Having established that the items loaded in a desired manner, scale statistics (responses, mean, and standard deviation) were calculated. In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the reliability of the scales. The alpha coefficient ranged from .81 to .92, which as cited previously, is appropriate for research in the social sciences. Table 20 shows the factor loading and scale statistics based on the main study responses.

Additional Matters

Having outlined the basic description of the sample and established the performance of the instrument / model, it was considered important to investigate whether there was any bias in the responses of the self-reporting principals. To investigate this matter, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were calculated for each item and scale. In addition to the descriptive statistics, Hays' (1981) omega squared which corrects the eta-squared for inherent increase in error (from either small sample, large numbers of predictors or small effects) was used to calculate an effect size. The formula used to compute the omega squared was:

$$\omega^2 = (SOS_{\text{BETWEEN}} - [(k - 1) \text{ x } MS_{\text{WITHIN}}]) / (SOS_{\text{TOTAL}} + MS_{\text{WITHIN}})$$

where SOS_{BETWEEN} is the sum of squares between the dependent variable, MS_{WITHIN} is the mean square within groups and k is the number of groups (Hays, 1981, p. 349). Snyder and Lawson (1993) argue that a corrected estimate is generally more accurate estimates of population effects or likely to be encountered in replication. Vacha-Haase and Thompson

116

Table 20. Factor loading and scale statistics from SLQ main study

Items	Component 1	2	3	4	5	Scale Statistics N	$\bar{x}$	σ	α
Envisioning									
8	.78								
17	.78								
33	.77					258	4.76	.71	.85
11	.76								
1	.75								
21	.72								
Engaging									
36		.83							
26		.83							
31		.82							
27		.80				258	5.04	.77	.92
10		.78							
5		.77							
14		.77							
18		.74							
Articulating									
6			.83						
32			.81						
3			.77			258	4.92	.67	.81
13			.68						
24			.66						
20			.57						
Implementing									
23				.81					
4				.81					
16				.80					
28				.80		258	4.97	.70	.91
34				.79					
12				.78					
7				.74					
30				.71					
Monitoring									
22					.81				
19					.79				
35					.79				
9					.78	258	4.88	.68	.90
2					.77				
15					.75				
29					.74				
15					.70				
Eigenvalues	3.45	5.03	3.15	4.86	4.69				
R^2	57.55	62.85	52.42	61.07	58.62				

Extraction method: principal component analysis

(2004) suggest that corrected estimates should be used more than their uncorrected counterparts.

However, in recognition that the most frequently used effect size is arguably Cohen's (1988) *d*, it has been included for all analysis that involved a binary measure (e.g. gender). The formula used to compute Cohen's *d* was:

$$d = M_1 - M_2 / \sigma_{pooled}$$

$$\text{where } \sigma_{pooled} = \sqrt{[\sigma_1^2 + \sigma_2^2 / 2]}$$

Cohen (1988) defined *d* as the difference between the means, divided by the standard deviation of either group. He argued that the standard deviation of either group could be used when the variance of the two groups are homogeneous. However, Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996), argue that in practice, the pooled standard deviation is more commonly used. The pooled standard deviation is found as the "root mean square of the two standard deviations" (Cohen, 1988, p. 44). That is, the pooled standard deviation is the square root of the average of the squared standard deviations.

The APA Task Force on Statistical Inference emphasized that effect sizes should always be reported along with *p* values (Wilkinson & Task Force on Statistical Inference, 1999) and in response, the fifth edition of the APA *Publication Manual* (2001, pp. 25-26) declared "For the reader to fully understand the importance of your findings, it is almost always necessary to include some index of effect size or strength of relationship in your results section" and failure to do so was described as a defect in research design and reporting. Fidler *et al.* (2005) argue that it is the effect size which should be utilized most

often to provide the major justification for conclusions drawn from data. In recognition of the every expanding number of effect size measures (Kirk, 1996) and adhering to Thompson (2007), it was consider important to explicitly articulate which effect size measure was being employed in the analysis of the data. A second consideration in the reporting of effect size is interpretation. In light of Prentice and Miller's (1992) claim that there is no one-size-fits-all model, the effect sizes will be interpreted in consideration of what is being studied / investigated in alignment with previous studies on the topic of inquiry.

Table 21 shows the results at the scale level between self-reporting and those with raters. No scale displayed a statistically significant difference between the groups. Additionally, the omega squared (Hays, 1981) were all low, less than one percent of the variance and Cohen's (1988) *d* were all within what he Cohen hesitantly defined as a "small" effect size (p. 25).

Table 21. Comparison of means for self-reporting and self plus others (scales)

Scale	n	$\bar{x}$	σ	F	df	p	f	ω^2	d
Envisioning									
- *Self report*	33	4.64	.72	.86	75	.36	.11	.00	.20
- *Self + others*	43	4.74	.43						
Engaging									
- *Self report*	33	5.13	.61	.71	75	.40	.10	.00	.18
- *Self + others*	43	5.03	.49						
Articulating									
- *Self report*	33	4.82	.64	.71	75	.40	.10	.00	.18
- *Self + others*	43	4.92	.42						
Implementing									
- *Self report*	33	4.97	.51	.01	75	.93	.00	.00	.02
- *Self + others*	43	4.96	.47						
Monitoring									
- *Self report*	33	4.87	.61	.02	75	.90	.00	.00	.02
- *Self + others*	43	4.86	.40						
Overall									
- *Self report*	33	4.90	.56	.01	75	.94	.00	.00	.02
- *Self + others*	43	4.91	.42						

The means between the two groups were then compared at the item level (see Table 22). This analysis revealed five items with statistically significant differences. Of the five items that demonstrated statistically significant differences, self-reporting principals rated higher on four. Of the four items where self-reporting principals rated higher, three directly relate to the relationships between leadership and staff or others. Maintaining the staff's commitment (item 16, F=4.34, df=75, p=.04, ω^2=.04, d=.47), the contributions of others making a difference (item 27, F=6.61, df=75, p=.01, ω^2=.07, d=.59), and supporting other potential leaders (item 31, F=4.32, df=75, p=.04, ω^2=.04, d=.48) all relate to what the principal does for others in the organization. Self-reporting principals interpret themselves as doing better at these items than principals whose information includes other raters. While not directly related to other people, self-reporting principals also rated higher on taking into account changes and their effects on the school (item 35, F=6.96, df=75, p=.01, ω^2=.07, d=.60) although in consideration of the previously discussed items, self-reporting principals may not necessarily interpret the effects on others. The only item where self-reporting principals rated lower in the group was item 21, relating to building images or metaphors for a desired future state (F=7.93, df=75, p=.01, ω^2=.08, d=.62). This item with an overall mean of 4.16 (σ=.96) was actually the lowest scoring item on the entire questionnaire. It is suggested that from reading this and in consideration of the extensive use of rational-linear models of strategic management in schools and the literature, that the use of metaphor and images is what Mintzberg (1994) would refer to as 'left-handed planning', relying less on the analytical aspects of strategy and more on the creative and intuitive, a mode that is not frequently promoted in educational management.

Table 22. Comparison of means for self-reporting principals and self plus others (items)

Item	*n*	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2	*d*
16. Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction									
- Self report	33	5.12	.74	4.34	75	.04	.24	.04	.47
- Self + others	43	4.81	.57						
21. Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state									
- Self report	33	3.82	1.24	7.93	75	.01	.33	.08	.62
- Self + others	43	4.42	.58						
27. The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made									
- Self report	33	5.52	.71	6.61	75	.01	.30	.07	.60
- Self + others	43	5.12	.63						
31.Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school									
- Self report	33	5.42	.66	4.32	75	.04	.24	.04	.46
- Self + others	43	5.12	.63						
35. Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's program									
- Self report	33	5.27	.57						
- Self + others	43	4.96	.47	6.96	75	.01	.31	.07	.59

Despite the sample containing a large proportion of self-reporting principals (*n*=33), and taking into account the previous discussion of differences at the item level, the overall consistency of the means at the scale level between self-reporting and those with raters was important for the development of the study. Two of the scales and the overall total mean had a variance of just 0.01 (ω^2=.00). While this does not completely eliminate the potential bias of self-reporting participants, it provided sufficient support for including all the participants (both self-reporting and those with raters) in the final sample for data analysis.

To further investigate the difference between principal self-reporting and raters, a comparison of means was computed for the group of principal who had others complete the

questionnaire (*n*=43). Table 23 displays the results of the analysis. As with the previous table, the difference between the self and other reporting was not statistically significant and the effect size (both omega squared and Cohen's *d*) were small.

Table 23. Comparison of means between self and raters at the scale level

Scale	*n*	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2	*d*
Envisioning									
- *Self*	43	4.71	.41	.35	222	.56	.05	.00	.12
- *Raters*	181	4.79	.76						
Engaging									
- *Self*	43	5.10	.45	.38	222	.54	.05	.00	.12
- *Raters*	181	5.01	.86						
Articulating									
- *Self*	43	4.94	.41	.01	222	.92	.00	.00	.02
- *Raters*	181	4.93	.73						
Implementing									
- *Self*	43	4.98	.44	.00	222	.96	.00	.00	.01
- *Raters*	181	4.97	.78						
Monitoring									
- *Self*	43	4.82	.47	.49	222	.49	.05	.00	.13
- *Raters*	181	4.90	.74						
Overall									
- *Self*	43	4.92	.39						
- *Raters*	181	4.93	.74	.01	222	.94	.00	.00	.02

The two groups were also compared at the item level. This analysis revealed three items with statistically significant differences. Of the three items, principal rated themselves higher on two. Principals rated themselves higher on item 27, 'The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made' (5.45 to 5.01, F=6.86, *df*=222, *p*=.01, ω^2=.03, *d*=.51) and item 15, 'Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximize effectiveness' (5.24 to 4.91, F=5.14, *df*=221, *p*=.02, ω^2=.02, *d*=.44). The raters scored the principal higher on item 25, 'Provides

a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction', (4.86 to 4.52, F=4.31, df=221, p=.01, ω^2=.02, d=.36). An interesting occurrence in this analysis is that while raters reported that principals provide a forum, principals rated themselves higher when it comes to the contributions of others making a difference. However it should be noted that even the means in each case are still relatively high on a six point scale.

Limitations and Constraints

This study should be interpreted in light of its key limitations. The scale of studies has traditionally been an issue in educational leadership and management research, in that constraints on funding have frequently been a constraint on sample size (Foskett, Lumby, & Fidler, 2005). This study is no exception, the selection of one region makes generalizations limited as the homogenous nature of the region may have impacted on the study's findings. In addition, the low response rate of raters further constrains the transferability of the results to another context. Furthermore, it is unknown as to whether there was any bias on the part of the principal's in the distribution of rating questionnaires to staff and other stakeholders.

While these limitations and constraints may have impacted on the study in various degrees, it is important to view them in relation to the over arching purposes of the thesis – theory development. This thesis set out to go beyond what is already known and set forth new frameworks, perspectives, testable propositions, and methodological recommendations for the study of strategic leadership and management in education. As such, the findings

provide a new platform for theory and research on the strategic role of school leaders, consolidating what is already known, identifying the high priorities for what next needs to be known, and proposing how scholars might fruitfully conduct their inquiries.

Results

The purpose of this study was to empirically investigate the strategic role of the public primary school principal. The inquiry followed two streams, initially, to what extent do public primary school principals display strategic leadership and management (as theorized in the model presented in chapter two) and secondly, drawing on the upper echelon perspective, do demographic variables (both personal and school based) moderate the strategic leadership and management of principals? The results of these two inquires is detailed below.

To what extent do public primary school principals display strategic leadership and management?

To explore this question descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used. The analysis was completed at the questionnaire, scale and item level. Table 24 contains an overview of the data analysis at the scale and questionnaire level.

In addition to acquiring the descriptive statistics, both the skewness (symmetry of the distribution) and the kurtosis (height and width ratio) were calculated. As can be seen in Table 24, the distribution was negatively skewed. Kaplan (1987) and Vernoy and Vernoy (1997) consider a distribution to be seriously skewed if the measure (indicated by 'static' in

Table 24) is more than three times its standard error. Skewed distributions create problems insofar as they indicate a violation of the assumption (normal distribution) that underlies many of the commonly used statistical tests, such as correlation coefficients and *t*-tests (Anderson & Bourke, 2000; J. Brown, 1996, 1997). As reported in Table 24, both 'envisioning' and 'engaging' were seriously skewed. In such cases, both Kaplan (1987) and Vernoy and Vernoy (1997) suggest using the median (the final column in Table 24) opposed to the mean as the mean can be affected by extreme cases. However, three of the five scales and the overall questionnaire were not seriously skewed. As such, the mean scores were used in the analysis.

Table 24. Descriptive statistics of questionnaire

| Scale | N | x̄ | σ | Skewness | | Kurtosis | | Median |
				Static	S.E.	Static	S.E.	
Envisioning	76	4.71	.57	-.92	.28	1.92	.55	4.82
Engaging	76	5.07	.55	-.99	.28	1.10	.55	5.19
Articulating	76	4.88	.53	-.69	.28	1.19	.55	4.90
Implementing	76	4.97	.48	-.56	.28	.40	.55	5.00
Monitoring	76	4.86	.50	-.46	.28	.43	.55	4.90
Overall	76	4.91	.48	-.70	.28	1.07	.55	4.95

But, to what extent do public primary school principals exhibit strategic leadership and management? Recognizing the negative skew of the distribution, and subsequent high means, it is concluded that participants in the study frequently exhibit strategic leadership and management. The questionnaire utilized a six-point Likert scale (one – strongly disagree through to six – strongly agree) and the means for the scales and the overall questionnaire ranged from 4.71 to 5.07, reflecting a trend between slightly agree and agree

(even if using the median, the trend would still have fallen in the same range, but slightly higher).

Having established the overall trend in the data at the questionnaire and scale level, the next level of analysis was at the individual item level. Rather than include a lengthy table with the information for each item (this is however included as appendix 4), the highest and lowest scoring items are presented for consideration and further analysis. As the questionnaire featured 36 items, the items were divided into quarters to highlight the highest (top 25%) and the lowest (bottom 25%) scoring items based on their mean scores. Tables 25 and 26 display these results.

All of the items in Table 25 were negatively skewed. Of particular interest in this sub-set of items is the high number of items from the 'engaging' scale (five out of the top seven items). This reflects the current discourse in the field of educational leadership towards more participative models of school leadership and management. From this pattern in the data, it is concluded that principals are engaging a range of people within their strategic role. However while the contributions of others can make a difference to decisions was the highest scoring item, involving a wide group to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters was one of the lowest scoring items (see Table 26). This raises the question as to whether or not the right people are being asked to inform the discussion on strategic matters.

Applying the notion of serious skewness for items with a static measure greater than three times the standard error, two items match this criterion. Items 27 and 3 conform and item 26 is within .01 of conforming. Using the median instead of the mean for each of these items changes the order of ranking. Item 27 remains the highest scoring item, in fact the

median (5.36) is actually higher than the mean (5.29). Item 3 on the other hand actually decreases from 5.20 to 5.00. Readjusting the ranking, item 3 would be much lower on the list than it currently situated. Although item 26 does not strictly conform to the rule of three times the standard error, had it been adjusted to reflect the median as opposed to the mean, it would rise from 5.18 to 5.23 and subsequently rise up the ranks.

Table 25. Highest scoring items on the SLQ

Item (*scale*)	N	x̄	σ	Skewness Static	Skewness S.E.	Kurtosis Static	Kurtosis S.E.	Median
27. The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made (*Engaging*)	76	5.29	.69	-1.00	.28	.76	.55	5.36
31. Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school (*Engaging*)	76	5.25	.66	-.78	.28	.49	.55	5.23
3. Orally articulates the school's strategic direction to others (*Articulating*)	76	5.20	.59	-1.22	.28	4.61	.55	5.00
30. Recognizes when the school needs a change (*Implementing*)	76	5.20	.61	-.43	.28	-.29	.55	5.14
26. Gives others the feeling that their contribution is important and recognized (*Engaging*)	76	5.18	.75	-.83	.28	.13	.55	5.23
14. Establishes a sense of purpose for the school's actions (*Engaging*)	76	5.16	.67	-.77	.28	.61	.55	5.10
5. Engages with others in the school community about the challenges of the future (*Engaging*)	76	5.14	.65	-.65	.28	.45	.55	5.05
4. Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action (*Implementing*)	76	5.11	.47	-.21	.28	.33	.55	5.00
15. Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximize effectiveness (*Monitoring*)	76	5.09	.63	-.80	.28	1.42	.55	5.00
35. Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's progress (*Monitoring*)	76	5.09	.54	-.19	.28	.32	.55	5.00

Overall the top ten scoring items reflects a diverse group of items drawn from four of the five scales of the SLQ (the missing element is 'envisioning'). However among those top ten scoring items, five come from one dimension (engaging), two from 'implementing' and 'monitoring' and a further one from 'articulating'. It is concluded that public primary school principals in the sample were most likely to demonstrate strategic leadership and management behaviors related to engaging others in the process. These conclusions are consistent with comments make by principals on the bottom of the SLQ principal version. A sample of which included:

It is highly important to build the capacity of the whole team and to ensure the plan is shared and owned by all (as far as possible). It is important for people to see that their ideas become part of the plan (if not, why not) and see the progress made.

Principal 21

We have a strong focus on building community partnerships – we offer lots of opportunities to contribute through information sessions, meetings and surveys.

Principal 53

At the end of the day, it is about valuing others, working together and articulating beliefs and goals for the future.

Principal 75

It was expected that the lowest scoring items may reflect the opposite composition of the highest scoring items. However, this was not to be the case. Although it should be noted that even the nine lowest scoring items were still negatively skewed. Again, four of the five elements were represented in the nine lowest scoring items. There were three items from 'envisioning' (which failed to appear in the highest scoring items) and 'monitoring', with a further two and one from 'articulating' and 'engaging' respectively. Three of the

lowest scoring six items came from the 'envisioning' scale. Envisioning was the only scale that did not appear in the highest scoring items list. This occurrence is interesting because much of the literature espousing participative models of leadership and management stress the importance of engaging others in the processes of decision making and goal setting. The over-representation of items relating to engaging in the highest scoring items and items relating to envisioning in the lowest scoring items reflect an incongruence in the practice of strategic leadership and management. It may be that principals are engaging a wider scope of people in the processes, yet the stage of the process that they are engaged in, is not the envisioning of the desired future state. As stated earlier, this represents an incomplete link with the literature on distributed and participative models of leadership and management and arguably represents an underlying power relationship in shaping the future direction of the school.

While not necessarily obvious from the item means, numerous principals commented on constraints to their strategic role in the open-ended section at the base of the SLQ. A representative sampling of which is included below:

In recent years the gap between the real and ideal world has greatly increased. I assume that all principals have a positive philosophy and goals. Unfortunately a large percentage of time goes into not involving school plans. DET pressures constantly take our time away from what is really important in the school. It gets very difficult to not become negative.
Principal 33

The DET is frequently changing direction and requirements within our strategic plan period – we are never given a chance to manage a program / policy throughout a three year cycle. Annual targets do not sit well in a three year strategic plan. We should only be 'tackling' one major KLA and one policy area a year.
Principal 44

There is great value in the 'big picture' and as a leader this should be the basis of all policies, procedures, behaviors and relationships. However the constancy of administrative

129

responsibilities limits time to a debilitating level sometimes. There is a need to realign priorities.

<div align="right">Principal 62</div>

The busyness of school life in terms of management versus educational leadership and increasing workloads and time restraints often hinder performance

<div align="right">Principal 64</div>

Having completed this [questionnaire] I feel GUILT! Too often I get bogged down in administrivia and day-to-day hassles of student behavior, staff relationships and school maintenance. Effective use of time is another theme. After ten years as a principal I should have the strategies to ensure the varied day-to-day hassles are minimized so as an organization we are reflective, proactive and forward thinking.

<div align="right">Principal 73</div>

Table 26. Lowest scoring items on the SLQ

Item (*scale*)	N	x̄	σ	Skewness Static	Skewness S.E.	Kurtosis Static	Kurtosis S.E.	Median
21. Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state (*Envisioning*)	76	4.16	.96	-1.04	.28	1.59	.55	4.19
13. Separates the school's operational plan (1-3 years) from the strategic plan (*Articulating*)	76	4.40	1.02	-.86	.28	.60	.55	4.60
22. Establishes periodic in-depth, thoughtful and considered evaluation of the effectiveness of strategic actions (*Monitoring*)	76	4.53	.73	-.84	.28	1.33	.55	4.72
33. Creates a shared conceptual or mental map of the future (*Envisioning*)	76	4.54	.82	-.72	.28	1.54	.55	4.50
18. Involves a wide group of individuals to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters (*Engaging*)	76	4.64	.70	-.27	.28	.44	.55	4.64
11. Moves debates from day-to-day problems to the strategic future of the school (*Envisioning*)	76	4.66	.66	-.09	.28	.123	.55	4.80
25. Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction (*Monitoring*)	76	4.75	.78	-.78	.28	1.35	.55	5.00
32. Integrates the school's strategic direction into all aspects of the school's organization (*Articulating*)	76	4.76	.83	-1.01	.28	1.92	.55	5.00
19. Makes the monitoring of progress a continuous process (*Monitoring*)	76	4.80	.69	-.32	.28	.35	.55	5.00

Consistent themes to emerge from these comments include the perceived lack of time, frequently attributed to the increasing administration and workload of the principal position. An underlying theme in these comments is the influence of the system and the implications of changes in the system on the strategic leadership and management of the school. Arguably this is further evidence of the constant power struggle in shaping the future direction of the school between the principal and the system.

Before moving on though, a comment written by a rater on the SLQ is worth discussing, albeit briefly. The rater in question refused to complete the SLQ yet returned it (it was the only returned SLQ from that school) to the researcher with the following comment attached:

> Though I am considered to be an intelligent man, this survey is beyond my understanding, and that of my parent colleagues. It appears to be in the realm of non-teaching educational bureaucrats who love meaningless statistical paperwork. Recommendation: as a current student and future educationalist, do not let 'bureaucratic; dominate your surveys or language or thoughts.
>
> Rater from school 78

With no means of following up with the author of the comment, it is assumed that the term 'strategy' and its operationalization in the items is what he / she is referring to as meaningless 'bureaucratic' language. This comment raises some key points for consideration. Firstly, is the term 'strategy' or 'strategic' so far removed from perceptions of school leadership that people would feel uneasy discussing or completing a questionnaire? Does this explain the low response rate from raters? Is the term 'strategy' to abstract or loosely defined for it to be understood by those other than the person using it? Are bureaucratic terms inappropriate for school leadership? Or is this merely the comments

131

of one rater to the questionnaire? The core conclusion coming from the analysis of the level of strategic leadership and management exhibited by public primary school principals in the sample and the additional comments made by participants is that further work needs to be done on defining the strategic role of the principal from the practitioner perspective. This is the rationale for the study which is discussed in chapter five.

Do demographic variables (personal and school) moderate the strategic leadership and management of principals?

As noted previously, in addition to analyzing the data at the principal level, further analysis was undertaken using demographic conditions as a potential source of variance in performance. The primary form of analysis was a comparison of means with tests for statistical significance and effect size used to draw conclusions. Using a modified version of the upper echelon perspective (Hambrick & Mason, 1984) the personal demographics of gender, age, tenure, career path and formal education were investigated as differentiators of the strategic role of the principal. In addition, the school based demographics of school size (measured by student enrolments), socio-economic status and significant student enrolments were investigated. Table 27 presents a correlation matrix of the demographic conditions to establish any initial relationships. Age and tenure, although not overly surprising, were positively correlated. Before moving the actual comparison of means based on the two demographics, this raised a further question, 'Was the correlation based on the movement of principals up the organizational ladder?' therefore reaching the larger schools later in their career and staying put for longer. However neither age ($r=.02$, $p=.87$, $n=74$) or tenure ($r=.01$, $p=.95$, $n=72$) were significantly correlated with school size.

Alternatively, it may be possible that once a principal reaches their career peak (whether the choice is made individually or by those who employ) they stay for longer periods or indefinitely before moving laterally.

Formal education was negatively correlated with school size leading to the conclusion that those principals with post graduate qualifications are most likely to be found in smaller schools. This may be the result of the change in qualifications structures and the subsequent delay of the university graduate era moving to the top of the ranks. The socio-economic status of the school had significant correlations with the principals gender ($r=-.30$, $p=.01$, $n=73$), tenure ($r=.32$, $p=.01$, $n=71$), and school size ($r=-.25$, $p=.04$, $n=73$). Some potential conclusions drawn from these correlations are that male principals are most likely to be present in a school located in a low socio-economic area. The reason for this phenomenon are unknown and beyond the scope of this thesis. The socio-economic status of the school and the principals tenure are positively correlated which is consistent with the myth that schools in socio-economic areas are hard to staff and that staff do not stay for long. The size of the school was negatively correlated with the socio-economic status the school leading to the conclusion that schools in low socio-economic areas are more likely to be large schools. The final statistically significant relationship occurred between school size and significant student enrolments ($r=-.31$, $p=.01$, $n=73$). The conclusion being that the larger the school is, the less likely it is to have a significant student enrolment of a minority or disadvantaged group.

Having established the relationship between the demographic proxies used in the study, the next level of analysis was to compare the means of the groups. The goal being to establish whether there was any difference in performance based on demographic proxies.

133

Table 27. Pearson product-moment coefficients of correlations between demographic

variables

	Gender	Age	Tenure	Education	School Size	SES
Age	-.08					
Sig.	.51					
N	75					
Tenure	-.23	**.37**				
Sig.	.06	**.00**				
N	73	**73**				
Education	.03	.12	-.16			
Sig.	.83	.33	.18			
N	75	75	73			
School Size	.07	.02	.01	**-.24**		
Sig.	.54	.87	.95	**.04**		
N	74	74	72	**74**		
SES	**-.30**	.08	**.36**	.05	**-.25**	
Sig.	**.01**	.51	**.01**	.66	**.04**	
N	**73**	73	**71**	73	**73**	
SSE	.11	-.06	-.14	-.07	**-.31**	-.31
Sig.	.36	.60	.23	.56	**.01**	.01
N.	76	75	73	75	**73**	73

Note: Statistically significant correlations at the level of $p=<.05$ are indicated in bold.

Gender: The mean scores were compared at the overall questionnaire, scale (see Table 28) and individual item levels. At the overall questionnaire level, despite females rating higher than males (5.01 to 4.81), it was not a statistically significant ($p=.08$, $\omega^2=.03$, $d=.42$) and the gender of the principal accounted for a mere 2.8 percent of the variance (using the omega-squared measure). Although much of the literature suggests that it is not the overall leadership between the genders that varies, but rather the manner to which the genders go

about their leadership that differs. As such, it may be expected that there would be differences at the scale level worthy of further discussion.

Table 28. Scales scores by gender

Scale	n	$\bar{x}$	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2	*d*
Envisioning									
- *Male*	39	4.66	.60	.58	74	.45	.09	.00	.18
- *Female*	37	4.76	.54						
Engaging									
- *Male*	39	4.97	.67	3.05	74	.09	.20	.03	.41
- *Female*	37	5.19	.35						
Articulating									
- *Male*	39	4.77	.61	3.71	74	.06	.23	.03	.45
- *Female*	37	5.00	.39						
Implementing									
- *Male*	39	4.84	.58	6.13	74	.02	.29	.06	.56
- *Female*	37	5.10	.32						
Monitoring									
- *Male*	39	4.79	.59	1.82	74	.18	.16	.01	.30
- *Female*	37	4.94	.38						
Overall									
- *Male*	39	4.81	.58	3.17	74	.08	.21	.03	.42
- *Female*	37	5.01	.34						

The only scale with a statistically significant difference was 'implementing' with females rating higher than males (5.10 to 4.84, F=6.13, *df*=74, *p*=.02, ω^2=.06, *d*=.56). In addition to being statistically significant, the fact that the gender of the principal was related to 6.3 percent of the variance made analysis at the item level worthy of further investigation. While it could be argued that a further 93.6 percent of the variance remains unexplained, when read in collaboration with the literature in the field, the 6.3 percent is worth discussing. Table 29 displays the comparison of means for each item of the 'implementing' scale.

Four of the eight items in the scale had statistically significant difference, and more importantly each of those items had an ω^2 greater than .06. Whereas influential educational administrative gender researchers such as Shakeshaft have argued that female styles of leadership differ from males in the three main areas of relationships, teaching and learning, and community (see also Shakeshaft & Perry, 1995), the only difference that was significant in this study centered on the implementation, generally perceived as a managerial task-orientated male trait. However, this is consistent with other literature (Blackmore & Kenway, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987) suggesting that females are the doers of educational leadership. The two items which directly relate to relationships with staff (12 and 16) had very little variance between the genders. But what does this mean for the strategic role of the public primary school principal? The overall data form this study leads to the conclusion that there is only a minor difference in the enactment of the strategic role based on gender. This does not suggest that the genders go about the role the same way, but that the overall enactment of the role is not overly moderated by the gender of the principal.

Age: As with gender, a comparison of means was completed at the item, scale and entire questionnaire levels (see Table 30). The primary point of departure from the gender analysis is the presence of a third group. Principals in the sample fell into one of three age brackets, 31-40, 41-50 or 51+ years of age. The group sizes were however not equal (4, 29 and 42 respectively), which is consistent with the previous stated context of the principalship in Western countries.

Before discussing statistically significant differences and effect sizes, one dominant trend emerges for the data. That is, the scale mean peaks with the 41-50 year old age group.

136

In all bar one example (implementing), the order of means has the 41-50 first followed by the 51+ with the 31-40 ranking the lowest (see Table 30). From this data, it is possible to conclude that the 41-50 year old principals exhibit strategic leadership and management behaviors more frequently than any other age group.

Table 29. Comparison of item means for implement scale by gender

Item	*n*	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω²	*d*
4. Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action									
- *Male*	39	4.97	.51	7.28	75	.01	.31	.08	.62
- *Female*	37	5.25	.38						
7. Considers how the school's strategic direction can be witnessed as happening									
- *Male*	39	4.62	.75	7.10	75	.01	.31	.07	.61
- *Female*	37	5.02	.55						
12. Ensures that staff have an understanding of the school's strategic direction									
- *Male*	39	4.95	.67	.61	75	.44	.09	.00	.18
- *Female*	37	5.05	.42						
16. Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction									
- *Male*	39	4.88	.72	.79	75	.38	.11	.00	.20
- *Female*	37	5.01	.60						
23. Improves what the school already does but, significantly, moves to a much higher level of performance									
- *Male*	39	4.73	.97	3.41	75	.07	.22	.03	.43
- *Female*	37	5.06	.50						
28. Tries to significantly improve existing operations by developing the capability to shift to a whole new level of operation									
- *Male*	39	4.67	.75	5.93	75	.02	.28	.06	.56
- *Female*	37	5.03	.51						
30. Recognizes when the school needs a change									
- *Male*	39	5.02	.59	7.57	75	.01	.32	.08	.64
- *Female*	37	5.40	.59						
34. Initiates changes before external constraints and conditions force change									
- *Male*	39	4.86	.82	.94	75	.34	.71	.00	.23
- *Female*	37	5.02	.58						

Table 30. Comparison of scale means by age group

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	df	p	f	$ω^2$
Envisioning								
- 31-40	4	4.47	.75					
- 41-50	29	4.83	.52	1.09	72	.34	.17	.00
- 51+	42	4.67	.58					
Engaging								
- 31-40	4	4.94	.85					
- 41-50	29	5.25	.36	2.14	72	.13	.24	.03
- 51+	42	4.99	.59					
Articulating								
- 31-40	4	4.51	.88					
- 41-50	29	5.00	.47	1.86	72	.16	.23	.02
- 51+	42	4.86	.50					
Implementing								
- 31-40	4	5.00	.71					
- 41-50	29	5.11	.40	1.74	72	.18	.22	.02
- 51+	42	4.90	.48					
Monitoring								
- 31-40	4	4.33	.62					
- 41-50	29	4.99	.42	3.64	72	.03	.32	.07
- 51+	42	4.85	.49					
Overall								
- 31-40	4	4.67	.68					
- 41-50	29	5.05	.34	2.00	72	.14	.24	.03
-51	42	4.86	.49					

The age of the principal is a difficult demographic to analyze as it is closely related to tenure and makes an assumption that all principals enter the profession at the same age. Much of the literature which loosely alludes to studying principal career stage or life cycle most often refers to tenure. However this does not mean we cannot speculate from the findings. Based on the assumption that current principals enter the profession at the same stage of life, presumed to be at the conclusion of tertiary study or early twenties, and retire at 55-60 years of age, it is possible to suggest a pattern of behavior emerging from the data. That is, in support of those advocates of experience as a pre-requisite for effective practice and the urban myth of principals in 'countdown mode' (a term used to describe a principal

who is nearing retirement and seeks to maintain the status quo rather than engage in any reform initiatives) in the lead in to retirement, it is proposed that principal peak performance is based on a 'developmental leadership paradigm'. Meaning that the principal as an educational professional refines and hones their knowledge, skills and understandings over time before reaching the height of their career from which point they maintain their performance at a level that is reduced, but still superior to their early career. This developmental leadership paradigm was arguably the basis of previous promotion models in the New South Wales public school system (subsequently replaced with a merit based system) which gave primacy to the experience in the system of the applicant (this of course has socialization and behavioral reproduction implications for applicants). It should however be noted that research by Earley and Weindling (2007, p. 79) led them to conclude that there was "no necessary relationship between age and performance" of headteachers in the United Kingdom. In summary, the findings of this analysis are consistent with prior research on the relationship between age and educational leadership. However, as suggested earlier, it is possible that the notions of age and tenure are too closely related to be separated (see Table 27).

Tenure: A not to dissimilar trend emerged from the data analysis of tenure as that from age. Although age featured only three categories, tenure was divided into four, less than three years, four to six years, seven to ten years and greater than 11 years. As with age, the mean score rose over the first two categories before dropping away in the third (see Table 31). Although an interesting trend was that the mean rose again in the fourth category to its highest point.

Excluding the phenomenon of the fourth category for the moment, the fluctuation of the mean is consistent with the work of Earley and Weindling (2007) who proposed that principal first take hold (year one), reshape (year two) and refine (years three to four) before consolidating (years five to seven) and then reaching a plateau (years eight onwards). An alternative perspective is that of Oplatka (2004b) who discusses the principal career stages as 'induction', 'establishment', 'maintenance vs renewal' and then finally 'disenhancement'. Both models propose that performance reaches either a plateau or decline at the end, whereas the data collected in this study actually portrays a different situation. Why may this be so?

Whereas early stages of tenure a principal is socialized into the school and their new role (both at the school and systemic level), is it not possible that over time the pattern of leadership behavior exercised by the principal becomes part of the school as an organization and it is accepted as the norm rather than the exception. As seven years provides the opportunity for a generation of students to move from kindergarten through to leaving primary school, staying longer than 11 years socializes a generation of parents to the principal's style of leadership and take on the situation and context of the school. Assuming that a principal would not stay in a working environment where they are not well received by staff, students or the community, a long serving principal may lead a school towards a single governing paradigm.

Prior to moving into a position, a leader's governing paradigm (made up of his / her pre-existing knowledge system and repertoire of leadership and management tools) is already established. He or she may have previously held a series of assistant or deputy principal positions, acting / relieving principal positions or possibly served as a principal in

a smaller school. By virtue of being promoted, a principal is correct in assuming that their personal paradigm has potential and is appropriate for their new posting, or at least better than those of other applicants.

Table 31. Scale scores by tenure

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2
Envisioning								
- ≤ 3	22	4.68	.52					
- 4-6	24	4.83	.41	2.43	71	.06	.37	.07
- 7-10	17	4.48	.58					
- 11+	10	5.01	.38					
Engaging								
- ≤ 3	22	5.14	.50					
- 4-6	24	5.19	.43	2.42	71	.06	.37	.07
- 7-10	17	4.74	.64					
- 11+	10	5.25	.44					
Articulating								
- ≤ 3	22	4.86	.52					
- 4-6	24	4.97	.42	1.51	71	.21	.29	.03
- 7-10	17	4.69	.58					
- 11+	10	5.12	.28					
Implementing								
- ≤ 3	22	5.02	.44					
- 4-6	24	5.05	.39	1.48	71	.22	.29	.02
- 7-10	17	4.74	.55					
- 11+	10	5.09	.36					
Monitoring								
- ≤ 3	22	4.86	.45					
- 4-6	24	4.94	.42	1.85	71	.13	.32	.04
- 7-10	17	4.68	.48					
- 11+	10	5.11	.39					
Overall								
- ≤ 3	22	4.93	.44					
- 4-6	24	5.01	.37	2.10	71	.09	.34	.06
- 7-10	17	4.68	.53					
- 11+	10	5.12	.35					

In a personal correspondence cited in Earley and Weindling (2007), Pam Sammons, one of the authors of Mortimore *et al.* (1988) was cited as saying:

We found long serving (primary) headteachers were associated with less effective schools – of course this does not mean all schools with long serving headteachers were less effective, it was a trend across our sample. Long serving headteachers were those with 11 or more years in the same post. We also found new headteachers (first three years) were generally less effective. Mid term headteachers were associated with most effective schools (three to seven years in the post).

With long serving headteachers the task is different and the implication for LEAs (and governing bodies) is that they need to find ways of supporting those headteachers and if possible of rekindling their energy and enthusiasm. In this situation many school boards in the US or Canada would simply transfer heads from one school to another. In England, where headteachers have tenure within their schools, this is not possible (p. 81).

The findings of this study contradict what has been found in previous work and although their existed no statistically significant difference and the omega squared size ranged from 2.4 to 7.0 percent of the variance, it does raise the question of tenure and its effect on practice.

Career Path: The previously unexplored, in the educational leadership literature, construct of career path required a somewhat different form of analysis from the earlier demographic variables. Rather than attempting to break the length of time at each stage of the organizational hierarchy into categories for an analysis of variance, as the artificially produced categories would dilute reality to such a point that the data would become redundant, a Pearson product-moment-coefficients correlation was completed (see Table 32). Two streams of data emerging from the analysis are of particular interest, the first being the negative correlation of teaching and time spent as a medium sized school principal to each dimension of the strategic role model, and secondly the presence of statistically significant correlations.

Table 32. Pearson product-moment coefficients of correlations between means for scales

and the principal's career path

	Envisioning	Engaging	Articulating	Implementing	Monitoring	Overall
Classroom teacher	-.05	-.07	-.09	-.08	-.06	-.08
Sig.	.70	.58	.51	.57	.63	.56
N	59	59	59	59	59	59
Assistant Principal	.02	.16	.16	.13	.13	.13
Sig.	.89	.21	.22	.30	.30	.30
N	61	61	61	61	61	61
Deputy Principal	.09	.10	.07	.16	.17	.13
Sig.	.49	.46	.57	.22	.19	.32
N	61	61	61	61	61	61
Small Principal	**.29**	.16	.13	.05	**.26**	.20
Sig.	**.02**	.21	.33	.69	**.05**	.13
N	**62**	62	62	62	**62**	62
Medium Principal	**-.28**	-.22	-.17	**-.26**	-.19	-.25
Sig.	**.03**	.09	.20	**.04**	.15	.06
N	**61**	61	61	**61**	61	61
Large Principal	.10	.06	.14	.16	.09	.12
Sig.	.47	.64	.30	.23	.52	.38
N.	61	61	61	61	61	61
Non school based	.11	.05	.12	.09	.12	.11
Sig.	.40	.68	.35	.48	.35	.41
N	62	62	62	62	62	62

Note: Statistically significant correlations at the p=<.05 are indicated in bold.

In contrast to the notion that extended experience in the classroom is needed to lead

a school (and this argument could be extended to include a school system), the data

presents a situation where, at least in this sample, time in the classroom is negatively

correlated with the enactment of the strategic role. At least a further two views could taken to this data. First, this pattern could be read in such a way to support the idea that strategic leadership and management are so poorly matched to the educational environment that those who spend considerable time working in the profession are somewhat removed from the entire role. Alternatively, it could be argued that spending considerable time in the classroom reduces the understanding and scope of education beyond the classroom therefore reducing the enactment of the strategic role. While there existed no statistically significant correlations in the matrix, the absence does not suggest that it is a phenomenon not worth noting.

In recognition of the statistically significant differences in both time spent as a small school principal (envisioning and monitoring) and medium sized principal (envisioning and implementing) it was decided to further investigation both situations. In recognition that not all principals take the route through small schools on the way to larger schools, it was considered appropriate to categorize the data in the binary code of either yes or no. For example, if a respondent had spent time as a small school principal during their career they were coded 1, if they had not spent time as a small school principal they were coded 0. This allowed for a comparison of means between the groups (see Table 33). Consistent with the positive correlation between small school principalship and the dimensions of the strategic role, those respondents who had spent time as a principal in a small school had a higher mean on each dimension of the strategic role. Statistically significant differences were present in two dimensions (envisioning and engaging) and overall. The most significant difference was in the dimension of envisioning (4.49 to 4.49, F=8.89, *df*=61, *p*=.00, ω^2=.11, *d*=.73).

Table 33. Scales scores presence of teaching principals position

Scale	N	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2	*d*
Envisioning									
- *No*	26	4.49	.71	8.89	61	.00	.39	.11	.73
- *Yes*	36	4.89	.32						
Engaging									
- *No*	26	4.97	.58	4.79	61	.03	.28	.06	.54
- *Yes*	36	5.24	.40						
Articulating									
- *No*	26	4.75	.60	3.90	61	.05	.26	.05	.49
- *Yes*	36	5.00	.40						
Implementing									
- *No*	26	4.93	.51	2.07	61	.16	.19	.02	.35
- *Yes*	36	5.08	.33						
Monitoring									
- *No*	26	4.78	.54	3.17	61	.08	.23	.03	.44
- *Yes*	36	4.98	.34						
Overall									
- *No*	26	4.80	.55	5.12	61	.03	.30	.06	.56
- *Yes*	36	5.05	.31						

To further investigate the pattern emerging from the time spent as a medium sized principal, the raw data (years spent as a medium sized principal) were recoded into year brackets. The goal was to produce groups that were as close to equal in number as possible (see Table 34). Furthermore, the intention being that means could then be compared to establish whether after a certain time period the level of strategic leadership and management behaviors altered. After multiple attempts the following breakdown was used: less than three years (*n*=9, 11.84%), four to six years (*n*=12, 15.79%), seven to nine years (*n*=12, 15.79%), ten plus years (*n*=10, 13.16%) and missing or not yet at that level (*n*=29, 38.16%). An additional category is principals who have moved to a large school principalship without having spent time as a medium sized principal (*n*=4, 5.26%).

In each case, the lowest mean was recorded against the category of ten plus years in the post. In each case the mean rises before declining. As a medium sized school would be

considered a stepping stone to a larger posting, it is proposed that the decline in enactment of the strategic role is related to the most effective principals (at least those perceived to be most effective by employers) moving onto to other posts (usually larger). A Pearson's product-moment coefficient correlation matrix supports this proposition (r=-.11, p=.39, n=61) although the relationship is not statistically significant. What is of greatest implications for systemic authorities and further research is the negative correlation between time spent as a medium sized school principal and the enactment of the strategic role. Is it the case that those principals who conform to the strategic role are promoted into larger schools, while those who are perceived to be less effective in that role remain at the medium sized school? To further draw conclusions in this matter, it is important and valuable to read the section on school size in collaboration with these findings.

Formal Education: Principals were asked to indicate the types of formal education they had undertaken. Options given were diploma in education, bachelor, graduate certificate, masters', doctorate (both PhD and EdD) and other. To assist in the analysis of the data, only the highest level of formal education was included in the data set (see Table 35). The distribution of participants was uneven with diploma in education being well represented (n=41), masters being the second most cited (n=25) and both bachelor (n=8) and EdD being the least cited (n=1). Interestingly no participants held PhD. In comparison, Scott's (2003) sample contained 82 percent with basic degrees and 51 percent with graduate diplomas, a further three percent with PhDs, and 18 percent EdDs. Scott's (2003) sample didn't only use the highest level of formal education as an identifier. The substantially higher percentage of bachelor degrees held by principals in Scott's sample can be used to conclude

that the age composition of principals in the Hunter / Central Coast region and more specifically the sample are older than the state average, as indicated by Scott's system wide study.

Table 34. Scale scores by time spent as a medium sized principal

Scale / Years	n	x̄	σ	F	df	p	f	ω^2
Envisioning								
- *No*	4	4.53	.75					
- *≤ 3*	9	4.60	.73					
- *4-6*	12	4.76	.34	1.21	46	.32	.34	.02
- *7-10*	12	4.75	.50					
- *10 +*	10	4.29	.64					
Engaging								
- *No*	4	4.81	.70					
- *≤ 3*	9	5.27	.42					
- *4-6*	12	5.24	.33	1.63	46	.19	.39	.05
- *7-10*	12	5.04	.59					
- *10 +*	10	4.79	.63					
Articulating								
- *No*	4	4.70	.69					
- *≤ 3*	9	4.87	.59					
- *4-6*	12	5.03	.38	.98	46	.43	.31	.00
- *7-10*	12	4.87	.53					
- *10 +*	10	4.61	.54					
Implementing								
- *No*	4	4.88	.57					
- *≤ 3*	9	5.09	.40					
- *4-6*	12	5.17	.35	2.05	46	.11	.44	.08
- *7-10*	12	5.00	.50					
- *10 +*	10	4.66	.43					
Monitoring								
- *No*	4	4.71	.58					
- *≤ 3*	9	4.81	.56					
- *4-6*	12	4.97	.30	1.04	46	.40	.31	.00
- *7-10*	12	4.93	.44					
- *10 +*	10	4.62	.46					
Overall								
- *No*	4	4.74	.65					
- *≤ 3*	9	4.95	.47					
- *4-6*	12	5.05	.28	1.46	46	.23	.37	.04
- *7-10*	12	4.93	.49					
- *10 +*	10	4.61	.49					

Table 35. Scales scores by level of formal education

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	df	p	f	$ω^2$	d
Envisioning									
- *Graduate*	50	4.83	.47	6.53	75	.01	.30	.07	.58
- *Post grad*	26	4.49	.68						
Engaging									
- *Graduate*	50	5.16	.48	3.92	75	.05	.23	.04	.45
- *Post grad*	26	4.91	.62						
Articulating									
- *Graduate*	50	4.93	.49	1.40	75	.24	.14	.01	.28
- *Post grad*	26	4.78	.58						
Implementing									
- *Graduate*	50	5.03	.47	2.45	75	.12	.18	.02	.37
- *Post grad*	26	4.85	.49						
Monitoring									
- *Graduate*	50	4.93	.46	2.35	75	.13	.18	.02	.37
- *Post grad*	26	4.74	.55						
Overall									
- *Graduate*	50	4.98	.44	3.69	75	.06	.22	.03	.48
- *Post grad*	26	4.76	.55						

When attempting to use each of the previously cited categories however, the distribution of participants was still too uneven to conduct conventional statistical comparisons. In response, the variable was reduced to two levels, initial teacher training (including both the diploma and bachelor groups, $n=50$) and post-graduate qualifications (including both the masters' and doctoral participants, $n=26$). The analysis needs to be read in recognition of the fact that formal education was negatively correlated with each dimension of the model (envisioning was however the only one at a statistically significant level, $r=-.24$, $p=.04$, $n=75$). It was beyond the scope of this thesis to inquiry as to what the nature of the post graduate qualification was or the granting institution. As the purpose was to investigate the strategic role of school leaders not to evaluate the effective of formal education, neither university nor DET ethics committees felt it appropriate to ask the granting institution.

In each dimension of the strategic role, the graduate level respondents had a higher mean than the respondents with post-graduate qualifications. In Scott's (2003) work, 28 percent of respondents who held masters degrees and 27 percent who held doctor of education qualifications rated the degrees as highly important in their develop as principals. None of the principals who held PhDs rated them as useful in the role of principal. While noting the lack of information regarding the exact nature of post graduate qualifications undertaken, the lower means of principals with post graduate qualification, combined with Scott's findings raises questions for providers of post graduate qualifications in educational leadership and management.

However, unlike initial teacher education, educational administrative preparation and learning it is not always located within universities. There is disagreement as to whether leadership and management education is 'vocational' as opposed to university learning (Holian, 2004). An Australian Institute of Management (AIM, 2003) study found that only about 10% of leadership and management education is located in formal university based programs. Most programs are offered through nonacademic sources such as government education departments (Kanan & Baker, 2006). When programs are offered through universities, Farkos (2001) suggests that they frequently do not meet the needs of participants. Malone (2001) adds that programs teach general leadership behaviors, but not the knowledge and skills that participants need to be successful practitioners. Many participants are unaware of the type of education they need or will receive (Harris-John, 2007). Levine (2005) suggests that students enrolled in university based educational leadership and management programs generally fit into three categories: current and future educational leaders; teachers earning a degree for salary enhancement; or future

researchers. Additionally, research by McCarthy & Kuh (1997) found that a significant proportion (up to 90%) of staff in educational administrative programs had no practice based administrative experience. Murphy (2006) suggests that this has led to programs that presume academic superiority and marginalize practice. This is potentially why principals with higher levels of formal education may not have had higher means.

Overall, the analysis of data through the lens of formal education raised some interesting questions that are beyond the scope of this thesis. Although with the current advent of the professional standards era, it is arguably timely to begin a discussion on the role of formal education (those offered by universities) and the practice of educational leadership and management in schools. Current work by Bates and Eacott (2008) has identified the common concepts covered in university offered courses which reflect a global trend towards improving practice, but the caveat being that they also identify a limited Australian voice in the discourse, suggesting that the content of programs is based in global terms (which is consistent with the desire of Australian universities to compete in the global 'market') rather than the specific Australian context. This is not to suggest that programs should be narrowed to only the Australian context, but rather focused on the Australian context in parallel with global trends. It should also be noted that building on from Bates and Eacott (2008), Gronn (2008) suggests that in the current higher education marketplace, educational leadership programs in Australian universities have been reduced to the lowest common denominator (change management) as opposed to offering unique perspectives on educational leadership based on staff expertise and research profiles.

In addition to the personal demographic variables addressed above, a further three school based demographic variables were investigated, school size (as judged by enrolment numbers), socio-economic status and significant student enrolments.

School Size: The low number of P1 schools (n=2) and P6 schools (n=1) made it inappropriate to conduct some forms of statistical analysis. Therefore school size was grouped into clusters. Large schools included those that were P1 (over 700 students, n=2) and P2 (451-700 students, n=13). Medium sized schools included those that were P3 (301-450 students, n=14) and P4 (161-300 students, n=28). Small schools included those that had a teaching principal (P5 – 27-160 students, n=16 and P6 $\leq$ 26 students, n=1). Having completed the recoding, a comparison of means was undertaken (see Table 36).

Similar to the earlier analysis on career path, the medium sized school principalship was consistently (in this case, each dimension and the overall questionnaire) the lowest performer. Small school principals rated highest on each dimension. This poses an interesting situation as small school principal are teaching principals, yet time spent as a teacher was negatively correlated with all dimensions of the strategic role. Once again the envisioning dimension of the model was most significantly different. Using the omega squared measure for effect size, the school size was responsible for 16.4 percent of the variance. Two inter-related interpretations of these results are proposed. Initially it is proposed that leaders of small schools view their school as unique enough to effectively shape the future of the school within the wider system whereas larger schools are more inclined to view themselves a part of a larger system and then conform to systemic norms rather than differentiate themselves through an envisioning process. Closely intertwined

151

with this idea is the notion that as a principal rises through the ranks they further conform to the systemic norms and therefore the boundaries between their individual leadership and that of the wider system become blurred and less easy to distinguish. The smaller staff and physical school size make the principal and their role more evident. Therefore, it is proposed that the actual space between the small school principal and the larger system that moderates the strategic role of the principal.

Table 36. Comparison of scale means by school size

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	df	p	f	ω^2
Envisioning								
- *Small*	15	5.17	.40					
- *Medium*	42	4.58	.57	8.28	73	.00	.48	.16
- *Large*	17	4.65	.48					
Engaging								
- *Small*	15	5.38	.44					
- *Medium*	42	5.00	.53	3.36	73	.04	.31	.06
- *Large*	17	5.09	.52					
Articulating								
- *Small*	15	5.14	.54					
- *Medium*	42	4.80	.51	2.76	73	.07	.28	.05
- *Large*	17	4.88	.46					
Implementing								
- *Small*	15	5.24	.39					
- *Medium*	42	4.89	.47	3.98	73	.02	.34	.07
- *Large*	17	5.02	.44					
Monitoring								
- *Small*	15	5.15	.55					
- *Medium*	42	4.80	.46	3.54	73	.03	.32	.06
- *Large*	17	4.81	.41					
Overall								
- *Small*	15	5.22	.43					
- *Medium*	42	4.82	.46	4.83	73	.01	.37	.09
-*Large*	17	4.90	.42					

Socio-Economic Status: The SES of the school was self-reported by the principal from four pre-determined categories and the means analyzed. PSP is a DET program that attracts

additional funding to target systemic identified weaknesses in low socio-economic areas (literacy, numeracy and school community relations). The other three categories required the professional judgment of principals. Table 37 displays the results of the analysis. The 'average' and 'above average' groups scored higher on all elements than the 'low' and 'PSP' groups but there was no significant difference and low effect sizes. Based on this study, it is concluded that the socio-economic status of the school is not a moderating factor on the strategic role of the public primary school principal.

Table 37. Scale scores by socio-economic status of the school

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	df	p	f	ω^2
Envisioning								
- *PSP*	26	4.59	.71					
- *Low*	12	4.75	.61	.92	72	.44	.20	.00
- *Average*	27	4.81	.37					
- *High*	8	4.88	.52					
Engaging								
- *PSP*	26	5.08	.54					
- *Low*	12	4.94	.63	.87	72	.46	.19	.00
- *Average*	27	5.18	.46					
- *High*	8	5.27	.44					
Articulating								
- *PSP*	26	4.80	.60					
- *Low*	12	4.87	.65	.64	72	.60	.17	.00
- *Average*	27	4.99	.38					
- *High*	8	4.96	.49					
Implementing								
- *PSP*	26	4.98	.48					
- *Low*	12	4.90	.54	.29	72	.83	.11	.00
- *Average*	27	5.04	.42					
- *High*	8	5.02	.48					
Monitoring								
- *PSP*	26	4.79	.52					
- *Low*	12	4.79	.61	1.35	72	.27	.24	.01
- *Average*	27	4.98	.37					
- *High*	8	5.08	.50					
Overall								
- *PSP*	26	4.86	.52					
- *Low*	12	4.85	.57	.76	72	.52	.18	.00
- *Average*	27	5.01	.36					
- *High*	8	5.05	.46					

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds: Of the 76 responding principals, 61.84 percent (*n*=47) did not identify their school with a significant student enrolment from disadvantaged backgrounds. 23.68 percent (*n*=18) identified with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, 5.26 percent with Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (*n*=4). A further 6.58 percent (*n*=5) cited both ATSI and NESB. Additionally, 2.63 percent (n=2) had special educational education units (e.g. classes) in their schools. Due to the low number of cases in some categories, it would have been inappropriate to conduct a comparison of means between the groups using raw frequencies. To allow for analysis, the data was recoded to reflect those with significant student enrolments and those without. This binary coding system allowed for a direct comparison of means and more importantly, an analysis directly measuring whether the presence of students from disadvantaged backgrounds moderates the strategic role of the public primary school principal (see Table 38).

Table 38. Scales scores by presence of students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Scale	n	x̄	σ	F	*df*	*p*	*f*	ω^2	*d*
Envisioning									
- No	47	4.67	.62	.74	75	.39	.10	.00	.20
- Yes	29	4.78	.49						
Engaging									
- No	47	5.05	.58	.24	75	.62	.06	.00	.11
- Yes	29	5.11	.49						
Articulating									
- No	47	4.88	.55	.00	75	.96	.00	.00	.00
- Yes	29	4.88	.49						
Implementing									
- No	47	4.94	.51	.52	75	.47	.08	.00	.17
- Yes	29	5.02	.44						
Monitoring									
- No	47	4.86	.54	.02	75	.89	.00	.00	.02
- Yes	29	4.87	.44						
Overall									
- No	47	4.89	.52	.21	75	.65	.06	.00	.10
- Yes	29	4.94	.43						

There were no statistically significant differences and all of the effect sizes were very small. Therefore, from this study, it is concluded that the presence of significant student enrolments is not a moderating factor in the strategic leadership and management of the public primary school principal.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to investigate the extent to which public primary school principals exhibit strategic leadership and management as described by a model derived from the knowledge base on the topic from the literature in the field. Having established that the proposed model was evidenced in a consistent manner and that the designed instrument behaved in an appropriate fashion, it is concluded that the high means for each element of the model and the overall model that public primary school principals frequently demonstrate strategic leadership and management behaviors.

While it is noted that Heck and Hallinger (2005) consider the study of leaders traits and demographics to be of personal interest to the researcher, but of limited value to the field at large, and more importantly, demonstrating a weak connection to the general literature in the field, the strategic role was explored through demographic conditions as a potential moderating factor on the enactment of the role. Table 39 displays an overview of the conclusion drawn from the data. The table is based on the data and findings from the study. Due to the lack of any significant confirmation of moderation based on the demographic conditions (as indicated by low effect sizes), variables are considered to be either possible moderators on the strategic role or not moderators.

155

There is sufficient evidence in the study to pose the possibility that the demographic variables of the principal may have a moderating effect on the enactment of the strategic role. Of course any such findings and conclusions are open to critique and further testing in the aim of theory development.

Table 39. Overview of analysis by demographic variables

Demographic condition	Moderating	How
Gender	Possible	Females rating higher on all elements
Age	Possible	The 41-50 year old age group rated higher than younger and older groups
Tenure	Possible	The 11+ years and 4-6 years tenure rated higher than 7-10 and ≤ 3years groups
Career path	Possible	Patterns emerging that time spent teaching and in the medium sized school principalship are negatively correlated with strategic role
Formal education	Possible	Post graduate qualifications did not produce higher means on any element
School size	Possible	Small schools rated the best, followed by large schools.
Socio-economic status	No	No effect on strategic role
Students from disadvantaged backgrounds	No	No effect on strategic role

At this point, the work of Shavelson *et al.* (2003) on what constitutes quality educational research is considered in relation to the study and its findings. The key criteria included:

Pose important questions that it was possible to answer: The very nature of the word 'important' could be debated as it is difficult to define and more significantly, who is it that decides what is important? The purpose of this study, and the thesis in general, is theory development. Arguably the development of theory, which should foster further knowledge in the field, is by its very nature an 'important' task for an academic field of inquiry.

Through the development of the model, the key question of investigating the extent to which public primary school principals exhibit strategic leadership and management behaviors is measurable by a questionnaire. Therefore the important question of developing theory is possible to be measured.

In addition the further analysis through the use of demographic conditions is a key question in consideration of the impending turnover of school executive staff. It is possible in the coming decade that the demographic profile of school leaders will significantly alter and the development of empirical research centered on this and its potential effects on practice has significant impact on the field of practice and scholarship in educational leadership

Relate research to available theory, and seek to test that theory: This was the primary goal of the study, synthesizing the currently available theory into a testable model that could be applied to a sample of public school principals. The model being tested was derived from the knowledge base on the topic in the field. The model was then tested in the target population. Additionally, the study drew on the upper echelon perspective and the selection of demographic conditions was based on the available literature in the field.

Use methods allowing direct investigation of the questions: The key research questions of the study required a direct measure of principals' enactment of the strategic role and the potential moderation of demographic conditions on that role. The enactment of the strategic role was measured using a questionnaire and appropriate statistical analysis. This is consistent with the research question and based on conventional research in the field. The comparison of means between demographic variables allowed for a direct investigation of the research question.

Be replicable and fit easily into synthesis: The methods, instrument and theoretical framework for the study are clearly articulated in either this chapter or previous and could be replicated in other settings to either support, or reject the conclusions and findings of this study. The articulation of methods and decisions made allow for critical reading and analysis from those other than the researcher.

Be disclosed to critique, rather than playing only to a gallery of existing converts: It would have been possible to use of the multitude of strategic management models present in the current literature and then seek assurance from the original authors and supporters in the findings of such as study. However, drawing stimulus from Hambrick (2005) who claims that theoretical developments come not from filling holes in the literature or merely supporting current claims, but by running ahead of current knowledge, this study sought to develop a model from the knowledge base (leaving it open to criticism from others in the field) and drawing from a theory beyond the conventional boundaries of educational leadership (the upper echelon perspective from the field of strategy). Both choices

represent a conscious decision by the researcher to position the study at the edge of what is currently known and move forward into a currently uncharted terrain.

This study suggests that public primary school principals reported a high frequency of strategic leadership and management behaviors as defined by the literature in the field. It has also raised the possibility that demographic conditions may serve as moderators for that role. Significantly, this justifies the need to push for a more expanded theoretical frame for the strategic role than has previously been applied. But a particular caution hangs overhead: that is, despite the best attempts by the researcher to structure the research in a way that was not restrained by the conventional rational models of strategic leadership and management, is it possible that principals rated so high because the operationalization of the term 'strategy' has become synonymous with rational planning and management? Is it possible that for principals and those rating them that the term strategy simply refers to a simple rational model of school management? The essential question being, 'How do practicing principals define their strategic role?' To investigate this question however requires going to the source, in this case, practicing public primary school principals. The next chapter reports on one such study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Defining the Strategic Role of the Public Primary School Principal

As noted earlier, despite the volume of literature on strategic management models and scholarship on the strategic role of school leaders, the fundamental question of 'What is the strategic role of school leaders?" has been relatively omitted. This is surprising considering that one of the key elements of the strategic role is the presence of commonly shared goals, values and norms that demarcate the members of an organization or organizational unit. This chapter reports on a study where practicing public school principals were asked the question 'What is your strategic role?' The responses of principals were used to construct a framework for the strategic role that was then compared with the knowledge base used in chapter two and the wider literature of the field. The results of this comparison serve as the basis for further inquiry on the strategic role through a more social lens than has traditionally been the case.

The previous chapter highlighted that when testing a model derived from the literature on the topic, pubic primary school principals rated very high (as indicated by high means). However, this does not mean that the model represented how practitioners would define their strategic role. The premise of this chapter is that a 'field of practice' (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990b, 1998) is a community of practitioners who share a common identity and language (others such as Lingard *et al.* (2003) and Blackmore (1999) have also used this premise). The roots of this premise can be traced back to the sociology of knowledge, where science is seen as a fundamentally social enterprise (Kuhn, 1962; Latour & Woolgar, 1979; Merton & Storer, 1973). Building from this conceptualization, Nag, Hambrick and Chen (2007) wrote:

If we assume that scientific knowledge is socially constructed, then language, in the form of scientific discourse, is the fundamental medium that makes that social construction possible (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Grace, 1987). Language provides the basis for the emergence of a distinctive identity shared by members of a scientific community (Whorf, 1956). Astley (1985) asserted that scientific fields are 'word systems' created and maintained by their members (p. 937).

While discussing an academic field, it is no less true for a field of practice, like school leadership. It is through language that members of a field express their ideas, and consequentially it is also through language that the very essence of a topic can be identified. Drawing loosely on the principles of 'grounded theory' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998), the study reported on in this chapter has the underlying assumption that by using the transcribed text of interviews, the analyst should be able to identify and assess the distinctive language that gave rise to the participants' responses, thus imputing the participants' conceptions of what makes up their strategic role. This is the logic applied in conducting the study.

Procedures and Theoretical Structure

A semi-structured interview schedule (see appendix 5) served as the data collection strategy for this study. The questions and probes encouraged the participants to give specific, detailed examples of experiences, behaviors, actions and activities that characterized their strategic leadership and management. The opinions and values of the participants not only provided insight into what they thought about past experiences, but also what they would have liked to see in the future.

Data source: Interviewing is one of the oldest and most widely used of the social science research techniques (Wragg, 2002). Strauss and Corbin (1998) argue that "to understand social behavior requires interviewing or intensive field observation, with these the only two methods of data collection sensitive enough to capture the nuances of human living" (p. 28). The understanding of a social or human problem, in this case the strategic role of the public primary school principal, is the core purpose of qualitative analysis (Creswell, 1994). The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to obtain information in the form of text. The exploratory interview was heuristic, concerned with trying to understand how practicing school leaders think and feel about the concept of strategic leadership and management.

Sample: Van de Ven, Angle and Poole (1989) highlight that without studying strategy from the leader or manager's perspective, it becomes difficult (if not impossible) for an investigator to understand the dynamics confronting leaders and managers. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) stress that within the goal of better understanding human behavior (in this case the strategic role), the use of participant perspective is necessary to achieve a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon. Within a school, the principal is generally viewed as the primary decision maker, facilitator, problem solver or social change agent in the school setting (Adams, 1987; Barth, 1991; Kim & Kim, 2005). Additionally, the study of strategy in adjacent fields (e.g. marketing, management, and economics) is primarily concerned with the individual decision makers (St John, 2005). A sub-sample of the public primary school principals from the previously reported study (see chapter four) was chosen as the unit of analysis for this study to ensure comparability between this investigation and the previous one reported on in chapter four. To continue the theory development process

and hence create a better understanding of the strategic role, requires an examination and understanding of how practitioners construct that role.

Creswell (2002) suggests that a sample size of between 15-25 participants is appropriate for this style of exploratory research. The participants for the study were identified through a self-selection process. Following an invitation from the researcher at the district principal meetings (n=4), consent forms were distributed for completion. Of the total population of 169 principals in the region, 36 agreed to be interviewed. This represents 21.30% of the population. The 36 interviewees consisted of 21 females (58.33%) and 15 males (41.67%). In comparison, the study reported on in chapter four had 50.67 percent males and 49.33 percent females. There were 12 principals (33.33%) from large schools (> 450 students enrolled), 18 from medium sized schools (50.00%, 160-450 students) and a further 7 from small schools (19.44%, < 159 students), in chapter four the distribution was 19.73, 55.26 and 22.36 percent respectively. The tenure of principals ranged from 1 to 12 years, in the previous chapter, the range was 1 to 14.

In contrast to the majority of studies in the field, all principals were of interest in this study and not just those identified as good operators by supervisors or a pre-defined criteria. This is consistent with the overarching goal of the thesis to build theory. The 'best practice' or 'what works' (Gorard, 2005) stream of research in the field arguably finds its roots in what many believe to be the key mission of professional schools, that is, to develop knowledge that can be translated into skills that advance the practice of the profession (Kondrat, 1992; Simon, 1976; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). As such, the central mindset of the field has been a quest for some essence of leadership, some distinctive set of characteristics possessed by leaders and not others (Evers & Lakomski, 1996, 2000). The overarching goal of 'positive organizational scholarship' (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn,

2003), is to investigate positive deviance, or the ways in which organizations and their members flourish and prosper (Cameron & Caza, 2004). However it is the interpretation of this that is most limiting in the field of educational leadership. Frequently, samples, both schools and individual leaders, are selected because they are identified as effective using some external criteria, whether that is high student examination results, retention levels or other data. The fault in such models is that they fail to analyze the scope of schools or individual leaders, and identify what it is that distinguishing the 'effective' from the 'less effective'. The result, many of the lists of characteristics and behaviors of effective school leaders are exhibited by the majority of school leaders. This study sought not to establish a list of characteristics of effective leaders, rather to better understand how practicing principals perceive their strategic role. This is why willing participants were included in the sample.

Text of interview protocol: Participation in the interview was voluntary. The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and interviewees read their transcriptions and made any corrections. The questions were designed to gather information about the principal's understanding and experiences of strategic leadership and management in the public primary school setting. The first half of the interview was concerned with the principal's understanding of his / her strategic role, in particular what it means and how it is enacted. Later questions focused on the forms of professional learning that the principal had undertaken in relation to strategic leadership and management, choosing an analogy to describe the role and offering any additional comments on the nature of the role. As it was less structured, the second half of the interview allowed for greater probing and discussion. For example, depending on the type of analogy articulated, interviewees where asked to

relate that back to what they had previously said or asked to explain why it differed from previous statements.

The interview was deliberately structured to have the participant define their strategic role and then explain how that role was enacted. This allowed for a within interview internal validity check. That is, the responses provided by each individual participant could be compared with one another to ensure that a consistent message was present.

Process of analysis: Following transcription, a lexicographic analysis of the responses was conducted, through which the 'distinctive vocabulary' of the strategic role of the public primary school principal was identified. This process was a modified version of conventional coding. The process was a form of content analysis, where the goal was to conceptualize the core features of the strategic role from within the extensive text, through the identification of distinctive words and phrases. The core features of the role were to serve as the building blocks for a theoretical positioning of the inductive definition. Following multiple iterations of the process, a set of 36 words / phrases were identified. Moving iteratively between prior definitions of the strategic role and an interpretation by the researcher of how the 36 words / phrases could be placed into conceptual categories, four dimensions that constitute the implicit consensual definition of the strategic role were identified.

The 36 words / phrases generated from the text analysis formed the basis for imputing a consensual definition of the strategic role of the public primary school principal. The inductive exercise was undertaken in an iterative manner. Initially, some tentative categories were developed, based on small clusters of words. For example, several words dealt with students (e.g. students, kids, children, pupils); some clearly focused on stakeholders (e.g. parents, community members); other words fell into other tentative categories. To assign the 36 words / phrases required the balance of several considerations. To maintain rigor in the process, the procedure used by Nag, Hambrick and Chen (2007) was applied:

> We attempted to use the conceptual nomenclature from existing definitions whenever possible; at the same time, we did not want to be constrained by prior definitions. For the sake of parsimony, we wanted to develop as few definitional elements as possible, but it was also important that all the words assigned to a category genuinely cohere and fit together. Finally, as a way to maintain simplicity, we only allowed a given word, or lexeme, to be assigned to one category, even though it's various forms might reasonably belong in additional categories (p. 942).

This multi-step process led to the following definition of the strategic role of the primary principal, as imputed from the distinctive lexicon of the field: 'The strategic role of the public primary school principal deals with (a) advancing the school's purpose; (b) within the school's unique context; (c) by shaping the direction of the school; and (d) through leadership behaviors.' It is acknowledged that this definition is not elegantly worded or graceful in syntax. Rather, it represents the best effort to integrate the four dimensions into sentence form. Table 40 shows the assignment of the 36 distinctive words /

166

Table 40. The distinctive lexicon of the strategic role

Distinctive words/phrases	Dimensions ('The strategic role of the public primary school principals deals with …')
Students/children (12)	… advancing the school's purpose
'Real' school outcomes (5)	
Holistic (4)	
Parents/community (10)	… within the school's unique context
Liaison/consulting (6)	
Stakeholders (6)	
External pressures (5)	
Results (5)	
Staff learning (4)	
Accountability (3)	
Juggling roles (2)	
Resources (2)	
Focus/priorities (10)	… by shaping the direction of the school
Shared vision/direction (8)	
Audit/analysis (4)	
Long term (4)	
Plan/planning (4)	
Reflecting/evaluating (4)	
Moving forward/growth (3)	
Where they want to go (2)	
Timing (2)	
Synthesize (2)	
Relationships (12)	… through leadership behaviors
Capacity building (8)	
Proactive (8)	
Commitment (6)	
Trust (6)	
Seeing it through (5)	
Flatter hierarchies (4)	
Team (3)	
Listening (3)	
Involving others (2)	
Hands on (2)	
Influencing others (2)	
Valuing others (2)	
Creativity (2)	

NOTE: Only words that appeared more than once are included in the table. Numbers in parentheses are the number interviewees who used that word / phrase.

167

phrases to these four dimensions. The most significant difference between the framework provided in this chapter and the model developed in chapter two and applied in chapter four, is the heightened importance of the social-political nature of the role.

The four dimensions make up the implicit consensual definition of the strategic role of the public primary school principal. Adhering to this method of induction allows the definition to differ fundamentally from others, because it represents the way principals think about the role, rather then asking them question derived from a pre-conceived model. The process was loosely based on 'grounded theory' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998) principles. Each dimension is now contextualized in the educational leadership and more specifically, the literature on the strategic role of school leaders.

Advancing the School's Purpose

The first dimension, 'advancing the school's purpose', as shown in Table 40, is represented by words / phrases such as 'students / children', 'real school outcomes' and 'holistic', which refer to core purpose of schools, educating children. The concept of 'the purpose of schooling' has a rich history in the literature, although not frequently in the educational leadership literature. More often, it appears in the sociology of education or sociology in general.

School structures and processes mirror the norms, values, and ideologies institutionalized in society (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Their structure conforms with and is constrained by institutional rules of what society defines school to be (Meyer, Scott, & Deal, 1992). However the debate on 'What is the purpose of schooling?' has failed to reach any conclusions. For example, in 1955, Jeffreys wrote "when it comes to knowing what is the ultimate purpose of education, there is uncertainty and confusion. We know we need

education, but we are not very clear what we need it for" (p. 1). Taking a legal-education lens to the discussion, Stefkovich and Begley (2007) suggest that the purpose of education is to serve the 'best interests of students', yet they conclude that there is a lack of clarity in the literature as to what constitutes 'best interest'. However, they add that an emerging body of literature shows that principal validation processes are heavily directed towards rational consequentialist orientations grounded in a concern for the well-being of students. As one principal in the study stated:

> Strategic leadership is about the simple concept of leverage. There are things that we ignore, things we shut out, intentionally. Not just the dead dog syndrome, we strategically ignore things that take our focus away from what has the greatest capacity to make a difference for students.
>
> Principal 4

The focus on what is best for students and the validation of decisions and actions made on conceptualization implies a set of values, morals or ethics underpinning the leader's cognitive processes. Increasingly, management theory (both educational and broader fields) is integrating more humanistic terms such as soul, mission, transformation, passion, ethics, morals and inspiration. Flying in the face of rational, linear models of leadership and management, there appears signs that the rational is being complemented by the emotional (Hartley, 2004). Greenfield (2005) argues that the education of the public's children is by its very nature a moral activity, and that relationships among people are at the very center of the work of school leaders and teachers, and for this reason, school leadership is, by its very nature and focus, a moral activity. Although the argument for moral leadership in schools is not new, arguably finding its roots in the work of Gross and Herriott (1965), moral leadership evolved in response to the functionalism basis, with its

concern for efficiency and effectiveness, and the conceptualization of leadership as a

special form of power exercised by individuals, of leadership thought. Considerable

attention has been given to the moral imperative of educational leadership in the last decade

(Duignan, 2006; Fullan, 2003; Starratt, 2004). As principals in the study noted:

> Education is not longer just purely the academic side of things, it really has a very strong pastoral care and welfare side and that is just the nature of education today. It is the social, it's the emotional and it's the academic side as well and quite often in this role, you're also supporting families.
>
> Principal 31

> … because with social change I have a very strong appreciation that the school, and more particularly, the Primary school has become that vehicle that is common to a greater number of people in any community and has taken over where once either the church or other social institutions may have been far more influential.
>
> Principal 23

Other research findings (Davies & Coates, 2005) have suggested that teachers and

school leaders are motivated towards the public good rather than private benefit. In doing

so, school leaders infuse management decisions and school routines with educative

meaning (Dwyer, 1984; Lutyen *et al.*, 2005).

The relationships between students, leadership morals (or ethics, values, etc) and

broader social change are complex. However in many ways, it is the relationship between

these three concepts that shape our understanding of school purpose. For many, education

is viewed as the basic gateway to society, and it is an important component in the level of

civilization and culture of a country (Petridou & Chatzipanagiotou, 2004). While for some,

education serves as a means of 'urban renewal' (Gulson, 2005) or access to higher social

status, for others it serves as a means of social and cultural reproduction (Bourdieu &

Passeron, 1977).

Many government initiatives have focused on using education as a means to achieving social change (Caldwell, 2004). This is based on the notion that schools are 'people changing' organizations (Boyd, 2004). Agreement with this positive outlook on schooling aligns with a hyper-rationalist perspective of organizational and contextual management. The underlying assumption of this position is that everything can be manipulated through a logical sequence of rational decisions and actions. Central to the functioning of this hyper-rational perspective is the "translation of complex social processes and events into simple figures or categories of judgment" (Ball, 2003). In the current socio-political context of schooling, the measurement of school purpose becomes a contentious matter. The presentation of a rational, systematic and progressive mechanism for initiating social change or improving educational quality serves as the rationale for many accountability schemes. The apparent neatness and efficiency of accountability schemes serve partially to distract attention from the specific mechanisms that proponents seek to introduce in its name: the large-scale changes in school management and school purpose. In other words, the changes towards quantifiable evidence in school achievement, and the subsequent push towards evidence-based practice, attempt to reduce the work of schools to numbers that can be compared and contrasted in economic terms. The achievement of schools becomes a tool for manipulation in the broader economic management of governments. Monbiot (2002) forcibly argues:

> Our schools are being privatized not for the benefit of our children, but for the benefit of our corporations and the export economy to which the government hopes they will contribute. Children are simply the raw materials with which they work. They will, unless parents demand an end to this experiment, be traded on the world's stock market like so many barrels of oil (p. 6).

171

Such a shift in the perspective of school purpose raises many significant issues for school leaders and those engaged with the work of schools. One implication is the re-shaping of professional identity and the subsequent affect that this new identity has on decision making. This implication should not be taken as the only implication that could be drawn from past inquiry or reasoning. Rather, it is illustrative and appears to be one that is supportable and open to research.

In seeking to align the leadership and management of schools with the methods, culture and ethical systems of the private sector (Ball, 2003), the distinctiveness of the school is diminished. What it means to be an educational leader and what it means to be a school principal are subtly, although this could be debated elsewhere, but decisively changed. Ball (2000; 2003) explicitly discusses this context in what he terms the 'performative society'. Within a performative society, the "performances (of individuals or organizations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection' (Ball, 2000, p. 1). He adds that one of the effects of such a society on education is the positioning of academic performance as an element of economic market exchange, both nationally and internationally. The linking of national economic prosperity and education measures (usually, but not exclusively, test scores) was a key feature of the 'productivity agenda', at the recently held Australia 2020 summit (April 19-20, 2008) hosted by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and bringing together 1000 of Australia's top thinkers with the goal of shaping a long term strategy for the nation's future (see http://www.australia2020.gov.au/).

Policies derived from such a view of the purpose of schooling have the capacity to "reshape in their own image the organizations they monitor" (Shore & Wright, 1999, p. 570). The leadership and management of schools with a performative purpose drive

172

performativity into the day-to-day practices of principals and the social relations between principals. Whereas Ball (2000; 2003) made the case at the teacher level within the school system, the impact of the performative purpose of schooling is equally true at the principal level. Increasingly, the actions of principals and the judgment of principals actions is based on their contribution to school performance, rendered in terms of measurable outputs. Decisions invariably become based on whether they can "extract increases in performance as measured by external targets or competitive advantage" (Ball, 2003, p. 223). The social value of individual principals, teachers and students is replaced with a judgment where they are valued for their level of productivity alone. The purpose of schooling to nurture and develop the individual child is severed as the school becomes an 'auditable commodity' seeking a stronger 'market share' or 'performance position' (Ball, 2003).

While being a dimension of the strategic role of public primary school principals, advancing the school's purpose is inevitably shaped (and shapes) by its context.

Within the School's Unique Context

There are many who have cited the contextual nature of school leadership (Ball, 2007; Green, 1988; Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1999) as principals are responsible for working with the entire spectrum of stakeholders, from students to school council members, parents to policy makers, teachers to local business owners, support staff to union officials (Mangin, 2007). The influence of these factors (both internal and external) can be substantial on the school, and this is sometimes beneficial and sometimes not (Lutyen *et al.*, 2005). The pattern emerging from the data shows four key contextual elements influencing the strategic role of the principal: the system, the community, the staff; and the student

body. Each contextual element, in terms of both its organizational culture and its history is significant to the current practices of the school and the strategic role of the principal.

As part of a larger system, public school principals are constantly faced with balancing the demands of the system with the demands of their schools. Building on from the work of Bourdieu, Lingard *et al.* (2003) argue that educational policy derived from the political field primarily deals with levels of funding, funding models and organizational structures as opposed to the core technology of schools, at least as seen by teachers and principals. Taking this perspective to the analysis and assessment of education requires reducing the product of education to quantifiable numbers which can be tabulated to evaluate and assess value for money. Consider the role of basic skills testing and the distribution of funds and resources based on results. However, whether we like it or not, systemic or political accountability schemes have maintained a rapid rise in society (for example see the league tables system in England). One principal commented:

> … when you take on additional roles and responsibilities as a principal [regional president of primary principals association] you develop your understanding of all the accountabilities that exist within government structures. … the increasing accountability on principals within the last five years has heightened our awareness of exactly how political motivated fitting in with all the policies has become.
>
> Principal 19

Since the 1970s, regimes of public accountability have been strengthened systematically so that accountability is no longer merely an important instrument or component within a system, but constitute the system itself (Ranson, 2003). Some have labeled modern society as the 'audit society' (Power, 1999) or 'performative society' (Ball, 2001). To be accountable, conventionally is to be 'held to account', defining a relationship

174

of formal control between parties, one of whom is held to account to the other for the exercise of roles and stewardship of public resources (Ranson, 2003). School leaders experience strong demands for school performance and improvement from government agencies, systemic authorities, parents and the business community (Heck, 1992; Molnar, 2006; Witziers *et al.*, 2003).

However, scholars and practitioners alike conclude that any accountability system must be appropriate for the work of education and not merely an exercise in control from those holding to account. Using a rhetoric and lexicon borrowed from business and economics, governments have attempted to establish criteria from which school achievement can be measured. In many cases, student achievement in examinations is the criteria used. Ranson (2003) argues that

> When the emphasis is on 'holding to account', the orientation is towards instrumentally rational goods of effectiveness (Power, 1999), creating the culture and technology of 'performativity' that strives to 'optimize performance by maximizing outputs (benefits) and minimizing inputs (costs)' (Lyotard, 1997). What begins as an approach to assessing quality gravitates to evaluation of efficiency (Elliot, 1999). Measures of productivity are created to judge and control the performance of organizational 'units', rendering them continually accountable. Yet as Foucault argues, the accounts produced typically become 'fabrications' of performance, manufactured for their effects as accountability (Ball, 2001). Such regimes of accountability deny our agency, turning us into inauthentic subjects pursuing and resisting the impositions of extrinsic goods alone (p. 462).

It is a difficult position for the school leader to balance the demands of meeting the purpose of schooling with the external accountability of education departments and political leaders. Student learning is a complex process that defies a simple linear measurement. The reduction of student learning to a number dehumanizes the process and implies that learning outputs can be manipulated and described like commodities in the stock market. While accountability from systemic authorities does not necessarily act in

total opposition to the purpose of schooling, they do establish the means for school performance to be audited, measured and assessed. The challenge for school leaders in balancing the systemic pressures of accountability and the purpose of schools is the choice relating to how they reach the individuals (e.g. teachers, community members and students) in the school. How individual actors within the school, used in it broadest sense, interpret the intentions of systemic pressures and the purpose of schooling are integral to subsequent actions (Burch, 2007).

The participation of local communities in the planning and policy formulation of schools has gained favor in recent decades (Jones, 1991). Although the historical patterns of hierarchical control in school systems and the current dominance of performance orientated accountability schemes pose a significant challenge to the promotion of democratic forms of interactions between parents / community members and school leadership (Zaretsky, 2004). What remains is the rhetoric of participation in decision making (Wildy, Forster, Louden, & Wallace, 2004) with a state of role ambiguity for non-school based members of decision making groups and forums.

The intent of involving others in the decision making process of schools is about changing the status quo and correcting power imbalances between professionals (school staff and particularly school leaders) and school communities. However Hatton (2001) contends that parents, as with community members, often feel intimidated in meetings or forums invested with decision making authority and frequently are unaware of their role in the process. Despite the persuasive consensus of research and policy suggesting the legitimacy of insisting that school communities engage in the work of the school, namely the provision of a quality education for students (Starratt, 2004) it raises two potential streams of community involvement: the docile nodding heads or the dependent model.

In the former, parent / community groups are presented with information or a document that this primarily for endorsement as opposed to challenge and critique. This conforms to the rhetoric of making parents and the community part of the process, but reduces that role to a tokenistic pre-presentation of the final product. While a school adopting this model can tick off the involvement of parents and the community in the process as part of their annual review, the value and nature of the process does little more than reinforce the traditional power relations of school professionals and school communities. Despite all of the interviewees referring to involving the school community in the decision making processes, very few (*n*=3, all using surveys) explicitly described how the community was involved. The more common response was focused on the 'participation' of the school community. For example:

> When I arrived here, the school had previously been run only by the principal, my goal was that within three years there will be total community involvement.
>
> Principal 4

> If we are going to be servicing the needs of our broader community, we have to be continually bringing in the views of the stakeholders and working with them. There is a need to accommodate the different view points and consider them when decisions are being made.
>
> Principal 21

However this principal later added:

> … when it comes to the actual pedagogical understandings and those practices of the school and classrooms, questions and views from parents and those outside the school can only ever be impressions or perceptions and nothing more. It would be unrealistic to expect that they would have the experience to analyze the style of delivery and things like that. So those types of input are done in-house, through the executive.
>
> Principal 21

The dependence model takes the involvement and sway of parental opinion to the other extreme. Figure 3, below, shows the conventional causation models used in the study of strategy and organizations. It was the model used to analyze the causation models in the knowledge base in chapter two. In published literature on the topic, strategic leadership was most frequently portrayed as dependent on the environment, organizational form or performance. This is where conventional models of strategic management such as the Johnson and Scholes (1988) model or the SWOT approach (Andrews, 1971) can shift the balance of decision making influence from the school leader to that of the school community. By weight of numbers, the often used process of surveying parents and the community through either questionnaires or large scale SWOT analysis provides the school community with the ability to significantly shape the direction of the school, or at least the rhetoric of school direction. This can have considerable implications for decisions, as the school community (just as the staff of the school, it might be added) interpret the reality of the situation through a different lens to other stakeholders. Some schools have attempted to negate this situation by collecting information from staff, the community and students with each given equal weighting. Within the sample, 30 of the 36 participants made direct reference to formulating the school vision or strategic plan on the basis of balancing community identified needs with systemic mandates. While the social boundaries of the school are often blurred, in each of these cases, the direction for the school was derived from outside the physical space of the school. This is not to imply that the inclusion of such input is not needed, but rather that the balance has shifted to a point where school leaders are solely deriving their strategic direction from outside. Paradoxically, this is happening in an era of supposed school based planning. For example:

In my current role I need to look at government objectives and align those with what the community wants. I need to work with data from whatever source, both internal and external, and establish a plan to achieve the outcomes set by the government and the community.

Principal 26.

Although, drawing from experience in a regional leadership position, a principal noted:

For a lot of principals, their strategic role is limited to their school community and their school. They fail to see that they are part of the bigger picture. They are but one part of a jigsaw puzzle that is a statewide public school system.

Principal 21

Figure 3. Causation models for the strategic role.
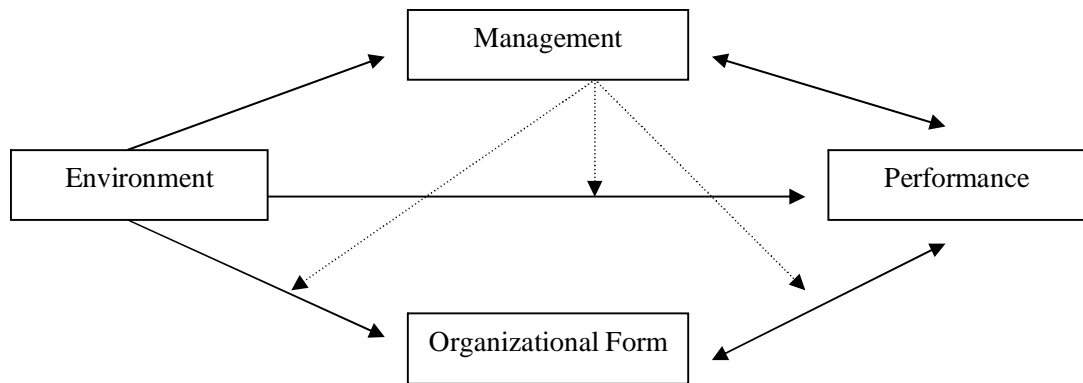
One caveat to consider however is the nature of data collection by schools. In many cases, the apparent involvement of a wider group of stakeholders in actual fact is little more than a reinforcement of traditional power relations. Take the situation where a school

distributes a questionnaire (the only explicit strategy identified in the interviews) to the school community to gain insights into the school operations and with the intent of setting priorities for the future. As it is the school, and usually the executive who set the questionnaire, the nature of the items will be structured in such a way that they represent the position of the executive (often influenced by systemic accountability schemes). Information will therefore only be collected on a limited scope of topics and often merely for the purpose of supporting the current position and decisions being made by the school leader and executive. As very few staff working in schools have had training in questionnaire design or statistical analysis, the results of the questionnaire will provide a small amount of data on a pre-conceived framework of where the school should be heading by those people in the positions of power in the relationship.

In short, despite adopting the contemporarily popular notion of community involvement and participative decision making processes, a school leader may exclude certain 'voices' from the policy process through the ways in which some ideas are promoted. While this may read as a negative perspective on the involvement of the wider school community in the strategy process, this is not the intention. Rather the goal has been a critical perspective on the process and the lexicon of participation. Ball (1994) argues that policy texts are the product of a series of compromises by various stakeholders. This provides a smooth link from the involvement of community members and the role of context in the strategy process to the direction setting for the school.

Shaping the Direction of the School

For participants in the study, direction setting was concerned with planning, envisioning, goal setting and implicitly decision making. The conceptual overlap of elements in each of

the dimensions of the strategic role highlights the blurring of boundaries and the difficulties in separating the dimensions. The role of context and community involvement is instrumental in the decision making and goal setting of the school. The plan is arguably a product of the before mentioned process. The actual planning for action to achieve the direction is of vital importance.

Very few would advocate the wasting of resources, but as Boyd (2004) cites, not everyone is prepared to acknowledge that to avoid doing so requires attention to efficiency and evaluation. Gamson (2003) cites that educational history has repeatedly shown that institutional improvements need not be at odds with efforts at administrative efficiency. However it should be noted that Callahan (1962) stressed that while efficiency was important, it was too often pursued in educational administration just for reducing costs rather than trying to get the highest quality for the least cost. He urged readers to recognize that the introduction of concepts and practices from fields such as business and industry can be a serious error as efficiency and economy must be considered in the light of the quality of education that is being provided.

The direction setting dimension of the strategic role should pull together the purpose of the school with the process of taking into account the context of the school. It requires decisions to be made as to what courses of action are pursued and which ones are not. As one principal stated:

> The key question is: Is this good for kids? And if the answer is no, then go away or talk to me about something else.
>
> Principal 28

It is this dimension of the strategic role that provides the alignment of school processes around a shared future goal. The direction set should provide the rationale for decisions made and escape the ad hoc management of multiple school based initiatives which take attention and focus away from what the school is aiming to achieve. This is a difficult process and position for some school leaders as many have risen through the ranks on the fact that they say 'no' to very few things and are constantly managing multiple tasks at any one time. Frequently the rationale for such a situation is that they do not want the students to miss out on anything, hence why the same staff member often takes all the sporting teams, the debate team, chess team, multiple school based programs and still manages to teach full-time. Although what is arguably more effective when leading and managing a school is an approach that conforms to the 'do less but do it well' approach rather than the 'do everything and master nothing' model.

School leaders need to oversee the implementation of a school's strategic direction. In doing so they must be prepared to undertake the hard intellectual work of adopting actions which are feasible and possible given the unique context, resources and time available to the school. What works in one school is not always transferable to another. While for some, this perspective is taken as prioritizing principles of efficiency over effectiveness, the over arching goal is providing the highest quality education to students by focusing on a limited number of priorities. However working as part of a larger system can have an impact on the direction setting of a school as some principals noted:

> The single biggest hiccup in the strategic leadership and management of schools is the DET with its politically reactive mandates that do little more than imposition school leaders and take considerable attention away from the work of the school.
>
> Principal 8

> While the powers that be tell us that they are trying to devolve power and its not going to be a top down model. I think that we have become far more accountable and far more answerable to people. … you can be a great strategic leader, but you can be completely circumvented by things that are completely out of your control and you can stand there in front of staff and they can say, we don't agree with this and we don't think this is the way it should be. All of our professional knowledge and background and experience can say that this is not the way to go, yet the system requires us to do it.
>
> Principal 18

> The direction that we get from region is incredibly limited and the role of the school education directors is so much at the behest of state that they spend much of their time reacting to shit and putting out spot fires. They do not have the opportunity to act strategically themselves because they are pulled in so many ways. We do not get the leadership, support structures and assistance that we need in schools.
>
> Principal 17

The strategic role has the potential to provide the school leader and any member of the school community with the criteria against which new initiatives can be assessed. Essentially, does it provide new avenues for the school to pursue its desired future direction taking into consideration its resources (physical, financial and human)? However, as with the previously discussed dimensions of the strategic role there exists an underlying challenge and tension relating to the balance of power in relationships. New initiatives may be thwarted because they do not conform to the strategic direction of the school, yet the strategic direction of the school may have been established by the dominant group within the school and endorsed by powerless groups. Despite only being explicitly discussed in relation to the imposition of DET mandates in the interview transcripts, the role of power relations in the strategic role of the public primary school principal have a significant impact on actions. This leads to a discussion on the nature of leadership behaviors within the strategic role.

Through Leadership Behaviors

Schools, as do any organization, depend on leadership to shape a productive future through a series of actions and decisions. What emerged from the analysis of the interviews were three different forms or levels of leadership: with others, from others and through others. Not surprising given the previously discussed rhetoric of participation was that the first two forms of leadership imply a more distributed approach to leadership. Notably missing was the concept of leading subordinates, rather the presence of what has been classified as leading through.

Adopting a pattern of leadership behavior that meaningfully engages the efforts of others is arguably the orthodoxy of contemporary literature in the field. Participatory or distributed models of school leadership are not only fashionable with practitioners but also researchers, policy makers and educational reformers (Harris, 2005; Silins & Mulford, 2002). The very origins of the movement can be traced back to the 1960s in the field of organizational theory (Barnard, 1968). While the notion of working in a team of leaders environment sounds ideal it is not without some cautionary tales. Despite some empirical support suggesting a positive relationship between distributed leadership and organizational change (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007), Timperley (2005) warns that "increasing the distribution of leadership is only desirable if the quality of the leadership activities contributes to assisting teachers to provide more effective instruction to their students" (p. 417). Simply put, distributing the strategic role of the school with others is not necessarily a positive or a negative thing. It does not directly equate to organizational improvement. Working with others in this distributed form of leadership involves a process of administrative restructuring and the first walls to be breached are those that exist in the minds of people (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000). Power relations need to

184

alter so that the leadership of any given initiative can come from the 'best' person for the role, not the one with the title.

The three different modes of leadership present in the transcribed text represent somewhat of a continuum of power relations beginning with the leader-centric approach of leadership through others, through to the transitional stage of leading with others and finally leadership from others.

Leading through others reflects the notion of influence. For Bush (2007), influencing represents the ability to affect outcomes through personal characteristics or expertise. Bacharach and Lawler (1980) suggest that in contrast to the notion of authority, influencing is a dynamic, tactical element of leadership that is not bound to a superior-subordinate relationship.

> Strategic leadership to me really means you capacity to convince other people that this is the direction to take. It is a capacity to get people to jump on board with an imitative.
>
> Principal 31

Leading with suggests a more distributed model where the role of leadership is shared.

> My role as the principal is to involve the community. Getting other people to do the stuff so that you don't have to do everything. It is not that I don't want to do the work, it is about creating a sense of community.
>
> Principal 21

> It is such as broad job [the principalship] that there is no shame in not knowing every aspect of everything. There is too much to do and you could not humanly do it. It only makes sense to involve others and work with them to get things done.
>
> Principal 2

185

Leadership from others links with the dependence model of school leadership and management discussed context and displayed in Figure 3. This represents a form of non-leadership by the principal, where the actual decisions and directions are set by those other than the principal.

> Public schools need to service the needs of the broader community. There is a need to be continually bringing in the views of the stakeholders. I am not saying that any particular group hijack the agenda, but you certainly need to ensure that decisions made are consistent with the wants and needs of the school's stakeholders.
>
> Principal 20

The analysis of the transcribed text revealed that practicing principals are more inclined to describe their strategic role as one requiring leadership with, from and through others as opposed to the traditional bureaucratic hierarchy involving leadership being done to people.

What has remained consistent in the analysis and discussion of the interview transcripts is that practicing principals see their role as one that draws on multiple perspectives and requires more than just them. The dimensions inductively extracted from the text conform to the contemporary literature in the wider field of educational leadership yet present a more holistic and relationship based model than the one derived from the strategic leadership and management literature presented in chapter two. To further investigate why this may be so, the text from the second half of the interviews was analyzed to gain greater insights into the principals' thinking and understanding of the strategic role.

Additional Information

Considering that the basic premise behind this study was to investigate whether there was an alignment between the scholarly and practice based definitions of the strategic role, a pivotal question to be asked was whether principals thought the term was misunderstood. Of the 36 participants, only two indicated that they felt the term was not misunderstood or misused. The other 34 expressed varying degrees of concern in relation to the uses of the term in the educational leadership arena. Two representative examples of comments are:

> I'm not sure if it's misused or if its one of those terms like transformational leadership that's current. Yeah I'm not sure if I could say if it's definitely misused or not, but it is something that we talk about in our educational jargon.
>
> > Principal 6

> I don't' know whether it is misunderstood, but I don't think that it necessarily helps people to focus on the core issues. Every word that we come up with ends up being a buzzword, and then it gets misused.
>
> > Principal 7

In an attempt to further contextualize the responses of participants, they were asked to indicate what forms of learning they had undertaken in relation to their strategic role. Table 41 displays the most frequently cited forms of professional learning. The two most frequently cited examples (talking to others and mentoring) reflect a trend towards informal learning about the strategic role. This trend is evident throughout the entire list in Table 41 with the exception of university courses. This reflects an implicit consensus in the field that the strategic role is one of practice and somewhat removed from theory. When respondents were probed regarding what they were reading in relation to the strategic role, most cited journals or publications which were distributed to schools by the DET. Some did cite

publications from leading professional association such as the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (e.g. *The Australian Educational Leader* and *Leading and Managing*), but Thomson (2001a) wrote a critique of these publications for focusing on the practical and technical matters of the role and not the bigger philosophical and theoretical questions surrounding practice.

Table 41. Forms of professional learning undertaken relating to the strategic role

Type of learning	Times cited 36 interviews
Talking to others	10
Mentor	9
Principal conferences	8
University courses	8
One-off presentations (e.g. Senge, Fullan, Eacott, Covey, Walker)	8
Reading	7
Internet	4
Experience / reflection	4
* nine other forms mentioned < 2 time	

The practice orientation of principal's learning about their strategic role is further evidence of an underlying contradiction in the work of school leaders. On one hand they speak of their role in relation to the broader social purpose of schooling and the expansion of the role beyond the mere pursuit of academic learning. However to learn about their role, they seek information that is devoid of explicit theoretical reference. This internal contradiction seeks to distinguish between practice and theory.

Educational research is often considered irrelevant to practitioner needs (Laferriere *et al.*, 2006) with many difficulties existing in translating abstract theoretical principles into actions (Chan & Fai Ping, 2006; Hammerness *et al.*, 2002; Willower, 1980). Many see the

divide as academics developing and refining theory and school leaders engaging in practice (Bush, 2006; English, 2002). However, most seem to agree that the "integration of theory and practice is a desirable if elusive goal" (Fullan, 1991, p. 293). However as was highlighted in chapters two and three, the current scope of research methods and subsequent conceptual development of the strategic role has been narrow. The focus of the literature on the strategic role within the field is arguably a poor interpretation of practice. One which reduces the strategic role to that of an activity and not part of a social network, where actors (both within and beyond the school) engage in activities which shape future decisions and actions.

Almost all of the participants in the interviews made some reference for the need to establish and build relationships and the need for relationship features such as trust and collegiality within their strategic role. As such, the strategic role requires serious analysis from a sociological or organizational perspective rather than a mere description of actions. To concentrate on strategic role as being 'what people do' (Jarzbkowski, 2004) is to limit, unnecessarily, to a narrow and under-theorized view of practice. Building on from Carter, Clegg and Kornberger (2008), to understand the practice of strategy, it is important to engage with the issues of power and other socio-political games. The tendency for school leaders to refer to under-theorized literature and narratives of practice reduces their understanding of the strategic role to an 'activity' as opposed to a social practice.

What is notably missing from the list is any form of formal sustained support for the role, such as formalized mentoring relationships or ongoing school based visit, a key area of need identified by both McKenzie *et al*. (2008) and Scott (2003). While it is possible that 'talking to others', 'mentoring' and 'reading' may be sustained, the informal nature of such initiatives make them susceptible to opportunity and not continuous support. Principal

conferences and one-off presentations are useful for the presentation of ideas, but without ongoing support, the ideas presented and discussed may quickly fade from practice. What is of greatest concern in this data is the lack of support for principals in the role and that the support that is offered comes only from the DET or those also working in the role. While there is an existing body of literature supporting the inductive practice orientated problem solving of principals working together on their practice, it is argued that this model of implementation and management is somewhat of a Trojan Horse.

To explain further, the DET expands the role of the school leader to encompass a strategic element. As one principal noted:

I've really noticed that ever since the Department moved into putting management plans and meeting targets and forcing people to meet targets I guess, that it has actually forced principal to act in a somewhat strategic fashion. Because essentially, until that happened, people just did whatever they wanted to do and accountability was low. The Department of moving more and more strategically and it is forcing that upon school principals.
Principal 24

It does so in the rhetoric of 'empowering schools' and school leaders to shape the future of their schools. However, by not providing ongoing support, principals are encouraged to talk to one another for support and guidance. Through the infrequent and minimal provision of information through publications sent directly to principals, the DET is able to significantly influence principal practice by suggesting models of strategic leadership and management, based in the larger systemic accountability regime that constrain the strategic role of the school leader. In short, the dominant group (the DET) has through the rhetoric of empowerment implicitly sought to control the key actors in school change (the principal). The key feature of this process rests in the power relations of school

190

leaders and the system. By endorsing, and in turn legitimizing, the expansion of participants in the strategic process at the school level to include teachers, school communities and in some cases students, the system has expanded the level of surveillance on the principal under the guise of empowering them to direct their own school. In collaboration with the level of public accountability applied to school leaders, the system has increased the level of examination on school leaders while actually removing the focus of that examination from the system. It is this situation which forms the basis of the discussion in the next chapter.

Having discussed the nature of their strategic role, each of the 36 interviewees was asked to identify an analogy which best summarized what their current experience of the role is like. The three most common analogies involved sailing, a sporting team or gardening. A representative sample of these analogies includes:

> I see it [strategy] as Captain Cook leading his ship to try and find a new land, Australia. You have the goal in mind, at the end there it is, we are going to discover this great unknown southern continent, but along the way, the ocean really deals lots of blows and the people that you have working with you come from all different strata, whether it is the cabin boy down stairs or the one who is going to feed you slop or whatever. You are also dealing with all kinds of clientele, and trying to keep them happy and safe, also making sure that you keep you vision, because it is a long journey. Sometimes you need to readjust the path, but the destination remains the same.
>
> Principal 5

> I come from a sporting background, rugby. I see strategic leadership just like a game of rugby. We get on the field and bust our butts together, but when we walk off the field, we either won or lost as a team. It does not matter that I dropped the ball over the line and they scored, we play as a team and we win or lose as a team.
>
> Principal 8

> I see it [the strategic role] as being the gardener in the garden. You have to tender it. You have to know your plants. You have to know your seasons. You have got to actually be able to identify the weeds and not pull out the flowers. Sometimes you need to let the weeds take a little bit of a hold, but manage them and then trim them. If you want your garden to look

like Central Park in New York, you have got to put in a hell of a lot of work. But when you stand back and admire it, you can say that you helped create that, and that it is your garden.

Principal 7

These analogies align with three different streams of work on the strategic leadership and management of schools, and educational leadership in general. The sailing reference, which frequently included control over where the boat was going and the numerous crewing working on it, reflects the busyness of the school environment while also reinforcing the concept of control or management by the principal.

The sporting team analogy referred to in the sample is consistent with contemporary educational leadership discourse on the participative models of leadership. A notable omission from the sporting team analogies was the term 'captain' or its equivalent. In each case, the respondent spoke of the 'win as a team / lose as team' approach to sport. Even if one person made a catastrophic mistake that led to the loss, the game was played as a team and therefore lost as a team. The notion of 'control' or 'responsibility' is in direct contrast in the two analogies discussed so far. In the first, the principal, under the guise of ship's captain is controlling the actions of crew and the direction of the ship, essentially the responsibility for reaching the desired destination falls with the principal, even though it is the actions of many that make it happen. In comparison, in the team analogy the success or failure in the game does not fall on just one person. This has organizational (or team) culture and climate implications for practice. It requires an environment where all staff take responsibility for aligning their actions with the espoused goals of the team. It makes assumptions that all staff are on board with whole school initiatives and that they will act professionally in fulfilling their roles. While this is arguably the goal of moves towards professionalism in education, it has significant implications for the manner in which staff

192

are supervised and performance is monitored. If working effectively, it has the potential to raise the levels performance of both staff and students, however if dysfunctional, it could lead to individualism, minimal systems for quality assurance and a shifting of blame for poor performance.

Returning briefly to the work of Ball (2003) among others, both analogies still implicitly discuss the raising of the individual leader above others. Ball (2003) wrote:

> … the work of the manager, the new hero of educational reform, involves instilling the attitude and culture within which workers feel themselves accountable and at the same time committed or personally invested in the organization. These new managers, in part at least beneficiaries of reform, are the 'technicians of transformation' (May, 1994, p. 619), or what Foucault calls 'technicians of behavior', their task 'to produce bodies that are docile and capable' (Foucault, 1979a, p. 294). (p. 219).

The act of leading a school and the management of staff / school communities are altered within this new mode of leadership. Two apparently opposed activities are achieved; both an increasing individualization; and a new form of school or system affiliation based on corporate culture. The individual breakdown of tasks, explicitly evident in the ship analogy, yet somewhat invisible in the sporting analogy, seeks to institutionalize the need for each individual actors, whether they be teachers, crew on a ship or players in a sporting team to perform their individual tasks. The performance of which could, although not necessarily, be compared within one another. Against the individualization of roles (note the still evident impact of Taylorism), is the re-working of roles as a collective responsibility, hence the team analogy of 'win as team or lose as a team'. In this instance, the role of each individual is blurred, although still present, and focused more on the contribution to the organizational performance than individual performance. It appears

193

from the reported analogies that the strategic leadership and management of the school requires the simultaneous enactment of both activities

The gardening analogies used in the sample reflects a blend of approaches. On one hand, it reflects the singular leader model (such as the sailing analogy) but it also encompasses a long term perspective, in which the hard work of today will not see full benefit until some time in the future. As with the sailing, or the team analogy for that matter, the desired future state is known in advance. Routes or plans can be made and minor (or in some cases, major) adjustments may be made along the way. What is unique about the gardening analogy is temporal sequence. When sailing to a destination, you eventually get there (or somewhere). Similarly in a game of sport, eventually it ends. In gardening however, it is the actor (or principal in this case) who decides when it ends, not the garden. For example, crops have cycles, when one harvest is complete the process begins again in preparation for the next. Changes and adjustments can be made from cycle to cycle to reflect learning based on reflection in the goal of achieving more or higher quality the next time. The gardening analogy reflects a more dynamic perspective to the strategic role.

The three most cited analogies in the sample confirm that there are many ways to go about the strategic role of the primary school. There is no empirical literature which explicitly states that any one mode of leadership is more effective than another, despite advocates for participative models claiming otherwise. Using the related topic of instructional leadership as an example, despite instructional leadership and school effectiveness research attracting considerable interest (Witziers *et al.*, 2003), it has produced conflicting results as to the role of school leadership (Maeyer, Rymenans, Van Petegem, & van den Bergh, 2007). Some studies have suggested that school leaders have a

direct impact on student achievement (Cotton, 2003; Fisher & Frey, 2002; Gentilucci & Muto, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Janerrette & Sherretz, 2007; Kearney, 2005; Mulford, 2003; Walker & Stott, 2000) while others have noted only indirect effects (Blase & Blase, 2000; Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Boyan, 1988; Day, 2004; Glasman & Heck, 1992; Gurr, Drysdale, & Mulford, 2006; Guskey, 2007; Hale & Rollins, 2006; Harris, 2004; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Maeyer et al., 2007; Pitner, 1988; Purkey & Smith, 1985; Robertson & Miller, 2007; Salfi & Saeed, 2007) and some question whether leaders even matter (Deal, 1987; Lee, 1987). But what is of most significance in this body of literature is that 'effective schools' have been found to have principals with both democratic and autocratic styles of leadership and management. There is no consistent pattern as to which style of leadership and management can guarantee success.

Before moving the discussion beyond the analogies, the two creative examples below viewed the role through a very different lens, yet provide further insights into the nature of the strategic role.

> Strategic leadership is like a theatrical performance. A good theatrical performance will have impeccable timing, whether it's comedic or dramatic. It's about when you can hear the pin drop because you've got the audience engaged. You can say all these fancy things about its about managing and having timetables and organizing and communicating, but at the end of the day its really whatever it is that makes up a good theatrical performance. Theatrical performances can be a whole variety of things, comedy, solos, Shakespearian, musical, it could be any number of things and that's the versatility. At the end of the performance you may not remember the specifics [exact words] but it is the essence of what you experienced that matters.
>
> Principal 19

> Its probably like a very good sexual relationship long term, because it is long term and its where people are equal and its not always easy and its not always what you want and what you feel like, but its something that can be really exciting you want to work on, but if you're not involved in it, you're not going to enjoy it.. But it can't be something someone else can do all the hard work for and you go hey yeah, this is great, because that doesn't work, it's that team work and that people are engaged together and being a part of something. It can be sort of full on and other times have nice sort of gentle lulls that you enjoy.
>
> Principal 36

195

In contrast to the previously discussed analogies, these two present a slightly different take on the strategic role. The theatrical performance alludes to concepts of timing, engagement and the big picture as opposed to finer details. The use of timing reflects a desire to implement changes at the right time to maximize their effect. The engagement of audience suggests a compelling tale in which the audience is immersed. The notion of the big picture or overall story as opposed to the finer details can be interpreted as the desired future state, the path to get there may vary and have numerous smaller adventures on the way, but the overall story that is being told remains central.

The sexual relationship analogy presents a more organic perspective on the role, but addresses some key aspects. The explicit reference to the power relations (where people are equal) and the subsequent requirement for active participation to make the process happen has been somewhat missing in other analogies and the interview texts in general. In addition, it alludes to the ebbs and flows of a relationship or process over time. As with any role, the strategic role has periods of intense activity follow by less busy periods. Both analogies, in addition to being highly creative, provide greater insight into the thinking and experiences of practicing public primary school principals.

Before concluding the interview, participants were asked if they had anything else that they would like to add in relation to their strategic role. Three themes emerged from their comments:

1) Principals saw the role as a relatively new addition and therefore required further support, both prior to and post assuming the principal position;

2) the DET hopped from 'guru' to 'guru', whether they be Hargreaves, Fullan or Covey, and there was a feeling that the DET adopted an ad hoc approach to what was popular at the time (or tried to shape what was popular at the time); and

196

3) the strategic role was considerably constrained by the those outside the immediate school such as the DET, the Primary Principals Association, Teachers' Unions, and Regional structures.

These comments were relatively consistent with the messages present through the earlier stages of the interviews. The lack of support for the role was clearly evident in the manner to which principals learnt about the strategic role, mostly through informal methods. While the use of 'gurus' was not present in the earlier discussion, it is in alignment with the discussion concerning the Trojan Horse approach of the DET to shape the leadership and management of principals. Through the provision of minimal support to principals and then making a certain type of support available such as Hargreaves, Fullan or Covey, the DET is implicitly (although the argument could be made for explicitly) endorsing the models offered up by a guru in the field. When the DET engages with an external consultant, such as Fullan, Hargreaves or Covey, they usually conduct a series of workshops with school leaders across the state. These workshops form part of regional or district principal meetings, maximizing the exposure. In the case of Covey, members of regional teams are trained and then offer training to principals and deputy / assistant principals. Of the 36 principals interviewed, 20 cited having completed the Covey training in the previous twelve months at some stage of the interview process, even if not in response to what learning they had undertaken.

Despite the rhetoric of empowering schools and the devolution of authority in the strategic process, principals still feel that the role is constrained by the DET, regional structures, not to mention the Primary Principals Association (which was formed to represent the interests of principals) and the Teacher's Unions (which have a long history of

stopping educational reform in what they describe as the 'best interests of teachers'). A sample of comments made by principals includes:

I really do not believe that the system is set up to support principals with strategic leadership, it is too frequently making knee jerk reaction to situations. … The direction we get from region is incredibly limited and the role of school education directors is so much at the behest of the state government that much of their time is spent reacting and putting out fires. They do not get the opportunity to be strategic themselves. Because they are pulled in so many ways, we do not get the leadership that we need in our schools.

Principal 17

I suppose the thing that I think about strategic leadership, and leadership in general, is that in order to become strategic we have got to feel empowered and I am not sure that the Department structures actually enable us to be empowered. While I feel that our regional director and the deputy director general are all about liberating us and giving us what we need to effectively run our own ships, I feel disheartened when I see the union holding us back. Additionally, I think that Primary Principals Council is largely about holding us back.

Principal 10

I get frustrated with the system for throwing us a red herring that we probably did not see coming. In my career, I have seen the system evolve to the point where it is very political, it is almost a reaction to a political situation that control votes. A lot of decisions are not necessarily made from a wise educational perspective, they are often made from a fiscal point of view. Frequently to create the illusion that things are either considerably more well resourced than reality or achieving better than they are.

Principal 20

The additional comments offered by principals reflect a constant tension between want they are being asked to do and what they are able to do. The goal of proactively shaping the future of the school is consistently inhibited by the constraints of the dominant groups. As one principal commented:

Unfortunately the next level up from the principal [school education directors] is focused on protecting their own back. I had a recent situation where a poor choice was made and when I rang up to report it, the reply was 'we have got to act quickly to keep this out of the

media'. So it was all about covering the Departments butt basically and I think that this is unfortunately what it has come down to for the system as a whole. Those in high position, above principals, loose focus of what is really important in schools.

Principal 19

Summary

The definition of the strategic role that emerged from the interviews transcripts collected in this study demonstrates some points of divergence from the model derived from the literature. Figure 4 shows a visual overview of the emerging model.

Figure 4. The implicit consensual definition of the strategic role of the public primary school principal

199
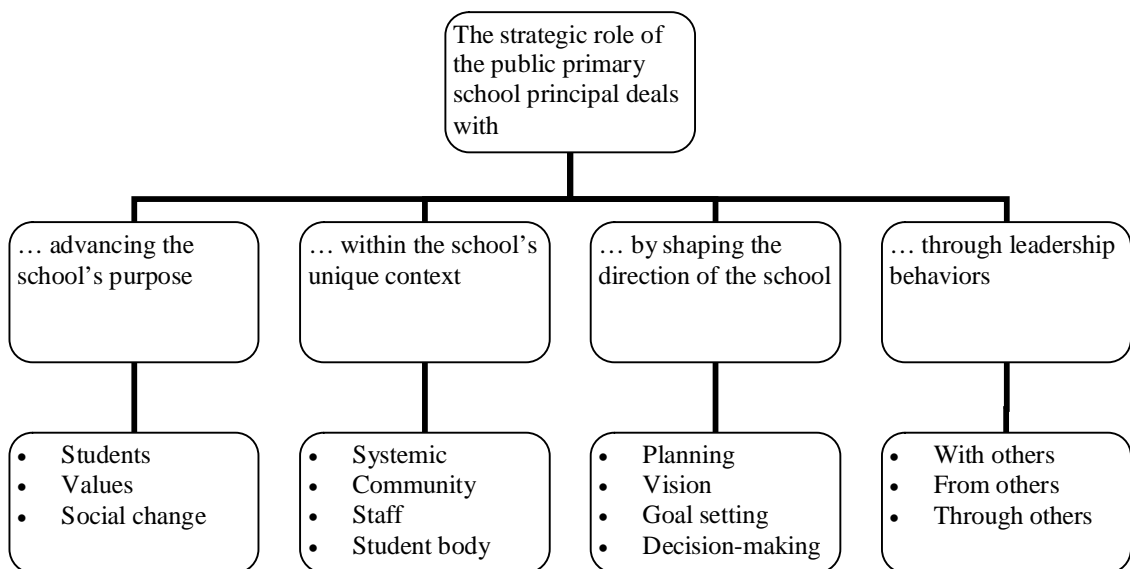
To determine the validity of the implicit definition of the strategic role of primary school principals, the four dimensions themselves (rather than the individual word / phrases used to induce the dimensions) were used to examine the literature in the field. To conduct this test, the 77 articles identified in chapter two were re-examined as to which dimension/s they addressed. After completing this analysis, articles appearing in the past five years (2003-2007) in the top five journals (*n*=883) identified in the SORTI / AARE study (see chapter two) were examined. To conduct this test logistic regression (LOGIT) was used. The dependent variable was whether an abstract was identified as about the strategic role of school leaders in chapter two. The independent variables were four binary variables, each representing one of the dimensions of the practitioner definition, coded 1 if there was any reference to one of the words assigned to that dimension. For example, if an abstract included reference to the political context of educational leadership, it was categorized under the dimension of context. If none of the words in that dimension appeared in the abstract, the binary variable was coded 0. This put the conceptual dimensions of the definition to a direct and stringent test.

The LOGIT was chosen over multiple regression models as the response category was binary rather than continuous. A multiple linear regression model assumes that, given the values of the explanatory variables, the response variable has a normal distribution with constant variance (Landau & Everitt, 2004). Clearly this assumption is not acceptable for a binary response. Logistic regression is well suited for describing and testing hypotheses about relationships between a categorical outcome, such as whether an article was identified as being about the strategic role, and one or more categorical or continuous

predictor variables, such as the four dimensions of the definition (Peng, Lee, & Ingersoll, 2002). Prior to conducting the logistic regression model a cross-tabulation was used to provide initial insights into the structure of the data (see Table 42).

Table 42. Cross-tabulation of data set

Classification		Purpose		Context		Direction		Leadership	
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Not strategy	Count	726	69	634	161	692	103	563	232
	Percentage	91.32	8.68	79.75	20.25	87.04	12.96	70.82	29.18
Strategy	Count	66	22	43	45	26	62	28	60
	Percentage	75.00	25.00	48.86	51.14	29.55	70.45	31.82	68.18
Total	Count	792	91	677	206	718	165	591	292
	Percentage	90.66	9.34	81.08	18.92	84.26	15.74	75.15	24.85

The results of the cross-tabulation shows that in the sample, only 25 percent of articled identified as being about the strategic role in chapter two made any reference to 'advancing the school's purpose' in their abstract. Additionally, only 51.14 percent made reference to the 'unique context of the school'. This is in contrast to the attention given to the purpose of schooling and the unique context of each school and its community discussed by the principals during the interviews.

Following on from the cross-tabulation, a four-predictor logistic model was fitted to the data to test the relationship between the dimensions of the definition and the previously identified literature on the strategic role (see Table 43). According to the model, the log of the odds of an article being identified as about the strategic role of the educational leader was negatively related to 'within the school's unique context' (β=-.43, p=.21) and

positively related to 'advancing the school's purpose' (β=.18, p=.60), 'by shaping the direction of the school' (β=2.63, p=<.01) and 'through leadership behaviors' (β=.73, p=.02). However, in assessing the effectiveness of the model, Peng, Lee and Ingersoll (2002) recommend attending to: a) the overall model evaluation; b) statistical tests of individual predictors; c) goodness-of-fit statistics; and d) validations of predicted probabilities.

Table 43. Logistic regression analysis of 883 educational leadership articles and the model proposed for the strategic role of the principal

Predictors The strategic role of the public primary school principals deals with …	B	S.E.	χ^2	df	p	Exp(β)
'… advancing the school's purpose'	.18	.34	.28	1	.60	1.20
'… within the school's unique context'	-.43	.34	1.58	1	.21	.65
'… by shaping the direction of the school'	2.63	.32	68.47	1	.00	13.93
'… through leadership behaviors.'	.73	.30	5.82	1	.02	2.08
Constant	-3.46	.23	235.48	1	.00	.03

Test			χ^2	df	p	
Overall model evaluation						
- Likelihood fit			137.23	4	.00	
- Score test			137.23	4	.00	
- Wald test			137.23	4	.00	
Goodness of fit test						
- Hosmer & Lemeshow			34.32	4	.00	
Sample size	883					
Percentage of cases correctly identified	90.00					

Note: Cox & Snell (1989) R^2 =.14. Nagelkerke (1991) R^2=.30.

Overall model evaluation. The evaluation of the logistic model was undertaken using three inferential statistical tests: the likelihood ratio, score and Wald tests. All three yielded the

same conclusions for the present data, which is not uncommon (Landau & Everitt, 2004; Peng *et al.*, 2002). The results of these tests indicate that all observations would be predicted to belong in the largest outcome category. In other words, the logistic model does not represent a better fit for the data than the intercept only, commonly referred to as the null hypothesis.

Statistical tests of individual predictors. Wald's chi-square statistic is used to test the statistical significance of the individual regression coefficients (i.e. *β*s). According to Table 43, both 'by shaping the direction of the school' and 'through leadership behaviors' were significant predictors (*p*=<.05) of articles identified as about the strategic role. The constant statistic refers to the test of the intercept and suggests whether or not an intercept should be included in the model. For the current data set, the result (*p*=<.01) suggested that a model with an intercept could be applied to the data.

Goodness-of-fit statistics. Goodness-of-fit statistics assess the fit of the logistic model against the actual outcomes (Peng *et al.*, 2002), for example whether an article was identified as about the strategic role or not. The inferential goodness-of-fit test was the Hosmer-Lemeshow (2000) test that yielded a χ^2 of 34.32 and was significant (*p*=<.01), suggesting that the model was not a good fit to the data. In other words, the null hypothesis of a good model fit to the data was not tenable.

Two additional descriptive measures of good-of-fit are reported in Table 43, defined by Cox and Snell (1989) and Nagelkerke (1991), respectively. These were included based on Peng *et al.*, (2002) suggestions for reporting and interpreting logistic regression models. However, it is noted that some (Long, 1997; Menard, 2000) have argued that such measures

fail to adequately ascertain the proportion of variance in logistic regression. Menard (2000) suggested that they do not correspond to predictive efficiency nor can they be tested in an inferential framework. For these reasons, they have been included as supplementary to the other, arguably more useful, evaluative measures such as overall evaluation of the model, tests of individual regression coefficients, and the good-of-fit statistic.

Validation of predicted probabilities. A logistic regression predicts the logit of an event outcome from a set of predictors. Peng *et al.* (2002) explain:

> Because the logit is the natural log of the odds (or probability/[1-probablity]), it can be transformed back to the probability scale. The resultant predicted probabilities can then be revalidated with the actual outcome to determine if high probabilities are indeed associated with events and low probabilities with non-events. The degree to which predicted probabilities agree with actual outcomes is expressed as either a measure of association or a classification table (p. 6).

Four measures of association were conducted to validate the predicted probabilities of the model. The measures are Kendall's Tau-*a*, Goodman-Kruskal's Gamma, Somers' *D* statistic, and the *c*-statistic (see Table 44). The Tau-*a* statistic is Kendall's rank-order correlation coefficient without adjustments for ties. The Gamma statistic is based on Kendall's coefficient but adjust for ties. Peng *et al.* (2002) suggest that the Gamma is more useful and appropriate than the Tau-*a* when there are ties on both outcomes and predicted probabilities. The Gamma statistic for the predictors ranged from .56 to .88. It is interpreted that as 56 to 88 percent fewer errors made in predicting which of the articles would be classified as either about the strategic role or not by using the estimated probabilities of the predictors than by chance alone. However some (Demaris, 1992; Siegel & Castellan, 1988)

have raised caution about the Gamma statistic, arguing that it has a tendency to overstate the strength of association between estimated probabilities and outcomes and that a value of zero does not necessarily imply independence.

Table 44. Validation of predicted probabilities

Tests	Purpose	Context	Direction	Leadership
Kendall's Tau-*a*	.16	.22	.44	.25
Goodman-Kruskal Gamma	.56	.61	.88	.68
Somers' D_{xy}	.16	.21	.43	.23
c-statistic	.06	.11	.21	.14

Somers' D_{xy} is a preferred extension of Gamma whereby one variable is designated as the dependent and the other the independent (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). The D_{xy} represents the degree of association between the outcome, designated as the dependent, and the estimated probability, designated as the independent (Demaris, 1992). In this data set, the Tau-*a* and D_{xy} are similar.

The *c*-statistic represents the proportion of article pairs with different observed outcomes for which the model correctly predicts a higher probability for observations with the event outcome than the probability for non-event observations (Peng *et al.*, 2002). For the present model, the *c*-statistic ranges from .06 to .21. This means that for between 6 and 21 percent of all possible pairs of articles, one identified as being about the strategic role and the other not, the model correctly assigned a higher probability to those who were classified as strategic. A .50 value means that the model is no better than assigning observations randomly into outcome categories. The low *c*-statistic for each of the

predictors indicates that the four dimensions of strategic role as derived from the interview transcripts are not distinguishing elements of the literature in the field relating to the strategic role of educational leaders.

Despite correctly distinguishing 90 percent of articles as either about the strategic role of the educational leader or not, only two dimensions of the definition were statistically significant, 'by shaping the direction of the school' and 'through leadership behaviors'. The relationship between 'by shaping the direction' and the identification of an article as about the strategic role is not surprising given the skewed focus of literature on the establishment of plans and direction setting in schools (see chapter two).

Although what is noteworthy is that 'through leadership behaviors' was significant (p=.02), both 'advancing the school's purpose' and 'within the school's unique context' were not (p=.60 and .21 respectively). This supports what has previously been argued by Davies and Davies (2004) and Eacott (2008b) that the strategic role is just that, a role and not a separate type of leadership. Furthermore, apparent from the LOGIT result, the strategic role of the public primary school leader cannot be separated from the broader role of school leadership. This analysis suggests that the definitional dimensions of the strategic role of the public primary school principal as derived from the transcripts of interviews with principals and stated as 'The strategic role of the public primary school principal deals with advancing the school's purpose within the school's unique context by shaping the direction of the school through leadership behaviors' blurs the boundaries of the strategic role and the boarder scope of school leadership.

Additionally, the poor fit of the definition with the literature of the field poses some significant issues for the scholarship of the strategic role. Specifically, the findings of this study propose that in general, the literature of the field that focuses on the strategic role of

206

the educational leader may in fact be a poor representation of the reality of practice for educational leaders, as seen by the leaders themselves. In other words, the scholarship of the topic describes a different role to the one that principals believe they are enacting.

Implications

This study both supports and refutes the knowledge base of strategy in education presented in the previous chapters. Having extracted a definition of the strategic role of the public primary school leader, the obvious question is 'So what?' The most significant benefit of having this definition is that it allows educational leadership scholars to frame the debate about what they want the strategic role to become, or how they want it to change. Along this line, for example, the definition appears to give primacy to a more holistic view of the strategic role of school leadership as opposed to the planning focus in the literature. Similarly, the definition places far greater emphasis on the purpose of schooling rather than the dependent causal model of planning derived from mass stakeholder input.

At the most basic level, the definition extracted from this study could stimulate further work. If the field of educational leadership adheres to its own concept of distinctiveness - as opposed to merely adopting tools from outside the field – then the existing definition might be seen as an invitation or filter. Scholarly work which does not conform to the definition would be treated as outside the field, beyond the realm of educational strategic leadership and management. Alternatively, viewing the definition as an invitation, designed to attract or invite related work, then the definition and the field itself, may evolve over time. Through this perspective, the field of educational leadership, and the topic of strategic leadership and management, can be viewed for its ability and

willingness to broker and integrate the works of multiple other fields to create a unique educational leadership perspective.

Conclusions

The strategic role of the primary principal is a very important and vital part of an effective school. While some scholars have lamented the ambiguous nature of the construct, inquiry into the domain has been essentially constrained by a dominant theoretical or methodology lens limiting the development of the construct to the role of planning. This study however suggests that the ambiguity of the construct should be viewed as a strength and not a weakness. The amorphous boundaries and embedded pluralism serve as a common ground for scholars to thrive as an academic community without theoretical or methodological blinkers. The strategic role of the school leader acts as a conduit allowing for the simultaneous pursuit of advancing the purpose of schooling and balancing the political accountability context of contemporary society.

CHAPTER SIX

The Strategic Role as a Disciplinary Practice

The two purposes for this thesis set out in chapter one were first, to take stock, assess and integrate the existing body of literature on strategic leadership and management in schools and second, to go beyond what is already known to set forth new frameworks, perspectives and agendas for the study of the strategic role. So far, the focus has primarily been on the first of these two purposes, although in the last chapter, attention turned to the second. This chapter explicitly addresses the second objective. As stated in chapter one, in some places the ideas will be clearly speculative, meant to stimulate debate and systematic inquiry. The discussion is intended to provide a new platform for theory and research on the strategic role, building from what is already known and not by filling gaps in the literature, but stepping beyond the current knowledge base and shaping further inquiry.

The proposition of this chapter is that the contemporary strategic role of the public school principal is a disciplinary practice (Foucault, 1979). Ever present surveillance and normalizing judgment, in the form of increased stakeholder involvement in decision making and accountability regimes, serve to minimize resistance to systemic norms and produce a mode of self-regulation in principals. Disciplinary practice, as the term is used in this chapter, refers to a set of discourses, norms, and routines that shape the way in which a field of inquiry (educational leadership, and more specifically, the strategic role of the educational leader) and its related practices constitute themselves. This self-constitution establishes "conventions, agreements, and rules that regulate and legitimize current ways of distinguishing among best practices, desired outcomes" (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998, p. 330). Foucault argued that the ultimate expression of modern disciplinary technology was

Bentham's panopticon (Staples, 1994) and therefore, this chapter uses Foucault's discussion of the panopticon as a theoretical lens to examine the contemporary strategic role of the school principal.

A logical question may be to ask 'Why Foucault?' It is the contention of this chapter that continuity in practices, discarded ideas and initiatives and policies which were never enacted have to do with power relations in educational institutions, systems and processes. Educational leadership researchers have traditionally paid little attention to the micro-level functioning of power relations. The work of Foucault, Bourdieu and Marx just to name a few are rarely drawn from in the field (exceptions include Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Gunter, 2001; Lingard *et al.*, 2003), although they are often drawn on in the study of education policy and the sociology of education, arguably two closely aligned fields. When considering where the future of scholarship on the strategic role of the public primary school principal could go next, a re-reading of Callahan's *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* forced consideration of the way policy and context can shape the behavior of school leaders. This led to revisiting Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and in particular the chapters on the panopticon and docile bodies. Immediately upon re-reading these passages the thought of viewing the strategic role of the public school principal as a disciplinary practice came to mind. The current policy context in NSW public primary schools, such as the requirement of schools to have strategic plans, the systemic delivery of models for activities leading to such plans, and the publicly available nature of plans, raised the question as to whether the system had sought to control principals through a series of actions making that control invisible. This chapter is devoted to further expanding this idea.

Although before beginning the analysis in greater depth, a few caveats need to be highlighted. Firstly, the framing of educational leadership as what Foucault referred to as a

disciplinary practice is not an entirely new idea, rather, an extension of previous work in the field that has focused on hidden dimensions of social and organizational life (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998). However the application of Foucault's work is a relatively unexplored feature of inquiry on the strategic role of educational leaders in the educational leadership literature. Building on from Anderson and Grinberg (1998), who sought to appropriate Foucault's work in the field of educational leadership, Foucault's explicit focus on an "analysis of the administration of social institutions and because it challenges many taken-for-granted aspects of our field" (p. 331), makes his work both useful and provocative. Secondly, it is not proposed that any single frame orient the field of inquiry, but rather that it is through multiple frames, as opposed to the relatively narrow perspective taken in the current literature on the topic, that we can begin to make sense of the complexities of organizational life and the empirical challenges of studying such institutions.

Foucault on Strategy

In order to contextualize the discussion it is important to introduce Foucault into the conversation on the strategic role. While he never specifically wrote about the strategic role of organization leaders, he did write on the relations of power and the relations of strategies by situating institutions within the "thin but all-entangling web of power relations" (Caputo & Yount, 1993, p. 4). For Foucault (1983), the word strategy was employed in three ways:

> First, to designate the means employed to attain a certain end; it is a question of rationality functioning to arrive at an objective.

211

Second, to designate the manner in which a partner in a certain game acts with regard to what he thinks should be the action of the others and what he considers the others think to be his own; it is the way in which one seeks to have the advantage over others.

Third, to designate the procedures used in a situation of confrontation to deprive the opponent of his means of combat and to reduce him to giving up the struggle; it is a question therefore of the means destined to obtain victory (pp. 224-225).

The first deployment of the word is most consistent with the current knowledge base on the topic. The very use of the word 'rationality' conforms to the underlying assumption of many works on the strategic process. Although an implicit feature of Foucault's first employment of the term are power relations. The second aligns closely with a capitalist perspective of strategy and the desire for competitive advantage. It moves beyond the mere rational management and perceived control of the environment (or market) towards a more intuitive stance based on lived experience. The position of strategy involves the consideration of actions, reactions by others (in this case an adversary) and so on. This implies a proactive positioning of strategy that is based on competition. The final employment of the term situates strategy in a relationship of power and a struggle for survival. It reflects an element of instability in context (much like that of market ideology). Moving beyond the mere competitive advantage of the second context, the third brings the phenomena of 'domination' to visibility. Foucault (1983) writes

Domination is in fact a general structure of power whose ramifications and consequences can sometimes be found descending to the most incalcitrant fibers of society. But at the same time it is a strategic situation more or less taken for granted and consolidated by means of a long-term confrontation between adversaries. It can certainly happen that the fact of domination may only be the transcription of a mechanism of power resulting from confrontation and its consequences (a political structure stemming from invasion); it may also be that a relationship of struggle between two adversaries is the result of power relations with the conflicts and cleavages which ensue. But what makes the domination of a group, a caste, or a class, together with the resistance and revolts which that domination comes up against, a central phenomenon in the history of societies is that they manifest in a massive and universializing form, at the level of the whole social body, the locking together

212

of power relations with relations of strategy and the results proceeding from their interaction (p. 226).

The notion of domination can be linked to economic forms of strategy relating to organizational survival, but what of schools? Is there such a competitive environment in the delivery of schooling that organization survival is a concern? In a critique of current practices of strategy in schools, Bell (1998) argued:

> The very use of strategy is based on an assumption that the school is a unique entity which must seek to gain competitive advantage over its neighbors. Yet, if schools are carefully examined, their similarities are far greater than their differences. Their uniqueness is, in most cases, marginal and their opportunity to profit at the expense of other schools is limited. The assumptions which are implied in the deployment of strategy, such as the use of competition and market force to determine educational provision and the social relationship which it appears to engender, based on conflict, are not appropriate for a non-profit organization such as a school, the main purpose of which are the nurturing and education of children (p. 455).

The notion that schools are not unique entities may have some practitioners and community members feeling somewhat uncomfortable, particularly those who have sought to protect the status quo of their school based on its uniqueness. Bell's comment serves to challenge the conventional application of strategy and market ideology. While some academics have advocated market ideology (Elmore, 1987; Tooley, 1992) as a means of improving the standards and provision of education, others have expressed concerns relating to the sociological impact and social class disparity embedded in such reforms (Alder, 1997; Taylor, 2001). Ball (1993) suggests that the introduction of an educational market is a "mechanism of class reproduction", legitimating and reinforcing the "relative advantages of the middle and upper class within state education" (p. 13). This returns the focus of strategy to a social space where power relations are shaped by actions, an

argument that is consistent with the work of Foucault and Bourdieu. As a result, the focus of this chapter stems from the final sentence of the previously cited Foucault (1983) discussion on domination and in particular, "the locking together of power relations with relations of strategy and the results from their interaction" (p. 226).

Considering the analogy of a game of chess, according to Foucault, the capture of one piece by another is a form of 'micro-power', in addition to being the result of the overall arrangement of the pieces at the time of the capture and the moves (or strategy) leading up to the capture (Hoy, 1986b). Two key aspects of this analogy provide further insight into Foucault's take on strategy. The first is that power is visible in the act of capturing of another piece, but also a result of possible resistance from the adversary. This represents the constant tension and struggle of strategy in better positioning oneself yet taking into account the moves of others. Secondly, while strategy may explain why one piece should capture another or move a particular way, it does not determine what must be done. Hoy (1986b, p. 136) writes that "opportunities are sometimes deliberately delayed for larger future gains, as well as simply overlooked".

During the interviews conducted for the study reported in the previous chapter, a principal also used chess as an analogy for strategy, stating:

> Chess is the kind of game where you have to be thinking a long long way ahead. You need to be thinking of the end of the game while you are actually playing the game and part of playing chess is that you do it lots of times, so you already know the moves in advance. You need to know in advance what you are going to do and you need to know that if this happens [in response], then you do it this way. If this happens, then you do it this way. You are constantly problem solving and renegotiating along the way.
>
> Principal 21

Building from the notion that strategy is the result of interactions or non-actions of both the self and others, and that strategy can be used to explain but not determine action, the prospect of using the panopticon as a means of exploring the strategic role of the public primary school principal began to take shape. It is argued that by using the techniques of surveillance and normalization, the strategic role of the public school principal is constructed.

The Panopticon and Disciplinary Practices

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault (1979) illustrates his interpretation of power through Jeremy Bentham's 19th century drawing of the panopticon. This prison design consists of a tower surrounded by a circular structure containing cells that are visible from the tower. Those inside the cells never know whether they are being watched, but because they cannot see into the tower, they must assume that they are being watched.

> All that is needed then is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker, or a school boy. …Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers (pp. 200-201).

The function of constant perceived surveillance (the logic of the panopticon) is that the surveillance becomes internalized and therefore invisible. The observed individual "does not need to be constantly watched because he continuously watches himself" (Jones, 2004). Foucault (1979) wrote:

> He who is subjected to the field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relations in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principal of his own subjection (p. 202).

Foucault points out that schools, in addition to other social institutions have always operated as observation machines, strongly arguing that the physical design and layout of schools was such that their inhabitants could be constantly observed. Teachers taught from raised platforms, prefects were selected to observe their classmates in the teachers absence; desks were arranged so that teachers could see everyone; long corridors ensured clear views of movements; names, aptitudes and activities were recorded in registers so that each individual could be monitored (Jones, 2004). Foucault (1979) suggests that this surveillance "is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or adjacent part, but as the mechanism that is inherent to it" (p. 176).

With surveillance, comes the notion of normalization. Through the "imposition of a model of well-ordered human activity" (Hoy, 1986a, p. 12), systems, such as education systems, seek to mould actors within that system into 'normal' as opposed to abnormal, delinquent or deviant. Foucault referred to this process as 'normalization'. Normalization, like surveillance becomes one of the great instruments of power (Foucault, 1979). The power of normalization imposes homogeneity, but it also individualizes, by making it

possible to measure variance. Normalization operates through both individual self-discipline and group control (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998).

While the idea of normalization (usually achieved through the process of assessment) and surveillance have a long history in education, particularly in relation to students, it is increasingly becoming a feature in the working lives of teachers (King, 1994) and school leaders. The enactment of surveillance, combined with normalizing judgment, make it possible to "qualify, to classify and to punish" (Foucault, 1979, p. 184).

How Disciplinary Power is Enacted within the Strategic Role

Notions of positional power dominate traditional concepts of educational management, finding roots in the conceptualization of schools as hierarchical social systems. With the exception of the push towards empowering others in the school (which Handy (1996) states mirrors demands made in the 1950s and 1960s for employee participation) and distributing leadership, by engaging a wider scope of stakeholders in strategic decision making processes, the concept of power is notably absent from the discourse on the strategic role of public primary school principal.

The very use of the term 'power' is often seen as an unethical or inappropriate practice in the pursuit of good leadership and management (Pfeffer, 1992). However this stance fails to acknowledge that every aspect of the leadership and management of change has political (in the broadest scope of the word) consequences for the organization. Power is frequently conceived as a binary, adopting an underlying assumption of Newtonian physics, where movements result from the application of a set of forces on an object. From this perspective, 'power' is defined (and understood) in terms of what right once can

217

dominate another through exercising force. This view stems from the bureaucratic mindset, where authoritative right of control and power extends downward from supervisor to subordinate (Ford, 2006).

From this rationalist logic, power is required to orchestrate and direct actions crucial to the realization of strategic change (Handy, 1996). Foucault challenges the notion that power is something that is wielded and argues that it is embedded in social relations. In contemporary society, power is exercised through institutional relations that discipline our ways of thinking and acting through self-regulation (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998). A major implication of Foucault's view of power is that educational leadership and management practices that appear democratic or participatory may be in fact constitute forms of power and therefore result in more effective means of control. As one principal noted:

> … while the powers that be [DET and regional directors] tell us that they are trying to devolve power and it is going to no longer be a top-down model, in actuality, we have become far more accountable for what we are doing to those above us in the system.
>
> Principal 18

Kearins (1997) suggested that a Foucauldian perspective seeks to look beyond the manifest and obvious exercise of power, to ask how resistance and expression of dissent have been minimized or even eliminated. Foucault (1983) argued that the goal of his work had not been to "analyze the phenomena of power nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis" (p. 208) but rather, to create a "history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (p. 208). In the chapter detailing the role of discipline in producing 'docile bodies', Foucault (1979) wrote:

What was being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, it gestures, its behavior. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it. A 'political anatomy', which was also a 'mechanics of power', was being born; it defined how one may have hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines (p. 138).

Two particular comments made by principals during the interviews align with the production of 'docile bodies':

I think that what we have become in many ways is a group of clones. We [principals] are not risk takers and I think we need to stick our head out a bit and take some risks.

Principal 10

I am a member of the DET. If they tell me this is going to happen, then that is what is going to happen. I might not agree with it, and I can go in private to meet with and disagree with them [regional and state directors], but I cannot stand up in the middle of a road and express my dissent. I do not feel that I can ignore or reject what my employer tells me to do.

Principal 31

While the first comment does not explain how, it does indicate that resistance to 'normal' modes of operation have been minimized, if not eliminated. The second comment offers one insight into why this resistance has been reduced, employer loyalty. Although a more pessimistic view would be to suggest that it is a fear of punishment, whether that is in the form of reprimand or less overt actions, such as being overlooked for promotion, as the motive behind such oppressed behavior.

As noted in previous chapters, orthodoxy in contemporary educational leadership, and particularly the strategic leadership and management of schools, centers on the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in decision making processes. It is argued that the involvement of stakeholders such as teachers, parents and community members enables a school to better reflect local priorities in its planning (Eacott, 2006a; Kaufman, 1992a;

219

Leithwood, 2001) and that this process empowers the school and its community. But what if covertly this process was actually expanding the surveillance of the school leader? Instead of previously where the school leader was under surveillance from the education department, the surveillance may now come in the form of teachers, parents, community members, in some cases students and this excludes the extensive political bodies and media outlets overseeing the schools operations. As one principal noted:

> I have to lead my school where I need to satisfy the needs of the community, the needs of the staff, the rules of the Teachers' Federation, the requirements of the DET and both the state and federal government, all at the same time.
>
> Principal 29

The enactment of this technique of power remains relatively invisible in everyday practice. Surveillance in this panoptic form is a functional mechanism that improves "the exercise of power by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective, a design of subtle coercion for a society to come" (Foucault, 1979, p. 209). This increased level of surveillance is in direct contrast to the professional autonomy and public trust that some, particularly teachers' unions, believe should be exhibited towards educationalists.

Gunter (2004) forcibly argues that the way we label serves a political purpose. The labeling of school communities, alumni, parents and even prospective students as stakeholders as opposed to school communities or citizens, establishes a social relationship. The argument here, is not that the term stakeholder is 'toxic' (Hudak, 2001), but it does seek to shape the social relationship between the school and the stakeholder. As one principal stated in the interviews:

220

I hate the word stakeholder. I think it is an overused term, but, it is probably an accurate one. Stakeholders are the people who are involved. I have not got an alternative, but I think that in parliamentary circles it can certainly be used as a gloss over term. At the end of the day, they are our clients, the people we work for, the people involved in the process. It really is political jargon.

<div align="right">Principal 7</div>

The language of collaboration, empowerment and voice for stakeholders in the governance of schooling has gained prominence based on the idea that student learning is stifled by excessive bureaucracy; conservative, turf protecting teachers' unions; and out-of-touch reformers imposing ideas on schools from above (Anderson, 1998). After all, isn't it obvious that those closest to the action (teachers, students) and those with a stake (parents, community members, students) in the school should have a strong voice in decisions? Although Anderson (1998) warns:

… it is important to understand the fundamental differences between participation as consumerism and participation as citizenship. While metaphors are useful in that they tell us how something is like and unlike something else, educators too often lose sight of the metaphorical use of certain terms. It has become fashionable for educational administrators and teachers to refer to their students and communities as their *customers* without stipulating the ways students and communities are like customers, as well as the ways students and communities are not like customers. This lack of attention to the nature of metaphor has had adverse consequences for schools, blurring important distinctions between public and private social spheres and opening them up to the worst excesses of entrepreneurial exploitation (Molnar, 1996). Furthermore, by framing participation as parents making rational choices for their own children, it is assumed that only those with a direct stake in schools (i.e. parents with children currently attending a local school) should participate. This limits schooling to being the equivalent of a consumer product rather than being a social institution charged with broader social objectives to serve a wider community of citizens (p. 584).

Further to the issue is the term 'empowerment'. Community or stakeholder participation was once contained to the notion of 'public relations' (Anderson, 1998), often

enacted through a model of one-way communication, that is, keeping the community informed through newsletters, annual reports and parents and citizens meetings. However, with the stated goal of bringing multiple voices (e.g. teachers, students, and parents) into school governance, the language of empowerment for stakeholders has penetrated the educational leadership discourse on all levels. Anderson and Grinberg (1998) argue that empowerment:

> is generally counterposed to traditional hierarchical, bureaucratic, and control-oriented approaches to management. However, once we view management teams, shared governance councils, parent-involvement models, and desks in a circle as disciplinary practices that represent the increasingly rationalized efforts to normalize and control individual and collective action, we must rethink current uses of the term *empowerment*. Empowerment becomes a disciplinary practice that embodies forms of unobtrusive or nonovert control in contemporary organizations in which control no longer appears to come from outside the organizational members' sphere of activity. According to Barker (1993), "the relative success of participatory approaches hinges not on reducing control but on achieving a system of control that is more effective than that if other systems" (p. 433).

The purpose of this discussion is not to suggest that the participation or empowerment of stakeholders in school governance is a positive or negative move. Rather, it is to argue that such initiatives have a significant impact on the strategic role of the educational leader and therefore warrant the attention of researchers and practitioners alike.

In many educational leadership and management models, participation is not used to challenge and critically reflect on existing practices and purposes, but to incorporate members into existing ones (Anderson, 1998). Barker (1993) argues that in post-bureaucratic organizations, control is increasingly exercised by shifting "the locus of control from management to the workers themselves, who collaborate to develop the means of their own control" (p. 411). In contrast to bureaucratic control, with its investment of control in hierarchical structure, this form of control, which Barker labeled 'concertive

222

control', hands over the creation and supervision of rules and norms to organizational members. Although this may be a positive development in many organizations, it also increases the intensity of control by embedding ever present surveillance and normalizing judgment, while at the same time, hiding the sources of control. Participation becomes a disciplinary practice that "embodies forms of unobtrusive or nonovert control in which control no longer appears to come from outside the organizational members' sphere of activities" (Anderson, 1998, p. 580).

The major effect of the panopticon was to "induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (Foucault, 1979, p. 201). Whereas in the panopticon items were arranged so as to give the effect of constant surveillance, in a school context, this is enacted through among many other means, the public spaces and architectural design of schools. It is an important mechanism that consciously embeds surveillance in all activities while at the same time removing surveillance from any one individual. Foucault (1979) states:

> Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up. … Consequently, it does not matter who exercises power. Any individual, taken almost at random, can operate the machine: in the absence of the director, his family, his friends, his visitors, even his servants (Bentham, 45). Similarly, it does not matter what motive animates him: the curiosity of the indiscreet, the malice of a child, the thirst for knowledge of a philosopher who wishes to visit this museum of human nature, or the perversity of those who take pleasure in spying and punishing. The more numerous those anonymous and temporary observers are, the greater risk for the inmate of being surprised and the greater his anxious awareness of being observed (p. 202).

An undeniable power relationship is established from this conscious observation based context. The need for punitive measures for non-compliance is reduced as the constant surveillance produces a mode of self-regulation on the principal. This highlights

223

one of the major contentions of this chapter, that constant surveillance, through stakeholder participation, changes the nature of school leadership? Chapter four raised concern relating to the contemporary understanding and practice of strategy in schools. In short, it was concluded that the proliferation of rational strategic management models may have reduced the understanding of strategy to be the 'rational strategic management model'. This situation is consistent with Foucault's notion of 'normalization'. Building from Foucault, Gore (1998) defines normalization as "invoking, requiring, setting, or conforming to a standard – defining the normal" (p. 237). For the purpose of this discussion, Gore's definition will be used.

To support the argument of this chapter, policy documents and communications within the DET are used. In a memorandum to school principals, regional directors, school education directors and state office directors in July 2005, Trevor Fletcher, the deputy director general of school, wrote:

> We have come to the view that school planning is best presented as both a continuous process of quality improvement and an iterative process with a three year planning horizon.
>
> The aim is to produce a three year plan updated annually. Led by the principal and with increased input from teachers, parents and students, the school community, following careful consideration of student outcomes and program performance, can set long term goals and shorter term targets. Linked to annual school reports, the publicly available school plan provides a framework for resource allocations, professional learning, system support and performance monitoring and reporting.

Note the explicit links to 'increased input from teachers, parents and students, the school community', and 'careful consideration of student outcomes and program performance'. The 'publicly available' plan only heightens the level of surveillance on the principal. Again, this is not suggesting that this is a good, bad or neutral process, but that

this may be impacting on the enactment of the strategic role. The role of student outcomes

and program performance sounds good in theory, yet the performance of student outcomes

as reported in the annual school report focuses only on the performance of students in the

statewide basic skills tests. While arguably an important set of data, it may not be reflective

of the work that is, or is not, going on in the school. As a case in point, Regional (Hunter /

Central Coast) targets cite numerous quantitative measures of school / regional success,

such as 75% of kindergarten students reading at level six (on the Reading Recovery

leveling system); 93% of all students, 80.6% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

students and 87.5% of Priority School Funding (very low SES) students in year three will

rate in band two or higher of the statewide basic skills test. One principal commented that:

> I don't know whether principals tend to get hung up on the DET information that comes down, such as 75% of my kids at kindergarten have to be reading at level six. Doesn't matter who they are as individuals or people or whatever, this is what I have to do, this is what I work towards, Basic Skills Tests I have to do this, I have to present this much, I have this in my management plan, they want me to do this. I feel that some people are getting lost in thinking that they have to satisfy DET requirements as opposed to looking at individual needs.
>
> I previously worked at a school where the results [in basic skills testing] were not what the DET expected. They [the DET] kept telling me that I had to do this and that. Every year the results just never matched the external expectations because of the cohort of children that I was working with. But the children were engaged in their learning and they were learning. Maybe not the same level as other schools, but they can still work and be happy in life, function and be engaged in learning and enjoying school life.
>
> There is just so much pressure from the top to conform and I think that people get lost in that and just want the numbers to look right, and that is a shame.
>
> Principal 34

Targets such as those set by the Region, which reflect state government priorities,

become the criteria for assessment of school achievements. As one principal noted:

> Being effective is what it is all about. Defining effective requires you to go back to your goals and targets and seeing how you are going. You need to hard data to support your case.
>
> Principal 36

The targets that are set at the state and regional level have a trickle down effect where they then constitute school targets. Therefore, the rhetoric of devolving decision making and direction setting to the school level is set within the parameters of systemic control. As one principal articulated:

> Strategic planning and direction setting is great and very important for the school and its community, but at the same time, the Department mandates what the areas of the plan should be, literacy, numeracy and student welfare.
>
> Principal 2

As a further normalizing act, in a document supporting the memorandum from Trevor Fletcher, the Office of Schools (2005) provided the following model for school planning (see Figure 5). It is described as a continuous, iterative process best understood as cyclical, developmental and adaptive, and directed at improved teaching and learning.

However, it is presented in the diagram as a linear decision making and planning model, which conforms to the principles of Deming's quality systems management (e.g. plan, do, check and report). The delivery of such a model by the system to the schools endorses the model as the preferred, giving it legitimacy and serving to establish the model as the norm. While not explicitly stating so, the fact that it is present suggests that this is what supervisors (in the form of school education directors) will be looking for. Covertly, if not explicitly, the system has invoked and set the standard from which the school plan (the written articulation of the school's strategic direction) will be evaluated. The system has

226

used its access to all schools to effectively normalize its model of the strategic planning process.
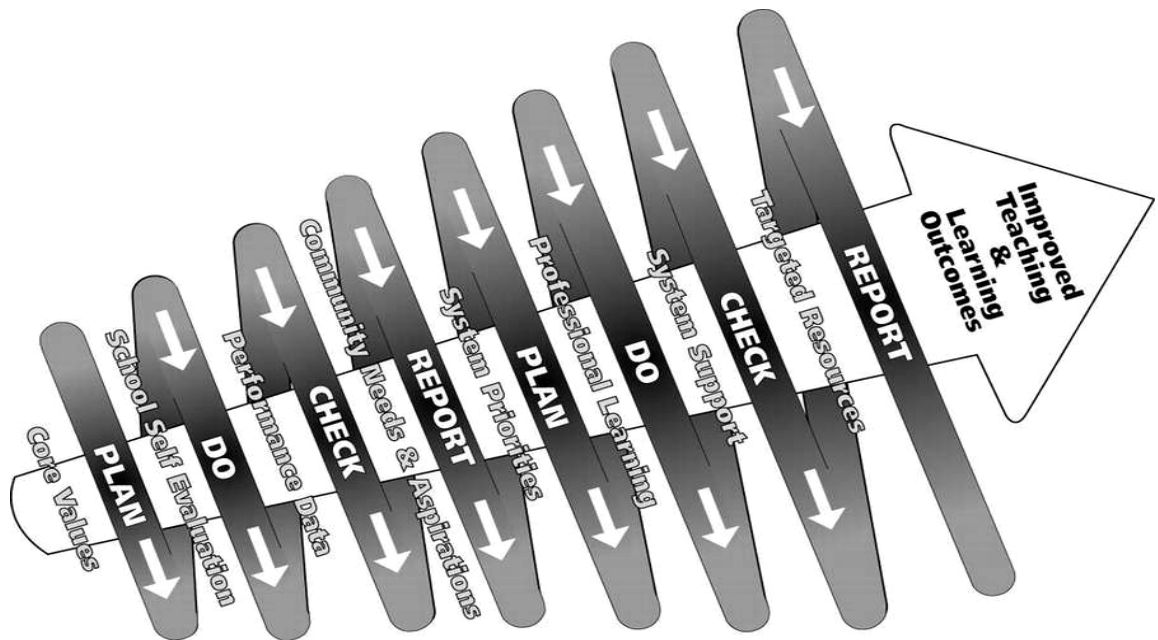
Figure 5. A planning model provided by the DET, Office of Schools (2005).

Consistent with the notion of increased surveillance, the memorandum cites the Auditor General's Office report on annual school reports and the recommendation that the DET could strengthen the role of school annual reports in promoting public accountability by requiring schools to prepare a school plan. To which the DET responded by saying:

Our Department intends to create a clear link between the school planning process and the school annual reporting process. Having publicly declared in the plan what it intends to do

in the coming years, what its priorities and initiatives are and how it intends to measure its success in achieving its targets, the school at year's end will publicly report on its achievements and emerging issues in terms of the plan and indicate the areas of emphasis and improvement for the coming years (2005, p. 4).

The DET has explicitly indicated that school plans are public declarations of school intent and the basis from which success should be measured. The availability of the information makes any person part of the regime of surveillance on the school and implicitly the performance of the principal. As accountability measures are quantifiable data such as percent of students who need to meet pre-determined levels on standardized testing (e.g. 93% of all year three students will achieve band two or higher on the basic skills tests), a persuasive rationale for principals would be to structure their school leadership and management based on adding value to school performance data. Simply put, if principal performance is being evaluated on the basis of quantifiable data and the system is delivering a rational model of decision making and goal setting, how is this shaping the strategic role of the public primary school principal? With the increasingly public nature of performance and the greater involvement of stakeholders in decision making processes is the constant surveillance of principals altering the way they go about their business?

Surveillance and Public Mistrust

The era of professionalism was built on foundations of public trust for professionals to deliver reliable services of a high quality (Ranson, 2003). However over the past quarter of a century, this trust in professionals has dissolved in the face of public concern and inquiry into the actions of educational (and other public) institutions. The public dependence on

trusting professional judgment has been replaced by "trust in mechanisms of explicit, transparent, systematic public accountability that seeks to secure regulatory compliance of professional practice" (Ranson, 2003, p. 468). Neo-liberal accountability regimes, which were arguably designed to restore public trust in professionals, have in fact further eroded the public's trust in the delivery of services. A distinctive form of this neo-liberal accountability has been the evolution of an "intensive system of evaluating and accounting for educational practice" (Ranson, 2003, p. 467).

While the accepted discourse presented by governments and the media is that schools (implicitly linking that to principals and teachers) are in need of reform and that this reform needs to be monitored by increased surveillance. Poulson (1998) argues:

> … few people would disagree that increased accountability is a good thing; or that standards in schools should be raised. … However accountability is an ambiguous term in discourses about education; within it are condensed a range of meanings and emotions (p. 420).

It is not the contention of this chapter to challenge the inherent 'good' of accountability regimes, although it is a concern that current models of accountability (measuring schools success based on standardized testing results) have simply been accepted as part of the education system and critics of such regimes are viewed as being anti-progress. Avis (2005, p. 211) contends that the existence of a "regime of truth that refutes other conceptualizations of good practice, which therefore become silenced and are denied legitimacy" cannot be good for a system or institution. What is of concern or proposal in this chapter is the impact and affect that such constant surveillance, through both increased stakeholder involvement and expansion of accountability regimes, has had on the strategic role of the public primary school principal, or any educational leader for

229

that matter. One such impact has been on the production of individuality in principals based on school based success on performance measures.

The Production of Individuality

It is rare for those who work in the field of educational leadership to consider the notion as to whether leaders matter. Confronting such a question challenges the very basis of our work, not to mention the ethical dilemma of taking our students time and money under the guise of becoming 'more effective educational leaders'. Alternatively, it may be possible that we have all pondered this question and reached the reassuring conclusion that the answer is 'yes'. After all, we are frequently surrounded with the news of leadership excellence and incompetence which implies that many consider the affirmative response.

However, when considering the strategic role of school principals and their effect on organizational behavior and performance (namely, student outcomes, both academic and social), not all who have looked at the issue agree. In fact, there is a stream of thought, supported by some evidence, that school leadership in general has little, or only an indirect effect on organizational behavior or performance. Before moving with this discussion, there is a need to confront the fundamental issue of whether leaders matter.

Since the seminal work of Lieberson and O'Conner (1972), a prevailing assumption in the broader leadership and management literature has been that the nominal leaders of organizations have unreliable effects on their organizations' performance (Meyer, 1975; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977; Thomas, 1986). Effective schools research gave rise to several theories about factors within a school that have a positive impact on organizational performance. This research locates the principal at the cornerstone of leadership activity,

holding the principal responsible for functions related to organizational behavior and performance. Frequently, leadership behaviors and traits are correlated with student achievement (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Bossert *et al*., 1982; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), but questions remain as to whether the association reflects a cause and effect or coincidental relationship (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Pitner, 1988). More recent research has documented the powerful influence that leadership has on school based programs (Kaur, Ferrucci, & Carter, 2004). While the exact level of influence that school principals have on organizational behavior and performance is a source of conflict in the literature, the underlying assumption of this section is that through the disciplinary practices of surveillance and normalized judgment, the strategic role of school principals serves to create and promote individuality. Rather than arguing whether the impact of the school leader is direct or in-direct, this discussion is focused on the creation of the school leader as an individual, with value within the larger system, based on the measurement of their school on performance measures.

Although individualism has been a characteristic of Western culture since the time of the ancient Greeks (Meadmore, 1993), it is only in recent times, the last two centuries, that it has assumed its place of dominance (Jones, 1990). While suggesting that perhaps no other aspect of Western social thought and culture has been as widely acknowledged and deeply felt as that of individualism, Cagan (1978) adds that "individualism , shaped by capitalism, … generates competitive egotistic and atomized social relations" (p. 228). During the interviews for the study presented in chapter five, a principal made the following comment when asked about the nature of learning activities undertaken in relation to the strategic role:

> … I suppose it comes back to the individual principal, 'what their agenda is' and 'what their ambitions are'. For example, James, the previous principal, he is young, very ambitious, did a great job but he is a rolling stone. He is moving onto higher things I suppose, and he has done that as he got promoted. He would have done the sort of things like go to weekend conferences, network and so forth. I'm not in the same position as him, and my approach to it is a bit different. I would rather spend time working towards the benefit of this school, rather than the benefit of myself.
>
> <div align="right">Principal 35</div>

This comment raised the suggestion that the role of the school leader can be aimed at achieving both personal and / or organizational gain. The notion of individualism is observed in the literature on the strategic role. Shrivastava (1985) makes the argument that strategic management research gives unproblematic importance and supremacy to top managers. The scholarship on the educational leaders' strategic role (presented in chapter two) demonstrates a clear bias towards descriptive models. Much of the work is based on linear rational logic and conceived out of case studies or small scale studies which constitute part of the ever expanding 'what works' movement (Gorard, 2005). Many articles portray how an inspirational leader came into a declining or low achieving school and then through their actions, they were able to turn the school around. These narratives are designed to serve as guides for current and aspiring leaders on the techniques of strategic leadership and management. However, whether the models presented are considered participatory or dictatorial, they further legitimize the role of the individual, usually the school leader, in the process. In many ways a return to the 'great man' theories of early leadership and management thought. As principals noted during the interviews:

> I have been in education, as a teacher and principal for 30 plus years and there has been a culture of teachers and principals not sharing resources and ideas, primarily because you had to prove that you were somehow different to another person. If you want the next promotion, you need to demonstrate that you have done something that is different to everybody else.
>
> <div align="right">Principal 31</div>

<div align="center">232</div>

Overall, there has to be one person who pulls it altogether and I think in most schools that needs to be the principal.

Principal 32

With its military orientations and overtones of hierarchy and competition (Bell, 1998), the very nature of the term strategy seeks to establish some form of competitive advantage over others. Linking this notion of competitive advantage, a central feature of economic and market theory, highlights the need for individuals to attempt to maximize their own advantage. Bell (2002) argued that:

Strategic planning is now embodied in current educational policy that departments, faculties, curriculum areas and even individuals in schools will be expected to derive their own plans from the overall strategic plan (p. 407).

The notion of individuals having strategic plans, the individualized career plan is a much advocated feature of contemporary human resource management, and the central feature of competitive advantage, further establishes the role of surveillance and accountability on staff. The very act of producing an individual career plan, whether it is shared with anyone else or not, serves to regulate the behavior of the individual. If shared with supervisors, the written plan becomes the basis for evaluation and reflection on performance. If kept to the individual, the plan serves the same purpose, however, whereas the supervisor is an external examining body, the individual internalizes the evaluation of performance, just as in the panopticon.

Surveillance and normalizing judgment work to produce and regulate difference between schools and implicitly, school leaders. While some would argue that these practices are productive as they enable education systems to "govern individual difference

233

in order to maximize both individual and social efficiency" (Rose, 1988), in doing so, systemic governance models seeking to 'cater for individual differences' become an individuation practice (Meadmore, 1993). An analysis of the strategic role of the school leader has revealed a regime of disciplinary practices which produce and specify individuals as objects of knowledge and power. Such practices of individuality continue to be used on school leaders and should be the object of critique, questioning and challenge as opposed to being either accepted without question or avoided.

Back to the Beginning

Uncovering the underlying assumptions of the strategic role through the disciplinary practices of surveillance and normalized judgment has revealed that despite the rhetoric of empowerment and discretion over school direction, the core feature of strategy remains that of competition. The surveillance and accountability regimes have created 'individuality' in school leaders, an individuality which seeks to dominate or gain advantage over adversaries (although principals working in the same public school system would hardly be considered hostile). The features of this role are not too dissimilar from the discussion of Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, or Foucault's definitions of strategy. A principal noted that:

> When I think of strategy I cannot help but think of old Second World War movies. You have a group of men sitting down around a table and they are moving ships and things and then, more intelligence comes in and suddenly whole bits are wiped out and plan changed. For me, being strategic is constantly about gaining intelligence and shifting and moving everything and knowing full well that at any given time, something could come up and the whole board could be wiped off and you need to start again.
>
> Principal 28

The findings of the both chapters four and five and the discussion of this chapter can be linked back to the three uses of the word strategy outlined by Foucault (1983). The rational functioning mode of strategy was evident in the literature base reported on in chapter two. It has arguably shaped the orientation of the term strategy within the field. The normalization of this approach and the legitimacy given to rational planning through system delivered models was an underlying feature of the findings of chapter four.

Foucault's (1983) second employment of the term strategy was not as evident in the studies conducted for this thesis as the other two. While many principals spoke of the need to balance or reflect contextual needs, the notion of an interplay or proactive stance was missing. What was most evident, was a dependence model, where school directions were the result of contextual factors, both systemic and stakeholder, pressures and input. The shaping of 'market' trends and initiatives, central features of entrepreneurial work, and arguably Foucault's second definition, remains elusive, if not absent in the discussion of the strategic role of the school leader. While entrepreneurial activity may be required in systems where school leaders need to acquire additional funds through sponsorship (Karstanje, 1999) or diversified sources of funding (Wong Lai-ngok, 2004), the strategic role of school leaders in at least the New South Wales public school context and arguably Australia wide remains rooted in a dependence model.

The third employment of the term strategy by Foucault with its reference to 'confrontation', 'combat' and 'victory', has clear links with notions of war. While it is difficult to make the argument that public schools are at war with each other, as each schools serves a particular catchment area and policy limit the number of 'out-of-zone' students that a school can enroll, the argument of this chapter is that it is the actual principals who are in combat.

235

Through the acts of surveillance and normalized judgment, principals become more accountable to a wider range of people. In fact, the authority and responsibilities of the principal within the NSW school system is derived from the *Teaching Service Regulation, 2007* under the *Teaching Services Act, 1980*, particularly section 9 *Management of Schools* and section 6 *Scope of Duties*. In this legislation, the principal is identified as the individual who is responsible for the proper, efficient, economic and equitable management of the school. As a result of the system, through the regional office, setting the expected targets of schools, and implicitly principals, the achievement of those targets become associated with the principal. As under their scope of duties, the principal must participate actively in all of the corporate interests of the Department and must undertake duties assigned to them by any other person (e.g. directors or ministers) having the authority to assign duties.

The competitive merit selection process for promotion (Vinson, 2002), leads to the egotistic and atomized social relations referred to by Cagan (1978). Principals become less likely to share resources and ideas as they compete with one another for the next promotion. The 'victory' becomes the perception of being an effective principal, as judged by a school achieving better results than surrounding and like schools. The combat is the competition between schools to achieve better results than each other. While it could be argued that improving results across schools is the goal of the system, the collective good is lost in the combat between schools to out do each other. The procedures used to deprive the opponent of combat means include, which out-of-zone students a school will enroll, the recruitment of teachers (although this is frequently a cause for debate in a statewide public school system with a centralized staffing process, although this is currently being restructuring, resulting in industrial action), and the level of public acknowledgement and attention drawn to results by principals. Over time, the enactment of these strategies, and

others like them, a principal can reduce the efforts of others to concede and give up the struggle.

The Empirical Implications

Foucault (1979, p. 207) wrote of the panopticon:

> It arranges things in such a way that the exercise of power is not added on from the outside, like a rigid, heavy constraint, to the functions it invests, but is so subtly present in them as to increase their efficiency by itself increasingly its own points of contact. The panoptic mechanism is not simply a hinge, a point of exchange between a mechanism of power and a function; it is a way of making power relations function in a function, and of making a function though these power relations.

The proposition of this chapter that the ever present surveillance, in the form of increased stakeholder involvement in decision making and accountability regimes, of public school principals has an impact on the manner to which they go about their duties has both theoretical and methodological implications.

Theoretically, and the findings from the interviews reported in chapter five also suggest empirical verification of this, the positioning of the principal is changed. Whereas conventional studies of school leadership and management have placed the principal at the apex of inquiry and their actions, or lack thereof, are studied for their effect on school performance, staff, or some other related unit of interest. Viewing the principal within the context of panoptic accountability, places the principal within a web of intertwined connections. It can no longer be represented in a two-dimensional linear causal map. The

underlying assumption of principal behavior is that they are social actors performing social actions within a social environment. The focus of attention shifts from the behaviors (although they remain important), to the social interactions between actors in any given situation. This social definition of the principal's role and associated duties can not be drawn simply from reading a policy document on what is expected of the principal, rather it needs to be inductively development through sustained inquiry.

In contrast to studies aimed at investigating the enactment of certain leadership and management behaviors, the study of the principal as a social actor requires intensive fieldwork. This is not however proposing that scholarship of the strategic role needs to align with any one particular 'paradigm' such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. Such alignment would be to the detriment of knowledge creation and scholarship. Studies drawing from a diverse range of methods and designs are desirable, if not necessary for the advancement of knowledge in any topic of inquiry. Whether studies are conducted that deal with data in the form of text, numbers or ideas, the findings and results should focus on advancing the knowledge base. The data required for such inquiry can not be obtained exclusively through mail out questionnaires, the result being that samples would be much smaller. Although it was stated in chapter two that small sample size and case studies were a limitation on the knowledge base. The difference in this proposal and the current literature base is that the sample size of intensive fieldwork is by its very nature, smaller than large scale mail outs. The selection of sites therefore becomes increasingly more important. The use of multi-site case studies where each site either brings something new to the discussion, such as in the case of Gore (1998), or each site has a certain level of commonality to allow for comparison. This style of case study is far removed from the single site narrative of a change or planning process that is currently present in the

literature. Temporal relations are also of increased importance in this proposal. The effect of surveillance on the principals' strategic role is not something that can be ascertained in a single visit. Such inquiry would take a sustained focus with numerous visits, observation of meetings, document analysis and interaction (usually through interviews or focus groups) with participants. As such, studies of this nature would most likely be longitudinal.

Empirical investigation through this lens requires an epistemological shift in the study of the strategic role of the public primary school principal. Whereas most frequently the principal is viewed as the person doing to others, this proposal inverts this idea. The principal becomes the center of a web of social relations that affect the principal's social behavior and in turn shape the behavior of others. The public primary school principal is reconfigured as the conscript of the state (through the implementation of politically motivated performance measures and the normalization of rational models) and school communities (involving members in the decision making process and being answerable for those decisions and subsequent actions).

While there maybe a continuum of possible outcomes from such inquiry, it is the two ends of that continuum that will be discussed. The first is that the principal is not at all consumed by the constant surveillance and goes about their duties oblivious to, or purposely ignoring, the surveillance. In such a case, the link between accountability for actions and everyday activities becomes contrived. The performance data that is produced is produced solely for the purpose of meeting accountability measures and not for guiding practice. Considering the possibly raised in chapter two that long serving principal establish the ways of operation at their schools, it is within the realms of possibility that principals who are not affected by the constant surveillance have normalized their mode of operation

within the school and therefore the surveillance is negated. Unless the principal does something that is completely out of the ordinary, their actions are not called into question.

A second alternative is that the everyday policies and practices of the principal are all consumed with the performance of the school in relation to the accountability measures and the perceived survival of the school as an organization. Within such a situation, all decisions would be made based on how they will affect the student results in publicly available test results. Overtime, the leadership and management of the school would become a vehicle for the publicly available data with all actions consumed with improving or adding value to results. Theoretically, the least likely to benefit from this situation are all other aspects of the school and the people involved in it. Meetings and supervision become entirely based on the perceptions of others and meeting the expectation of those doing the surveillance.

Conclusion

By putting power back into the equation, the political dynamics of management are made visible and awareness can be raised concerning how power is used (Handy, 1996). The apparent aversion to discussing power has restricted our understanding of strategic leadership and management in schools and impeded our knowledge of effective strategic change and educational reform efforts. The study of key actors in the process of strategically shaping the school is a fundamental component of understanding educational leadership and management. We cannot begin to understand the actions and inactions of schools without a firm understanding of the key actors who make decisions and the contexts in which they make those decisions. Although the strategic role can be likened to

240

the nerve center of the school as an organic organization, to explain the logic of the phenomenon, awareness of and appreciation for its importance requires heightened attention. In an attempt to address such a challenge, this chapter has used Foucault's discussion of Bentham's panopticon to integrate the roles of power and surveillance to offer a new research agenda for the future.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Positioning and Framing

This thesis is dedicated to an analysis and synthesis of research on the strategic role of school leaders, with the ultimate goal of suggesting a new definition and research agenda for the field. Each chapter of the thesis has taken up this challenge through different means, resulting in an overview of the construct of strategy within the field of educational leadership. It is hoped that each of these chapters encourages students, practitioners and scholars to continue to investigate this important topic and to undertake the challenge set forth to advance our understanding of the strategic role of educational leaders and potentially their effects on their institutions.

Despite maintaining a primarily scholarly focus – as such a focus is exceedingly important for the advancement of any field of inquiry – it is also recognized that many of the ideas discussed have profound practical significance to educational institutions and those who lead and manage them. Discourse on strategy in education, models of strategic leadership and management and defining the strategic role of educational leaders have great consequences for institutions and their leaders. An understanding of how these features of strategic leadership and management arise, interact and affect personal and institutional performance is greatly aided by an in-depth comprehension of the phenomena as discussed in each chapter of the thesis. In this final chapter, each of the previous chapters is briefly summarized. Rather than repeating what has already been written, a greater contribution of this final chapter is to illustrate the integration of the key ideas of each chapter into a single, but brief, narrative.

Positioning

This thesis was written to serve two purposes: to take stock, assess, and integrate the body of literature on strategic leadership and management in education; and to go beyond what is already known and set forth new frameworks, perspectives, testable propositions and methodological recommendations for the study of strategic leadership and management in education.

What became clear in undertaking this project was that the fluctuating interest in the topic had not yielded a particularly orderly, cumulative or concise set of findings. In fact, the literature on the strategic role was immensely diverse in methods and perspectives, yet somewhat narrow in focus. This thesis has been written to help the reader navigate and make sense of this profuse domain and critical reflect on the scholarship and practice of the strategic role in educational institutions.

Chapter one set the scene for the discussion. In addition to providing the reader with the necessary organizational features of the thesis, this chapter briefly outlined the evolution of 'strategy' within the educational leadership context. More importantly though, it implicitly discussed the ongoing tension of the educational leader, that is, balancing the purpose of education and the measurement of education.

What we know of strategy and its application in educational leadership is guided by the theory and methods used by scholars in the field. Chapters two and three presented a comprehensive analysis of contemporary research on strategic leadership and management in 18 prominent journals in the field. The identified works were subjected to analysis through a variety of conceptual (chapter two) and methodological (chapter three) features. These chapters had two goals: first to gain an appreciation for what has been done in the

field, and secondly to provide a knowledge base to inform conceptual development for further inquiry.

Through the analysis of literature, five dimensions of the strategic role (envisioning, engaging, articulating, implementing and monitoring) were derived. Chapter four reported the findings of a questionnaire based study to investigate 'to what extent do principals exhibit strategic leadership and management' as described in the literature of the field. In recognition of the literature base suggesting that demographic variables, such as gender, age, tenure, can create a variance in performance, a second step in the study was to investigate the level of variance based on demographic proxies. The findings of the study report that principals in the sample had high mean scores on all dimensions of the strategic role. Demographic conditions were possibly responsible for some variance in performance, but this was not conclusive, and the overall means were high. These findings raised concerns that the strategic role may lack an explicit, or implicit for that matter, definition. The interpretation of the strategic role by participants may be limited to a linear decision making process, as was much of the literature. To address this concern, a semi-structured interview schedule was used to ask principals how they define and enact their strategic role.

Through the analysis of the transcribe interviews, four key dimensions of the strategic role emerged; purpose, context, direction and leadership. While there exist certain elements of overlap between the model developed out of chapter two and tested in chapter four, the new model positions the strategic role is a social space and the wider context of school leadership. While not a radical alternative to conventional discourse in the field at large, it did propose some implications for the study of the strategic role.

In seeking to go beyond what is already known on the topic in the field, the ideas proposed in chapter six are meant to stimulate debate and further inquiry. They are intended

to provide a new platform for theory and methodological developments. The positioning of the strategic role within a wider social space, a concept drawn out from the discussion in chapter five, poses key methodological questions for scholars and critical key points of reflection for practitioners. For scholars, it is no longer appropriate to study the strategic role only at a distance, e.g. questionnaires and document analysis. It also requires approaches more commonly aligned with sociology and anthropology than has traditionally been the case in educational leadership. In doing so, it draws in closely aligned fields of education policy and sociology of education, reflecting the pluralistic and to a lesser extent inter-disciplinary nature of the strategic role. The introduction of power relations, and not just bureaucratic authority or chains of command, requires a depth of investigation that goes beyond the mere literal meaning of words in a strategic plan or policy document, and asks questions relating to the how it was written and why items are included and excluded.

This proposition is clearly designed to be provocative, although, it is also meant to be an optimistic perspective and not just a radical rejection of conventional scholarship. It challenges the uncritical acceptance of hierarchy and formal authority as the sole sources of power and influence in educational, institutions, and in doing so, bypasses approaches to educational leadership scholarship which proliferate most educational leadership journals and books. Although this approach may be unsettling for some in the field, it is becoming hard to ignore such a stance. As Corson (1995) forcibly argued:

> there is a new openness in theory and practice in the human sciences. Disciplinary boundaries are crumbling, as disciplinary discourses that were once distinct begin to integrate with one another. It is likely that the study of educational administration cannot remain a remote outpost in the human sciences – a walled institution located on a backroad – and still survive as an area of study (p. xii).

Framing

The strategic role is a fundamental dimension of school leadership. We cannot understand the actions and behaviors of schools as organizations without an understanding of the leaders within those schools. A recurrent theme in this thesis has been that our current understanding of the strategic role is limited. Conventional one-dimensional models of strategic leadership and management, which portray the strategic process as a linear series of decisions, fail to acknowledge the social space in which leadership of any kind occurs.

Research on the strategic role of educational leaders might beneficially proceed along several lines. Following on from the discussion of the strategic role undertaken in this thesis, three testable propositions have been developed. While they have been developed from engagement with the prior literature in the field and the numerous studies and reviews reported on in the thesis, to some extent they are speculative, because at this stage of the thesis the goal is to encourage more theory building on the topic. The propositions presented should not be taken as the only propositions that could be drawn from the thesis or reasoning. Rather, they are illustrative and appear to be some of the most supportable and open to research. The propositions are presented as part of the thesis' aim to stimulate empirical inquiry on the strategic role of school leaders.

Almost all models of strategic leadership and management contain some reference to involving those other than the organizational leader in the formulation of policy and decision making. Many (Gamage, 1998; Pashiardis, 1994; San Antonio & Gamage, 2007; Timperley & Robinson, 2000) have argued that the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the decision making process improves the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. However what is not clearly defined or studied for that

matter is the definition of 'participation' in these participatory models and how this influences the behavior of the leader. A recent special issue of the *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(2), edited by Harris was devoted to the concept of 'distributed leadership', which Harris (2008) describes as a concept that is "quickly filling the vacuum left by countless leadership texts reiterating the same tired orthodoxies about school leadership" (p. 139). However we choose to view the expansion of leadership from a singular organization head, whether that is distributed, participatory, democratic, shared, collaborative, or any other chosen adjective, the role of actors within that model of leadership is most important. In chapter five I raised the issue that participation of stakeholders could to some principals be as tokenistic as presenting policy and planning to stakeholders before implementation. In which case, the participation is merely limited to a pre-implementation viewing as opposed to critical engagement with the materials and shaping the final product.

In chapter four, the 'engaging' scale of the SLQ had the highest mean of any scale, and four of the eight items from that scale had means ranked in the top seven items overall. However, within that data there existed a trend of interest. In the analysis between the principal and other who rated the principal, the raters scored item 25 'Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction' higher than the principals. Although the principals rated themselves higher on item 27 'The contribution of others can make a difference to decisions made'. The self-reporting principals who did not have any other raters, rated themselves even higher on item 27. The difference in each of these cases was statistically significant at $p=<.05$ with effect sizes ranging from $d=.51$ ($\omega^2=.03$) to $d=.59$ ($\omega^2=.07$).

In summary, on the basis of the data presented in chapter four, the discussion in chapter five and the continuing discussion in the field on what constitutes the expanded role of school leadership, it is posited that, the principal's perception of 'participation' will influence their engagement with others in the formulating of policy and planning. More specifically:

Proposition 1a

Principals who perceive 'participation' as a means of addressing stakeholder needs will adopt a 'dependence' logic in their strategic role.

Proposition 1b

Principals who perceive 'participation' as an element of accountability will adopt an 'independent' logic in their strategic role.

Proposition 1c

Principals who perceive 'participation' as an active element of their leadership will adopt an 'inter-dependent' logic in their strategic role.

In each of the three propositions above, the relationship between the perception of 'participation' by the principal and the strategic role enacted by the principal varies immensely. In the first instance, the strategic role of the principal is limited to addressing the needs of the stakeholders, most frequently, the school community, but to a lesser extent the system (in the case of public schools). This dependence model is the most frequently found causal model in the literature of the field (see chapter two). The over reliance and

unbalanced collection of data from stakeholders as the sole source of information informing strategic initiatives is a flaw in this model. By raw numbers, the under-analyzed data collected in annual surveys completed by schools favors the input of stakeholders outside the immediate working of the school (e.g. parents) over those working within the school (teachers). While some (particularly advocates of school-based management) may argue that this is a desirable occurrence, the proliferation of stakeholders management in schools may serve to merely reproduce current social hierarchies and status within and between communities. As such, research into community managed schools or even models of participative leadership may be better served by social theory (e.g. Bourdieu) than conventional leadership theory.

The second proposition suggests that as a result of current regimes making the school, and implicitly the principal, accountable to stakeholders beyond the system, the participation of others in the strategic process serves little more than a symbolic function. The sharing of information with the school community and other stakeholders symbolizes and stands for the consensus of the school, and indeed these actions can "also work as a means of manufacturing consensus – the focusing of activities around an 'agreed' set of priorities" (Ball, 2003, p. 236). The strategic role of the principal remains independent of the thoughts and input of the stakeholders. The sharing with stakeholders is little more than a superficial endorsement of the principals' decisions.

The final proposition proposes what advocates of distributed or participative leadership models argue for, a democratic mode of leadership where stakeholders and organizational heads work together to formulate the future. However with such a model there is a need to see the process as a social activity with embedded power relations. As with the two previous propositions, to understand the strategic role of the principal requires

249

a broader theoretical framework than has traditionally been used in the literature of the field.

Building on from the role of participation in influencing the leadership and management behaviors of school leaders, is the ever expanding literature on school accountability. As noted earlier, substantial reference is made in the literature on the strategic role of the leaders need to listen to and meet the needs of their clients or stakeholders. In both chapters two, five and to a lesser extent above, the underlying causation model of the strategic role was exposed to be one of dependence, where external forces shape the direction of the school. In many cases these forces were initiatives by governments or education departments. Other times they emerged from school communities. Most notably in the case of government initiated forces, is the apparent distance between policy formulation and actual practice in schools. This is a point discussed by Ball (2001), Callahan (1962) and Lingard, Rawolle and Taylor (2005).

Pivotal to meeting the needs of stakeholders, and particularly governments, is meeting performance targets. Chapter six included examples of externally set targets taken from the Hunter / Central Coast Regional Plan. In each case, they were statistically measures of student achievement (e.g. 75% of kindergarten students reading at level six). If the strategic role, or educational leadership in general, is about achieving performance targets, and school leaders want to extract increases in performance as measured against such targets, "they would be less likely to 'invest' in initiatives aimed at children with special needs where the margins for improved performance are limited" (Ball, 2003, p. 223). In a context of heightened accountability, schools, as with other organizations, are most likely to only spend money on initiatives and actions that will lead to measurable returns. Gray *et al*., (1999) concluded that a focus on this type of accountability and

measurement encourages managers to search for tactical moves that will result in short term improvements. The consequences of which have a direct effect on the distribution of effort and investment. The long term social ramifications of such a context and basis for leadership decision making are substantial. In summary, it is proposed that, the principal's perception of what they are 'accountable' for will influence their decisions on what initiatives and actions to resource, more specifically:

Proposition 2

School resources and reform initiatives will be positively related to the school's pursuit of accountability targets.

Simply put, if a school based initiative is not going to directly provide a positive impact on what the school is accountable for (e.g. improvements in basic skills test results), it is less likely to get resources, whether they be financial, human, or infrastructure. In essence, the measures of accountability shape the actions of the school and implicitly the school leader. This proposition builds directly on the argument put forward in chapter six and the use of Foucault in the discussion of the strategic role.

If schools are measured, and potentially compared, based on statistics, it can be concluded that schools will behave differently based on their current levels of performance. In schools where the performance level is considered below average, the expectations on the school will be focused on doing "whatever it seems necessary" (Ball, 2003, p. 225) to raise the standard of achievement. In many cases, the need to improve performance, as measured by externally set, system or regional wide targets, becomes the sole rationale for decision making. The rhetoric of context specific leadership and the adjustment of

programs to match the individual needs of the children are lost in the need meet performance targets.

In contrast, for school who are performing well or above systemic targets, their apparent strong market position may lead to forms of complacency or reinforcement and / or retaining commitment to current practices (Ball, 2003). The current management and instructional practices of the school are successively reinforced with each passing year and soon become part of the organizational culture. This poses few operational issues unless either the performance measures or the level of performance changes. At which point, the input of fresh and generally appropriate ideas may be in conflict with current conditions.

Schools whose performance sits around the average have the dual pressure of at least maintaining current performance, to prevent falling below average or desired targets, yet simultaneously seeking to improve what they do, to reach new heights. For many school leaders, the desire for continuous quality improvement is what led to the adoption of systems management and the Total Quality Management movement of the late 1980s and 1990s (see Ball, 1997, for a discussion of a school adopting TQM).

Recognizing and building on from the influence of participation and accountability, it is posited that, the strategic decisions and actions of a school, and implicitly a principal, will be influenced by the school's 'market' or 'performance' position. More specifically:

Proposition 3a
Schools in strong 'market / performance' positions are less likely to pursuit innovative initiatives.

Proposition 3b

Schools in weak or average 'market / performance' positions are more likely to use accountability measures as the rationale for decisions and actions.

Proposition 3a is consistent with the prospect theory, at the heart of which is the idea that people place a higher value on avoiding loss than on realizing gain (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Ball (2003) makes a similar argument about the nature of strong market position and school action / inaction stating that:

> For others, in a strong 'market' or performance position the impact of performativity may be different; either forms of complacency or reinforcement and/or the possibility of retaining commitment to non-performative values and practices. Elite institutions are the best places to evade the judgements of the 'technicians of transformation' (p. 225).

In contrast, schools in weak or less than strong market / performance positions will do whatever is necessary to excel or in some cases survive. Linking back to the previous propositions on accountability, the policy technologies have the "capacity to reshape in their own image the organizations they monitor" (Shore & Wright, 1999, p. 570). The requirements of accountability regimes and market position for schools frequently introduce unhelpful or damaging practices, at both the school leader and teacher level, and serve little more than performance measures (see Shore & Wright, 1999, for a discussion of this in the higher education sector).

As previously stated, the propositions presented are not the only ones that can be derived from this thesis, rather they are designed to stimulate further empirical inquiry into the strategic role of educational leaders.

Conclusion

The discussions in this thesis, particularly that in the latter chapters has sought to expand the horizons of scholarship and understanding on the topic. Although this should not be interpreted as a prescriptive call for how further inquiry should be undertaken. Foucault (1980, p. 265) wrote:

> The role of an intellectual is not to tell others what they have to … The work of an intellectual is not to shape others' political will; it is, through the analyses that he carries out in his field, to question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, to disturb people's mental habits, the way they do and think things, to dissipate what is familiar and accepted, to reexamine rules and institutions and on the basis of this reproblematization (in which he carries out this specific task as an intellectual) to participate in the formation of a political will (in which he has his role as citizen to play).

The reviews, studies, analysis and proposed research agendas of this thesis indicate that the strategic role has considerable theoretical and practical importance to schools, the governance of educational institutions, the behavior of those within schools and for the consequences of this behavior on school performance. While this thesis has offered a blueprint for further study of the strategic role of the public school principal, it remains for the reader to accept the challenge. Doing so will enable important new insights into and understanding of the strategic role of the school principal (not to mention educational leadership and management in general), the actions they take and the performance that they deliver.

REFERENCES

Adams, J. P. (1987). *Superintendents and effective schools.* Unpublished PhD, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA.

AIM. (2003). *Management development practice in Australia* (Vol. 1). Melbourne: AIM.

Alder, M. (1997). Looking backwards to the future: parental choice and education policy. *British Educational Research Journal, 23*(3), 297-313.

Allison, D. J. (2001). Riding the E and L roller-coaster: how I came to fear naturalistic coherentism. *Journal of Educational Administration, 39*(6), 539-553.

Anderson, G. L. (1998). Toward authentic participation: deconstructing the discourses of participatory reforms in education. *American Educational Research Journal, 35*(4), 571-603.

Anderson, G. L., & Grinberg, J. (1998). Educational administration as a disciplinary practice: Appropriating Foucault's view of power, discourse, and method. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 34*(3), 329-353.

Anderson, L., & Bourke, S. F. (2000). *Assessing effective characteristics in the school.* New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Andrews, K. R. (1971). *The concept of corporate strategy.* Homewood, IL.: Richard D. Irwin.

Andrews, R., & Soder, R. (1987). Principal instructional leadership and school achievement. *Educational Leadership, 44*, 9-11.

Ansoff, H. I. (1965). *Corporate strategy: an analytical approach to business policy for growth and expansion.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Aristotle. (1932). *The rhetoric of Aristotle* (L. Cooper, Trans.). New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Association, A. P. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC.: American Psychological Association.

Avis, J. (2005). Beyond performativity: reflections on activist professionalism and the labour process in further education. *Journal of Education Policy, 20*(2), 209-222.

Bacharach, S. B. (1989). Organizational theories: some criteria for evaluation. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 496-515.

Bacharach, S. B., & Lawler, E. J. (1980). *Power and politics in organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bain, A. (2000). The school design model: strategy for design of 21st century schools. In C. Dimmock & A. Walker (Eds.), *Future school administration: Western & Asian perspectives* (pp. 131-166). Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Ball, S. (1993). Education markets, choice and social class: the market as a class strategy in the UK and USA. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 14*(1), 3-19.

Ball, S. (1994). *Education reform: a critical and post-structuralist approach.* London: Routledge.

Ball, S. (2000). Performativities and fabrications in the education economy: towards the performative society. *Australian Educational Researcher, 27*(2), 1-23.

Ball, S. (2001). Performatives and fabrications in 'post-modern schooling'. In J. Carter (Ed.), *Post-modernity and fragmentation of welfare: a contemporary social policy.* London: Routledge.

Ball, S. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*(2), 215-228.

Ball, S. (2007). Leadership of academics in research. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*(4), 449-477.

Bantel, K. A., & Jackson, S. (1989). Top management and innovations in banking: does the composition of the top team make a difference? *Strategic Management Journal, 10*(S1), 107-124.

Barker, J. (1993). Tightening the iron cage: concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 38*(3), 408-437.

Barnard, C. (1968). *Functions of the executive*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Barth, R. S. (1991). *Improving schools from within*. San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass.

Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass and Stogdill's handbook of leadership: theory, research and managerial applications* (3 ed.). New York: Free Press.

Bates, R., & Eacott, S. (2008). Teaching educational leadership and administration in Australia. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 40*(2), 149-160.

Beaver, G. (2000). The language of strategy. *Strategic Change, 9*, 465-468.

Bell, L. (1998). From symphony to jazz: the concept of strategy in education. *School Leadership and Management, 18*(4), 449-460.

Bell, L. (2002). Strategic planning and school management: full of sound and fury, signifying nothing? *Journal of Educational Administration, 40*(5), 407-424.

Bell, L. (2004). Strategic planning in primary schools: a tale of no significance? *Management in Education, 18*(4), 83-36.

Bell, L., & Chan, D. W. K. (2005). Principals' leadership and strategic planning in primary schools in Hong Kong and England: a comparison. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 33*(3), 2-21.

Bell, R. (2003). Toward a metastrategic approach to the business of schools. *Leading & Managing, 9*(1), 64-71.

Bennett, N., Crawford, M., Levačić, R., Glover, D., & Earley, P. (2000). The reality of school development planning in the effective primary school: technicist or guiding plan? *School Leadership and Management, 20*(3), 333-351.

Bergh, D. D., Hanke, R., Balkundi, P., Brown, M., & Chen, X. (2004). An assessment of research designs in strategic management research: the frequency of threats to internal validity. In D. J. Ketchen & D. D. Bergh (Eds.), *Research methodology in strategy and management* (Vol. 1, pp. 347-363). Oxford: Elsevier.

Biklen, S. K., & Brannigan, M. B. (Eds.). (1980). *Women and educational leadership*. Lexington: Lexington Books.

Bishop, P., & Limerick, B. (2006). To adopt, adapt or ignore? Challenging corporate type performance measures in state schools. *Leading & Managing, 12*(1), 76-90.

Blacklock, H. (1970). *An introduction to social research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Blackmore, J. (1999). *Troubling women: feminism, leadership and educational change*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Blackmore, J. (2005). The politics of gender and educational change: managing change or changing gender relations? In A. Liberman, A. Hargreaves, M. Fullan & D. Hopkins (Eds.), *Extending educational change: international handbook of educational change* (pp. 180-201). Dorchester: Springer.

Blackmore, J., & Kenway, J. (Eds.). (1993). *Gender matters in educational administration and policy: a feminist introduction*. London: Falmer Press.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2000). Effective instructional leadership: teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 130-141.

Boal, K. B., & Hooijberg, R. (2000). Strategic leadership research: moving on. *Leadership Quarterly, 11*(4), 515-549.

Bogden, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods* London: Allyn & Bacon.

Boisot, M. (2003). Preparing for turbulence: the changing relationship between strategy and management development in the learning organization. In B. Garratt (Ed.), *Developing strategic thought: a collection of the best thinking on business strategy* (pp. 34-55). London: Profile Books.

Bossert, S., Dwyer, D., Rowan, B., & Lee, G. (1982). The instructional management role of the principal. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 18*(3), 34-64.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990a). *In other words: essays towards a reflexive sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990b). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: on the theory of action*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J.-C. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (R. Nice, Trans.). London: SAGE.

Bowen, H. P., & Wiersma, M. F. (1999). Matching method to paradigm in strategy research: limitations of cross-sectional analysis and some methodological alternatives. *Strategic Management Journal, 20*(7), 625-636.

Bowman, E. H., Singh, H., & Thomas, H. (2002). The domain of strategic management: history and evolution. In A. M. Pettigrew, H. Thomas & R. Whittington (Eds.), *Handbook of strategy and management* (pp. 31-51). London: SAGE.

Boyan, N. J. (1988). Describing and explaining administrator behavior. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 77-97). New York: Longman.

Boyd, B., Finkelstein, S., & Gove, S. (2005). How advanced is the strategy paradigm? The role of particularism and universalism in shaping research outcomes. *Strategic Management Journal, 26*(9), 841-854.

Boyd, W. L. (1974). The school superintendent: educational statesman or political strategist. *Administrators Notebook, 22*(9).

Boyd, W. L. (2004). Are education and efficiency antithetical: education for democracy versus the 'cult of efficiency'. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(2), 160-173.

Bridges, E. (1982). Research on the school administrator: the state of the art 1967-1980. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 18*(3), 12-33.

Broadhead, P., Cuckle, P., Hodgson, J., & Dunford, J. (1996). Improving primary schools through school development planning: building a vision, exploring the reality. *Educational Management and Administration, 24*(3), 277-290.

Brock, D. M. (1997). Strategy, autonomy, planning mode and effectiveness: a contingency study of business schools. *International Journal of Educational Management, 11*(6), 248-259.

Brown, J. D. (1996). *Testing in language programs*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Brown, J. D. (1997). Skewness and kurtosis. *Shiken: JALT Testing & Evaluation SIG Newsletter, 1*(1), 18-20.

Brown, P. (2004). Strategic capability development in the higher education sector. *International Journal of Educational Management, 18*(7), 436-445.

Brown, R. B. (1997). You can't expect rationality from pregnant men: reflections on multi-disciplinarity in management research. *British Journal of Management, 8*(1), 23-30.

Bryson, J. M. (2004). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bunnell, T. (2005). Strategic marketing planning in international schools. *International Journal of Educational Management, 19*(1), 59-66.

Burch, P. (2007). The professionalization of instructional leadership in the United States: competing values and current tensions. *Journal of Education Policy, 22*(2), 195-214.

Busenitz, L., West, G. P., Shepherd, D., Nelson, T., Chandler, G. N., & Zacharakis, A. (2003). Entrepreneurship research in emergence: past trends and future directions. *Journal of Management, 29*, 285-308.

Bush, T. (1998). Organizational culture and strategic management. In D. Middlewood & J. Lumby (Eds.), *Strategic management in schools and colleges* (pp. 32-46). London: Paul Chapman.

Bush, T. (2002). Authenticity - reliability, validity and triangulation. In M. Coleman & A. R. J. Briggs (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 59-72). London: Paul Chapman.

Bush, T. (2006). Theories of educational management [Electronic Version]. *NCPEA Connexions KB Project* from http://cnx.org/content/m13867/latest/.

Bush, T. (2007). Theory and research in educational leadership and management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*(1), 5-8.

Bush, T., & Coleman, M. (2000). *Leadership and strategic management in education*. London: Paul Chapman.

Byrd, J. K. (2007). A call for statistical reform in EAQ. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 43*(3), 381-391.

Cagan, E. (1978). Individualism, collectivism and radical educational reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 48*(2), 226-266.

Caldwell, B. (1998). Strategic leadership, resource management and effective school reform. *Journal of Educational Administration, 36*(5), 445-461.

Caldwell, B. (2004). A strategic view of efforts to lead the transformation of schools. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 81-100.

Caldwell, B. (2006). *Re-imagining educational leadership*. Camberwell: Australian Council for Educational Research Press.

Callahan, R. E. (1962). *Education and the cult of efficiency*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Cameron, K., & Caza, A. (2004). Contributions to the discipline of positive organizational scholarship. *American Behavioral Scientist, 47*, 731-739.

Cameron, K., Dutton, J., & Quinn, R. E. (2003). *Positive organizational scholarship: foundations of a new discipline*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Cannella, A. A., & Monroe, M. J. (1997). Contrasting perspectives on strategic leaders: toward a more realistic view of top managers. *Journal of Management, 23*(3), 213-237.

Caputo, J., & Yount, M. (1993). Institutions, normalization, and power. In J. Caputo & M. Yount (Eds.), *Foucault and the critique of institutions* (pp. 3-26). University Park, PA: Pennsylvannia State University Press.

Carter, C., Clegg, S. R., & Kornberger, M. (2008). Strategy as practice? *Strategic Organization, 6*(1), 83-99.

Chan, C. K. K., & Fai Ping, M. (2006). Teacher collaboration in learning communities. *Teaching Education, 17*(1), 1-5.

Cheung, W. M., & Cheng, Y. C. (1996). A multi-level framework for self-management in schools. *International Journal of Educational Management, 10*(1), 17-29.

Cheung, W. M., & Cheng, Y. C. (1997). The strategies for implementing multi-level self-management in schools. *International Journal of Educational Management, 11*(4), 159-169.

Child, J. (1972). Organization structure, environment, and performance: the role of strategic choice. *Sociology, 6*(1-22).

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Collard, J. (2002). Leadership and gender: time for critical analysis. *Leading & Managing, 8*(2), 100-109.

Corson, D. (1995). Foreword. In D. Corson (Ed.), *Discourse and power in educational organizations* (pp. ix-xiv). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press Inc.

Cotton, K. (2003). *Principals and student achievement*. Melbourne: Hawker Brownlow Education.

Cox, D. R., & Snell, E. J. (1989). *The analysis of binary data* (2nd ed.). London: Chapman and Hall.

Crandall, D. P., Eiseman, J. W., & Louis, K. S. (1986). Strategic planning issues that bear on the success of school improvement efforts. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 22*(3), 21-53.

Cranston, N. (2002). School-based management, leaders and leadership: change and challenges for principals. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 30*(1), 2-12.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE.

Cuckle, P., & Broadhead, P. (2003). Developments in development planning in English primary schools: 1994-2001. *School Leadership and Management, 23*(2), 229-240.

Cuckle, P., Broadhead, P., Hodgson, J., & Dunford, J. (1998). Development planning in primary schools: a positive influence on management and culture. *Educational Management and Administration, 26*(2), 185-195.

Cuckle, P., Hodgson, J., & Broadhead, P. (1998). Investigating the relationship between OfSTED inspections and school development planning. *School Leadership and Management, 18*(2), 271-283.

Daft, R. L. (1986). *The past and future of strategic management research: a fast track to nowhere?* Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the Academy of Management.

Davies, B. (2003). Rethinking strategy and strategic leadership in schools. *Educational Management and Administration, 31*(3), 295-312.

Davies, B. (2004a). Developing the strategically focused school. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 11-27.

Davies, B. (2004b). Introduction to the special edition on strategy and strategic leadership in schools. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 7-9.

Davies, B., & Davies, B. J. (2004). Strategic leadership. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 28-38.

Davies, B., & Ellison, L. (1992). *School development planning*. London: Longman.

Davies, B., & Ellison, L. (1998). Futures and strategic perspectives in school planning. *International Journal of Educational Management, 12*(3), 133-140.

Davies, B., & Ellison, L. (1998). Strategic planning in schools: an oxymoron? *School Leadership and Management, 18*(4), 461-473.

Davies, B., & Ellison, L. (1999). *Strategic direction and development of the school*. London: Routledge.

Davies, B., & Ellison, L. (2003). *The new strategic direction and development of the school: key frameworks for school improvement planning* (2 ed.). London: Routledge/Falmer.

Davies, B. J., & Davies, B. (2006). Developing a model for strategic leadership in schools. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 34*(1), 121-139.

Davies, P., & Coates, G. (2005). Competing conceptions and values in school strategy: rational planning and beyond. *Educational Management and Administration, 33*(1), 109-124.

Day, C. (2004). The passion of successful leadership. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(4), 425-437.

Day, C., & Bakioglu, A. (1996). Development and disenchantment in the professional lives of headteachers. In I. Goodson & A. Hargreaves (Eds.), *Teachers professional lives* (pp. 123-139). London: Falmer Press.

De Lissovoy, N., & McLaren, P. (2003). Educational 'accountability' and the violence of capital: a Marxian reading. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*(2), 131-143.

Deal, T. E. (1987). Effective school principals: counselors, engineers, pawnbrokers, poets ... or instructional leaders. In W. Greenfield (Ed.), *Instructional leadership: concepts, issues and controversies* (pp. 230-246). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Demaris, A. (1992). *Logit modeling: practical applications*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

DET. (2005). School planning and reporting: the implementation cycle.

DeVillis, R. F. (2003). *Scale development: theory and applications* (2nd ed. Vol. 26). London: SAGE.

Dimmock, C. (2000). *Designing the learning centred school: a cross-cultural perspective*. London: Falmer Press.

Dimmock, C., & Walker, A. (2004). A new approach to strategic leadership: learning-centredness, connectivity and cultural context in school design. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 39-56.

Donmoyer, R. (2001). Evers and Lakomski's search for leadership's holy grail (and the intriguing ideas they encountered along the way) *Journal of Educational Administration, 39*(6), 554-572.

Drejer, A. (2004). Back to basics: strategic management - an area where practice and theory are poorly related. *Management Decision, 42*(3/4), 508-520.

Duignan, P. A. (2006). *Educational leadership: key challenges and ethical tensions*. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Durbin, R. (1978). *Theory development*. New York: Free Press.

Dwyer, D. C. (1984). The search for instructional leadership: routines and subtleties in the principal's role. *Educational Leadership, 41*(5), 32-37.

Eacott, S. (2004). Leading towards excellence: a model for implementing effective school-wide change. *The Practising Administrator, 26*(3), 7-9.

Eacott, S. (2006a). Strategy in schools: from direction to plan. *The Australian Educational Leader, 28*(2), 24-26.

Eacott, S. (2006b). Strategy: an educational leadership imperative. *Perspectives on educational leadership, 16*(6), 1-2.

Eacott, S. (2007a). *Demographic proxies, strategy and educational leadership*. Paper presented at the NSW Institute for Educational Research Annual Conference.

Eacott, S. (2007b, 29 July - 1 August). *Strategy and the practising educational leader*. Paper presented at the Directions for Catholic educational leadership in the 21st century: the vision, challenges and reality, Sydney.

Eacott, S. (2007c). Strategy and the school principal. *Journal of Catholic School Studies, 79*(2), 3-18.

Eacott, S. (2008a). An analysis of contemporary literature on strategy in education. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 11*(3), 257-280.

Eacott, S. (2008b). Strategy in educational leadership: in search of unity. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(3), 353-375.

Earley, P., & Weindling, D. (2007). Do school leaders have a shelf life? Career stages and headteacher performance. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*(1), 73-88.

El Hout, M. S. (1994). Strategic planning for educational systems: necessity and methodology. *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration, 8*(1), 47-62.

Elenkov, D., Judge, W., & Wright, P. (2005). Strategic leadership and executive influence: an international multi-cluster comparative study. *Strategic Management Journal, 26*, 665-682.

Elliot, D. (1999). Strategic leadership and management in schools. In M. Brundett (Ed.), *Principles of school leadership* (pp. 42-70). Norfolk, UK: Peter Francis.

Elmore, R. E. (1987). Choice in public education. *Journal of Education Policy, 2*(1), 79-98.

English, F. (2002). Cutting the Gordian knot of educational administration: the theory-practice gap. *The review, 44*(1), 1-3.

Enns, H., Huff, S., & Golden, B. (2003). CIO influence behaviors: the impact of technical background. *Information and Management, 40*(5), 467-485.

Erickson, D. A. (1967). The school administrator. *Review of educational research, 37*(4), 417-432.

Evers, C., & Lakomski, G. (1996). *Exploring educational administration*. Oxford: Elsevier.

Evers, C., & Lakomski, G. (2000). *Doing educational administration*. Oxford: Elsevier.

Farkas, S. (2001). *Trying to stay ahead of the game: superintendents and principals talk about school leadership*. New York: Public Agenda.

Fayol, H. (1930). *Industrial and general administration*. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons.

Feldvebel, A. M. (1964). Organizational climate, social class, and educational output. *Administrators Notebook, 30*(8).

Felfe, J., Tartler, K., & Liepmann, D. (2004). Advanced research in the field of transformational leadership. *Zeitecrift fur Personalforschung, 18*(3), 262-288.

Fidler, B. (1989). Strategic management: where is the school going? In B. Fidler & G. Bowles (Eds.), *Effective local management of schools: a strategic approach* (pp. 19-35). Essex: Longman.

Fidler, B. (1996). *Strategic planning for school improvement*. London: Pitman.

Fidler, B. (1998). How can a successful school avoid failure? Strategic management in schools. *School Leadership and Management, 18*(4), 497-509.

Fidler, B. (2002a). Strategic leadership and cognition. In K. Leithwood & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Second international handbook of educational leadership and administration* (pp. 613-652). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Fidler, B. (2002b). *Strategic management for school development*. London: SAGE.

Fidler, B., & Bowles, G. (Eds.). (1989). *Effective local management of schools: a strategic approach*. Essex: Longman.

Fidler, F., Thomason, N., Cumming, G., Finch, S., & Leeman, J. (2005). Still much to learn about confidence intervals: reply to Rouder and Morey. *Psychological Science, 16*, 494-495.

Finkelstein, S., & Hambrick, D. (1996). *Strategic leadership: top executives and their effects on organizations*. St. Paul/Minneapolis: West Publishing.

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2002). 5 lessons for leaders. *Principal Leadership, 3*(3), 53-56.

Fitz, J. (1999). Reflections on the field of educational management studies. *Educational Management & Administration, 27*(3), 313-321.

Fogelman, K. (2002). Surveys and sampling. In M. Coleman & A. R. J. Briggs (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 93-107). London: Paul Chapman.

Ford, R. (2006). Organizational learning, change and power: toward a practice-theory framework. *The Learning Organization, 13*(5), 495-524.

Forde, R., Hobby, R., & Lees, A. (2000). *The lessons of leadership: a comparison of headteachers in UK schools and senior executives in private enterprise*. London: Hay McBer.

Foskett, N., Lumby, J., & Fidler, B. (2005). Evolution or extinction? Reflections on future of research in educational leadership and management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 245-253.

Foucault, M. (1971). Orders of discourse. *Social Science Information, 10*(2), 7-22.

Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings by Michel Foucault, 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1983). Afterword by Michel Foucault: the subject and power. In H. L. Dreyfus & P. Rainbow (Eds.), *Michel Foucault: beyond structuralism and hermeneutics* (pp. 208-228). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Franklin, P. (1998). Thinking of strategy in a post modern way: towards an agreed paradigm. *Strategic Change, 7*(6), 313-332.

Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. London: Cassell.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform* London: Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (2003). *The moral imperative of school leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Gamage, D. T. (1993). A review of community participation in school governance: an emerging culture in Australian education. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 41*(2), 134-149.

Gamage, D. T. (1998). How community participation promotes efficiency, effectiveness and quality. *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration, 12*(3), 313-323.

Gamage, D. T. (2005). Decentralization and school-based management: a comparative study of self-governing school models. *Educational Practice and Theory, 27*(2), 35-58.

Gamson, D. A. (2003). The infusion of corporate values into progressive education: professional vulnerability or complicity? *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(2), 137-159.

Gay, L. R. (1987). *Educational research: competencies for analysis and application* (3 ed.). Melbourne: Merrill.

Geertz, C. (1975). *The interpretation of cultures*. London: Hutchinson.

Gentilucci, J. L., & Muto, C. C. (2007). Principals' influence on academic achievement: the student perspective. *The National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*(Sept).

Giles, C. (1995). School-based planning: are UK schools grasping the strategic initiative? *International Journal of Educational Management, 9*(4), 4-7.

Glasman, N. S., & Heck, R. H. (1992). The changing leadership role of the principal: implications for principal assessment. *Peabody Journal of Education, 68*(1), 5-24.

Glover, D. (1990). Towards a school development plan: process and practice. *Educational Management and Administration, 18*(3), 22-26.

Glover, D., Bennett, N., Crawford, M., & Levačić, R. (1997). Strategic and resource management in primary schools: evidence from OfSTED inspection reports. *School Leadership and Management, 17*(3), 357-374.

Glover, D., & Levačić, R. (1996a). Leadership, planning and resource management in four effective schools: part 1. *School Organization, 16*(2), 135-149.

Glover, D., & Levačić, R. (1996b). Leadership, planning and resource management in four very effective schools: part 2. *School Organization, 16*(3), 242-257.

Goldring, E. B., & Pastnerack, R. (1994). Principal's coordinating strategies and school effectiveness. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 5*(3), 239-253.

Gorard, S. (2005). Current contexts for research in educational leadership and management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 155-164.

Gore, J. M. (1998). Disciplining bodies: on the continuity of power relations in pedagogy. In T. S. Popkewitz & M. Brennan (Eds.), *Foucault's challenge: discourse, knowledge and power in education* (pp. 231-251). New York: Teachers College Press

Gray, J., Hopkins, D., Reynolds, D., Wilcox, B., Farrell, S., & Jesson, D. (1999). *Improving schools: performance and potential*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Green, M. (Ed.). (1988). *Leaders for a new era: strategies for higher education*. New York: Macmillan.

Greenfield, W. (2005). Postscript: where have we been? Where are we going in the study of educational organizations? *Journal of Educational Administration, 43*(1), 121-126.

Griffiths, D. (1959). *Research in educational administration: an appraisal and a plan*. New York: Teachers College.

Griffiths, D. (1965). Research and theory in educational administration. In W. W. Charters (Ed.), *Perspectives on educational administration and the behavioral sciences* (pp. 25-48). Eugene, Oregon: Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration.

Griffiths, D. (1985). *Administrative theory in transition*. Melbourne: Deakin University.

Gronn, P. (2008). The state of Denmark. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 40*(2), 173-185.

Gross, N., & Herriott, R. E. (1965). *Staff leadership in public schools: a sociological inquiry*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Gulson, K. N. (2005). Renovating educational identities: policy, space and urban renewal. *Journal of Education Policy, 20*(2), 141-158.

Gunter, H. (2001). *Leaders and leadership in education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Gunter, H. (2004). Labels and labelling in the field of educational leadership. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 25*(1), 21-41.

Gunter, H., & Fitzgerald, T. (2008). Educational administration and history part 1: debating the agenda. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 40*(1), 5-21.

Gurr, D. (2002). Transformational leadership characteristics in primary and secondary school principals. *Leading & Managing, 8*(1), 79-99.

Gurr, D., Drysdale, L., & Mulford, B. (2006). Models of successful school principal leadership. *School Leadership and Management, 26*(4), 371-395.

Guskey, T. R. (2007). Multiple sources of evidence: an analysis of stakeholders' perceptions of various indicators of student learning. *Educational Measurement, Issues and Practice, 26*(1), 19-27.

Hale, E., & Rollins, K. (2006). Leading the way to increased student learning. *Principal Leadership, 6*(10), 6-10.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (1998). Exploring the principal's contribution to school effectiveness: 1980-1995. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 9*(2), 157-191.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1983). Instructional leadership and school socio-economic status: a preliminary investigation. *Administrators Notebook, 30*(6).

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1985). Assessing the instructional management behavior of principals. *Elementary School Journal, 86*(2), 217-247.

Hambrick, D. (1986). *Research in strategic management, 1980-1985: critical perceptions and reality*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management.

Hambrick, D. (1989). Putting top managers back in the strategy picture. *Strategic Management Journal, 10*(Special Issue), 5-15.

Hambrick, D. (2005). Upper echelon theory: origins, twists and turns, and lessons learned. In K. G. Smith & M. A. Hitt (Eds.), *Great minds in management: the process of theory development* (pp. 109-127). Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Hambrick, D., & Fukutomi, G. (1991). The seasons of a CEO's tenure. *Academy of Management Review, 16*(4), 719-742.

Hambrick, D., & Mason, P. (1984). Upper echelons: the organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Academy of Management Review, 9*(2), 195-206.

Hammerness, K., Darling-Hammond, L., & Shulman, L. (2002). Toward expert thinking: how curriculum case writing prompts the development of theory-based professional knowledge in student teachers. *Teaching Education, 13*(2), 219-243.

Handy, C. (1996). Understanding power: bringing about strategic change. *British Journal of Management, 7*(Special Issue), S3-S16.

Hargreaves, D. (1995). Self-managing schools and developmental planning - chaos or control? *School Organization, 15*(3), 215-228.

Harris-John, M. (2007). How universities can help new principals succeed. *NCPEA Connexions KB Project*, from http://cnx.org/content/m14363/latest/

Harris, A. (2004). Distributed leadership and school improvement. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 32*(1), 11-24.

Harris, A. (2005). *Crossing boundaries and breaking barriers: distributing leadership in schools*. from http://www.sst-inct.net.

Harris, A. (2008). Distributed leadership through the looking glass. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(2), 139-140.

Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., & Hopkins, D. (2007). Distributed leadership and organizational change: reviewing the evidence. *Journal of Educational Change*.

Hartley, D. C. (2004). Management, leadership and the emotional order of the school. *Journal of Education Policy, 19*(5), 583-594.

Hatton, E. (2001). School development planning in a small primary school - addressing the challenge in rural NSW. *Journal of Educational Administration, 39*(2), 118-133.

Hays, W. L. (1981). *Statistics* (3rd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Heck, R. H. (1992). Principals' instructional leadership and school performance: implications for policy development. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 14*(1), 21-34.

Heck, R. H., & Hallinger, P. (2005). The study of educational leadership and management: where does the field stand today? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 229-244.

Helgesen, S. (1990). *Fraen fuhren anders*. Frankfurt: Campus.

Heller, R. W., & Paulter, A. J. (1990). The administrator of the future: combining instructional and managerial leadership. In S. Jacobsen & J. A. Conway (Eds.), *Educational leadership in an age of reform* (pp. 131-143). New York: Longman.

Hofer, C. W., & Schendel, D. (1978). *Strategy formulation: analytical concepts*. St. Paul/Minneapolis: West Publishing.

Hoinville, G., Jowell, R., & Associates. (1978). *Survey research practice*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Holian, R. (2004). The practice of management education in Australian universities. *Management Decision, 42*(3/4), 396-405.

Hosmer, D. W., & Lemeshow, S. (2000). *Applied logistic regression* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

House, R., & Aditya, R. (1997). The social scientific study of leadership: quo vadis? *Journal of Management, 23*(3), 409-473.

Hoy, D. C. (1986a). Introduction. In D. C. Hoy (Ed.), *Foucault: a critical reader* (pp. 1-26). Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.

Hoy, D. C. (1986b). Power, regression, progress: Foucault, Lukes and the Frankfurt school. In D. C. Hoy (Ed.), *Foucault: a critical reader* (pp. 123-148). Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.

Hoy, W. (1978). Scientific research in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 14*(3), 1-12.

Hoy, W., & Miskel, C. (2001). *Educational administration: theory, research and practice* (6 ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Huber, S. G. (2004). School leadership and leadership development: adjusting leadership theories and development programs to values and the core purpose of school. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(6), 669-684.

Hudak, G. M. (2001). On what is labeled "playing", locating the "true" in education. In G. M. Hudak & P. Kihn (Eds.), *Labeling, pedagogy and politics* (pp. 9-26). London: Routledge.

Hunt, G. J., & Conger, J. A. (1999). From where we sit: an assessment of transformational and charismatic leadership research. *Leadership Quarterly, 10*(3), 335-343.

Hutchinson, B. (1993). The effective reflective school: vision and pipedreams in development planning. *Educational Management and Administration, 21*(1), 4-18.

Immegart, G. L. (1975). *The study of educational administration 1954-1974: myths, paradoxes, facts and prospects*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University.

Ireland, R. D., Webb, J. W., & Coombs, J. E. (2005). Theory and methodology in entrepreneurship research. In D. J. Ketchen & D. D. Bergh (Eds.), *Research and methodology in strategy and management* (Vol. 2, pp. 111-141). Sydney: Elsevier.

Janerrette, D., & Sherretz, K. (2007). School leadership and student achievement. *Education Policy Brief* Retrieved 17 October, 2007, from http://www.rdc.udel.edu/

Jarzbkowski, P. (2004). Strategy as practice: Recursiveness, adaption, and practices-in-use. *Organizational Studies, 25*(4), 529-560.

Jeffreys, M. V. C. (1955). *Beyond neutrality: five essays on the purpose of education*. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons.

Johansson, O., & Davies, A. (2002). Leadership, gender and democracy. *Leading & Managing, 8*(2), 144-153.

Johnson, G., & Scholes, K. (2003). Understanding strategy development. In M. Preedy, R. Glatter & C. Wise (Eds.), *Strategic leadership and educational improvement* (pp. 142-156). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Johnson, J., & Scholes, K. (1988). *Exploring corporate strategy*. London: Paul Chapman

Jones, A. (1987). *Leadership for tomorrow's schools*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Jones, A. (2004). Social anxiety, sex, surveillance, and the 'safe' teacher. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 25*(1), 53-66.

Jones, A. M. (1991). Community participation in frontier educational planning. *Educational Management and Administration, 19*(3), 160-165.

Jones, G. R. (1996). School development planning in Jersey primary schools: a contingency analysis. *School Organization, 16*(3), 281-296.

Jones, R. (1990). Educational practice and scientific knowledge: a genealogical reinterpretation of the emergence of physiology in post-revolutionary France. In S. Ball (Ed.), *Foucault and education: disciplines and knowledge* (pp. 78-104). London: Routledge.

Jordan, K. F., & Webb, L. D. (1986). School business administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 22*(3), 171-199.

Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect theory: an analysis of decision under risk. *Econometrica, 47*(2), 263-291.

Kakabadse, A., & Kakabadse, N. (1999). *Essence of leadership*. London: International Thomson Business Press.

266

Kanan, H. M., & Baker, A. M. (2006). Student satisfaction with an educational administration preparation program: a comparative perspective. *Journal of Educational Administration, 44*(2), 159-169.

Kaplan, R. M. (1987). *Basic statistics for the behavioral sciences*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1982). The balanced scorecard: measures that drive performance. *Harvard Business Review*(Jan/Feb).

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1996). Linking the balanced scorecard to strategy. *California Management Review*, 53-79.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2002). *The strategy focused organization*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Karstanje, P. (1999). Decentralization and deregulation in Europe: towards a conceptual framework. In T. Bush, L. Bell, R. Bolam, R. Glatter & P. Ribbins (Eds.), *Educational management: redefining theory, policy and practice* (pp. 29-42). London: Paul Chapman.

Kaufman, R. (1992a). *Mapping educational success*. Newbury Park: SAGE.

Kaufman, R. (1992b). *Strategic planning plus: and organizational guide*. London: SAGE.

Kaur, B., Ferrucci, B. J., & Carter, J. A. (2004). Department heads' perceptions of their influence on mathematics achievement in Singapore and the United States. *International Journal of Educational Management, 18*(2), 93-99.

Kearins, K. (1997). Power in organizational analysis: delineating and contrasting a Foucauldian perspective [Electronic Version]. *Electronic Journal of Radical Organization Theory*, *2*, 1-19 from http://www.mngt.waikato.ac.nz/ejrot/.

Kearney, K. (2005). Guiding improvements in principal performance. *Leadership 35*(1), 18-21.

Kelly, A. (2005). Praxes of school and commercial management: informing and reforming a typology from field research. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 8*(3), 237-251.

Ketchen, D. J., & Bergh, D. D. (Eds.). (2004). *Research methodology in strategy and management* (Vol. 1). Oxford: Elsevier.

Kets de Vries, M. F. R. (1994). The leadership mystique. *Academy of Management Executive, 8*(3), 73-92.

Kettunen, J. (2005). Implementation strategies in continuing education. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 19*(3), 207-217.

Kilduff, M. (2006). Editor's comments: publishing theory. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(2), 252-255.

Kim, S., & Kim, E. P. (2005). Profiles of school administrators in South Korea: a comparative perspective. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(3), 289-310.

King, M. B. (1994). Locking ourselves in: national standards for the teaching profession. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 10*(1), 95-108.

Kirk, R. E. (1996). Practical significance: a concept whose time has come. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 56*, 746-759.

Kondrat, M. E. (1992). Reclaiming the practical: formal and substantive rationality in social work practice. *Social Service Review, 67*(2), 237-255.

Kriemadis, A. (1997). Strategic planning in higher education athletic departments. *International Journal of Educational Management, 11*(6), 238-247.

Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

Kundu, A. (1991). Decentralised planning in education: a framework combining formal and informal approaches. *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration, 5*(4), 351-360.

Laferriere, T., Lamon, M., & Chan, C. K. K. (2006). Emerging e-trends and models in teacher education and professional development. *Teaching Education, 17*(1), 75-90.

Lamaison, P., & Bourdieu, P. (1986). From rules to strategies: an interview with Pierre Bourdieu. *Cultural Anthropology, 1*(1), 110-120.

Landau, S., & Everitt, B. S. (2004). *A handbook of statistical analyses using SPSS*. New York, NY: Chapman & Hall/CRC.

Lantz, A. E. (1984). Effectiveness of strategies to encourage an innovative education program. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 6*, 53-61.

Latour, B., & Woolgar, S. (1979). *Laboratory life: the social construction of scientific facts*. Beverly Hills, CA.: SAGE.

Law, S., & Glover, D. (2003). *Educational leadership and learning: practice, policy and research*. Buckingham, UK.: Open University Press.

Lawrence, B. S. (1997). The black box of organizational demography. *Organizational Science, 8*, 1-22.

Leader, G. (2004). Further education middle managers: their contribution to the strategic decision-making process. *Educational Management and Administration, 32*(1), 67-79.

Learned, E. P., Christensen, C. R., Andrews, K. R., & Guth, W. D. (1965). *Business policy: text and cases*. Homewood, IL.: RD Irwin.

Lee, J. (1987). Instructional leadership in a junior high school: managing realities and creating opportunities. In W. Greenfield (Ed.), *Instructional leadership: concepts, issues and controversies* (pp. 77-99). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Leggate, P. M. C., & Thompson, J. J. (1997). The management of development planning in international schools. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 11*(6), 268-273.

Leiberson, S., & O'Connor, J. F. (1972). Leadership and organizational performance: a study of large corporations. *American Sociological Review, 37*, 117-130.

Leithwood, K. (2001). School leadership in the context of accountability. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 4*(3), 217-235.

Leithwood, K., & Duke, D. (1999). A century's quest to understand school leadership. In J. Murphy & K. S. Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (2 ed., pp. 45-72). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., Earl, L., Watson, N., Levin, B., & Fullan, M. (2004). Strategic leadership for large-scale reform: the case of England's national literacy and numeracy strategy. *School Leadership and Management, 24*(1), 57-79.

Leithwood, K., & Riehl, C. J. (2003). What do we already know about successful school leadership? Retrieved 5 October, 2007, from http://www.cepa.gse.rutgers.edu

Lengnick-Hall, C., & Wolff, J. (1999). Similarities and contradictions in the core logic of three strategy research streams. *Strategic Management Journal, 20*, 1109-1132.

Levačić, R., & Glover, D. (1997). Value for money as a school improvement strategy: evidence from the new inspection system in England. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 8*(2), 231-253.

Levačić, R., & Glover, D. (1998). The relationship between efficient resource management and school effectiveness: evidence from the OfSTED secondary school inspections. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 9*(1), 95-122.

Levine, A. (2005). *Educating school leaders*. Retrieved May 4 2007, from www.edschools.org/pdf/final313.pdf.

Lingard, B., Hayes, D., Mills, M., & Christie, P. (2003). *Leading learning: making hope practical in schools*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Lingard, B., Rawolle, S., & Taylor, S. (2005). Globalizing policy sociology in education: working with Bourdieu. *Journal of Education Policy, 20*(6), 759-777.

Long, J. S. (1997). *Regression models for categorical and limited dependent variables*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Løwendahl, B., & Revang, O. (1998). Challenges to existing strategy theory in a postindustrial society. *Strategic Management Journal, 19*, 755-773.

Lumby, J. (1999). Strategic planning in further education: the business of values. *Educational Management and Administration, 27*(1), 71-83.

Lumby, J., Foskett, N., & Fidler, B. (2005). Researching educational leadership and management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 135-137.

Lutyen, H., Visscher, A., & Witziers, B. (2005). School effectiveness research: from a review of the criticism to recommendations for further development. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 16*(3), 249-279.

MacGilchrist, B., & Mortimore, P. (1997). The impact of school development plans in primary schools. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 8*(2), 198-218.

MacGilchrist, B., Mortimore, P., Savage, J., & Beresford, C. (1995). *Planning matters: the impact of development planning on primary schools*. London: Paul Chapman.

MacMillan, I. C. (1989). Delineating a forum for business policy scholars. *Strategic Management Journal, 10*(4), 391-395.

MacMillan, I. C. (1991). The emerging forum for business policy scholars. *Strategic Management Journal, 12*, 161-165.

MacMillan, I. C., & Stern, I. (1987). Delineating a forum for business policy scholars. *Strategic Management Journal, 8*(2), 183-186.

Maeyer, S. D., Rymenans, R., Van Petegem, P., & van den Bergh, H. (2007). Educational leadership and pupil achievement: the choice of a valid conceptual model to test effects in school effectiveness research. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 18*(2), 125-145.

Malone, R. (2001). *Principal mentoring*. Alexandria, VA.: National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Mangin, M. (2007). Facilitating elementary principals' support for instructional teacher leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 43*(3), 319-357.

Marshall, J. D. (1996). *Michel Foucault: personal autonomy and education*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Mather, I. (1998). Rethinking school planning: a case study of Southlands community college. *School Leadership and Management, 18*(4), 475-484.

Mawhinney, H. B. (1994). Institutional effects of strategic efforts at community enrichment. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 30*(3), 324-341.

Maxcy, S. J. (2001). Educational leadership and management of knowing: the aesthetics of coherentism. *Journal of Educational Administration, 39*(6), 573-588.

Mayo, C. R., Zirkel, P. A., & Finger, B. A. (2006). Which journals are educational leadership professors choosing? *Educational Administration Quarterly, 42*(5), 806-811.

Mazen, A. M. M., Hemmasi, M., & Lewis, M. F. (1987). Assessment of statistical power in contemporary strategy research. *Strategic Management Journal, 8*, 403-410.

McCarthy, M. M., & Kuh, G. D. (1997). *Continuity and change: the educational leadership professoriate*. Columbia, MO.: The University Council for Educational Administration.

McDevitt, R., Giapponi, C., & Soloman, N. (2008). Strategy revitalization in academe: a balanced scorecard approach. *International Journal of Educational Management, 22*(1), 32-47.

McKenzie, P., Kos, J., Walker, M., & Hong, J. (2008). *Staff in Australia's schools 2007*. Canberra: Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

McNarmara, G., O'Hara, J., & Ni Aingleis, B. (2002). Whole-school evaluation and development planning: an analysis of recent initiatives in Ireland. *Educational Management and Administration, 30*(2), 201-211.

McTavish, D. (2006). Further education management strategy and policy. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 34*(3), 411-428.

McWilliam, E. (2000). The perfect corporate fit: new knowledge for new times. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 3*(1), 75-83.

Meadmore, D. (1993). The production of individuality through examination. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 14*(1), 59-93.

Menard, S. (2000). Coefficients of determination for multiple logistic regression analysis. *The American Statistician, 54*(1), 17-24.

Merton, R. K., & Storer, N. W. (1973). *The sociology of science: theoretical and empirical investigations*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

Meyer, J. W., Scott, W. R., & Deal, T. E. (1992). Institutional and technical sources of organizational structure: explaining the structure of educational organizations. In J. W. Meyer & W. R. Scott (Eds.), *Organizational environments: ritual and rationality* (pp. 45-70). Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Meyer, M. W. (1975). Leadership and organizational performance. *American Journal of Sociology, 81*, 514-542.

Middlewood, D., & Lumby, J. (Eds.). (1998). *Strategic management in schools and colleges*. London: Paul Chapman.

Midthassel, U. V., Bru, E., & Idsoe, T. (2000). The principal's role in promoting school development activity in Norwegian compulsory schools. *School Leadership and Management, 20*(2), 247-260.

Miller, D., & Shamsie, J. (2001). Learning across the life cycle: experimentation and performance among Hollywood studio heads. *Strategic Management Journal, 22*(8), 725-745.

Milliken, J., & Gallagher, T. (1998). Three Rs - religion, ritual and rivalry: strategic planning for integrated education in Northern Ireland. *Educational Management and Administration, 26*(4), 443-456.

Mintzberg, H. (1994). *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. New York: Free Press.

Mintzberg, H. (2003). Strategic thinking as 'seeing'. In B. Garratt (Ed.), *Developing strategic thought: a collection of the best thinking on business strategy* (pp. 79-84). London: Profile Books.

Mitchell, C., & Sackney, L. (2000). *Profound improvement: building capacity for a learning community*. Lisse: Swets and Zeitlinger.

Mitroff, I. I. (1974). *The subjective side of science*. New York: Elsevier.

Moinbot, G. (2002, 1 January). Schooling for sale. *The Guardian*.

Molnar, A. (2006). The commercial transformation of public education. *Journal of Education Policy, 21*(5), 621-640.

Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., Stoll, L., Lewis, D., & Ecob, R. (1988). *School matters: the junior years*. Wells, Somerset: Open Books.

Mulford, B. (1994). *Shaping tomorrows schools* (Vol. 15). Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Administration.

Mulford, B. (2003). The role of school leadership in attracting and retaining teachers and promoting innovative schools and students. from http://www.dest.gov.au/

Mulford, B. (2007). *Overview of research on Australian educational leadership 2001-2005* (Vol. 40). Sydney: Australian Council for Educational Leaders.

Murgatroyd, S. (1991). Strategy structure and quality service: developing school wide quality improvement. *School Organization, 11*(1), 7-19.

Murphy, J. (2006). Perspective: of dubious efficacy - questioning the core university based preparation programs for school leaders [Electronic Version]. *NCPEA Connexions KB Project* from http://cnx.org/content/m14136/latest.

Nag, R., Hambrick, D., & Chen, M.-J. (2007). What is strategic management really? inductive derivation of a consensus definition of the field. *Strategic Management Journal, 28*, 935-955.

Nagelkerke, N. J. D. (1991). A note on a general definition of the coefficient of determination. *Biometrika, 78*, 691-692.

Neumann, Y., & Finlay-Neumann, E. (1994). Management strategy, the CEO's cognitive style and organizational growth/decline. *Journal of Educational Administration, 32*(4), 66-76.

Neumann, Y., & Neumann, E. F. (1999). The president and the college bottom line: the role of strategic leadership styles. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 13*(2), 73-79.

Newman, I., Ridenour, C. S., Newman, C., & De Marco, G. M. P. (2003). A typology of research purposes and its relationship to mixed methods. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 167-188). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

O'Donoghue, T. A., & Dimmock, C. (1996). School development planning and the classroom teacher: a West Australian case study. *School Organization, 16*(1), 71-88.

Ogza, J. (1993). *Teacher de-professionalisation: hard lessons from England*. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education.

Oplatka, I. (2004a). The characteristics of the school organization and the constraints on market ideology in education: an institutional view. *Journal of Education Policy, 19*(2), 143-161.

Oplatka, I. (2004b). The principal's career stage: an absent element in leadership perspectives. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 7*(1), 43-55.

Ortiz, F. I., & Marshall, C. (1988). Women in educational administration. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 123-142). New York: Longman.

Papadakis, V. M., Lioukas, S., & Chambers, D. (1998). Strategic decision-making processes: the role of management and context. *Strategic Management Journal, 19*, 115-147.

Pashiardis, P. (1994). Teacher participation in decision making. *International Journal of Educational Management, 8*(5), 14-17.

Pashiardis, P. (1996). Environmental scanning in educational organizations: uses, approaches, sources and methodologies. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 10*(3), 5-9.

Peng, C. Y. J., Lee, K. L., & Ingersoll, G. M. (2002). An introduction to logistic regression analysis and reporting *The Journal of Educational Research, 96*(1), 3-14.

Perryman, J. (2006). Panoptic performativity and school inspection regimes: disciplinary mechanisms and life under special measures. *Journal of Education Policy, 21*(2), 147-161.

Petridou, E., & Chatzipanagiotou, P. (2004). The planning process in managing organizations of continuing education: the case of Greek vocational training institutions *The International Journal of Educational Management, 18*(4), 215-223.

Pfeffer, J. (1992). Understanding power in organizations. *California Management Review, 34*(2), 29-50.

Pitner, N. (1988). The study of administrator effects and effectiveness. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 99-122). New York: Longman.

Place, A. W., & Lindle, J. C. (2006). Present company excepted or accepted? Recognizing each other's faces in educational leadership's scholarship and practice. *International Journal of Educational Management, 20*(3), 195-205.

Pondy, L. R., & Mitroff, I. I. (1979). Beyond open systems models of organization. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (pp. 3-39). Greenwich: JAI Press.

Ponting, R. (2005). *Implementation of school councils in Queensland state primary schools.* Unpublished EdD, University of Southern Queensland, Brisbane.

Poulson, L. (1998). Accountability, teacher professionalism and education reform in England. *Teacher Development, 2*(3), 419-432.

Power, M. (1999). *The audit society* (2 ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Prentice, D. A., & Miller, D. T. (1992). When small effects are impressive. *Pschological Bulletin, 112*, 160-164.

Priem, R. L., Lyon, D. W., & Dess, G. G. (1999). Inherent limitations of demographic proxies in top management team heterogeneity research. *Journal of Management, 25*(6), 935-954.

Purkey, S. C., & Smith, M. S. (1985). School reform: the district policy implications of the effective schools literature. *The Elementary School Journal, 85*(3), 352-389.

Quong, T., Walker, A., & Stott, K. (1998). *Values based strategic planning: a dynamic approach for schools*. Singapore: Prentice Hall.

Radford, J., Law, J., Soloff, N., Lindsay, G., Peacy, N., Gascoigne, M., et al. (2003). Collaboration between LEA and SLT managers for the planning of services to children with speech and language. *Educational Management and Administration, 31*(1), 83-95.

Ranson, S. (2003). Public accountability in the age of neo-liberal governance. *Journal of Education Policy, 18*(5), 459-480.

Ribbins, P. (1999). Understanding leadership: developing headteachers. In T. Bush, L. Bell, R. Bolam, R. Glatter & P. Ribbins (Eds.), *Educational management: redefining theory, policy and practice* (pp. 77-89). London: Paul Chapman.

Rice, E., & Schneider, G. (1994). A decade of teacher empowerment: an empirical analysis of teacher involvement in decision making. *Journal of Educational Administration, 32*(1), 43-58.

Richmon, M. J., & Allison, D. J. (2003). Toward a conceptual framework for leadership inquiry. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 31*(1), 31-50.

Robertson, J., & Miller, T. (2007). School leadership and equity: the case of New Zealand. *School Leadership and Management, 27*(1), 91-103.

Rose, N. (1988). Calculable minds and manageable individuals. *History of the Human Sciences, 1*(2), 179-200.

Rosnow, R. L., & Rosenthal, R. (1996). Comparative efficacy of treatments for posttraumatic stress disorder. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy, 5*(1), 126-144.

Rumelt, R. P. (1979). Evaluation of strategy: theory and models. In D. Schendel & C. W. Hofer (Eds.), *Strategic management* (pp. 196-212). Boston: Little Brown.

Saker, J., & Speed, R. (1996). Developing strategic planning in a special education service. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 10*(1), 5-10.

Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1977). Constraints on administrative discretion: the limited influence of mayors on city budgets. *Urban Affairs Quarterly, 12*, 475-498.

Salfi, N. A., & Saeed, M. (2007). Relationship among school size, school culture and students' achievement at secondary level in Pakistan. *International Journal of Educational Management, 21*(7), 606-620.

Sallis, E. (1990). Corporate planning in an FE college. *Educational Management and Administration, 18*(2), 30-34.

San Antonio, D. M., & Gamage, D. T. (2007). PSALM for empowering educational stakeholders. *International Journal of Educational Management, 21*(2&3), 254-265.

Sanyal, B., & Martin, M. (1992). *Improving managerial effectiveness in universities: the use of strategic management*. Paris: UNESCO.

Saunders, C. B., & Thompson, J. C. (1980). A survey of the current state of business policy research. *Strategic Management Journal, 1*(1), 119-130.

Sawyer, A. G., & Ball, D. (1981). Statistical power and effect size in marketing research. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(3), 275-290.

Scheerens, J. (1997). Conceptual models and theory-embedded principles on effective schooling. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 8*(3), 269-310.

Schendel, D. (1994). Introduction to the summer 1994 special issue - strategy search for new paradigms. *Strategic Management Journal, 15*, 1-4.

Schendel, D., & Cool, K. (1988). Development of the strategic management field: some accomplishments and challenges. In J. H. Grant (Ed.), *Strategic management frontiers* (pp. 17-31). Greenwich, CT.: JAI Press.

Schendel, D., & Hofer, C. W. (1979). *Strategic management: a new view of business policy and planning*. Boston: Little Brown.

Scheurich, J. J. (1997). *Research method in the postmodern*. London: Falmer Press.

Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Schon, D. (1991). *The reflective turn*. New York, NY: Teachers' College Press.

Schwenk, C., & Dalton, D. (1991). The changing shape of strategic management research. In P. Shrivastava, A. Huff & J. Dutton (Eds.), *Advances in strategic management* (pp. 277-300). Greenwich: JAI Press.

Scott, G. (2003). *Learning principals: leadership capability and learning research in New South Wales Department of Education and Training*. Sydney: New South Wales Department of Education and Training.

Shakeshaft, C. (1987). *Women in educational administration*. Newbury Park: SAGE.

Shakeshaft, C., & Perry, A. (1995). The language of power versus the language of empowerment: gender differences in administrative communication. In D. Corson (Ed.), *Discourse and power in educational organizations* (pp. 17-29). Cresskill, NJ.: Hampton Press.

Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(2), 217-226.

Shapiro, J., & Stefkovich, J. A. (2005). *Ethical leadership and decision making in education* (2 ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Shavelson, R. J., Phillips, D. C., Towne, L., & Feuer, M. J. (2003). On the science of education design studies. *Educational Researcher, 35*(2), 15-21.

Shore, C., & Wright, S. (1999). Audit culture and anthropology: neo-liberalism in British higher education. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 5*(4), 557-575.

Shrivastava, P. (1985). Is strategic management ideological? *Journal of Management, 12*, 363-377.

Shrivastava, P., & Lim, G. E. (1989). A profile of doctoral dissertations in strategic management: a note. *Journal of Management Studies, 26*, 531-540.

Siegel, S., & Castellan, N. J. (1988). *Nonparametric statistics for the behavioral science* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Silins, H., & Mulford, B. (2002). Schools as learning organizations: the case for system, teacher and student learning. *Journal of Educational Administration, 40*, 425-446.

Simon, H. A. (1976). *Administrative behavior* (3rd ed.). New York: Free Press.

Simsek, Z. (2007). CEO tenure and organizational performance: an intervening model. *Strategic Management Journal, 28*, 653-662.

Snyder, P., & Lawson, S. (1993). Evaluating results using corrected and uncorrected effect size estimates. *Journal of Experimental Education, 61*, 334-349.

St John, C. H. (2005). Multi-theoretical mixed-level research in strategic management. In D. J. Ketchen & D. D. Bergh (Eds.), *Research methodology in strategy and management* (Vol. 2, pp. 197-223). Sydney: Elsevier.

Staples, W. G. (1994). Small acts of cunning :disciplinary practices in contemporary life. *The Sociological Quarterly, 35*(4), 645-664.

Starratt, R. J. (2004). *Building an ethical school*. London: Falmer Press.

Stefkovich, J. A., & Begley, P. (2007). Ethical school leadership: defining the best interests of students. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*(2), 205-224.

Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: a survey of theory and research*. New York: Macmillan.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, Cal.: SAGE.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Taylor, C. (2001). Hierarchies and 'local' markets: the geography of the 'lived' market place in secondary education provision. *Journal of Education Policy, 16*(3), 197-214.

Taylor, F. W. (1911). *The principles of scientific management*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Thody, A. (1991). Strategic planning and school management. *School Organization, 11*(1), 21-36.

Thomas, A. B. (1986). Does leadership make a difference to organizational performance? *Administrative Science Quarterly, 33*, 388-400.

Thomas, A. R. (2006). New waves of leadership: a retrospect. In L. Smith & D. Riley (Eds.), *New waves of leadership: Australian Council for Educational Leaders yearbook 2006* (pp. 10-15). Sydney: Australian Council for Educational Leaders.

Thomas, H., & Carroll, C. (1992). Theoretical and empirical links between strategic groups, cognitive communities, and networks of interacting firms. College of Commerce, University of Illinois.

Thomas, H., & Pruett, M. (1993). Introduction to the special issue: perspectives on theory building in strategic management. *Journal of Management Studies, 30*(1), 3-10.

Thompson, B. (1996). AERA editorial policies regarding statistical significance testing: three suggested reforms. *Educational Researcher, 25*(2), 26-30.

Thompson, B. (2007). Effect sizes, confidence intervals, and confidence intervals for effect sizes. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*(5), 423-432.

Thomson, P. (2001a). How principals lose face. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 22*(1), 5-22.

Thomson, P. (2001b). *The representational and reform work of principals and their associations*. Paper presented at the AARE Conference.

Thomson, P. (2002). *Schooling the rustbelt kids: making a difference in changing times*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Thomson, S. D. (1993). *Principals for our changing schools: knowledge and skill base*. Lancaster, PA.: Technomic.

Thong, J., & Yap, C. (1995). CEO characteristics, organizational characteristics and information technology adoption in small business. *Omega, 23*(4), 429-442.

Timar, T. B., & Kirp, D. L. (1988). State efforts to reform schools: treading between a regulatory swamp and an English garden. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 10*(2), 75-88.

Timperley, H. (2005). Distributed leadership: developing theory from practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 37*(4), 395-420.

Timperley, H., & Robinson, V. (2000). Workloads and professional culture of teachers. *Educational Management and Administration, 28*(1), 47-62.

Tooley, J. (1992). The pink tank on the education reform act. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 40*(4), 335-349.

Toulmin, S. (1972). *Human understanding*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Toulmin, S. (1993). The construal of reality: criticism in modern and postmodern science. In W. Mitchell (Ed.), *The politics of interpretation* (pp. 99-117). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

Trim, P. (1997). Strategy saves the day. *Management in Education, 11*(4), 29-31.

Trim, P., & Lee, Y. I. (2004). A reflection on theory building and the development of management knowledge. *Management Decision, 42*(3/4), 473-480.

Tsiakkiros, A., & Pashiardis, P. (2002). Strategic planning and education: the case of Cyprus. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 16*(1), 6-17.

Vacha-Haase, T., & Thompson, B. (2004). How to estimate and interpret various effect sizes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 51*(4), 473-481.

Van Cauwenbergh, A., & Cool, K. (1982). Strategic management in a new framework. *Strategic Management Journal, 3*(3), 245-264.

Van de Ven, A. H. (1992). Suggestions for studying strategy process: a research note. *Strategic Management Journal, 13*(1), 169-188.

Van de Ven, A. H., Angle, H. L., & Poole, M. S. (1989). *Research in the management of innovation: the Minnesota studies*. New York: Harper & Row.

Van de Ven, A. H., & Johnson, P. E. (2006). Knowledge for theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(4), 902-921.

van Zanten, A. (2005). Bourdieu as education policy analyst and expert: a rich but ambiguous legacy. *Journal of Education Policy, 20*(6), 671-686.

Vernoy, M., & Vernoy, J. (1997). *Behavioral statistics in action*. Pacific Grove, CA.: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Vinson, T. (2002). *Inquiry into the provision of public education in NSW*. Annadale, NSW: Pluto Press.

Wacquant, L. (1997). Preface. In P. Bourdieu (Ed.), *State nobility*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Walker, A., & Stott, K. (2000). Performance improvement in schools: a case of overdose. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 28*(1), 63-76.

Wallace, M. (1991). Flexible planning: a key to the management of multiple innovations. *Educational Management and Administration, 19*(3), 180-192.

Walsh, P. (2006). Narrowed horizons and the impoverishment of educational discourse: teaching, learning and performing under the new educational bureaucracies. *Journal of Education Policy, 21*(1), 95-117.

Warnet, M. (1994). Towards clarification in determining school strategy. *School Organization, 14*(2), 219-234.

Watson, G., & Crossley, M. (2001). Beyond the rational: the strategic management process, cultural change and post-incorporation further education. *Educational Management and Administration, 29*(1), 113-126.

Watson, T. J. (1997). *In search of management*. London: Routledge.

Weber, M. (1968). *Economy and society: an outline of interprise sociology*. Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press.

Weick, K. E. (1976). Educational organizations as loosely-coupled systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 21*(1), 1-19.

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE.

Weindling, D. (1999). Stages in headship. In T. Bush, L. Bell, R. Bolam, R. Glatter & P. Ribbins (Eds.), *Educational management: redefining theory, policy and practice* (pp. 90-101). London: Paul Chapman.

Wellington, J., & Torgerson, C. (2005). Writing for publication: what counts as a 'high status, eminent academic journal?' *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 29*(1), 35-48.

Westphal, J. D., & Fredrickson, J. W. (2001). Who directs strategic change? director experience, the selection of new CEOs, and change in corporate strategy. *Strategic Management Journal, 22*, 1113-1137.

Wexler, P. (1991). After postmodernism: a new age social theory. In R. Smith & P. Wexler (Eds.), *After post-modernism*. London: Falmer.

Whetten, D. (1989). What constitutes a theoretical contribution? *Academy of Management Review, 14*(4), 490-495.

Wildy, H., Forster, P., Louden, W., & Wallace, J. (2004). The international study of leadership in education: monitoring decision making by school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(4), 416-430.

Wilkinson, L., & Task Force on Statistical Inference. (1999). Statistical methods in psychology journals: guidelines and explanations. *American Psychologist, 54*, 594-604.

Willower, D. J. (1975). Theory in educational administration. *Journal of Educational Administration, 13*, 77-91.

Willower, D. J. (1980). Contemporary issues in theory in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 16*(3), 1-25.

Wilson, D. (1999a). Strategy development in secondary schools. *Management in Education, 13*(3), 9-11.

Wilson, D. (1999b). Strategy development in secondary schools: part ii. *Management in Education, 13*(4), 9-12.

Witziers, B., Bosker, R. J., & Kruger, M. L. (2003). Educational leadership and student achievement: the elusive search for an association. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 39*(3), 398-425.

Wodak, R. (1995). Power, discourse, and styles of female leadership in school committee meetings. In D. Corson (Ed.), *Discourse and power in educational organizations* (pp. 31-54). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Wong, E. O. W. (2005). Operationalization of strategic changes in continuing education. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 19*(5), 383-395.

Wong Lai-ngok, J. (2004). School autonomy in China: a comparison between government and private schools within the context of decentralization. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 32*(3), 58-73.

Woods, P. A., Woods, G. J., & Gunter, H. (2007). Academy schools and entrepreneurialism in education. *Journal of Education Policy, 22*(2), 237-259.

Wragg, T. (2002). Interviewing. In M. Coleman & A. R. J. Briggs (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 143-158). London: Paul Chapman.

Yukl, G. (2006). *Leadership in organizations* (6 ed.). New Jersey: Pearson-Prentice Hall.

Zaretsky, L. (2004). Advocacy and administration: from conflict to collaboration. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(2), 270-296.

APPENDICES

Student Researcher

Scott Eacott
BTeach/BSocSci GradCertPTT MLMEd MACEA
PhD Candidate
University of Newcastle
Tel: (02) 4921 7805
Fax: (02) 4921 7887
Email: Scott.Eacott@newcastle.edu.au

Project Supervisor

Dr. David T. Gamage
Associate Professor
School of Education
The University of Newcastle
University Drive, Callaghan, NSW 2308
Australia
Tel: (02) 4921 5914
Fax: (02) 4921 7887

A Questionnaire on 'The Strategic Leadership of Public Primary School Principals in New South Wales'
(To be completed by Principals only)

Please indicate your preferred answer by ticking (✓) the appropriate box.

About yourself

Gender
☐   Male   ☐   Female

Age
☐   <30   ☐   31-40   ☐   41-50   ☐   51+

Time in your current position
☐   1-3 years   ☐   4-6 years   ☐   7-10 years   ☐   11+ years

Formal education (tick as many as appropriate)
☐   Undergraduate Degree   ☐   Diploma in Education
☐   Masters   ☐   EdD
☐   PhD   ☐   Other: _____

Functional Track (indicate time in years, spent at each applicable level)
___   Teacher   ___   Assistant Principal
___   Deputy Principal   ___   P5 or P6 Principal
___   P3 or P4 Principal   ___   P1 or P2 Principal
___   Other: _____

About your school

School Size
☐   P1   ☐   P2   ☐   P3   ☐   P4
☐   P5   ☐   P6

Socio-Economic Status (tick the most appropriate)
☐   PSP   ☐   Low   ☐   Average   ☐   High

Significant student enrolments (if applicable)
☐   ATSI   ☐   NESB   ☐   ATSI & NESB ☐   Other

Strategic Leadership Behaviours

The following items are designed to measure your perceptions of your own strategic leadership behaviours. For each item please tick (✓) the box which best describes your perception of performance for that item.

There is space below for you to justify your ratings and to add any other comments you think would be helpful.

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Builds in reflection of practice as part of the life of the school						
2. Develops a systematic method of collecting information about the implementation of the school's strategic direction						
3. Orally articulates the school's strategic direction to others						
4. Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action						
5. Engages with others in the school community about the challenges of the future						
6. Makes strategy come to life through conversations and discussions						
7. Considers how the school's strategic direction can be witnessed as happening						
8. Encourages reflective dialogue in meetings						
9. Continuously assesses 'How are we going with the school's strategic direction?'						
10. Works with other leaders in the school to encourage a culture of reflection and dialogue on strategic matters						
11. Moves debates from day-to-day problems to the strategic future of the school						
12. Ensures that staff have an understanding of the school's strategic direction						
13. Separates the school's operational plan (1-3 years) from the strategic plan						
14. Establishes a sense of purpose for the school's actions						
15. Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximise effectiveness						
16. Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction						
17. Builds in time to discuss and debate where we are going as a school						
18. Involves a wide group of individuals to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters						
19. Makes the monitoring of progress a continuous process						
20. Has a limited number of strategic objectives in writing that are measurable						

	SD	D	SD	SA	A	SA
21. Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state						
22. Establishes periodic in-depth, thoughtful and considered evaluation of the effectiveness of strategic activities						
23. Improves what the school already does but, significantly, moves to a much higher level of performance						
24. Creates structures (e.g. stage teams, KLA committees) to set the goals and develop the strategies for the school's strategic direction						
25. Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction						
26. Gives others the feeling that their contribution is important and recognized						
27. The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made						
28. Tries to significantly improve existing operations by developing the capability to shift to a whole new level of operation						
29. Applies value judgements on the effectiveness of strategic activities through reflection						
30. Recognises when the school needs a change						
31. Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school						
32. Integrates the school's strategic direction into all aspects of the school's organization						
33. Creates a shared conceptual or mental map of the future						
34. Initiates changes before external constraints and conditions force change						
35. Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's progress						
36. Mentors others in the development of their strategic capabilities						

Please explain any themes you can see running through your ratings and list aspects that have been missed which you believe are important. Attach additional pages if required.

Please place the completed questionnaire in the supplied self-addressed reply paid envelope and return to the researcher.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

Student Researcher

Scott Eacott
BTeach/BSocSci GradCertPTT MLMEd MACEA
PhD Candidate
University of Newcastle
Tel: (02) 4921 7805
Fax: (02) 4921 7887
Email: Scott.Eacott@newcastle.edu.au

The UNIVERSITY *of* NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Project Supervisor

Dr. David T. Gamage
Associate Professor
School of Education
The University of Newcastle
University Drive, Callaghan, NSW 2308
Australia
Tel: (02) 4921 5914
Fax: (02) 4921 7887

A Questionnaire on 'The Strategic Leadership of Public Primary School Principals in New South Wales' (To be completed by Principal Raters only)

Please indicate your preferred answer by ticking (✓) the appropriate box.

About yourself

For the principal you are rating, you fit into which of the below categories

☐   Organisationally above (e.g. School Education Director)
☐   At the same level as (e.g. other principals)
☐   Organisationally below (e.g. school executives, teachers)
☐   Other: _____ (e.g. P & C / school council members)

Strategic Leadership Behaviours

The following items are designed to measure your perceptions of your principal's strategic leadership behaviours. For each item please tick (✓) the box which best describes your perception of performance for that item.

Items	Level of agreement with the statement					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Builds in reflection of practice as part of the life of the school						
2. Develops a systematic method of collecting information about the implementation of the school's strategic direction						
3. Orally articulates the school's strategic direction to others						
4. Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action						
5. Engages with others in the school community about the challenges of the future						
6. Makes strategy come to life through conversations and discussions						
7. Considers how the school's strategic direction can be witnessed as happening						
8. Encourages reflective dialogue in meetings						

9. Continuously assesses 'How are we going with the school's strategic direction?'						
10. Works with other leaders in the school to encourage a culture of reflection and dialogue on strategic matters						
11. Moves debates from day-to-day problems to the strategic future of the school						
12. Ensures that staff have an understanding of the school's strategic direction						
13. Separates the school's operational plan (1-3 years) from the strategic plan						
14. Establishes a sense of purpose for the school's actions						
15. Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximise effectiveness						
16. Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction						
17. Builds in time to discuss and debate where we are going as a school						
18. Involves a wide group of individuals to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters						
19. Makes the monitoring of progress a continuous process						
20. Has a limited number of strategic objectives in writing that are measurable						
21. Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state						
22. Establishes periodic in-depth, thoughtful and considered evaluation of the effectiveness of strategic activities						
23. Improves what the school already does but, significantly, moves to a much higher level of performance						
24. Creates structures (e.g. stage teams, KLA committees) to set the goals and develop the strategies for the school's strategic direction						
25. Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction						
26. Gives others the feeling that their contribution is important and recognized						
27. The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made						
28. Tries to significantly improve existing operations by developing the capability to shift to a whole new level of operation						
29. Applies value judgements on the effectiveness of strategic activities through reflection						
30. Recognises when the school needs a change						
31. Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school						
32. Integrates the school's strategic direction into all aspects of the school's organization						
33. Creates a shared conceptual or mental map of the future						
34. Initiates changes before external constraints and conditions force change						
35. Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's progress						
36. Mentors others in the development of their strategic capabilities						

APPENDIX 3: SLQ – SCALES AND ITEMS

No.	Item	
	Envisioning strategy	
1	Builds in reflection of practice as part of the life of the school	Reflection
8	Encourages reflective dialogue in meetings	
11	Moves debates from day-to-day problems to the strategic future of the school	Strategic thinking
17	Builds in time to discuss and debate where we are going as a school	
21	Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state	Mental models
33	Creates a shared conceptual or mental map of the future	
	Engaging the people	
5	Engages with others in the school community about the challenges of the future	Strategic conversations
10	Works with other leaders in the school to encourage a culture of reflection and dialogue on strategic matters	
14	Establishes a sense of purpose for the school's actions	Participation
18	Involves a wide group of individuals to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters	
26	Gives others the feeling that their contribution is important and recognised	Motivation
27	The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made	
31	Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school	Capability
36	Mentors others in the development of their strategic capabilities	
	Articulating the strategy	
3	Orally articulates the school's strategic direction the others	Oral
6	Makes strategy come to life through conversations and discussions	
13	Separates the school's operational plan (1-3 years) from the strategic plan	Written
20	Has a limited number of strategic objectives in writing that are deliverable	
24	Creates structures (e.g. stage teams, KLA committees) to support the implementation of the school's strategic direction	Structural
32	Integrates the school's strategic direction into all aspects of the school's organization	
	Implementing the strategy	
4	Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action	Translating strategy into action
7	Considers how the school's strategic direction can be witnessed as happening	
12	Ensures that staff have an understanding of the school's strategic direction	Alignment
16	Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction	
23	Improves what the school already does but, significantly, moves to a much higher level of performance	Sequential / parallel implementation
28	Tries to significantly improve existing operations by developing the capability to shift to a whole new level of operation	
30	Recognises when the school needs a change	Strategic timing
34	Initiates changes before external constraints and conditions force change	
	Monitoring and evaluating the strategy	
2	Develops a systematic method of collecting information about the implementation of the school's strategic direction	Monitoring
9	Continuously assessing 'How are we going with the school's strategic direction?'	
15	Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximise effectiveness	

19	Makes the monitoring of progress a continuous process	
22	Establishes periodic in-depth, thoughtful and considered evaluation of the effectiveness of strategic activities	Evaluating
25	Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction	
29	Applies value judgements on the effectiveness of strategic activities through reflection	
35	Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's progress	

APPENDIX 4: INDIVIDUAL ITEM RESULTS

Item	N	Mean	SD	Skewness Static	Skewness S.E.	Kurtosis Static	Kurtosis S.E.	Median
1. Builds in reflection of practice as part of the life of the school	76	5.07	.64	-1.75	.28	7.05	.54	5.00
2. Develops a systematic method of collecting information about the implementation of the school's strategic direction	76	4.84	.74	-1.23	.28	2.71	.54	5.00
3. Orally articulates the school's strategic direction to others	76	5.20	.59	-1.22	.28	4.61	.54	5.00
4. Establishes strategic plans and frameworks and ensures they are translated into action	76	5.11	.47	-0.21	.28	.33	.54	5.00
5. Engages with others in the school community about the challenges of the future	76	5.14	.65	-0.65	.28	.45	.54	5.05
6. Makes strategy come to life through conversations and discussions	76	5.03	.62	-0.84	.28	1.21	.54	5.00
7. Considers how the school's strategic directions can be witnessed as happening	76	4.81	.68	-0.33	.28	-0.03	.54	5.00
8. Encourages reflective dialogue in meetings	76	4.97	.76	-1.01	.28	2.17	.54	5.00
9. Continuously assess 'How are we going with the school's strategic direction?'	76	4.92	.75	-0.78	.28	.50	.54	5.00
10. Works with other leaders in the school to encourage a culture of reflection and dialogue on strategic matters	76	4.96	.78	-1.07	.28	2.04	.54	5.00
11. Moves debates from day-to-day problems to the strategic future of the school	76	4.66	.66	-0.09	.28	.12	.54	4.80
12. Ensures that staff have an understanding of the school's strategic direction	76	4.99	.56	-0.25	.28	.10	.54	5.00
13. Separates the school's operational plan (1-3 years) from the strategic plan	76	4.40	1.02	-0.85	.28	.60	.54	4.60
14. Establishes a sense of purpose for the school's actions	76	5.16	.67	-0.77	.28	.61	.54	5.10
15. Makes adjustments (both small and large) during the implementation process to maximize effectiveness	76	5.09	.63	-0.80	.28	1.42	.54	5.00
16. Maintains the staff's commitment to the implementation of the school's strategic direction	76	4.94	.66	-0.20	.28	-0.17	.54	5.00
17. Builds in time to discuss and debate where we are going as a school	76	4.86	.76	-0.38	.28	-0.08	.54	5.00
18. Involves a wide group of	76	4.64	.70	-0.27	.28	.44	.54	4.64

individuals to inform discussion and debate on strategic matters								
19. Makes monitoring pf progress a continuous process	76	4.80	.65	-0.32	.28	.35	.54	5.00
20. Has a limited number of strategic objectives in writing that are measurable	76	4.85	.77	-0.66	.28	1.43	.54	5.00
21. Builds images or metaphors for a desired future state	76	4.16	.96	-1.04	.28	1.59	.54	4.19
22. Establishes periodic in-depth, thoughtful and considered evaluation of the effectiveness of strategic activities	76	4.53	.73	-0.84	.28	1.33	.54	4.72
23. Improves what the school already does but, significantly, moves to a much higher level of performance	76	4.89	.79	-0.95	.28	1.46	.54	5.00
24. Creates structures (e.g. stage teams, KLA committees) to set the goals and develop the strategies for the school's strategic direction	76	5.03	.76	-1.07	.28	.92	.54	5.00
25. Provides a forum for the school community to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's strategic direction	76	4.75	.78	-0.78	.28	1.35	.54	5.00
26. Gives others the feeling that their contribution is important and recognized	76	5.18	.75	-0.83	.28	0.13	.54	5.23
27. The contributions of others can make a difference to decisions made	76	5.29	.69	-1.00	.28	.76	.54	5.36
28. Tries to significantly improve existing operations by developing the capability to shift to a whole new level of operation	76	4.85	.66	-0.61	.28	.31	.54	5.00
29. Applies value judgements on the effectiveness of strategic activities through reflection	76	4.87	.67	-1.29	.28	4.16	.54	5.00
30. Recognises when the school needs a change	76	5.20	.61	-0.43	.28	-0.29	.54	5.14
31. Supports the development of other strategic leaders within the school	76	5.25	.66	-0.78	.28	.49	.54	5.23
32. Integrates the school's strategic direction into all aspects of the school's organization	76	4.76	.83	-1.01	.28	1.92	.54	5.00
33. Creates a shared conceptual or mental map of the future	76	4.54	.82	-0.72	.28	1.53	.54	4.50
34. Initiates changes before external constraints and conditions force change	76	4.94	.72	-0.34	.28	-0.37	.54	5.00
35. Takes account of changes and their effects on the school's progress	76	5.09	.54	-0.19	.28	.32	.54	5.00
36. Mentors others in the	76	4.95	.75	-0.40	.28	-0.22	.54	5.00

development of their strategic
capabilities

APPENDIX 5: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Student Researcher

Scott Eacott
BTeach/BSocSci GradCertPTT MLMEd MACEA
PhD Candidate
University of Newcastle
Tel: (02) 4921 7805
Fax: (02) 4921 7887
Email: Scott.Eacott@newcastle.edu.au

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Project Supervisor

Dr. David T. Gamage
Associate Professor
School of Education
The University of Newcastle
University Drive, Callaghan, NSW 2308
Australia
Tel: (02) 4921 5914
Fax: (02) 4921 7887

Structured Interview Schedule on 'The Strategic Leadership of Public Primary School Principals in the Hunter / Central Coast Region New South Wales'

Introduce purpose of interview
The purpose of this research is to undertake an empirical study on strategic leadership in public primary schools in New South Wales. It proposes to build on previous research and studies and undertake research in the context of New South Wales public schools. The specific objectives of this research are to:

- Identify the contemporary understanding of strategic leadership of primary school principals; and
- Identify the contemporary strategic role of principals in primary schools.

Interviewee name:
Date:

1. **What does the term strategic leadership mean to you in your current role?**
   Prompts
   - How does strategy fit into your school leadership?
   - Is the term misunderstood/misused?

2. **Tell me about the strategic role you play?**
   Prompts
   - How do you display strategic leadership?
   - What are the key aspects of this strategic role?

3. **Can you think of a specific change when your capabilities as a strategic leader have been most challenged?**
   Prompts
   - Describe the situation or problem
   - Describe how you handled it and, if this worked, why this was so?

4. **What forms of learning have you undertaken in relation to strategic leadership?**
   Prompts
   - Any formal staff development, university courses or other courses?
   - Any informal methods?
   - How has this learning contributed to your understanding and knowledge of strategic leadership in schools?

5. **What sort of analogy best describes the strategic leadership role in a school like yours?**

6. **Is there anything else you would like to add regarding strategic leadership in schools?**