Reviewing a school's core values:
One Aspect of School Self Review

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Educational Administration
at Massey University.

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2000

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is the product of the support, assistance, and intellectual influence of many people. My principal debt is to my two supervisors, Drs. Wayne Edwards and David Stewart of Massey University College of Education. These two men have challenged and guided my thinking, supported and encouraged my research efforts, and inspired and enthused me with their intellectual debate and educational knowledge and expertise throughout this project. I would also like to make special mention of my brother, Professor David Thomson who also guided and offered much valuable comment on this thesis.

A special debt is also owed to the school and their community that gave their support and co-operation to this research. For six months this school allowed me to educate, participate and work with them to reflect upon their own practices and to plan and trial new school self review practices. These people devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy to this work and for this I am very grateful.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the support and assistance of family, many friends and colleagues who challenged and shaped my thinking throughout the duration of this project.

I sincerely thank all these people for jointly making this thesis possible.

Abstract

In 1993, the New Zealand Government mandated the requirement that all schools must have in place an on going programme of school self review (National Administrative Guidelines, 4,ii). This thesis takes the position that, in 1999, most schools have met the obligation to implement self review programmes, but that many of these programmes are not resulting in the aimed for and hoped for, lasting school improvement.

It is the contention of this thesis that failure to achieve on going school improvement through school self review is, in part, due to the structure of many current school self review programmes. At present many schools perceive self review as review of every thing that happens in schools. This perception may mean that valuable time and energy is being wasted on reviewing a wide range of tasks and activities that have only indirect bearing on the primary purpose of the school, teaching and learning. Stewart and Prebble (1993) argue that this perception may also lead to wasting time in reviewing the very areas about which boards are already well informed

This thesis takes the position that school self review should be viewed from a more holistic perspective than is currently being done by many schools. In particular, it is argued that school self review should be conceived around a small group of core activities which centre directly on the main mission of the school, that is teaching and learning. One such core activity, according to Stewart and Prebble (1993), is the management and development of a school's culture.

For the purposes of this thesis, school self review is understood to mean the process of review of all school practices with the intention of improving practice. For self review to be successful in this context, it must be carried out in a collaborative school climate of open honest communication, mutual support and mutual responsibility. For self review to be effective it must also be planned, systematic, on going and it will involve collection of data through illuminative, participatory and responsive inquiry modes. This data in turn will be collectively analysed and critically reflected upon to ascertain whether school practices are realising the school's mission and vision.

A literature review in the fields of educational evaluation, monitoring, school

self review and school improvement examines the connections between school self review and school effectiveness and improvement. The literature review also considers the associations between school improvement, school effectiveness and school culture. Within the review of school culture, the role of the school principal in managing and developing a school's culture is considered.

Using knowledge gained from the literature review, a school self review trial is carried out in a case study school. This self review trial aims to improve teaching and learning in the case study school by collaboratively developing, implementing and analysing one aspect of a school's culture, the core values of the school. The trial is made up of nine activities which involve part or all of the school community in developing and implementing methods to review their school's core values. In the course of the self review trial, concepts of school effectiveness, school improvement, school culture and educational values are examined and discussed.

In brief, the trial found that: it is important for schools to review that which is valuable to them and to take responsibility for their own improvement; for school self review to be effective, the review must be for self accountability purposes and it must involve all of the school community; and if understanding the symbols and culture of a school is a prerequisite to making a school more effective, then part of school self review should involve looking at the 'larger picture', that is, the core values of the school community.

The findings of the case study, self review trial are combined with conclusions from the literature and with concepts from current theoretical perspectives in an effort to identify specific self review conditions and practices that contribute to and foster improvement of a school's culture. These identified successful strategies are finally amalgamated into a model for reviewing a school's core values, which it is hoped may be able to inform and guide others interested in reviewing this particular aspect of a school's culture.

In conclusion, this thesis found that the field of self review of a school's core values, is a field that has received little attention to date. Therefore, this thesis concludes with suggestions for further investigation in the domain of self review of a school's core values, beliefs and understandings. In particular, this thesis suggests that research is needed on the role that core values play in school effectiveness.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW

- A State of Confusion

"The concept of school self review as a means of improving both the accountability of schools and their effectiveness has been promoted in various education systems around the world over recent years" (Martyn, 1996:1).

In New Zealand, school self review has had a relatively recent history. The 1989 education reforms were based on the ideology of 'self managing' schools. These reforms radically altered the administration systems of New Zealand schools with one result being that school self review became a mandated requirement in 1993 (Ministry of Education, NAG 4 ii).

The purpose of this overview is to describe and provide a background to the planned study by considering the following topics:

- the planned study;
- the nature and purpose of evaluation;
- school self review;
  - definitions
  - rationale for and purposes of self review
    (Please note, the concept and nature of school self review are examined fully in Chapter Two, the Literature Review of this thesis)
- the background of the study;
- the nature of the study;
- the statement of the research problem;
- clarification of terms used in this thesis; and
- limitations and delimitations of the study.

THE PLANNED STUDY

In brief, the planned study in this thesis takes the form of a school based, collaborative review of a school's core values. This study arose from a school's wish to review part of their school culture, their core values, but they were unable to source any models or directions on how to do this. In the absence of suitable review models, the school decided to develop their own processes of evaluation for reviewing their core values. Therefore, the school's main objective was to involve the full school community in a collaborative process that would review the school's core values.

The writer's main purpose for the planned study was to produce a conceptual model of school self review which would consist of processes that could be used to review the core values of a school. To achieve her objectives, the writer took the role of an equal member of a small rural school community and worked with them as they planned, developed, trialled, implemented, and reviewed processes to review the core values of their school.

The outcome of the study was two-fold. The school identified their core values and developed methods for constructing indicators for these values and the writer produced an informed conceptual model of self review of a school's core values.

The Nature and Purpose of Evaluation

According to Codd the word 'evaluation', when considered in ordinary English usage, suggests "the appraisal of something in terms of its value" (1989: 3). Codd further writes that an evaluation is "a judgement based on some criteria of success, merit or worth" (1989: 3). In education, Codd states, evaluation can be defined "as the process of obtaining from within a given domain of educational practice, information about people, activities or institutions, and using that information to make interpretations, appraisals or judgements pertaining to specific purposes"(1989:3). He also argues that, no matter what kind of evaluation approach is taken and no matter what particular judgement or decision is to be made, evaluation will always involve four essential elements:

- a socio-cultural context in which the evaluation occurs;
- a set of standards or criteria that can be invoked or applied;

- a comparison between the actual phenomena being evaluated and the criteria; and
- a judgement of worth or value in relation to the criteria.

(1989:4)

Two factors, which are of particular importance when determining the nature of the evaluation process, are the overall purpose of the evaluation and the intended audience for the evaluation results. Codd (1989) argues that there are two main types of evaluation, summative evaluation, and formative evaluation. Codd (1989), Willms (1992) and Stoll and Fink (1996) write that summative evaluation or compliance review, is external review which is directed towards school effectiveness, productivity and external accountability. In New Zealand, the Education Review Office (ERO) is charged with the responsibility of external or summative evaluation. The exact nature and role of ERO will be discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis.

According to Codd (1989), Willms (1992) and Stoll and Fink (1996), formative evaluation is directed towards awareness and understanding for the benefit of the people who 'live inside' the schools. In particular, formative evaluation is a form of evaluation that is both self-reflective and self-critical, is concerned with the on-going process of development within a school, and has as its primary aim, school improvement and change (Codd, 1989). This type of evaluation, known as school self review in New Zealand, is implemented by the school, and is primarily for the use and benefit of the board of trustees (BOT), staff, parents and students of the school in which the review is undertaken.

School Self Review

The New Zealand Ministry of Education, explains in a newsletter, that self review is " a process that enables a school to evaluate how effectively it is meeting the goals it has adopted" (1997:1). The newsletter proceeds to explain that an "effective self review process provides the board with important information about how well it is managing the school in its desire to improve learning outcomes for students" (MoE, 1997:1).

The New Zealand Education Review Office had this to say of school self review in 1994:

> School self review is a process by which school boards of trustees identify, assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the school in

> meeting the values it has adopted, fulfilling its obligations to the community and providing the education it wants for its students (ERO cited in Annesley, 1996:108).

This definition is qualified by the explanation that self review is not intended to be an end in itself but rather it is a tool to inform board decision making and is to be used as part of the wider process of school improvement.

The Ministry of Education states that school self review is one stage of a continuous, five -stage cycle of school self review and development. They describe school review and development as "a dynamic process involving continuous change and growth" (1997:8).

Figure 1.1 Ministry of Education (1997:8) School Review and Development Model

The Ministry of Education (1997) adds that the self review and development process should be used by schools to systematically plan strategies to meet local goals and the requirements of the National Education Guidelines. They further argue that this process can be used to manage school review and development in all areas of the school operation and at both strategic and

operational levels.

Rationale for and Purposes of School Self Review.

Clift et al. (1987) state that there is a belief in many official and professional educational circles that schools taking responsibility for reviewing their own practices and performances is the most effective and efficient way of bringing about school improvement on a national scale. Rozenholtz in Lieberman (1990) argues that the rationale for the use of school self review practices is the notion that good performance is self rewarding and provides the incentive to continue performing well. Rozenholtz adds that self initiated self review enables schools to feel efficient and that this, in turn, makes teachers feel more committed to their work. The concept of self review will be fully examined in Section Three of the following literature review.

The New Zealand Situation

As stated above, the Education Act of 1989, (Section 61,2) promulgated a set of central aims and objectives for education in New Zealand. These aims and objectives are collectively known as the National Education Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1990). These guidelines were revised in 1993 and the section called the National Administrative Guidelines, amongst other things, contained the new requirement that school boards of trustees maintain an on going programme of school self review (NAG, 4ii. 1993). More will be said about New Zealand school self review policy and practices in the following literature review.

Background to this Study

This study evolved from a personal interest in school self review. During my years as Chairperson of a school board of trustees, my board struggled with the requirement to provide an on going programme of school self review as required by the 1993 National Administrative Guidelines.
At first, we ignored the requirement as it arrived at a time when we were very busy trying to implement the many other Ministry requirements. We also perceived this new requirement to be too difficult to undertake on the minimal amount of information supplied by the Ministry. However, our school was finally galvanised into action by an imminent ERO visit in mid 1994, so we

engaged the services of an education consultant to set up a programme of on going school self review for our school.

For the next two to three years we attempted to make the consultant's self review programme work but it proved to be very time consuming, overly complicated and above the general understanding of lay people (Sutton, 1994). We also failed to see its relation to improved teaching and learning in our school. After three years and another turn over of board members, we were still struggling with self review.

It was from this background that the thesis topic and research task and objectives evolved. My belief was that, the concept of school self review for school improvement was sound, but the problem was how to devise a workable, useful process that would lead to school improvement. My own reading, reflection and discussion with colleagues lead me to the view that, for school self review to work, it needs to be seen in holistic terms (Stewart and Prebble, 1993 and Stoll and Fink, 1996). Our first attempts at school self review had involved drawing up lists of everything that happens in the school and then these lists were divided into units which were reviewed over a three year cycle. This system was ineffective as it was time consuming and often reviewed areas of school practice about which we already had sufficient knowledge.

More recent reading and reflection leads me to the conclusion that, for self review to be both manageable and effective, we need to view self review in holistic units, like the units suggested by Stewart and Prebble for principal appraisal, in their book 'The Reflective Principal' (1993). In this book, Stewart and Prebble link principal appraisal to school self review when they contend that "an appraisal of the principal's performance must also be, in a sense, an evaluation or review of the whole school, or part of it"(1993:186).

Stewart and Prebble (1993) support this argument by writing that traditional approaches to principal appraisal have evolved from listing, in their job description, all a principal's tasks and responsibilities with little description of what these tasks look like. This has made appraisal difficult for both the principal and board of trustees. Stewart and Prebble write that this traditional approach to principal appraisal has resulted in many boards concentrating on the aspects of the principal's job that have most prominence in the document, with the result that they may be spending large amounts of time on appraising tasks that have little direct bearing on the primary purpose of the school:

teaching and learning (1993). As principal appraisal is, in essence, a review of everything that happens in a school, then these points also pertain to self review.

Stewart and Prebble, therefore, propose a different system of principal appraisal and, by association, a self review system which focuses on the core activities of a school: teaching and learning. They contend that the central mission of a school can be divided into five core activities:

- leading, co-ordinating and facilitating the learning community;
- managing and developing the school culture;
- taking responsibility for school communication networks;
- playing a figurehead role in representing the school; and
- maintaining a programme of personal professional development.

(1993)

It is this concept of five core activities which appealed to me as the basis for school self review. These five core activities embrace and group into logical units, all the tasks that are carried out in a school and, therefore, must be reviewed. This approach helps me realise, that to date, my attempts at self review had concentrated on a very diverse list of tasks and activities with the result that our final reports had been superficial and had not adequately addressed the basic performance of teaching and learning in our school. The greatest weakness of these systems, according to Stewart and Prebble (1993) was that they wasted much time and effort on areas which had little direct bearing on teaching and learning in the school.

These observations and reflection on our practice raised the question: How can these five core activities suggested by Stewart and Prebble, (1993) be developed into a school self review system that primarily aims to improve teaching and learning and meet the requirements of the 1993 National Administrative Guidelines? Literature searches to obtain references to support this approach, advocated by Stewart and Prebble, failed to find any other writers arguing for, or providing systems for, a similar, core activity approach to self review.

Therefore, the school and the writer came to the conclusion that they would have to devise their own systems if they wished to develop and trial a system of school review based on Stewart and Prebble's (1993) core activities and which, in particular, would review the case study school's core values.

To achieve this end, the planned study in this thesis takes one of the five core activities, managing and developing the school culture, and, in particular, review of a school's core values, and the writer works with a school to plan, develop, implement and evaluate a system of school self review which looks in depth at this central aspect of a school's mission and performance.

Nature of the Study

The self review trial, in this thesis, was undertaken in a rural New Zealand primary school. The school has a decile rating of ten and is situated in close proximity to both a sizeable town and a city. There are currently fifty children and three permanent teachers at the school. Because of the size of the school, the principal is also a teacher with one day a week for release for administrative duties. This small school has enjoyed a pattern of stable staffing for some years with the present principal having been in the school for the past five years. Another of the teachers has been with the school for ten years and the third teacher has served some two years with the school. The school board of trustees, until recently, had experienced a relatively stable complement of members but, in the past eighteen months, there have been several changes of board members, including two chairpersons and this left the school in a somewhat vulnerable position. It was in this environment of some uncertainty that the writer worked with the school on their core values review.

The case study was implemented over a twelve month period during which the writer worked collectively with the school staff, students, board of trustees and parents. Together, we planned, trialled and reflected upon school self review practices in this school and, in particular, we developed methods that reviewed the school's core values. At times, the writer was asked to be the 'expert' in the group so that she could educate and inform the group about school culture, school effectiveness and school improvement, but, for most of the study, she was an equal member of the research review team.

Statement of Research Task

As previously stated, the main purpose of the research task was to develop methods that could be used to review a school's core values. The objectives for this research can be divided into two groups, one group being the

objectives the writer wished to attain from the research and the second group consisting of objectives which the school wished to attain from this study.

The writer's objectives for this study were to:

- develop and trial a system of school self review which focuses on one of the core activities of learning and teaching, management and development of a school's culture, a notion of Stewart and Prebble, (1993) and, in particular, identification of a school's core values;

- incorporate principal appraisal into school self review to determine whether principal appraisal is, in essence, review of the whole or part of a school's performance. This objective is also based on an argument proffered by Stewart and Prebble (1993);

- ascertain whether it is feasible for a group of school staff, students and parents to collaboratively devise processes for self review of a school's core values; and

- produce a conceptual model of review of a school's core values which could be used by other schools to meet part of the National Administrative Guidelines (1993) which require each school board of trustees to maintain an on going programme of school self review (N.A.G., 1993,4,ii).

- to experiment with and learn about research methodology by being involved in a true collaborative action research exercise. This objective is a very important aspect of the planned study as this is the researcher's first experience in research of this nature.

The case study school's objectives for this research were:

- to learn more about school culture, school improvement and school effectiveness;

- to identify the core values of their school by addressing the question: Did their school community possess a set of shared values, beliefs and understandings?

- to ascertain whether the shared values were evident in current school practices by addressing the questions: Did school policy and practice reflect the school community's identified core values, and if they did not, how might this be affecting the effectiveness of the school and what could be done to improve or change the situation?

It is important to note, at this juncture, that, although the above objectives were agreed at the beginning of the study, by the key group of the researcher, staff and school board of trustees, it was also agreed that the group would be flexible with the objectives so that they could change or modify them as they progressed, if the consensus of the group was that new directions would be more useful to the school.

Clarification of Terms Used in this Thesis

The concept of school self review is encompassed by several other terms in the literature to which reference is made in this study. In American and British literature, (e.g. Willms, 1992 and Nevo, 1995) reference to school self review is usually as school self evaluation, self monitoring and self accountability. All these terms share similar meanings and understandings with the New Zealand term 'school self review'. Throughout this study, the four terms, self evaluation, self monitoring, self accountability and self review, will be considered to share a broad common meaning.

Therefore, this thesis adopts the position that school self review is a process using rigorous, planned, systematic, formative and summative methods to monitor, assess and evaluate everything that happens in a school with the primary purpose of improving teaching and learning in that school.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The choice of a collaborative action research study of one school imposed a number of limitations on this study; the main limitation being lack of time. As we had made a group decision to use collaborative research in this study and we had also made a commitment to ourselves and the school board to include as many members of the school community as possible in the project, these requirements meant that the trial was going to require substantial amounts of

time to carry out this full consultation. The writer was also aware of everyday demands on teacher's time; therefore, she always tried to ensure that time spent on the review was used prudently.

Despite the trial being undertaken over a twelve month period, much of this time was lost due to waiting, for meetings which had to be scheduled carefully to meet the needs of several people, for consultations which had to be held out of school time and also at night and for the return of surveys.

Having two main purposes for the study also put more demands on the available time. As the school was primarily interested in outcomes and my reason for the study was to reflect upon processes, these dual aims meant that each task took a substantial amount of time for completion and reflection so that both aims were met. However, it should be noted that the dual agenda did not make difficulties for the progress of the research. By agreement and consent, both parties in the research task decided that they would get most benefit from the review if they reflected on and discussed both the processes and the outcomes of the research.

Another limitation of the study, from the writer's perspective, was the way the collaborative research method changed and modified the direction and purpose of the study. Although the group had agreed to set objectives at the beginning of the study, the direction of the trial changed several times by consensus of the group. As the writer was only one person in a group of approximately ten key people, she did not always fully agree with planned actions but she had to agree and support the consensus of the group.

Finally the concept of 'group think' also placed some limitations on this study. Unfortunately, the writer was only introduced to the concept of groupthink in the latter stages of this self review trial. Although it was too late by this time to take groupthink into account during the trial, it was possible to apply the concept to the reflection on and analysis of the trial.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in six chapters. Chapter One has already provided an overview to the planned study by outlining the purposes, approaches and outcomes of the self review of a school's core values. To support the overview of the planned study, the nature of the study task was stated, the background to the study was discussed and limitations and delimitations of the study were

proffered. This chapter also introduced, in brief, the notion of educational evaluation and the purposes and nature of school self review.

Chapter Two takes the form of a literature review which examines both international and New Zealand historical and current literature on school evaluation policy and, in particular, school self review definitions, rationale, purposes and characteristics. This chapter also looks at the concept of school effectiveness, school culture and the principal's role in development and management of a school's culture as these concepts are very closely linked to and inform the planned study. This chapter concludes with identification of four hypotheses that are the focus for the planned self review study.

Chapter Three considers the research methodology used in the planned study. In particular, this chapter examines the nature and purpose of collaborative action research, investigates the nature and scope of the data collection methods which are used in the planned study and links this information into an analytical framework for the planned study. This chapter also includes discussion on research issues such as ethical considerations, verification of information, and reliability of information which were considered in the course of the review exercise.

Chapter Four contains a full record of the review of a school's core values exercise. This report contains explanation of the planning, trialling, and implementing of the nine activities in the review. A very important component of each activity was the critical reflection on both the outcomes and the processes used. This reflection is reported in depth so that the reader will be fully informed on how the processes evolved and why recommendations for improvement of processes were made.

In the fifth chapter conclusions from the review exercise are presented and review methodology is reconsidered. From the explanation of the nine review activities, reflection on action and recommendations for improved practice, a conceptual model that could be used to inform review of a school's core values, is presented and explained.

The final chapter brings the thesis to a conclusion by restating the four hypotheses and considering them in light of the study results. From this linking of the research strands, hypotheses are stated and several conclusions are reached. The thesis concludes with recommendations for further study and research.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction and Overview

According to Schollum and Ingram (1991), Willms (1992) and Nevo (1995), school self review is not a new concept. In fact, many schools have experienced, at some time, forms of external or internal, formal or informal reviews, evaluations or inspections of their performance. Teachers have long been accustomed to evaluating their own teaching programmes, materials and resources and learning outcomes. However, these writers argue that formalised, mandated school self review, as defined for use in this paper, is a relatively recent educational initiative.

This literature review is presented in four main sections. Section One provides an historical discussion of early educational developments, in Britain, the United States of America and New Zealand, which laid the foundations for current school self review practices. Section Two explores the growth of the effective schools movement and the relationship and significance of this to school improvement, school culture and school self review, and the third section examines recent literature about school self review. In particular, this section considers current self review meanings, rationale, purposes and characteristics. The final section examines and discusses recent literature, particularly that pertaining to current school review practices, perspectives and practices in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and particularly New Zealand.

Section 1- An Historical Account of the Events Which Laid the Foundations for the Development of School Self Review.

Section Overview

To establish an understanding of how and why self review practices in New Zealand have developed into their present form, section one contains discussion on the following key concepts:

- school evaluation policy in the United Kingdom, United States and

New Zealand prior to the 1980's;

- the notion that schools make little difference to pupil attainment;
- the reasons for which educational opinion changed to recognising that schools did indeed make a difference to pupil outcomes; and
- the political climate in the 1970's which was to reshape the direction of education world-wide.

This section concludes with identification of the most significant links between this literature review and the planned self review exercise.

UNITED KINGDOM- SCHOOL EVALUATION POLICY PRIOR TO THE 1980s

Willms (1992) states that, prior to 1980, there was little formalised internal school self review being undertaken in British schools. Rather, British schools had a long history of highly structured external school review. According to Silver (1994), this tradition was founded in 1839 when the British government appointed the first school inspectors whose job it was to make judgements about the standard of education in government funded schools. These inspectors were to be the "eyes and ears of the government" (Silver, 1994: 20). Interestingly, Silver notes that these early formal reviews focused primarily on monitoring standards of discipline in the schools and that curriculum attainment was only a secondary consideration.

By the late 1950's and early 1960's, there was a widely held belief in educational circles that schools made little difference to the attainment levels of their pupils. Rather, it was family variables which had the major influence as the predictor of school outcomes. As early as 1959, the Crowther Report had shown that there was a very close association between a father's occupation and the educational achievement of his children. The Robbins Report of 1962 confirmed this finding when it studied pupil achievement and parent characteristics and found that the status of parents is a highly reliable predictor of student progress (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989). The Plowden Report of 1967 (cited in Beare, Caldwell and Millikan ,1989) also found little correlation between school outcomes and school effects. What these three reports were saying was that schools had little influence on the outcomes of their students. As these three reports argued that schools have little influence on the attainment of their students, it begs the question, if

schools make little difference to student outcomes, as to whether evaluation is necessary. It could also be said that this notion was just a 'cop out' for schools that were failing and that thinking, of this nature, saved schools from being subject to public accountability.

Reynolds (1985) argues that it was not until the late 1970's that the British intellectual climate was ready to question and debate this premise. It was at this time that the sociology of education was coming into prominence in Britain. In particular, Reynolds (1985) states that questions were being asked about what many people saw as the constraining influences of social class on the then system of divided public education. Silver (1994) adds that public opinion was asking for greater educational and social fairness in education. According to Silver, debate was also fuelled by the notion that, contrary to popular belief, schools did indeed make a difference to pupil attainment.

At the same time as the emergence of interest in the sociology of education, Britain was one of the advanced industrial countries which was feeling the effects of growing international competition and economic decline. As a result of this political situation, the British government was beginning to look towards its education system as a possible means for recovering national "economic equilibrium and social stability and cohesion"(Silver, 1994: 2). Thus, by the mid 1970's, British political and intellectual conditions were ripe for reform, renovation and reconstruction in education. It was this emerging debate that was to turn its focus to school effectiveness and, in turn, to the concepts of accountability and school self review.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - SCHOOL EVALUATION POLICY PRIOR TO THE 1980's

The American education system followed many of the same trends in school evaluation as did its British counterparts. By the mid nineteenth century, examinations and testing, both internal and external, were a distinctive feature of the American educational system. However, argues Nevo (1995), the American testing system differed from the British system, in that, the British system was nationally structured and controlled while the American system was based on state and local control. So, while Britain was establishing nation wide testing and examination, the United States of America were similarly developing city-wide and state systems.

Silver (1994) and Nevo (1995) note that the United States of America, like its British counterpart, began to feel the effects of international competition and resulting economic decline in the 1960's. At this time, there was also a growing awareness throughout the country of the widespread and rapidly increasing levels of poverty that post-war affluence had failed to eradicate. This recognition of poverty promoted President Lyndon Johnson to launch his 'War on Poverty'. According to Clift, Nuttall and McCormick (1987), one strategy of the 'War on Poverty' was the introduction of wide ranging educational programmes which used early intervention as an attempt to break the cycle of poverty. As a result of this focus on the education of the disadvantaged, questions were also asked about the quality and purpose of all aspects of American education.

In particular, debate centred around the commonly held belief that schools had little influence on the attainment levels of their pupils. In the early 1960's, investigation after investigation had produced the conclusions that a student's progress at school is overwhelmingly more dependent on their home background than what the school does for the students (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989). The Coleman Report of the mid 1960's considered thousands of students from across the nation and produced the controversial conclusion that "schools bring little influence to bear upon a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context"(Coleman 1966 cited in Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989: 3). The Coleman Report became central to subsequent international debate on the relevance of school effects, resources and values and the relationship between school and outcomes. According to Silver, the Coleman Report was most significant in that it precipitated "the beginning of the intellectual disillusion with education"(1994: 79).

This disillusionment lead to attempts, in the 1970's to review and counter the prevalent negative messages about education and it resulted in an educational movement which aimed to search for school improvements that would provide an effective education for all children. This movement, according to Silver (1994) came to be known as the effective schools movement. It was this interest in effective schools and school improvement that led to serious examination of school evaluation practices and was to result in formalised systems of school self review in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The same interest was to influence thinking about school self review in New Zealand.

NEW ZEALAND- SCHOOL EVALUATION POLICY PRIOR TO THE 1980s

Like its British and American counterparts, New Zealand education also followed the early pattern of rigorous external school review but with little or no formalised self review. McCulloch (1992) writes that, with the passing of the 1877 New Zealand Education Act, the government was able to prescribe what knowledge was suitable for inclusion in the primary school curriculum and the Act also allowed the government to establish the first set of formal standards for primary education in New Zealand. These formal standards were to be examined by government appointed school inspectors. At this time, the government stated that these examinations were to provide a uniform means to evaluate the work of teachers and students over the nation whilst also checking that public money was being used for the public good (McCulloch, 1992). This new system was heralded by teachers and the public alike as being founded on principles of equality of educational opportunity.

As was the case with both the United Kingdom and the United States, New Zealand was also to suffer from the world-wide economic decline and fiscal instability of the 1970's. According to Codd (1993), this resulted in the New Zealand government also turning its attention to its education system as a possible means for facilitating economic recovery.

Codd (1993) argues that New Zealand political thinking, in the early 1980's, witnessed a strong resurgence of economic and political liberalism. This movement had, as its central tenet, reduction of state intervention and the increase of market mechanisms as a way of promoting economic growth. This political ideology also stressed individual choice over state imposed responsibilities and obligations, according to Codd (1993). These political arguments were applied to education with the result that the question of the effectiveness of schools was raised and it fuelled debate on school evaluation. Thus, the topic of school evaluation, both external and internal, was to move into the New Zealand education spotlight and, in conjunction with that move came discussion on school self review as a means of achieving school effectiveness and school improvement.

The main lessons to be learned from this historical review of evaluation policy are that systems of formalised self review are a relatively recent educational innovation which came about in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and New Zealand in response to political thought which saw

education as a vehicle for economic recovery. The notion that school self review is a relatively recent educational innovation is important to the planned study because the planned self review task emerged from an absence of suitable core value review models, as this topic is of comparatively new interest in New Zealand education.

Section 2- The School Effectiveness Movement, School Improvement, School Culture and the Emergence of School Self Review.

Section Overview

By the 1970s, the political and intellectual climates in all three countries were changing and subsequently educational practices were being questioned, criticised and debated. As a result of this educational debate, there emerged a new education initiative known as the effective schools movement.

Section Two of this literature review follows the growth of the effective schools movement and investigates its relationship to school improvement, school culture and the growth of school self review. In particular, this section will outline:

- the nature and purpose of the school effectiveness movement;
- the links between school effectiveness research and school improvement knowledge;
- the notion of and dimensions of school culture;
- the concept of core values in school culture
- the role of a school principal in managing and developing school culture; and
- the relationship between school improvement, school culture and school self review.

Section Two of this literature review concludes with the identification of significant links between this literature and the planned self review exercise.

According to Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, (1989) the effective schools movement was "a concerted attempt in several countries to rediscover ways of creating really excellent schools" (1989: 1). In America, argues Silver (1994), the origins of the movement corresponded with the introduction of the 'war on poverty' educational programmes which aimed to find school improvements

that would provide an effective education for all children.

According to Reynolds (1985), prior to the 1970s, there had been little American research carried out on schools as learning institutions. However, precipitated by the 'war on poverty' programmes and in response to allegations that schools are not important determinants of student characteristics, there followed a growth in research studies which reviewed schools and their internal structures. These research studies came to be known as the effective schools research. Harold Silver asserts that the most important role of the effective schools research was to "refocus attention on the inner workings of the school"(Silver 1994: 49). The effective schools research confirmed the premise that very little was known about how schools work, what makes each school unique and why some schools are more effective than others.

Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) note that it was not until the 1980s that research reports in this field began to appear in the United Kingdom. These writers give several reasons for Britain lagging behind America in this respect. They argue that, prior to the 1980s, researchers had difficulty gaining access to British schools. They also suggest that British research in this field was hampered by an intellectual climate which believed strongly in the primacy of the individual and the family; thus, creating a research climate which was hostile to school effectiveness research.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH FINDINGS

Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) caution us that, while all the effective schools reviews assume that effective schools can be clearly identified from those schools which are ineffective, the effective schools research was unable to come to consensus on what constitutes an effective school. However, it is possible to collate a list of highly effective school characteristics from the various research studies. They are summarised in Table 2.1 in which the writer has collated from the listed literature, the most frequently cited characteristics of highly effective schools.

Table 2.1 Characteristics of highly effective schools

CHARACTERISTICS	INFLUENTIAL REFERENCES
Strong Leadership; - the leader has clear goals & expectations - they are an instructional leader - they share power - they have clear decision making processes - they are firm but yet fair	Rutter, 1908, cited in Reynolds and Cuttance, 1992, Purkey and Smith, 1983, Caldwell and Spinks, 1988, Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989, and Bliss, Firestone and Richards, 1991.
A Climate of High Expectation; - high expectations for all students - high expectations for all teachers - emphasis on learning of skills	Edmonds, 1978 cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989, and Bliss, Firestone and Richards, 1991.
An Instructional Focus; - the leader provides strong instruction for teachers - there is a work centred environment - there is on-going staff development	Purkey and Smith, 1983, Mortimore et al.,1988 cited in Reynolds and Cuttance, 1992 and Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989.
A Strong School Culture; - they have a set of values which are considered important - they have a positive, supportive climate - they have an orderly climate which is conducive to learning - they encourage parental involvement - they value trust, commitment and loyalty - they have an informal open door policy	Edmonds, 1978, cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Rutter, 1980, cited in Reynolds, 1992, Purkey and Smith, 1983, Fullan, 1985 cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1987, Mortimore et al. 1988, cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Caldwell and Spinks, 1988 and Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989.

Limitations of the Effective Schools Literature

Reynolds and Creemers (1994) claim that most of the effective schools research suffered from both conceptual and methodological flaws. These writers argue that serious questions must be asked about the validity and

generalisability of these research findings, as the findings are often built on very narrow research bases. Bliss, Firestone and Richards add that the effective schools literature can also be faulted for research problems such as:

> over reliance on case studies, failure to control properly for socio-economic status, the comparison of only extreme outlier schools, the overuse of correlational instead of causal designs, and the sole use of elementary schools as the sampling unit.
> (1991: 139-140)

However, these writers acknowledge that the effective schools research findings were a break through in rejecting the notion that schools and classrooms do not matter. Rather, they state that this research lead to further inquiry which aimed to identify characteristics, variables and factors that could contribute to school effectiveness. The effective schools research also precipitated the growth of school policy which aimed to improve schools. According to Reynolds, Bollen et al. (1996), interest in school improvement practices arose as a direct consequence of the school effectiveness movement and, subsequently, interest in school improvement become an entire field of study in the 1980s. It was in this new field of educational study, school improvement, that formalised school self review was to have its origins in the mid 1980's and was to lead ultimately to the present study.

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

With the new educational notion that schools did indeed make a difference to student achievement, Hopkins and Wideen (1984) write that educationalists were forced to focus their attention on the internal processes of their schools. As Silver (1994) argues, responsibility for attainment was now returned to the schools and, as a consequence, educationalists were forced to look at school structure rather than assuming social composition was responsible for educational outcomes. In particular, they were forced to examine how schools worked and how they could change and improve them.

Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994: 68) define school improvement as an approach to "educational change that has the twin purposes of enhancing student achievement and strengthening the school's capacity to manage change". They add that school improvement must enhance student outcomes

and sustain teacher and school development.

Reynolds, Bollen et al.(1996: 3) state that knowledge of school effectiveness research and knowledge of school improvement are complimentary as the school effectiveness research offered "educational means and goals to practitioners in school improvement". In summary, this thesis takes the position, as do Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) that, school improvement knowledge is developmentally orientated action which provides the path to move from theory to practice.

Reynolds et al. (1994) maintain that, in recent years, the term school improvement has come to be frequently associated with the work of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development sponsored International School Improvement Project (ISIP). School improvement was defined in the Project as:

> a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.
> (Reynolds, Bollen et al.1996: 66)

School improvement, in this definition, rests on a number of assumptions. The assumptions which are of particular relevance to this thesis are that:

- the school is the centre of change;
- schools must take responsibility for their own improvement;
- there must be a systematic approach to change;
- the internal conditions of schools are a key focus for change;
- improvement will not be successful without focus on full school change; and
- school evaluation must accompany school improvement.

These assumptions are drawn from the writings of; Hopkins and Wideen (1984); Hopkins, Bollen et al. (1996); Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994); and Stoll and Fink (1996).

To achieve school improvement, Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) argue that a school must use self evaluation/ self review strategies and that:

- school based review (SBR) must be a central component of all school improvement;
- there must be school wide review;
- schools must reflect critically on their own practices;
- all members of the school should be involved, e.g. teacher as researcher; and
- school based review should be collaborative, open and honest.

Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) warn us to exercise caution at this juncture. They point out that, whilst school self evaluation has been a major strategy for managing school improvement since the mid 1980s, they suggest that the results of this have been ambivalent. They argue that school self evaluation has had only limited impact on the daily life of many schools because schools have tended to focus their review on individual changes, teachers and classrooms, rather than looking at how these changes fit into the whole organisation and, in particular, the culture of the school. Rather, they argue that there must be an holistic approach to self review to ensure that strategies are developed which directly address the culture of the school. If school improvement ignores the culture of the school then it is doomed to fail, according to Ainscow, Hopkins & West (1994). Deal and Kennedy (1983) also emphasise this point by saying that, if the school culture works against you, it is nearly impossible to get anything done.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT, SCHOOL CULTURE AND SCHOOL SELF REVIEW

The writer found earlier in this thesis that the effective schools movement identified school culture as being an important characteristic of effective schools. Deal (cited in Westoby, 1988) argues that the school effectiveness movement overlooked and did not place enough importance on the role of school culture in school effectiveness and improvement. Deal maintains that school culture is absolutely pivotal to the process and success of school change and improvement. Stoll and Fink (1996) argue that we can not emphasise enough the role that school culture plays in changing and improving our schools. Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) support this notion by adding that, while schools are now acknowledged as making a difference to student achievement, the differences in outcome are due in large part to the variations in school cultures.

My own fifteen years of experience in different schools bares testimony to this premise as it is now evident to me that, despite trying to implement the same changes in different schools, they did not always work as well in some schools as in others, despite the schools having similar compositions. It is now possible to see that these changes were implemented with no regard to the social organisation and context in which these changes were being introduced. In Stoll and Fink's (1996) words, our improvement plans were doomed to failure because we did not take regard of the school's culture, as understanding a school's culture is a vital part of school improvement.

Nias (1989) states that school culture is not a new concept but, rather, that it came to prominence in 1932 when Waller graphically described the separate culture of the school. Since that time, educationalists have made much use of the term. Unfortunately, culture is very difficult to define and, according to Smyth (1993), it may be one of the most complex and elusive educational concepts that we possess. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) concur with Smyth when they state that culture is a generic term which is used for two quite different meanings, ethnic and aesthetic and, as a consequence, its meaning in education remains ambiguous. However, Beare et al. (1993) argue that culture, in the school sense, embodies both ethnic and aesthetic values as well as artistic, moral and emotional values. More recently Stoll and Fink state that school culture defines 'how things are and acts as a screen or lens through which the world is viewed"(1996: 82). Poskitt attempts to define school culture when she states that school culture is:

> the conceptual glue that binds a school together by its shared patterns of beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours, symbolised in its rituals, cultural players, myths, stories, slogans and symbols.
> (Poskitt, 1989: 9)

Steinhoff and Owens add that culture is also "invisible, intangible and unwritten"(1989: 17). Deal elaborates on the concept of school culture when he argues that schools do far more than produce learning. He contends that we need to give "considerable attention to another potentially influential, but largely unmeasured and unmentioned factor in academic performance- school culture"(1988: 202). Thus, this thesis takes the position that school culture is the learned, unwritten values, rules and inferred basic assumptions which tell us how to operate within a school. Culture, therefore, according to Sergiovanni (1992) and Owens, (1995) can be said to be the spiritual and moral essence of schools.

This contention, that school culture is a significant influence on school effectiveness, is supported by a growing body of literature and research that has emerged, largely since the 1980s. Stolp (1994) writes that researchers have compiled some impressive evidence on school culture. In particular, he makes reference to two studies by Fyans and Maehr (1990) and Thacker and McInerney (1992) which support very clearly the proposition that student achievement is increased in school's that have strong cultures. These two studies involved some sixteen thousand American students who were studied over a six year period. These studies support the premise that school change and improvement will not succeed without consideration of a school's existing culture. Deal (1988), Stolp (1994), Stoll & Fink (1996), and Hargreaves (1994) argue that, in fact, we may do more harm than good by eroding the faith of the school community if we attempt change without consideration of the school's culture. Deal suggests that the most successful way to make improvements in a school is to make " the school the focus of change and culture its target" (1988: 199). Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) also support Deal's contention when they argue that school improvement must concern itself with "the deep structure of values, relationships, and interpersonal processes" if the school wishes to achieve effectiveness (1988: 182).

There are now a significant number of studies which proffer similar advice on the topic of school culture. Notable writers, such as Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) Beare, Caldwell and Millikan(1989), Bliss, Firestone and Richards (1991), Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), Stoll and Fink (1996), all contend that culture pervades all of an organisation's functions. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan further this argument when they assert that the link between school culture and school effectiveness is so important that " the development of a strong, co-ordinated constructive school culture must be a matter of deliberate intent" (1989: 201). At this juncture, it is important to form an understanding of what a strong, co-ordinated school culture would look like.

Four expressions of School Culture

In their book' School Improvement in an Era of Change', (1994) Hopkins, Ainscow and West cite Susan Rosenholtz who used the phrase 'learning enriched' to describe her ideal type of school. Rozenholtz is well known for her premise that there are two types of stereotypical schools, the 'moving' school and the 'stuck' school. According to Rosenholtz, the moving school

produces much higher learning outcomes for students than does the stuck school. Her characteristics of both school types are encapsulated in the following table.

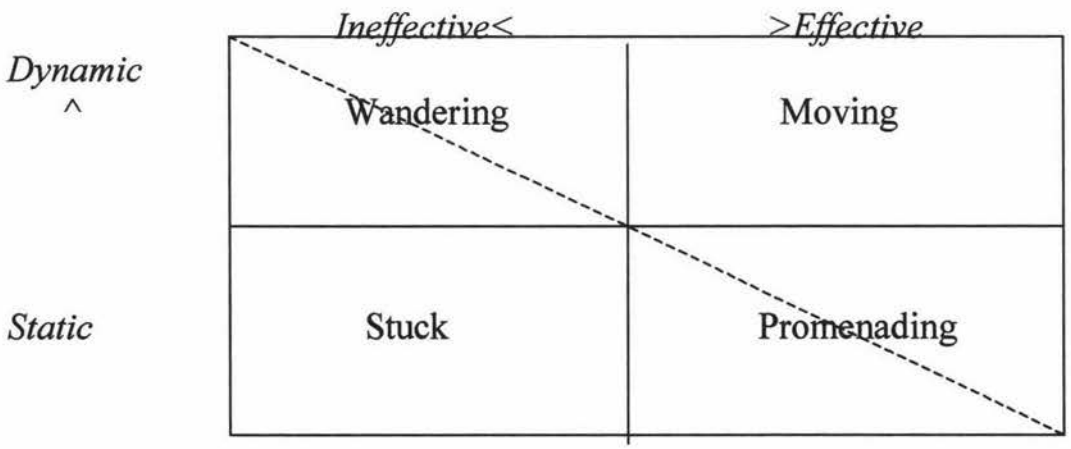
Table 2.2 Rosenholtz's (1989) School Work Culture

Stuck	Moving
Low Consensus	High Consensus
Teacher uncertainty	Teacher certainty
Low commitment	High Commitment
Isolation	Cohesiveness
Individualized	Collaborative
Learning improverished	Learning enriched

(Reprinted from Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994:90)

Hopkins et al. (1994) whilst applauding Rosenholtz's notion of the moving and stuck school, put forward a very sound argument to expand the original concept. They argue that school culture should be viewed as a continuum as they state that cultures are dynamic and constantly evolving and, therefore, they can not be fitted comfortably into only two categories. Rather, these writers propose a model of school culture which contains four expressions of culture.

Table 2.3 *Four expressions of school culture*



(Reprinted from Hopkins, Ainscow and West 1994: 91)

Stuck schools, according to Hopkins et al., are often failing schools. They are schools where the conditions are poor, teaching is an isolated solitary activity and expectations are low. In these schools, the notion of culture is relatively unknown and, if known, it will usually be regarded as something set, inflexible and unable to be changed.

The wandering school conversely has all the appearances of change and improvement but, in reality, this movement lacks vision and direction. According to Hopkins et al. (1994), the staff in these schools are worn out by continual change which achieves very little improvement.

By contrast, the promenading school is often a traditional school that is resting on its past achievements. These schools typically have a stable staff and attract students with successful learning histories. The philosophy of these schools is often, "Why change when we are pleased with the way things are done around here?" In fact, write Hopkins et al.(1994),these schools can be very difficult to change because maintenance of the status quo is their preferred option.

The final expression of school culture for these writers, is the moving school. Hopkins et al. (1994: 91) describe these schools as having a healthy blend of "change and stability, and balanced development and maintenance". These schools maintain a relative internal calm as they adapt successfully to the rapidly changing environment.

Hopkins et al. (1994) further explain that the diagonal line in the above matrix (Table 2.3) divides those schools which can achieve improvement from those schools in which change will be very difficult to implement. Generally, those schools above the line are in a position to carry out successful development work and those schools below the line need to work on their internal conditions before they can make successful improvements. Put simply, wandering schools need more focus and promenading schools need more movement.

Having discussed Rosenholtz's and Hopkins, Ainscow and West's expressions of school culture, it is now possible to take a closer look at the actual dimensions of a strong, effective school culture, a school culture which fosters and encourages improvement. From the ever-growing body of literature on school culture, which has emerged largely in the past fifteen years, it is

possible for the writer to identify some of the main characteristics of a strong, positive school culture which will foster school improvement and change. These characteristics are presented in summary form in table 2.4. This table brings together the most frequently cited main characteristics of strong school cultures.

Table 2.4 Characteristics of a strong positive school culture

CHARACTERISTICS	INFLUENTIAL REFERENCES
1. A shared philosophy/ vision that is held by all members.	Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989, and Stoll and Fink, 1996.
2. A set of shared goals which have as their main purpose the improvement of teaching and learning.	Caldwell and Spinks, 1988, Plunkett, 1990 and Stoll and Fink, 1996.
3. A set of shared values/ beliefs espoused by all school members, which serve to keep everyone pulling in the same direction.	Deal, 1988, Caldwell and Spinks, 1988, Beare et al. 1989, and Stoll and Fink, 1996.
4.A collaborative culture; - with shared decision making - which provides support, mutual respect and a reflective friend.	Sergiovanni, 1992, Smyth, 1993 and Stoll and Fink, 1996.
5.High expectations for all; - life long learning for everyone - continuous improvement - responsibility for success	Beare et al. 1989, Bliss et al. 1991, Purkey and Novak, 1996 and Stoll and Fink,1996.
6. A person oriented approach; - child centred, students as guardians of the culture - parents as partners	Stoll and Fink, 1996.
7. An appreciation and understanding of the value of school wide evaluation; - school wide and personal review - self review for self accountability not external review - values reflection with a purpose - uses the concept of the critical friend.	Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1989, Stewart and Prebble, 1993 and Stoll and Fink, 1996.

8. A culture and school practices which reflect the same values.	Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989.
9. A sense of pride, sense of community and sense of spirit.	Reid et al. 1987 and Creemers et al. 1989.
10. A principal as cultural manager and entrepreneur of values, who; - has vision - is firm and purposeful - is a transformational leader - uses participative approaches - shares leadership - develops and manages the school culture.	Sergiovanni, 1984,1987,1992, Deal, 1988, Stewart and Prebble, 1993, Sammons et al. 1995 and Stoll and Fink, 1996.

The facets of a strong school culture which have the greatest relationship to, and influence on the planned self review exercise in this thesis, are the notion of a set of core values being very important to school culture and the role of the principal in managing and developing the school culture and in particular the core values. The writer selected these two concepts for further discussion for because the planned study involves the development of methods to identify a school's core values and also investigates the role school principals play in managing and developing a school's core values. These two concepts are examined below.

CORE VALUES

As is shown in Table 2.5, Deal (1988), Caldwell and Spinks (1988), Beare et al. (1989), Sergiovanni (1992), Hargreaves and Fullan (1996) and Stoll and Fink, (1996) all write of the importance of a strong positive culture having a set of shared core values which are espoused by all school members and which serve to keep everyone 'pulling' in the same direction.

Lawley (2000) describes values as our deeply held beliefs about what is important. Leonard, cited in Begley, writes that "educational values give content and direction to educational aims, shape and dictate the means by which to achieve these aims, and are key elements to curriculum development" (1999: 219). Begley says that " core values are those values that

define the essence of any culture" (1999:54). These three writers state that little interest to date has been directed towards values in schools as opposed to values in education, because we have neither understood nor appreciated their importance to school effectiveness. Rather, they would argue, we have overlooked values because we have presumed they "are a natural part of the landscape", that they are a taken for granted and do not need discussion and examination (Begley, 1999: 90). Begley goes further and argues that not only do we overlook values in schools but, also, there is also a loss of common values in society. He contends that this loss of shared societal values is reflected in current school decision making which is dominated by policy and strategies. Campbell, writing in Begley, (1999) adds that, in recent years, educational administration has placed emphasis on the technical, social, and conceptual dimensions of administration; hence neglecting the question of values. It is my contention that, under the current right wing thinking evident in New Zealand education, values have been overlooked, because we have not understood their importance but, more importantly, because our prime concern has been with accountability and productivity in education. It appears that this may be changing, as evidenced in the appearance of groups such as the Living Values Project and the Quality Public Education Coalition which both promote the notion that schools need to establish their values bases in order to be able to improve the quality of education. These groups also share the idea that values education should be taught in schools; a notion which is not examined in this thesis.

At this point it is important to make the distinction between core values and what is often termed moral education or values education. Moral or values education argues Lawley (2000), is a taught curriculum component, which specifically teaches moral and ethical thinking and social and citizenship skills, whereas core values are the usually unarticulated values that guide and inform actions in a school.

In this literature review, the writer has noted that there is an increasing field of literature on moral education but that there is limited writing on core values in education although Willower and Licata (1997) argue that dialogue about values has become more salient in recent years in the literature of educational administration. Begley (1999) supports this contention by saying that increased concern with values is one of a number of trends in the current literature of educational administration. He argues that this concern has developed partially from the growing interest in school culture and its impact on school effectiveness and improvement but, he also argues, that interest in

core values in education has grown from a larger concern with the direction of education and in particular the outcomes of the drive for accountability and productivity.

Leonard, writing in Begley, (1999) adds that little research has been done on values in education as they resist empirical verification and are perceived to be complex and problematic. He also adds that values research has been overlooked because practitioners have failed to see the relevance of values as they are so busy solving the practical problems of the day.

Plunkett (1990) concurs that values in education are not often written about and he would add that core values are not often discussed by schools, as schools have been more accustomed to talking about content rather than values. Louis (1998) adds that we have consciously avoided serious discussion about values in our educational systems because it is easier to discuss policy and content. It is my contention that schools have always been in the values business, that they are much more than just charters and policy, and that they are in fact moral communities that practice the values they hold important in everything they say and do. However, my belief would also be that few New Zealand schools would have an identified set of values, an articulated 'code for living together' that everyone in the school community knows about. This is partly because the concept of school culture and, in particular, core values is relatively new to New Zealand education, and many professionals are only just being exposed to these notions, but it is also because of the current thinking in New Zealand education which places great emphasis on efficiency, productivity and accountability. This lack of interest in a school's core values means that there are few models available for those schools that wish to identify their core values. This absence of models gave rise to the planned study which develops and trials activities that can be used to identify a school's core activities.

When we speak of a set of shared core values in school culture, we are speaking of a set which is shared by the full school community. In the past, Plunkett (1990) contends, schools have operated on a fragmented system of values where the principal has espoused one set, teachers have applied their own values to their practices in the isolation of their classrooms and parents have had little or no say in their school's values systems. A New Zealand report, entitled 'A Report To The Ministry Of Education: A Survey Of Community And School Educational Values', (1992) found that teacher and parent values are often at variance as staff tend to emphasise personal

development skills while parents tend to emphasise vocational skills. Thus, there is the possibility that professionals' values may be at variance with community values and views. Therefore, according to Stoll and Fink (1996), to achieve a set of shared values which will support school improvement, the school must let the full school community have a voice in the identification, evaluation and review of the school's core values. Sergiovanni (1992) would add that core values are neither set in stone nor are easily changed. One of the main objectives of the planned study was to involve the whole school community in the review of core values exercise to ascertain whether it was both feasible and beneficial to use full participation in a task of this nature.

These points raise the issue: is it possible to reach value consensus through rational consultation and discussion? It is my contention that value consensus could be problematic and that this approach may induce neutrality, where all parties agree to respect differences. This point will be investigated in the planned self review of a school's core values study.

Current thought on core values in a school's culture (Leonard, 1999) argues that it is not sufficient to presume that a school community has a set of shared values; rather, that school communities should be actively involved in on going identification, discussion, scrutiny, evaluation and modification of values if necessary. Leonard goes as far as to argue that attention to a school's core values may be more important than teaching children to read and write as she maintains that, if a school does not have a set of shared values that are reflected in all school practices, then all teaching and learning is going to be hampered by the children receiving mixed messages as to what is valued in their school. In the absence of models to use to identify a school's core values, the major purpose of the planned study was to develop and trial methods that could be used for this task.

According to Lawley (2000), it is equally important to establish commonly understood meanings for those values so that everyone knows what is expected of them. The school involved in the planned study also considered this point to be very important as they could see little value in identifying the school's core values, recording them in the school's charter and not establishing common understandings of the values so that they could ascertain whether their school practices reflected the identified values. Therefore, the second section of the planned study concerns the development of performance indicators for a school's core values.

Willower and Licata (1997) argue that it is not sufficient for a school to identify their shared core values and to establish commonly understood meanings for those values, but that schools must also ensure these values are reflected in all school decision making and action. The writers contend that a statement of values can become highly ritualistic and have little relationship to the day to day activities in the organisation if practices are not put in place to regularly ensure that practice reflects policy. To do this, on going review of both the set of values, their meanings, and their presence in school practices, must be carried out. Plunkett (1990) argues that, ideally the full school community should take responsibility for and be involved in the regular review of the core values and their presence in school practices because full participation will raise commitment to and responsibility for the core values. The planned study explores this notion of full community participation in the review of a school's core values.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN SCHOOL CULTURE

As identified in Table 2.5, the role of a school leader in developing and managing a school's culture is very important. In fact, Schein (1997) would argue that "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (1997: 82). Deal also makes the point that making schools more effective is the role of the leader and that this requires "building and reshaping the hidden, taken for granted rules that govern day to day behaviour" (1988: 207). He argues further that, by influencing behaviour, culture affects productivity, how teachers teach and how learners learn. When the New Zealand writers, Stewart and Prebble (1993) talk about principal appraisal in relation to the central aspects of a school's mission and performance, they, too, cite managing and developing a school's culture as one of five key areas of educational and professional leadership.

Sergiovanni, (1987) a noted writer in the field of educational leadership, also concurs with the point that the school leader has a pivotal role as the manager and developer of a school's culture and, therefore, in the school's success. In his article ' Leadership and Excellence in Schooling' (1984), Sergiovanni presents five leadership forces which he considers must be present to attain excellence in schooling. At the pinnacle of his leadership forces, 'hierarchy', and the aspect, which in his opinion makes the difference between competent and excellent schools, is his cultural force. He describes this force as being the excellent leader who manages and develops the school culture through articulation of the school's mission, purposing of the school's culture and

reinforcing the culture through values, norms, traditions, habits, customs and stories.

The leader's role in developing and managing the school's culture is, according to Sergiovanni (1992) at the heart of leadership and is to do with values. He writes that one of the most important jobs a principal has to do is to protect and promote the core values of the school's community. Deal and Peterson (1998) wrote that principals communicate core values in their everyday work and that teachers reinforce values in their actions and words. To be able to model core values, they argue that principal's need to first read the culture of the school to get to know the deeper meaning embedded in the school before they try to reshape it. Secondly, they recommend that leaders uncover, identify and articulate the full school community's values. The third step, to reinforce, manage, develop and model the school's values, is also supported by Stolp (1994). This view contends that one of the most effective ways for a principal to reinforce a school's core values is to model those values which are important to the institution.

According to Sergiovanni (1992) the identification and establishment of a school's core values can serve as a substitute for direct leadership as, once values are identified, routinely incorporated into all school practices and reviewed regularly, leaders can step aside and take a less controlling role. He maintains that shared goals raise teacher commitment, motivation and, in turn, the level of teaching and learning. He also states that shared values provide the substance of management as they provide the 'glue' that binds people together.

This notion raises the question of staffing in schools because, if core values are very important to a school's success and if core values are not easy to change, how can a principal ensure the continuity of the school's values when schools typically have frequent staff changes? It could be asked whether staff should be selected for positions according to their values, if having a set of shared values is very important to a school's culture. It could also be argued that, if a set of shared values is very important to school effectiveness, then one part of the principal's role should be to staff the school with people who share the school community's values. This concept would present problems as it is often difficult to recruit and select suitable teachers in the present climate but if the values of potential staff was also to be considered, this would make the job of staffing schools even more difficult than it currently is. The role of the principal in managing and developing a school's core values is one of the

areas of investigation in the planned study. However, this study examines the issue of staff values not in the context of the recruitment and selection of new staff, but rather, the planned self review investigates methods that could be used to identify staff core values.

Section 3- Self Review

Section Overview

In this section of the literature review, the writer looks at the concept and commonly held understandings of school self review in the 1990's. In particular, the following issues are discussed:

- school self review definitions;
- the rationale for the use of school self review;
- purposes of school self review;
- characteristics of school self review;
- the process of school self review; and
- self review and the New Zealand Education Review Office.

School Self Review Definitions

According to Aspinwall et al. (1992), school self review is a process of monitoring school performance, a 'taking stock' of a school's position. Beare et al. (1989) add that school self review is a process which schools use to monitor everything that happens in a school, to ascertain whether they are achieving the goals they have set for their school. Clift, Nuttall and Mc Cormick (1987) define school self review as self generated institutional improvement.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, the New Zealand Education Review Office had this to say of school self review in 1994. School self review is a process by which school boards of trustees "identify, assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the school in meeting the values it has adopted, fulfilling its obligations to the community and providing the education it wants for its students" (ERO, 1994: 53). This definition is qualified by the explanation that self review is not intended to be an end in itself but, rather, it is a tool to inform board decision making and is to be used as part of the wider process of

school improvement.

Ruth Sutton (1994:4) states in her book, School Self Review- A Practical Approach, that self review "is about ensuring that children get the best possible experience during their one chance of compulsory education". She adds that we evaluate our schools as part of "providing and enhancing that entitlement"(1994:4). Schollum and Ingram write that self review is "an ongoing process enabling a school to focus on its vision, to listen and look at itself and to determine what the school is really like" (1991:4). For Schollum and Ingram, school self review is about realising a school's vision (1991).

Clift, Nuttall and McCormick (1987) caution us to clarify the term 'self' when discussing the notion of self review. They contend that most of us understand the term 'self' in relation to individual teachers evaluating their own practice within the four walls of their classrooms. However, they argue that the concept and its connotations are less clear when we consider institutional self review. Clift et al. state that 'self' review must mean teachers and schools seeing themselves collectively as the evaluators; not the evaluated, as is the case if the evaluation is carried out by external agents. Therefore, Clift et al. define self review as teachers and schools evaluating their own practices with the aim being to improve education in their own organisations. It is this final self review definition of Clift et al's. which is most in line with my own understandings of self review and it is this definition which is used to inform the planned study.

Rationale for the Use of School Self Review

The rationale for school self review is, according to Rosenholtz, (cited in Lieberman) that "good performance is self rewarding and provides the incentive for continuing to perform well" (1990,83). She adds that, if we do not allow people to feel efficient then they will lack commitment. As stated at the beginning of this thesis, Martyn (1996) argued that the New Zealand government mandated the use of school self review in 1993 "as a means of improving both the accountability of schools and their effectiveness". Clift et al. (1987) write that governments introduce and encourage the adoption of school self review strategies as governments perceive them to be a 'cost effective method' of inducing school improvement because government personnel do not have to be directly involved in part of the process of review. Rather, school staff and boards of trustees have to take responsibility and have to implement the greatest part of school review; that is the internal evaluation

or self review. The issue of whether New Zealand school self review is for accountability and effectiveness or whether it is a cost effective method for encouraging self improvement will be explored in section four of this literature review.

Willms (1992) writes that there is a further economic rationale for school self review. This rationale argues that self review is good for education because it makes possible comparison between schools and the subsequent competition stimulates and motivates schools to produce 'quality' education. But the term 'quality', which is now central to much policy discussion in education, is fraught with difficulties. (Clift et al. 1987 and Aspinwall, Simkins, Wilkinson and McAuley, 1992) Clift et al. liken 'quality' in education to beauty, "which lies in the eye- or rather the mind- of the beholder" (1987:202). There may be agreement as to what constitutes 'quality' amongst groups of people with similar interests, abilities, ideologies, social class or political persuasion but, according to Clift et al. (1987), there is no universal agreement about its nature.

This lack of consensus over the word 'quality' in school self review terms means that, with different expectations and concepts of quality, schools may end up with different standards of 'quality' education. What then is 'quality education' if that is what school self review is going to help produce? If we do not agree on what it means then how are we going to recognise it when we reach it? If each school formulates its own definition of quality education, then the result is surely going to be a country with a uneven balance of 'quality' education being produced in our schools. With different standards for 'quality' education from school to school, it follows that some New Zealand children must be receiving an education that is not equal to others and one of the aims of the Education Act of 1989 was to ensure that all children received equitable education. The issue that competition is good for education because it stimulates and motivates schools to produce 'quality' education will be examined and debated in Section Four of this literature review.

In the Ministry of Education's booklet,' Governing and Managing New Zealand Schools',(1997) they state that managing change is one rationale for the use of school self review. They write that, as the twenty-first century approaches, New Zealand is experiencing more rapid change than ever before. Therefore, in order to best serve their communities and prepare students for the future, schools must adapt and develop to keep pace with these changes. The report adds that schools will have to use school self review to make these

adaptations and developments. This thesis takes the position that self review can be a very powerful and effective motivator of change and that it can also be a process which can be used for school change. The use of school self review as a change agent is discussed under current New Zealand perspectives on school self review in Section Four of this literature review.

Purposes of School Self Review

By 1993, much had been written on the purposes of school review. Overseas literature indicates general agreement in the premise that the primary function of school self review should be the improvement of the quality of education. In particular, this contention is supported by Stoll and Fink (1996) who argue that school improvement can not happen without school evaluation. They write that the connection between school self review and school improvement was only really acknowledged in the 1980s and that, since that time, there has been a gradual return to monitoring and assessment in education.

Further overseas literature indicates that self review should be for self accountability and self assurance purposes(Nevo, 1995). But, clearly, as indicated by this literature review, not all self review practices have been for formative, improvement purposes. On the other side of the self review purpose debate is 'summative' self review which has, as its main purpose, accountability and assurance. Willms argues that one rationale put forward to support the notion of summative review has been the belief that "comparisons stimulate competition and that in turn motivates performance" (1992:3). The notion of formative and summative evaluation and the comparison of school's performance levels is considered in the current perspectives on New Zealand school self review, in Section Four of this literature review.

Sutton wrote, in 1994, that self review is about ensuring that children get the best possible educational experience. Schollum and Ingram who have written extensively on the subject, argue that school self review is "about change generated from within the organisation" and they state that this change leads to worthwhile and 'relevant' improvement (1991). Schollum and Ingram state that the purpose of school self review is to bring about worthwhile change and improvement through challenging current practices and ideas.

A Ministry of Education report, 'Governing and Managing New Zealand Schools, in 1997 said, that, school self review enables schools to specifically:

- examine schoolwide and classroom organisation;
- consider the effectiveness of policies;
- identify strengths and weaknesses;
- determine which planning targets have been met;
- evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programmes;
- identify barriers to learning;
- monitor the progress of identified groups of students;
- identify opportunities for curriculum and teacher development; and
- celebrate the good things that are happening.

(1997: 9)

From the above quotes and comments, one could deduce that school self review in New Zealand is intended to be used for formative, school self improvement purposes.

The issue of accountability and assurance begs the question, for whom is self review? This question raises several issues. Is the review purely for self improvement in the school which carries it out, is it for government purposes or is it for a combination of school and government purposes? In both the United Kingdom and the United States of America, in the 1980s, according to Willms, (1992) and Nevo (1995), self review was mainly for external accountability purposes as the results from school self evaluations were used to make public comparisons between schools. In the later 1980s, Willms (1992) adds, formative evaluation came into vogue and, then, the countries that retained self review into the nineties generally experimented with combinations of both formative and summative evaluation. Willms argues that there have always been inherent tensions between formative and summative evaluations and he questions whether it is possible to have an evaluation system which has both formative and summative functions. This issue will be discussed in Section Four of this literature review when we discuss current New Zealand perspectives on school self review.

The tensions that exist between formative and summative evaluations are mainly related to the feeling that school review for accountability to an external agent is counter productive to review which is for internal improvement. This is because, in many instances, when teachers perceive self review to be for external accountability purposes they cease working in shared, collaborative ways with other staff members and commence working

in isolated ways to enhance their own position and status. This stance serves to hinder and stifle whole school improvement, according to Silver (1994). As mentioned earlier, past experience has also shown that teachers have been wary and have felt threatened by review for external purposes and this state of negativity is also counterproductive to whole school improvement (Nevo, 1995). The question, for whom New Zealand school self review is intended will be considered in Section Four of this literature review.

New Zealand literature (e.g. Ministry of Education, 1997) which has been issued by the Ministry of Education since the introduction of the National Administrative Guidelines, 1993, generally argues that school self review is for school self improvement. In these statements, the point is made that school self review is clearly for the stakeholders in the school; that is, school staff, BOT, students and parents. However, on the other hand, New Zealand school self review reports have to be made available for a school's assurance visit by ERO and, in my experience, ERO scrutinises and questions these reports very closely. It could be argued that ERO uses these reports as the basis for professional dialogue. However, my experience with ERO leads me to believe that in their eyes, school self review is not only for internal accountability but also for external accountability to the government. Is external accountability to the government such a bad thing, as the government does provide the funding for most education? Are the government not entitled to know if they are getting 'value' for their money? It is my contention that we need both internal and external evaluation of schools and that the two processes are complimentary. We need external evaluation for accountability to the state, to ensure that education practices are standardised across the country and to ensure that each school is achieving the highest possible levels. We need internal evaluation, self review, to ensure that schools are motivated and stimulated to take responsibility for their own improvement and effectiveness.

Stoll and Fink (1996) bring to our attention the inherent danger that self review may not necessarily lead to improvement because it, in fact, may overlook school weaknesses. They argue that, if review is only carried out by people inside of the school, then there is the danger that these people may be too close to the problems to be able to see them. This notion would support the New Zealand government's contention that ERO plays the role of the objective evaluator, to provide that objectivity which might not be reached if school's were left completely alone to assess their own performance.

The above comments beg the question, What if self review shows a school to be less than effective and efficient? Could self review, then, not actually inhibit improvement by increasing the sense of failure and guilt? Clift et al. support this contention and add that school self review can also inhibit improvement in schools if the review process is overly involved, elaborate and /or time consuming. The issues of school failure, and public availability of ERO school assurance reports will be examined in Section Four of this literature review.

Characteristics of School Self Review

The ERO report, 'Self Review in Schools' (1994) listed the characteristics of school self review. As summarised from the above discussion, school self review:

- assesses and evaluates the effectiveness of the school;
- is part of the board's process of improving the education that the school provides;
- is an integral part of the management of a school;
- is not an end in itself but rather a process to assure its self and the community of its commitment to the vision, charter and policies of the school;
- is systematic and planned;
- involves the whole school community in the planning process; and
- is supported by documentation (ERO, 1994).

To this list can be added further characteristics of good self review. Clift et al. (1987) and Sutton (1994) argue that an important point about self review is that it must be voluntary and not imposed if it is to be successful. Overseas studies (Silver, 1994 and Nevo,1995) have shown that, when self review is imposed, teachers felt threatened, devalued and dehumanised by these reviews. Clift et al.(1987) write that the" true spirit of school self evaluation can only be found in voluntary schemes". (1987:194) As the New Zealand requirement for school self review was imposed on schools in 1993, does that mean that its chances of success are not good? Are teachers in 1999 resisting school self review and, therefore, hampering the potential success of school self review? These issues are considered in the fourth section of this literature review which considers current New Zealand perspectives and experiences of school self review.

The characteristic that school self review should be collaborative is supported by a wealth of literature. In particular, Clift et al.(1987), Schollum and Ingram(1991), Aspinwall et al. (1992), Willms (1992) and Sutton, (1994) all state that, for school self review to achieve lasting school improvement, it must be a shared, whole school, collaborative process. Nevo (1995:76) also emphasises the word ' process' and contends that self review must be seen as a process and not a 'one shot activity'. The planned study in this thesis takes the position that self review is planned, systematic and is a whole school community collaborative activity.

The Process of School Self Review

The Ministry of Education (1997) described school review and development as a dynamic process involving continuous change and growth. The process of self review must commence with and centre on some sort of overall plan, according to ERO (1994). In most instances this will be a school's strategic or development plan. With this plan as the focus, self review will concentrate on analysis, finding solutions to problems and then setting goals to make changes and bring about school improvement. Schollum and Ingram (1991), ERO (1994) Sutton (1994) and the Ministry of Education (1997) describe the process of self review as being cyclic in nature. They suggest that self review involves a cycle of the following components: initiating the review, the review in action and review development. To this cycle, the Ministry of Education would add, monitoring and reporting. The Ministry of Education describe the five steps of self review in the following manner (see Figure 2.1 below).

Figure 2.1 Ministry of Education , Self Review: A Five- Step Process
(Reprinted from Ministry of Education, 1997:13)

School self review is also cyclic in that, to manage review effectively, most schools develop some kind of two to five yearly cycle of the areas of school

practice which they will review each year. By using a cycle of review schools ensure that there is a vigorous and systematic search for assurance that goals are being met and that the education they are delivering to their students is constantly improving (ERO, 1994).

Within the cycle of self review and under the National Administrative Guidelines (1993), schools are required to review everything that happens in a school. Sutton (1994) argues that this is a daunting task for many small schools and she recommends a more 'holistic' approach to review for these schools, in particular. By this, she means that several areas of school management need to be grouped together so that it is possible to have only one or two self review focuses each year. She also suggests that it might also be beneficial for small schools to use an outside consultant to help carry out the review and to act as a critical friend to those involved in the review. According to Janis (1972), the use of an outsider will help the group to critically appraise their own position with less possibility of falling into the trap of groupthink.

Stewart and Prebble (1993) take this point a step further when they argue that principal appraisal is essentially self review of everything that happens in a school . They argue that boards often review those school practices about which they already have information and that they often overlook the more important and more difficult areas of school practice. To make principal appraisal and, therefore, school self review both more manageable and more worthwhile, they recommend that internal evaluation be centred on the following five main areas:

- leading, co-ordinating and facilitating the learning community;
- managing and developing the school culture;
- taking responsibility for school communication networks;
- playing a figurehead role in representing the school; and
- maintaining a programme of personal professional development.

This thesis accepts Stewart and Prebble's contention that principal appraisal and therefore, review of everything that happens in a school, should be viewed in an holistic manner with the emphasis being placed on the school practices which have the most effect on teaching and learning. Hence the planned study takes the form of self review of the management and development of a school's culture and, in particular, a school's core values.

A major component of the process of school self review, according to Clift et al.(1987), is the gathering of information for the review and, to do this, schools need to be involved in action research and data gathering. Data gathering for self review will involve gathering information on everything that happens in a school but the most important aspect of data gathering should involve collecting information on the achievement of students in all subjects (ERO, 1994). This information must be presented to the board of trustees in such a way as to assure the board that the decisions it has made have produced effective learning opportunities for the students. ERO (1994:4) notes that, "trustees in some schools are not provided with sufficient information to be properly accountable for the operations of the school" and "everything is the board's business because it is the trustees who are accountable in law" (ERO, 1994:4). Wiley, (1994) cited in Annesley, (1996) stated that, in 1994, aggregated achievement results were reported to only twenty four percent of boards of trustees in schools surveyed in a national study. It is this point, reluctance to supply achievement information to boards of trustees, which, in my opinion, hampers the true success of self review in many schools today.

In my work as a BOT trainer, it is still a regular occurrence to be told by school staff that review and, in particular, information on student achievement, is not the business of the board and that it should be left in the hands of the school's professionals. Many school trustees are still uncomfortable or uncertain as to what is the business of the professional leader, the school principal, and what is the board's business.

This thesis takes the position that it is very important to include a school's board in school self review so that the full school community takes responsibility for the process and outcomes of the review. Therefore, the planned study investigates the feasibility and usefulness of including the school board in all stages of self review of a school's core values.

Self Review and the New Zealand Education Review Office

In New Zealand we have a two tier system of school evaluation. We have internal school self review where schools develop and implement their own programmes of self review, and we have external review which is carried out by the Education Review Office (ERO). ERO is a government agency whose "sole purpose it to report publicly on the education and care of students in schools and early childhood centres" (www.ero.govt.nz, 2000). ERO's mission statement is, "High quality evaluation contributing to high quality

education" (www.ero.govt, 2000). According to Austin, Edwards and Parata-Blane, the two Ministry of Education reports, 'Administering for Excellence'(1988) and 'Tomorrow's Schools'(1988) stated that the Education Review Office would:

- ensure that institutions are accountable for the government funds they spend and for meeting the objectives set out in their Charter;
- be accountable through the Chief Executive to the Minister;
- ensure that regular reviews will be a cooperative endeavour, aimed at helping boards to meet their objectives and review their own performance; and
- comment on the performance of other elements in the system-the Special Education Service, the Colleges of Education supply of Advisory Services and the Ministry of Education's provision of policy advice and overseeing of policy implementation (1997: 16).

ERO carries out different types of reviews with accountability reviews being the review that all schools receive. On their website, ERO state that, in an accountability review, they investigate and report to boards of trustees, early childhood centre managers and the government on the quality of education provided for students in individual centres and schools. Accountability reviews are scheduled on the basis of prior performance, current risk appraisal and general review frequency which, for most schools, is at three to four yearly intervals. Each accountability review is carried out by a team of ERO reviewers who produce a report which is, in the first instance, supplied to the board of trustees for clarification. These reports are, in fact, public documents. In recent years the practice of printing parts of these reports in local newspapers has become common place as well as each school's full report being available on ERO's website and obtainable in full written form.

ERO accountability review reports take the form of listing requirements that a school must make before the next ERO visit, or their operational funding may be withheld, and they also make recommendations that ERO considers would improve practice in the school. However, it is not part of their job to tell schools how to go about reaching these requirements or recommendations. Their role does not involve actually helping or advising schools on how to improve their practices, according to Austin, Edwards and Parata-Blane

(1997). In short, ERO accountability reviews are the external review of schools whilst self review provides the internal review of New Zealand schools. While the two review modes are contrasting in nature and process, there are complimentary links between ERO evaluations and school self reviews. In particular the 'Achieving Excellence' report of 1997 stated that ERO should provide schools with indicators and standards that schools can use in their own self review practices to make judgements about their own progress and achievement. This report also suggests that ERO should play the role of the 'critical friend' who listens and helps schools to diagnose difficulties and their possible causes and makes recommendations for possible actions. The role of ERO will be further examined in Section Four of this literature review.

Section 4- Recent Experiences and Perspectives on School Self Review

Section Overview

Section Two of this literature review demonstrated that, by the late 1980's, the major education systems around the world were beginning to take a serious interest in school improvement and, in particular, school self review as a vehicle for achieving this school improvement. The third section of this literature review discussed the concept and form of self review as it had developed by the 1990's, and Section Four of this review examines recent developments, debates and controversies in the field of school self review in the 1990's. In particular, the following issues are examined in this section:

- the four school development strands which set the basis for school review philosophy and practice in the 1990's;
- recent school self review thinking and policy in the United Kingdom;
- recent school self review thinking and policy in the United States of America; and
- recent New Zealand school self review thinking and policy.

Clift, Nuttall and McCormick (1987) write that school self evaluation came into prominence in the western world in the late 1970s and early 1980's as a

result of four strands of school development that were taking place in most western countries at that time. The four strands of school development were accountability, curriculum development, curriculum review and staff development.

Accountability

The year 1976 was notable in British education circles, as the politician, Callaghan gave a memorable speech at Ruskin College which questioned the performance of schools and called for more accountability in education (Clift et al.,1987). This speech came at a time when there was a high level of dissatisfaction with many educational policies and practices, so the notion of improving educational outcomes by making education more accountable was embraced by many people as a possible solution to many of education's woes. Predictably, according to Clift et al., (1987) the immediate response from politicians and the public was to call for more testing of children and the production of league tables so that public comparisons of schools could be made. Public accountability in this form, according to Clift et al., was promoted as a means of stimulating school achievement through competition. This push for greater accountability in schools led to close scrutiny of the curriculum.

Curriculum Development

According to Clift et al. (1987) and Willms (1992), this strand of school development was more constructive than the cry for accountability because it aimed to actually change and improve schools by giving teachers a central position in the determining of curriculum in their schools. This new development was a reaction to earlier centralised curriculum developments which had failed to improve education. The new, espoused school based approach to curriculum development was, according to Willms (1992) and Martyn (1996), based on the assumption that teachers are the most significant forces in student's learning and, as such, they should be given more power to determine and design curriculum. Martyn adds that this new move in educational thinking was also based on the proposition that, if teachers are given greater participation to set appropriate goals for their own pupils, then improved teaching and learning will occur. Willms (1992) also notes that arguments such as these were based on the assumption that, if you give schools more responsibility, then they will actually want to improve. However, Willms adds that the move to give teachers more freedom in goal

setting was also actively promulgated by political teacher groups as they saw it as a means to democratise schools and share power both in schools and in the education systems in general.

Curriculum Review

From the cry for more accountability, in the United Kingdom, the United States, and later New Zealand schools, grew a raft of initiatives which focused on reviewing the curriculum. Most of these curriculum review initiatives aimed to monitor the effectiveness of individual teachers whilst deliberately overlooking, or perhaps avoiding, the larger issue of the notion and purpose of education, according to writers Lee and Hill (1996). Clift et al.(1987) add that these initiatives encouraged schools to review their own curricula, the content, delivery styles and educational outcomes.

The late 1980's, early 1990's were a very busy, if somewhat turbulent time in New Zealand curriculum review and development. The most significant review of curriculum to take place during this period, was the Curriculum Review of 1987. This key policy document acknowledged the need for equality of opportunity for girls and boys in education. However, according to O'Neill and Jolley, (1996) this review neither acknowledged the origins nor the real causes of the inequalities in our society. Following the findings of the Curriculum Review of 1987, and with a change of government and education philosophy and policy, came the release of the Draft National Curriculum in 1991 and then the adoption of the National Curriculum of New Zealand in 1993.

Staff Development

With the movement towards giving schools and teachers more power to set their own directions and evaluate their outcomes came a call for more school based teacher development so that teachers would have the necessary skills and expertise to implement these new requirements. According to Clift et al. (1987), this change in the direction of staff development grew from a general dissatisfaction with the traditional view of staff development, which saw teachers attending courses off the school site. New thinking deemed that, as schools were now being given more responsibility for their own direction in curriculum, staff development needed to be more holistic. That is, it should encompass all, or groups, of the staff rather than the traditional view of staff

development as single teacher or small groups of teachers receiving training away from the school site.

This new view was based on the premise that on site professional development would motivate, stimulate and show teachers how to improve their practice (Willms, 1992). However, it could also be argued that off site professional development allows teachers to mix with other teachers so that they can share experiences and learn from others. It is my contention that, at times, it is also easier to reflect critically on one's own practice when you are removed from the site and have others around you who can bring different perspectives to the situation. Another very important aspect of off site professional development, is the opportunity to look at other teacher's classrooms to glean ideas and inspiration from their work. These important facets of motivation are lost if professional development becomes solely school based.

It was also argued, according to Nevo (1995), that as staff development was now to be tailored to the direct needs of each school, it followed that the best place to carry out staff development was the school site. This is true but this argument, when considered in relation to the points raised above, should come to the conclusion that a balance, between site based professional development which takes account of a school's personal needs and off site professional development which provides the opportunity to share and reflect with others, offers the optimum learning opportunities for teachers.

During the 1980's and early 1990's, argues Nevo (1995), staff development was moving towards school based holistic development which encompassed teacher development and also whole staff and whole school organisation. Willms (1992) adds that, in some parts of the world, staff development was also being associated with parent education and parent involvement in decision making. He does add, however, that combined staff and parent education was only being introduced in isolated pockets rather than as whole state or country initiatives. The planned study in this thesis takes the position that it is very important to have combined staff, board of trustee and parent education and development so that all stakeholders understand and take responsibility for their school's development. This notion is supported by the work of Stoll and Fink (1996) who say that the full school community must be involved in school development if they wish the development to lead to school improvement.

From these four strands of school development, which returned the focus to

schools and what was happening in them, grew a number of different types of self evaluation, one of which was school self review. Other types of review which gained support at this juncture were formative reviews which were generally for accountability purposes and were implemented by external agencies.

THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE

Nevo (1995) writes that early forms of British school self evaluation were mostly aimed at review of the curriculum rather than at larger issues of school management and organisation. Some of the earliest forms of review took the form of check-lists and guidelines for schools which had been devised by Local Education Authorities. In particular, one such scheme was initiated with the publication of the booklet, ' Keeping The School Under Review: A Method of Self Assessment for Schools.'(1977) This method, which was devised by the Bristol LEA Inspectorate, had a clear formative philosophy which focused on past and present practices with the intent of improving teaching and learning, according to Holt (1981). However, Holt does add that this approach, though clearly formative in intent, did contain some allusions of external accountability as the Inspectorate asked that the results of the school reviews be available for discussion with the Inspectorate.

Another early British school self evaluation scheme was the GRIDS process, 'Guidelines for Review and Internal Development in Schools', which was developed in 1984 by McMahon, Bolam, Abbott and Holly. This scheme, according to Martyn, was "a compromise between meeting the accountability demands of the government and community without offending the professional sensitivities of the teachers and administrators" (1996: 27). The GRIDS Primary School Handbook was revised in 1988 and, at the time, its formulators stated that accountability factors had been played down and rather "the internal nature of the process was to be emphasised" (Martyn, 1996: 27). Nevo (1995) argues that this accent on the formative value of self review was necessary because British teachers, in 1988, were not yet ready to accept the notion of public accountability.

Another notable self evaluation programme from this period, was the Ford Teaching Project which was developed by John Elliott and reported by Nevo (1995). This system attempted to insulate itself from accountability demands, by introducing the concept of the teacher as a researcher. This new self review

notion posited that the teacher should use research methods to evaluate their own practices, according to their own needs. In Nevo's view (1995), this new approach to self evaluation, where the teacher carried out action research, made the first connections between action research and self review. The notion of the teacher as a researcher was advanced as a means of empowering teachers to take responsibility for their own performance in the belief that this would motivate and stimulate teachers to perform well. This argument holds merit in that giving teachers 'control' over their performance can in itself enhance performance but it could also be said that, unless teachers are given professional development on robust research methods that they might use to evaluate their performance, the teacher as researcher concept is fraught with difficulties.

It would be my observation that, currently, many New Zealand schools and teachers have still received little adequate training in how to access, devise and implement successful self review strategies with the result that many teachers and principals fail to see the potential of self review as a change and improvement process. To improve this situation, appropriate professional development is needed for all school staff and board of trustee members and schools also need to make 'quality' time available to all teachers so that they can reflect critically on their own performance. It would be preferable that this 'quality' reflection time be situated during the school day rather than at the end of the day when teachers are tired and less inclined to wish to spend time in reflection.

The planned study in this thesis uses the notion of the teacher as researcher in the self review of a school's core values exercise. In this exercise, a small New Zealand school which has had limited school self review professional development, investigates the effectiveness and feasibility of using the staff and school parents as researchers in the self review of their school's core values.

How Successful were these early British School Self Review Schemes?

According to Cuttance (1994) most of the early British school self evaluation schemes did not survive the education reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s. It has been noted by Clift et al. (1987), Hopkins (1989), and Hargreaves (1988) that these early school self review systems failed because:

- they were defensive and non critical of teaching and learning;
- they were perceived as not resulting in improvement;
- they were time consuming;
- their scope was too broad;
- they were infrequent and were usually carried out by only the senior staff in schools;
- they were often carried out by people who lacked the necessary skills and training;
- they depended on external motivation, thus they lacked teacher commitment; and
- teachers were afraid and sceptical of the reasons for, and methods used in self review.

By 1987, the writers Clift, Nuttall and Mc Cormick, had carried out six years of research on the topic of British school's self evaluation and they had reached the following conclusions:

- that "a close association between contractual accountability and school self evaluation leads to the impoverishment of the latter and to the effective assertion of the former";
- that school self evaluation requires substantial amounts of time, energy and resources;
- that teachers must be trained in the skills of self evaluation if the evaluation is to be effective;
- that ideally self evaluation should be carried out in a atmosphere of collegiality and open, honest communication; and
- that as self evaluation should lead to school improvement, plans for change should be included from the outset.

(1987: 90)

Writing in 1991, Nisbet, a critic of self evaluation, stated that self evaluation was a strategy for "avoiding change" and that it was also a cover for teacher "inefficiency, incompetence and indifference to public concern" (p.59). Nisbet also wrote that the success of early self evaluation strategies was greatly affected by four key social and cultural issues. The four issues, according to Nisbet, were power, conflict, school climate and managerial ethos. Nisbet argued that schools of that time, could not administer efficient self evaluation systems, the schools operated in 'top down', hierarchical, managerial modes,

beset by power struggles and conflict which he maintained resulted in school climates unsuitable for the successful implementation of objective self evaluation. Thus, despite the high level of popularity for self evaluation of schools in the United Kingdom in the early 1980s, it failed to find a permanent place in education at that time as a means for on going school improvement.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

American literature shows that American school self evaluation development followed the same general paths as British school self review with the exception that American demand for self evaluation practices started a little earlier than its British counterpart. Demands for school and teacher accountability were evident in the American education system by the mid 1970s. Because of the unique system of educational responsibility in the United States of America, where there is little national responsibility, commitment to self evaluation was delegated to each state, according to Nevo (1995). By the mid 1970s, demand for public accountability saw most states asking their schools to test their pupils more and, on the basis of these results, teacher evaluations and school comparisons were made and published for public scrutiny.

The notion of the teacher as researcher found much favour in the US as an early self review strategy, according to Calhoun (1994) who described action research as a process for gathering data about a school with the purpose of improving teaching and learning in that school. This self evaluation method saw teachers using research methods and supposed 'scientific' rigour to evaluate their own practice. Calhoun also states that, for action research to be successful, there must be high commitment from staff, staff must be trained in research methods and that action research inquiry must be systematic, well planned and regularly carried out. Corey (1953) a prominent educationalist, also promoted action research as a means for aiding decision making and implementing change.

Another self evaluation strategy, participatory evaluation, emerged at the same time as action research. Martyn describes participatory evaluation as "a responsive social action research approach" which is carried out by "trained evaluation personnel working in partnership with practice based decision makers"(1996: 37). This method saw an 'expert' coming in from outside of the school to facilitate and help the school in their self evaluation.

The American self evaluation system, which perhaps comes closest to my own preferred style of school self review, is practitioner- centred action research. Stoll and Fink (1996) maintain that in this collaborative system of evaluation, school practitioners, with the assistance of research consultant/s, implement an on going research cycle which has, as its main purpose, the improvement of teaching and learning. The point that sets this system apart from the others already mentioned is its reliance on collaboration for its success. Collaboration, in this context means staff planning review procedures together and equally sharing review responsibilities, processes and outcomes.

Collaboration is a very important element of the planned study in this thesis. In particular the study investigates the feasibility and effectiveness of using a system of self review that is based on full school community participation and collaboration.

How Successful were the early American Self Evaluation Systems?

Willms (1992) reports that the early American systems of school self evaluation suffered from the inherent tensions of any such performance monitoring systems, namely, "Are such evaluations for formative or summative purposes?" American teachers said that the early evaluation systems devalued and dehumanised school staff as they brought into question their professionalism. Therefore, many teachers showed little commitment to these practices and, at times, actually violently opposed their implementation (Nevo, 1995). Willms wrote, in 1992, that these self evaluation practices also resulted in teachers 'teaching to the test' so that test results would look impressive but with the result that creativity and innovation were stifled. Clift et al. (1987) would go as far as to say that early self evaluation systems often actually inhibited improvement in education because imposed systems of self evaluation are doomed to failure.

This section of the literature review has demonstrated that British and American attempts at school self review in the 1980's were fraught with difficulties which resulted in limited uptake of the concept at that time. However, according to Nevo (1995) self review in both these countries was to re-emerge as a possible change and development strategy in the late 1980's when educational administrative practices were to come under scrutiny. What then was the situation in New Zealand? Was New Zealand education to follow the same patterns or had they learnt lessons about school self review from

their international colleagues?

THE NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCE

New Zealand did not embrace the concept of school review until the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1977, the then Department of Education implemented an intermediate school system of self review which espoused aims of school improvement rather than public accountability. Robinson wrote that these systems were underpinned by four basic assumptions:

- that each system was voluntary because it was believed that staff who chose to be involved would be committed to the system;
- that the role of the school principal was to decide whether or not to carry out the review but not to direct or lead it;
- that staff must be trained in research design and methodology before they carried out the review; and
- that the process of review must not be harmful to the school's current level of effectiveness. "At worst a review may have no impact on a school".

(Robinson, 1984:144)

Robinson' s studies found that this early system of school self review fell short of achieving its goal because this model required a much higher level of collaborative skills than teachers generally had at that time. However, it is interesting to note that this early system of self review recognised the need for staff to be trained in research design and methodology before carrying out the review. Unfortunately, Robinson's report does not discuss whether schools in this trial had adequate and appropriate training for self review and whether this was a factor in the lack of success of this early self review trial. As Calhoun (1994) argued, and my own experience supported, professional development of teachers for the task of self review is crucial and pivotal to the success of self review. Unfortunately, adequate and appropriate professional development on school self review appears to be lacking in the present New Zealand education system.

Other New Zealand schools trialed similar self review processes in the late 1970s and early 1980s but most trials were isolated and were the result of single purpose curriculum development initiatives. Also, these early reviews were usually carried out by senior staff or selected groups of teachers in

schools rather than being based on whole school participation which Stoll and Fink (1996) and Hargreaves (1994) argue is a very important component of successful school self review.

The field of New Zealand self review literature is limited, despite the fact that self review has now been a mandatory requirement for over five years. There have been several Ministry of Education publications and newsletters on self review which have been distributed to schools and boards of trustees but there has been very little research done on the nature and the effectiveness of New Zealand systems of school self review. However, one important piece of literature in this domain, is Graeme Martyn's School Self- Review: Towards A Theory For Practice (1996). Martyn wrote this work as his thesis for his Master of Educational Administration degree.

This thesis provides a comprehensive study of both international and local perspectives on school self review. In particular, Martyn's thesis contains an expansive review of self review literature which outlines the international and local pressures which prevailed at the time while the concept of school self review was emerging from educational evaluation programmes. Martyn lists these pressures as: a desire for improvement in education, institutional accountability and the drive for self management of educational organisations.

Martyn's thesis looked at the nature and scope of current school self review practices in New Zealand. In this examination, he found that New Zealand has experienced many of the same problems that our overseas counterparts experienced when implementing programmes of school self review. However, Martyn argues that most of these problems have arisen from participants' confused theories of school self review and general lack of the technical skills, knowledge and resourcing needed to implement self review programmes.

To ascertain the current nature of self review in New Zealand schools, Martyn carried out a survey of practising primary and intermediate school principals. This survey found that, by 1996, most schools had some form of self review programme operating in their schools and that these reviews consisted of a range of combinations of ongoing, periodic and single event activities. The surveyed schools tended to have self review programmes which encompassed a number of years with just a small number of aspects being reviewed each year. Martyn's survey also found that most school review was carried out by the principal and school staff with little or no community involvement.

In conclusion, Martyn stated that his study had shown that school self review practices have been widely adopted by New Zealand schools. He also reported that school principals generally rated their self review programmes as successful and that they were convinced self review was a vehicle for identifying a school's strengthens and weaknesses so that priorities could be established for school development and improvement strategies.

The 1989 New Zealand Education Reforms and Self Review

1989 was a very significant year in New Zealand education, argues Ballantyne (1997), as the then Labour Government introduced the most radical changes to the administration of education in our history. The New Zealand education reforms were, according to Codd, introduced at a time when the government of the day was " adopting a number of strategies for strengthening the management of the state, while simultaneously reducing its size" (1997:1). Thus, in all commercial state activities, the major move was to corporatisation and in some areas, privatisation (Codd, 1997). Codd states that corporatisation is the transformation of the administration of state activities into enterprises which have the features of private business and he defines privatisation as a further step which involves the transfer of ownership. It is this transfer of ownership which according to Codd is the "ultimate objective of what has come to be called economic rationalism" (1997:1).

According to Codd (1997) the main strategies used to achieve economic rationalism in the areas of health, social welfare and education, have been devolution and decentralisation. In particular, he states that the New Zealand government adopted a policy of decentralisation in education, rather than a policy of devolution, as they argued that decentralisation produces greater flexibility and responsiveness. Codd disagrees with this view and argues instead that decentralisation, in reality, produces a very effective centralisation of control (1997).

Codd, Harker and Nash (1991) contend that there were two contradictory beliefs that drove the education reforms of 1989. They maintain that there was "a democratic imperative for more community participation in decision making and an economic imperative for tighter controls over public expenditure" (Ballantyne, 1997:7).

Ballantyne expands this argument when she contends that the rationale for the reforms was founded on three propositions:

- a democratic rationale for more parent involvement in education;
- an industrial and managerialist agenda to increase efficiency and accountability in the state sector; and
- a 'New Right' or market liberal advocacy for increased competition and privatisation". (1997:7)

The Labour Government of the day argued that the reforms were to make educational outcomes equitable for all students by including provisions in the reforms to "limit the potential for inequality and competition between unequally resourced schools" (Ballantyne, 1997:1). Ballantyne also notes that, while empowering parents in education is not new, the extent of New Zealand parent power and their responsibilities in controlling the management of New Zealand schools is more extensive than anywhere else in the western world.

These education reforms radically restructured the then central authority of education and put in its place a system of devolved, delegated power and responsibility to each individual school. This meant that each school was placed under the overall control of parent elected boards of trustees whose role was to:

- define the school's purpose by overseeing the development of the charter;
- set policies and goals for significant areas within the school, in consultation with the principal, staff, and community;
- appoint the principal and assess his or her performance in meeting the school's goals;
- support the principal in managing the school; and
- ensure the school is communicating effectively with its community.

(Ministry of Education, 1997:13)

Ballantyne argues that the education reforms of 1989 made parent elected volunteers accountable " to an extraordinary degree, for the achievement of educational outcomes" (Ballantyne, 1997:14).

The Education reforms of 1989 also introduced School Charters, which were an undertaking between boards of trustees and the Minister of Education. School Charters were an integral component of the new move to self-management because they should reflect the vision of the parents, staff and the

community for their school. Charters also detail the school's aims, purposes and objectives and they determine how the school will meet the needs of each student and how it will function and develop within its community. According to the Ministry of Education (1997), each charter must include the requirements of the National Education Guidelines and the community it serves, and they must also be consistent with current legislation and employment contracts. Therefore, school charters clearly designated accountability to school boards for delivery of educational outcomes (Ballantyne, 1997). To oversee this delegated school accountability, the Education Review Office (ERO) was established as an external, state evaluation agency.

The educational accountability movement is not unique to New Zealand Rather, Codd (1989) would argue that it is has been gaining momentum in most Western industrialised countries for nearly three decades. Codd states that policy documents of the 1980's moved beyond the general rhetoric of accountability and began proposing specific procedures for the evaluation of teachers and educational institutions. Codd also argues that the New Zealand education reforms of 1989 were a deliberate action by the then government to impose accountability measures that would serve to control what happens in classrooms (1989). Apple, cited in Codd, (1989) takes these arguments further, and contends that the demand for accountability in education was a direct measure to increase the pressure on teachers as a way of not only controlling what happens in schools but also removing from the immediate sphere of the government the blame for larger social problems within society.

It is my opinion that the New Zealand government not only introduced self review for accountability and effectiveness purposes but also as a cost effective method of inducing school improvement. At the time self review was mandated in New Zealand, the government was in the process of rationalising, devolving and cutting back many of its services and support to schools in its drive to make schools self managing. For many teachers, boards of trustees members and parents, self management and, therefore, self review, equated directly with saving money and not necessarily effectiveness and school improvement. Because of this line of thought, self review had a 'rocky' introduction into many of the schools with which my work brought me into contact. This was because these schools viewed self review primarily as another government cost cutting initiative rather than an opportunity to look closely at their own practices as a means of school improvement.

Codd (1989) argues that, despite the call for accountability in education, there has been by no means general agreement about what that for which teachers can be held accountable for. Diorio (1982) cited in Codd (1989) states that we cannot hold teachers responsible for ensuring that students acquire a certain body of knowledge or particular skills, because there is no agreement as to what that knowledge or those skills should be. As a teacher at the time of the reforms, my own experience attests to this point, because we had little idea for what exactly we were being held accountable, either by the government or our own school community. Therefore, our first efforts at school self review were launched at a time when we were unsure of what we were meant to review and for whom the review was intended.

The introduction of self review into New Zealand schools, in 1993, was further impeded by a lack of professional development offered on self review. In my area, our schools were offered little assistance for the first twelve months after self review was mandated and then we finally employed a consultant by using our own limited school funds. This lack of advice and support from the government reinforced the notion that we already held, which was that self review was a government cost saving move as they were telling us that we must now evaluate our own practices without preparing us for the task.

Self Review since the 1989 Education Reforms

From my perspective as a teacher in one school and a newly elected parent representative, in 1989, and then as Chair of a school board from 1990 to 1997, the first two years of the education reforms were a time of high frustration, anxiety and uncertainty from a board's perspective as we struggled to master the newly required skills of writing educational policy. There was little time left to even think about what was actually happening in the classroom, subsequent educational outcomes and public accountability. Any thoughts of self review as a means of taking responsibility for our actions were lost in the more pressing needs of learning about school charters, policies and administration.

My memories as a teacher, during these first two years of the reforms, were of uncertainty and apprehension at the thought of non-educationalists governing education. There was also much tension, albeit hostility in some cases, between school principals and new boards as lines of demarcation were

established between the roles of management and governance. Tension between school staff and parents grew as the new powers and controls of accountability were realised, writes Codd (1989). Thoughts of school self review became a guarded subject as school staff struggled with the notion of informing school boards of educational outcomes and with letting them be part of any school review processes.

As teachers, we also felt that our professionalism was being questioned and therefore, our attitude to both the new external review (ERO) and school self review was distrustful. However, as my own school gained more knowledge about self review, we were able to focus our critical evaluation less on individual teachers and more on programmes, organisation and teaching methods, hence, employing a form of accountability which enhances the professionalism of teachers, rather than diminishing it, a notion supported by Codd (1989). Now in 1999, most teachers appear to have moved from feeling that their professionalism is being questioned by self review. Rather, when self review is implemented in an atmosphere of trust, collaboration and open honest communication, teachers feel empowered and motivated; a point supported by Clift et al.(1987).

This state of apprehension and misunderstanding over the exact nature and purpose of self review was meant to be clarified with the introduction of a new set of National Administration Guidelines in 1993. These guidelines included a requirement of school boards to "maintain an on going system of self review"(NAG, 1993, 4ii). This new requirement arose from the new National Government's desire to place greater emphasis on curriculum and achievement and to monitor the performance of boards of trustees (Codd, 1997). Martyn (1996) writes that David Philips, a member of the Ministry of Education team which was charged with revision of the original 1990 National Education Guidelines, stated that the decision to make self review mandatory was greatly influenced by school improvement and school effectiveness research writings from the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

However, it should be noted that there were also a considerable number of writings in the same period, by notable educationalists, such as Holt, (1981), Clift et al. (1987) and Hopkins, (1988) which criticised self review practices and questioned their worth as a school improvement method. These people argued that school self review did not necessarily lead to school improvement but that, rather, it could actually inhibit improvement mainly because school staff often lack the expertise to employ robust forms of self review and also

because it can be difficult to be truly objective about one's own performance (Hopkins, 1988). Did New Zealand educationalists not know of this body of literature or did they deliberately over look its significant findings in their push to increase accountability in New Zealand education?

The National Administrative Guidelines were introduced with little explanation or help being offered by the Ministry as to how schools were actually going to carry out this school self review. In the absence of explanation or help, schools were wary of government intent and questions were rife: would the government use data from school self reviews to adjust funding to a performance based formula, was school self review information going to be used by the government to bring in performance pay for teachers and were self review reports to be made available to the ERO officers?

However, with school self reviewing a mandated requirement, schools and their boards were forced to face the daunting task of finding out what school self review meant, what its purposes were, what a programme of self review would look like and how they were going to implement these programmes. According to Sutton (1994), by the time of the 1993 New Zealand self review requirements, there was a substantial body of overseas literature available on the topic of school self monitoring and self review, not that it was generally used by school staff and boards to become more informed about school self review. In our school, the only material we had about school self review were Ministry of Education pamphlets and publications. It was not until we employed an educational consultant at our own expense that we began to really learn about the purposes, approaches and programmes of self review.

The Effects of Self Review on New Zealand Education since the 1989 Education Reforms

Mention was made earlier of Clift et al.(1987) Willms (1992) and Nevo's(1995) overseas research which suggested that ill conceived self review could actually inhibit school improvement. New Zealand literature, read in the course of this literature review, generally looked at the implementation rate of school self review into New Zealand schools but did not address the topic of the effectiveness of self review in New Zealand schools. Vivian Robinson made the comment, in 1997, that, early school review systems appeared to involve little school improvement for the work required in school self review.

An Education Review Office review, 'Self-Review in Schools' (1994),

reported on the extent to which effective self review was being implemented in schools. This review made some general observations about self review practices of the day, noting, in particular, that, by 1994, most schools had not accepted their responsibility to operate systems of self review. However, the report of the review made scant reference to the effectiveness of self review practices that were in evidence.

A further education review in 1997, ' Achieving Excellence- a Review of the Education External Evaluation Services', was asked, amongst other things, to consider "matters drawn to its attention in relation to school self review" (1997:6). This review panel commented that they had found "there was considerable goodwill to become involved in self review" and that self review was seen to be "empowering, motivating and satisfying". The panel also commented that self review was still in its infancy and that it had great potential (1997:43). The review also found that many schools, particularly those that were small and/or rural, were experiencing difficulty in achieving this aim and that professional development on self review was needed for all schools. This report did not address the effectiveness of established school self review practices.

This lack of recent research into the effectiveness of New Zealand school self review practices has been an impediment to the establishment of effective self review practices as schools have had to attempt to develop self review programmes on an ill informed, trial and error basis. The planned self review study in this thesis is an example of a school having to develop its own self review processes in the absence of suitable examples and models of how to review a school's core values.

Since the 1989 education reforms and, in particular, since self review was mandated for all schools in 1993, the subject of school self review has raised a number of significant issues and debates.

As has already been discussed, New Zealand since the 1990's has had a two tier system of school evaluation, summative evaluation which is carried out by ERO and formative evaluation which is school self review. As stated earlier, Willms (1992) has questioned whether it is possible to have an evaluation system which has both formative and summative functions. Clift et al. (1987) also stated that, if there are close associations between contractual accountability and school evaluation, then school evaluation will suffer at the hands of accountability. In the New Zealand situation, my reply would be that

it is both possible and necessary to have two systems of evaluation, so long as they are complimentary. We need external evaluation to report to the government that their funds are being used effectively and we need formative evaluation, that is self review, to ensure that each school is aware of and taking full responsibility for, their levels of achievement. According to Austin, Edwards & Parata-Blane (1997), as long as boards of trustees and staff members see the two systems of evaluation as complimentary then they can benefit from having two sets of information from which to make decisions about school improvement practices.

It could be argued that schools find it difficult to see ERO reviews as complimentary to their own review practices when ERO reviews are reported in the public domain whilst self review reports are intended for in school discussion and improvements. Willms (1992) stated that governments use the rationale that public reporting of school evaluations and the competition between schools that this creates are motivators for achieving high performance. It is debatable whether the reporting of negative reports will stimulate and motivate schools to perform better. The public reporting of such reports can also make schools feel such guilt that they are unable to motivate themselves onto a programme of change and improvement, argues Nevo (1995).

From the New Zealand experience, it is possible to raise several objections to Willm's (1992) argument. It could be said that competition has produced 'quality' education in some New Zealand schools but it could also be argued that comparison of schools has had many negative effects on our education system (Snook, 1996). In particular, it can be said that competition between New Zealand schools has resulted in the growth of 'good' and 'bad' schools. 'Good' schools are those schools which are populated by higher socio-economic families and 'bad' schools are those schools which tend to be made up of students from lower socio-economic families. The labelling of schools in this manner has resulted in those students who have the resources to travel to more distant 'good' schools being moved; thus leaving behind the students of limited economic means in the 'bad' schools. This labelling makes difficulties for, particularly, the 'bad' schools to recruit and retain good teachers with the result that only some schools are able to achieve 'quality' education. With poorer quality teachers and students from lower socio-economic backgrounds the schools are less likely to be able to attain high achievement levels and, therefore, the label 'bad' schools is reinforced, according to Snook (1996).

Competition in New Zealand schools has also resulted in the appearance of very aggressive marketing strategies. Those schools supported by higher socio-economic communities tend to have more money to spend on marketing schemes and are, therefore, more successful in attracting 'desirable' students to their schools; reinforcing the 'good' school, 'bad' school syndrome. It was brought to my notice recently that certain affluent secondary schools 'head hunt' and pay students by way of very lucrative scholarships to attend their schools if they think these particular students will help their schools to be top achievers in areas such as rugby. Strategies like this undermine the whole New Zealand ethos of equitable education for all (Education Act, 1989).

Snook (1996) argues that competition between schools has also affected the culture of many schools. Whereas teachers in the past were usually agreeable to sharing their good ideas and best practice with colleagues and were willing to support and encourage each other's work, there has been a growing trend, in the writer's experience, in this climate of competition, for teachers to keep their ideas to themselves so that they will receive the best 'personal reports' and have the greatest opportunities to make desirable career moves. Since the move to competition in New Zealand education, those schools which are affluent are also able to 'head hunt' the best teachers and pay them bonuses to retain them. From these arguments it is difficult to support Willm's (1992) statement that competition in education stimulates and encourages schools to perform better. It does, but only some schools achieve 'quality' through this method, while the others are tied into cycles of low achievement, lack of funds and difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff.

To improve the effectiveness of self review in New Zealand schools, there are several possible suggestions which can be proffered. As stated earlier, it appears that there has been little research carried out on the effectiveness of school self review practices in New Zealand schools. This is an area which needs immediate research as schools are investing large amounts of time and energy in school self review and may not be achieving the outcomes, the school improvement, which were sought. Government funded research on self review should identify the most effective programmes, processes and methods to use to implement school self review that leads to school improvement. This information should be made freely available to schools so that all schools do not have to try and develop their own self review methods through processes of trial and error. An important component of distributing this research knowledge must be professional development of all personnel who are to be involved in school self review; as Clift et al. suggested in 1987, people need to

be trained in the skills of self evaluation if the evaluation is to be effective. Now, in 1999, and with what we know about successful overseas school self review programmes, my recommendation would be that we not only train teachers for self review but also that we train boards of trustees, parents and older students; a notion which is supported by Sutton (1994) and Stoll and Fink (1996).

Education of all of the people to be involved in the self review exercise was a very important and integral factor in the planned study and this is a notion that is supported by the work of Hargreaves (1994). In this thesis, education on self review and other related key concepts was offered to all the school staff and parents in the studied school community.

The 1997 'Achieving Excellence' report made further recommendations for self review. In particular it recommended:

> 35. That self review should drive both school improvement and external evaluation.
> 36. That schools and centres be required to plan and implement self review protocols, assisted by guidelines, and in-service and professional development.
>
> (1997:44)

It would be unfair to say that the Ministry of Education has not supplied guidelines on self review. They have distributed several publications but it is my contention that they have been of limited worth. To date the publications have contained adequate information on rationale and purposes, but they have failed to provide actual programmes of self review for different school levels and school types. This kind of information should be research based and should be supplied to all schools to be used as the basis for building programmes of self review that take cognisance of local contexts. Annesley (1996) considers self review guidelines from a different angle. She argues that school performance would be enhanced by the production of some form of standardised indicators or criteria of effectiveness. The Ministry of Education (1997) acknowledge that the term 'quality' is problematic in education and they state that standards must be used in school self review. However, they still leave each school to establish their own standards against which results from the review will be assessed. My own experience indicates that many schools experience difficulty in establishing quantitative standards and have even more difficulty in developing qualitative standards; with the

end result that a wide range of 'quality' education is being produced in New Zealand schools. Annesley suggests that the production and distribution of standardised indicators would help the development of information systems within schools that would enable them to effectively monitor, review and report on their performance. The notion of performance indicators in school self review is investigated in the planned study in this thesis. In particular, a group of school members works collaboratively to ascertain whether it is possible for 'ordinary' school community members to develop performance indicators for a school's core values.

Now, in 1999, it is my perception that attitudes towards self review have changed and that a greater number of schools now view formative self review as a positive school empowerment and change and improvement agent. It also appears that most schools have some form of planned, on going self review strategy in place. In my opinion, the worth of many self review schemes would still have to be questioned. Many schemes appear to have flaws in their construction as they still review only selected parts of school practice. Other schemes attempt to review too many things in any given year with the result that reviews are shallow and of little worth. Other review schemes only review the " easy to ascertain" factors of school life, write Stewart and Prebble (1993).

Finally, it is also my perception that few school boards are playing an active role in school self review. It could be asked whether school staff and school boards can work together on programmes of self review which lead to both improved teaching and learning and also meet legal compliance requirements. It is my belief that we can achieve this end but, to do so, we will have to view and implement school self review in a different way. First, we must see school self review and principal appraisal as closely linked as this thesis has already argued that appraisal of a principal's performance is, in essence, a review of everything that happens in a school (Stewart and Prebble, 1993). Secondly, we must develop systems of self review which are based on collaboration and trust (Clift et al. 1987, Stewart and Prebble, 1993 and Stoll and Fink, 1996) and, finally, instead of thinking of school self review as review of every thing that happens in schools, we need to view it more holistically and look at a small set of important, core issues which govern everything we do in a school (Stewart and Prebble, 1993).

In conclusion, in this literature review, the writer has documented and discussed the development of the American and British school self review

systems that have influenced and laid the foundations for current New Zealand school self review practices. In the literature review, school improvement and the findings of the effective schools research are also examined and the relationships between these concepts and school self review are explained. The concepts of school culture and in particular core values and the role of a school principal in the management and development of a school's core values, are examined and links between these concepts and the planned study are identified.

From this literature review it is possible to draw out five hypotheses that will be the focus for, and will be investigated in the planned study. They are that:

1. It is important for schools to evaluate what they value and to take responsibility for their own improvement;
2. For school self review to be effective, the review must be for self accountability purposes and it must involve all of the school community;
3. If understanding the symbols and culture of a school is a prerequisite to making a school more effective, then part of school self review should involve looking at the ' larger picture', that is, the core values and beliefs of the school community; and
4. To improve the core activities of a school, that is teaching and learning, indicators must be developed for the school's core values so that it can be ascertained whether the values are in fact the basis for all school practices.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

Clark (1997) posits that how we go about educational research depends on what we think it is. Cohen and Manion (1990)and Tolich and Davidson (1999) also support this contention by adding that choice of research topic, the nature and wording of the problem to be investigated, objectives, design and method, will also be influenced by the researcher's view of the research problem, human nature and their approach to the social world.

In Chapter Three, the writer seeks to explain and discuss why she chose evaluative research as the design most appropriate for achieving her thesis research task objectives and reflecting her own personal beliefs about the social world and education. In this chapter, the writer also explains why she chose collaborative action research in one case study school as the research method most suited to meet the research objectives. In particular, the following issues are examined in Chapter Three:

- evaluative research;
- collaborative action research;
- case study research;
- methods of data collection and analysis;
- research issues; and
- research reports.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Evaluative Research

By the 1970s, many educationalists were coming to the conclusion that improvement in education would not be achieved through curriculum changes but, rather, that improvement could only be attained from development of teachers and through teachers reflecting critically upon their own work. According to Carr and Kemmis, cited in Hammersley (1993), evaluative

research in education arose from this call for a critical educational science. Carr and Kemmis argue that a critical educational science sees educational research as "critical analysis" which aims to " transform educational practices, values and understanding" (Hammersley, 1993:203). In short, Cooley and Lohnes (1976) state that educational research should be in, and for, education rather than on, and about, education. In particular, evaluative educational research is a specific type of inquiry which aims to contribute suggestions for action in education. The writer's own conception of evaluative educational research is founded on the following assumptions.

Table 3.1 Evaluative Educational Research Assumptions

ASSUMPTIONS	INFLUENTIAL REFERENCES
That the purpose of evaluative research is "not to prove but to improve."	Stufflebeam et al. 1971:1, Bishop, 1994 and Kincheloe, 1995.
That evaluative research is a spiral process of critical inquiry and reflection which leads to action.	Carr, 1995, Carr and Kemmis, 1986, Earl, 1995, Kincheloe, 1995, and Stufflebeam et al. 1971.
That educational research is a moral activity which we use to seek moral foundations for decision making.	Carr, 1995, Colley and Lohnes, 1976, and Foster, 1986.
That educational research should be contextual and responsive to local needs whilst retaining technical rigour.	Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, Cooley and Bickel, 1986, Cousins and Earl, 1995, Dewey in Colley and Lohnes, 1976 and Kincheloe, 1995.
That evaluative research is mainly formative and can be both qualitative and quantitative, subjective and objective.	Borich, 1994, Cousins and Earl, 1995 and Foster 1986.

That evaluative research should be an emancipatory, empowering form of research which teaches and encourages participants to take control of their lives through critical evaluation of their thoughts, experiences and situations.	Bishop, 1994, Carr, 1995, Carr and Kemmis, 1986, Foster, 1986, Kincheloe, 1995, McLaren and Giarelli, 1995 and Robinson, 1989.
That the primary task of the researcher in evaluative research is to train the participants in the technical skills so that they can fully participate in the research process so that in time they can go it alone. Therefore the researcher must be both "educative and educated".	Cavanagh and Rodwell, 1992:37, Cooley & Lohnes, 1976 and Cousins and Earl, 1995.

Cohen and Manion (1990) argue that researchers choose their research style according to their view of human nature and their approach to social science. Packwood and Sikes take this point further when they argue that assumptions, such as those identified above by the writer, are purely personal preferences unless they are linked back to a " recognised educational philosophical paradigm, a way of thinking about knowledge, a way of thinking about research" (1996: 155). The writer holds highly principles of democracy, justice, equality and the rights of the individual, so it follows that she chose evaluative research design to meet her research objectives.

To support these evaluative research tenets, the writer chose to use collaborative action research methodology because it best suited the research task which was involved reviewing the core values of a school with the aim of improving practice in the studied school.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Collaborative Action Research

The concept of action research can be traced back to the early work of John Dewey in the 1920's and Kurt Lewin in the 1940's. However, according to Johnson (1993), the term 'action research' was introduced to the educational

community, in 1949, by Stephen Corey and others at the Teachers College of Columbia University. Johnson adds that, although early experiences in action research involved collaborative activity, where practitioners worked together to help one another design and carry out investigations in their classrooms, this form of 'teacher as researcher' research did not come to be generally known as collaborative action research until the 1960's.

Action research, according to Cohen and Manion, is "a small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention" (1990: 217). Carr and Kemmis state that all action research must improve and involve the people whose situation is being investigated. Isaac and Michael (1990) argue that, in education, the purpose of action research is to obtain the answers to problems in certain situations and to provide professional development for teachers. Kemmis (1995) adds that action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry which is most empowering when undertaken in a collaborative way.

Collaborative action research was selected as the most appropriate research method for the planned study because it best met the research objectives of improvement and involvement. In the planned study, the case study school wished to improve its systems of self review and, from that task, they also wished to improve all learning and teaching in the school, by ensuring that the studied school possessed a set of shared core values that were reflected in all school practices. As discussed in the literature review, Deal (1988), Caldwell and Spinks (1988), Beare, Caldwell and Millikan(1989), and Stoll and Fink (1996) all argue that not only must a school possess a set of shared values if they wish to improve but also they must ensure that these values are reflected in all school practices. Another of the objectives of the planned study was to have full school community involvement in the review of the school's core values. Collaborative action research allowed all members of the case study school community to be involved in the review of their values.

In terms of method, collaborative action research is, according to Johnson (1993) and Kemmis (1995), a simple spiral of planning, action, observation and critical reflection which is undertaken by a group of critical friends. This method, according to Kemmis and McTaggart, (1988) should embody democratic principles and encourage participants to take an active part in determining their own actions and lives. This is a social process which sees all the participants as researchers with possible outside assistance and guidance from an 'expert'.

The planned study encouraged all members of the case study school to be involved in the self review by offering them opportunities for education and by directly involving them in group discussions, interviews, a parent consultation and information sharing meeting and a postal survey. Kemmis and McTaggart describe collaborative action research as:

- an approach to " improving education by changing it and learning from the consequences of the changes";
- participatory, where people seek to improve their own practices;
- collaborative, in that it involves those who are responsible for the action, working together to improve it;
- a systematic learning process of using 'critical intelligence' to inform our actions;
- a research process which is socially constructed;
- rigorous and systematic; and is
- a process which involves not only keeping records but also includes collection and analysis of our " own judgements, reactions and impressions about what is going on".

(1988: 22-24)

The role of teacher as researcher in collaborative action research may take the form of single teachers operating on their own in examining their own practice or it may be a group of teachers working collaboratively to examine some facet of school practice. Whole school collaborative action research involves the whole school examining school practices. Cohen and Manion (1990) argue that action research functions best when it incorporates the ideas and expectations of all persons involved in the situation. The planned collaborative action research study involved the participation of all members of a small rural school community in review of their school's core values.

Cohen and Manion (1990) write that whole school action research can often benefit from the assistance of an outside 'expert'. The same writers note that the role of the expert is that of a 'sounding board' against which practitioners may try ideas and learn about the reasons for their own actions. These writers add that the expert can also facilitate and encourage self reflection. In the planned study, my role included being the outside expert who provided education, encouraged self reflective thought and acted as the sounding board for ideas. My other main role in the planned task involved being a full participant in the research process. The duality of my position in the research

did not present any problems to the process of the research.

An important feature of collaborative action research is its flexibility and adaptability. Cohen and Manion (1990) say that these qualities are manifested in the changes that may take place during the implementation of the research. Collaborative action research also allows on-the-spot experimentation and innovation to take place. Flexibility and change were two features desired in the planned study. The case study school stated, at the outset of the research, that the methodology must be flexible enough to allow change in the research direction to take place if the school felt that change would lead to more significant improved practice. The planned study did change direction several times as events in the school facilitated changes in the intended plans. The use of collaborative action research allowed us to make these changes while still allowing the research to lead to satisfactory outcomes for all parties involved.

Another important feature of the planned study, which collaborative action research allowed us to do, was critical reflection and analysis on not only the outcomes of the research activities but also on our own feelings, reactions and impressions about what was occurring. There were nine main activities in the core values review and during, and particularly at the end of each activity, time was set aside to discuss our impressions of what was happening. Apart from this discussion, the key research members were also asked to keep a journal of their feelings and reactions to the research as Winter (1982), and Tolich and Davidson (1999) argue that data on feelings and reactions to the research can provide a further valuable dimension to the data analysis.

It is action research's lessened view of scientific method which often draws criticism for this method of research. However, it can be asked, "Is action research 'real' research?" If " real" research means producing objective, scientific data which separates fact from theory, researcher from researched, then action research is not " real" research. However, if "real" educational research involves a community of critical learners working together to find ways to change and improve education then maybe collaborative action research is the only true form of educational research!

In her article 'Teacher-As-Researcher', Johnson (1993) posits the question: Why is teacher research important? The concept of teacher as researcher is important because, in our current New Zealand climate of devolved school management, which has resulted in increased site-based decision making, and new accountability responsibilities, teachers now not only have to be able to

make decisions, but also they are called upon to make decisions which are data driven. This notion is supported by Johnson (1993) who adds that it is very important that teachers be able to document and evaluate their own practices through self review. Therefore, collaborative action research is one vehicle for achieving this end.

An example of a collaborative action research study undertaken in the United Kingdom, was the 'Humanities Curriculum Project' which was set up in 1967 to produce a teaching strategy that would develop an understanding of social situations and human acts and of the controversial value issues which they raise. This study involved several schools in testing and evaluating procedures that could be used to handle controversial issues in the classroom Another British example of collaborative action research was the 'Evaluation by Insiders' study described by King, McCormick and James, in Cohen and Manion, 1990. These research studies were a series of teacher as researcher studies which mainly concentrated on review of curriculum. Both of these studies are important because they demonstrated that using teachers as researchers can lead to improved practice in the studied schools.

A recent example of New Zealand collaborative action research, 'To Challenge Their Thinking: An Evaluation of Some Aspects of the Paper 19.258 Agricultural Systems II', (Massey University, 2000) involved the writer in a study which involved a team of university people in examining and evaluating their own team teaching practice with the assistance of two outside facilitators, one of whom was the writer. This exercise was true collaborative action research as the study was self-evaluative, participatory, situational and aimed to improve practice in the place where the research was undertaken.

It can be asked, what effects action research has had on education? Research by Goswami & Stillman, (1987) and Lieberman, (1988) and reported by Johnson, (1993) suggest that collaborative action research has lead to those teachers, who have been involved in action research, becoming more critical and reflective about their own practice. Research by Oja and Pine (1989) and Street (1986) and cited by Johnson reports that teachers who engage in collaborative research attend more closely to their own "methods, their perceptions and understandings, and their whole approach to the teaching process"(Johnson, 1993:2).

Finally, Johnson (1993) contends that collaborative action research includes and shares many of the characteristics of case study methodology. Johnson

(1993) argues that the two research methods are complimentary. In the next section of this chapter, case study methodology is explained and the complimentary links between it and collaborative action research are discussed. The reasons why case study methodology, in conjunction with collaborative action research, is used in the planned study in this thesis, are also explained.

Case Study Methodology

Robert Stake, (1995) an eminent writer in the field of qualitative research, states that all qualitative research is a search for patterns and consistencies. He adds that the case study method of qualitative research is concerned with the 'instance' and coming to understand the characteristics of an individual unit- a child, a group of children, a class, a school or a full school community. Stake notes that the purpose of the case study is to probe deeply and to analyse intensely the many facets of the life of the studied unit. Tolich and Davidson (1999) add that the case study allows the researcher to collect 'rich data' by focusing their attention on one case.

According to Davey (1991) there are six types of case studies. They are:

- illustrative case studies which are descriptive and use one or two instances to show what a situation is like;
- exploratory case studies which are condensed case studies that are usually undertaken before implementing a large-scale investigation;
- critical instance case studies which examine one or a few sites for one of two purposes. A frequent application for critical instance case studies, is the examination of a situation of interest with little or no interest in generalisability and the other purpose can be to test a highly generalised or 'universal assertion';
- program implementation case studies which examine whether implementation is in accord with its intent;
- program effects case studies which determine the impact of programs and provide inference about reasons for their success or failure; and
- cumulative case studies which aggregate information from several sites collected at different times.

The planned self review study in this thesis takes the form of a critical instance case study, as it examines one site of interest, a rural New Zealand

primary school. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias(1996) also argue that the 'one shot' case study is suitable for exploratory research that leads to insights that could, in turn, be studied as research hypotheses. The planned self review study did result in insights that could be studied as research hypotheses. The conclusion to this thesis contains ideas and recommendations for further areas and topics of research which arose during the planned study.

Manion and Cohen (1990) also argue that case studies are a 'step to action' because their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use. This advantage of the case study method is also found in collaborative action research. It was this factor which was of particular significance to the writer and the purpose of the planned study because a very important aspect of the planned study was that it must lead to further action and improvement of practice in the case study school.

An example of a critical instance case study is found in Wolcott's case study, cited in Cohen and Manion, (1990) entitled 'The Man in the Principal's Office'. In this research, Wolcott used participant observation to shadow a school principal for two years with the purpose of documenting the important strands of a principal's professional life. Wolcott cautions that case study research of this nature is a ' high risk, low yield adventure' (Cohen & Manion, 1990:137). He qualifies this statement by saying that it is high risk because the only gain may be to the researcher if the results are not published and that it is low yield because of the considerable time and personal effort that has to be put into this kind of research.

The planned case study could be classed as low yield according to Wolcott's criteria, as considerable time and energy was put into the research by, particularly, the key group members, but it is my contention that it could not be classified high risk as the results of the case study were used to inform subsequent school improvement and development decisions in the case study school.

On the often debated topic of subjectivity in qualitative research, Stake (1995) contends that subjectivity is not a failing but, rather, should be seen as an essential element of understanding. The planned review of a school's core values adopted and supported Stake's position as we, too, viewed subjectivity as an important and positive way of understanding what was happening in our research.

In the planned review of a school's core values, collaborative action research informs the data gathering methodology in the case study school. In conclusion, the research carried out for this thesis meets the tenets of both collaborative action research and case study methodology because it involved the writer working collaboratively with the staff, students and full school community of the case study school on the research task. Together, this team developed, trialled and reflected upon strategies which they designed to identify and review the core values of their school. The research also involved designing performance indicators for the identified core values. The whole research task was conceived with the primary purpose of improving teaching and learning in the school by examining one facet of the school's culture.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In this collaborative action research, the methods selected for data collection were made on the premise that data collection methods must reflect and be suitable for the research task (Tolich and Davidson, 1999). Therefore, data, which best answered the research objectives, were collected from selected participants using the following approaches:

- participant observation, where the observer was part of that which was being observed;
- in depth interviewing, where participants had the opportunity to articulate exactly their understandings and feelings about various issues and situations;
- questionnaires which were used to a lesser degree, when the researchers wished to gather data from a larger group such as the school community, and where in depth interviewing was not practical; and
- personal journals in which each of the key group members were asked to record their feelings, thoughts and comments on the research purposes and processes.

Participant Observation

According to Kane, participant observation is "observation in which the observer is at least visible to the observed, if not active" (1987:53). She continues to say that participant observation is a technique to use when you,

"wish to learn from people's actions what they do as opposed to what they say they do"(1987:53). The same writer notes that participant observation describes from the 'inside' but only tells you about that which has actually been observed and sense will still have to be made from the observations. May (1993) states that participant observation does not aim to test ideas (deduction) but, rather, that it makes no firm assumptions about what is important, leaving room for ideas to be developed from the observations (induction).

Kidder, Wrightsman and Cook (1981) argue that, with participant observation, there are different degrees of participation by the researcher. They state that, when using participation observation as a research technique, the researcher may be a fully participating member of the group under observation or they may be primarily an observer, only participating 'vicariously'. They add that participant observers frequently immerse themselves in situations where they are not bona fide members but where, in time, they can become trusted friends (Kidder et al.,1987).

May (1993) writes that there are two main roles which the researcher can adopt when undertaking participant observations. The first role is "complete participant" where the researcher attempts to engage fully in the activities of the group under investigation. In this instance, the researcher's role is covert as their intentions are not made fully explicit to the studied group. The second possible role, according to May, is that of "participant as observer". In this role, the researcher takes an overt role in making their intentions fully known to the studied group (1993). In the planned study, the studied group were fully aware of my objectives and my intentions as these were explained to all participants at the beginning of the research and as each new group of participants entered into the research.

In this thesis, my main role was as participant as observer in the research. This meant that I shared the experience and work of the group as a full member of that group. In particular, this role took the form of observer and participant in group discussions, staff meetings, Board of Trustee meetings, student discussions and parent meetings. At times, my role also included recording the observations during the actual event and, at other times, this job was shared with the other key members.

As the group wanted the research to be collaborative and to involve all participants, they wanted me to be part of all activities which, therefore, required me to adopt the role of participant observer. They also considered

that, because of my background in education and my experience in schools of this type, my knowledge and perspectives would be valuable to the research.

As with any research technique, participant observation has both its strengths and weaknesses. Kane (1987) says that, despite its critics, participant observation is a systematic and disciplined study and not a 'soft' option, as is sometimes argued. In fact, May writes that, at first glance, participant observation might appear an easy research technique but he cautions that, in fact, it might be the "most personally demanding and analytically difficult method of social research to undertake" (1993:138). May argues that this is so because it can take enormous amounts of time to undertake participant observations and then the researcher is frequently left with large quantities of subjective information to analyse. May (1993) also maintains that flexibility is one of the main advantages of participant observation because the lack of rigid frameworks in participant observations means that changes in direction can be made easily, as one series of observations give rise to a change of focus for the next series.

Participant observation, in the planned study, did result in large amounts of data being produced but this was collectively gathered by several people and collaboratively analysed by at least three people; therefore, sharing and spreading the work load. However, the collaborative analysis and reflection on all activities did mean that the study consumed large amounts of time.

The validity of data gathered from participant observations is an often debated and questioned issue, cautions May (1993). According to Blalock, (1970) lack of standardisation and the subjective nature of data are fundamental difficulties with participant observation, as each researcher will record what they have seen and heard in a different manner to another researcher. Blalock argues that replication is the obvious answer to this difficulty but replication is not always easy to accomplish as people do not like to be observed repeatedly and the nature of the situation might preclude it from being able to be replicated again. Replication was not possible in the planned study. Therefore, triangulation was an important procedure for ensuring the validity of data and ideas. The triangulation methods used in the planned study are discussed on page 92.

Kane (1987) warns that making value judgements in participant observations may also distort the validity of data gathered. She states that we must take care not to use judgement verbs, such as 'poor', when noting observations, as these

are very subjective terms. To overcome this problem, she recommends that researchers use triangulation to verify data. In the planned study, multiple methods of cross checking data took place. These included questioning the participants directly, phoning for clarification and checking with others as to their interpretations of the situation or reply.

Hakim (1987) also cautions about the possibility of researcher bias distorting data validity if only one researcher is used in participant observations. Researcher bias refers to the researcher interpreting situations according to what they see and hear in conjunction with their own beliefs, values and background experiences that they bring to the situation. This can result in distorted views of what was really happening. To overcome the above possible problems of participant observations, Hakim (1987), Kane (1987), May (1993), and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) recommend that several triangulation methods be used on the data.

Researcher bias, in the planned study, was minimised by having all research activities observed, recorded, analysed and reported by more people than just the researcher. In the study, there was an agreement that at least three people would carry out each of these activities not only to minimise researcher bias but also to share the workload in keeping with the collaborative action nature of the research task.

Multiple Triangulation

According to Kane (1987), triangulation is the use of multiple research methods on the same problem or data. Hakim (1987) adds that "triangulation" means examining the same data through different strategies in order to strengthen the validity of the research results. Denzin and Lincoln describe four kinds of triangulation. They are, according to Denzin and Lincoln (1994):

- data triangulation, the use of a variety of data sources in a study;
- investigator triangulation, the use of several different researchers;
- theory triangulation, the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and
- methodological triangulation, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem.

To ensure data validity in the planned study, the key group members used: data triangulation, where various people were asked the same questions as

demonstrated in the use of a postal survey; investigator triangulation, where more than one person carried out observations of the same situation as happened in several of the group discussions and meetings; and theory triangulation where several people interpreted a single set of data. Theory triangulation was used in analysis of all the activities in the school self review trial as we had made the policy that at least three people would be used in all data analysis to be in keeping with our collaborative tenets for the research.

Interviews

Hakim (1987) states that interviews are the most common data gathering technique used in qualitative research. She adds that there are two basic types of interview: the structured interview which normally uses a questionnaire and often has a time length and the unstructured interview where there is no questionnaire and can be of any time length. The choice of interview form, states Kane, (1987) will be determined by the nature of the research problem and the characteristics of the people to be interviewed.

Interviews may involve as few as one person or a group or groups of people. This school self review study primarily used group interviews and, to a much lesser degree, personal interviews, as both methods, according to Poskitt (1989), enabled the researchers to learn of data in a post- facto capacity. Group interviews were chosen by the case study school as the preferred data gathering tool because they argued that group interviews were in keeping with the tenets of collaborative action research. It is my contention that they also chose it because they were rather tentative about being involved in 'a research task' and group interviews offered them a sense of security. There was only one instance in the planned study when a 'one-on-one' structured interview was conducted and that was only done because the participant had been unable to attend the group discussion with the other staff members.

It is argued, by May, (1993) that group interviews are a valuable tool of investigation as they allow the researcher to," focus upon group norms and dynamics around issues which they wish to investigate" (1993:113). Group interviews were chosen to be used extensively in this school self review research as they best allowed the researcher to directly observe nuances of the school's culture and collaboration, which was the primary purpose of the research. Rutherford (1978, cited in Poskitt, 1989) stresses the value of personal interviews as a research tool. Poskitt argues that interviews secure individual's perceptions whilst also allowing enough flexibility to obtain both

breadth and depth of information. The usefulness of interviews as a data gathering method in the planned study will be discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Kidder, Wrightsman and Cook (1981) discuss further advantages for the use of interviews in qualitative research. They state that the greatest advantage of the interview over a questionnaire for eliciting information is that the interview allows for correction of mistakes and misinterpretations. They also argue that interviews are appropriate for revealing information that is both complex and emotionally laden and that visual aids such as pictures and diagrams can be used effectively in interviews. Kidder et al. also argue that the interview is a low cost research technique for eliciting large quantities of data and that the group interview also allows for large quantities of information to be gathered in a short time period.

It is commonly believed (May 1993) that tension exists between subjectivity and objectivity in the interviewing process. He states that, "on the one hand interviews are said by many to elicit knowledge free of prejudice or bias: on the other, a self-conscious awareness must be maintained in order to let the interview flow"(1993: 115). To overcome these issues, May suggests that interviewers consider several important issues. Firstly, what is the interviewer's role? Is it one of impartial scientist or friend? Secondly, what is the purpose of the interview? May writes that interviews, " are social encounters and not simply passive means of gaining information"(1993: 116).

Therefore, it is important that interviewers know the information that is required and what is expected of them, so that the interviewees will feel comfortable and valued and supply the required information. Interviewers also have to ensure that they are well prepared and have chosen their question structure very carefully. The matter of question structure is discussed in the following questionnaire section as the rules for question structure for interviews and questionnaires are similar.

As interviews involve verbal reports, the issue of validity of this form of data is often raised. Kidder et al. (1981) argue that verbal reports are a valid form of research data as they maintain that the interview situation allows for immediate checking and verification of information and also allows the interviewer to assess whether a valid interviewing process has been used. Hakim actually argues that the strength of the interview is the validity of the information obtained. She maintains that well constructed interviews allow for

individuals to be questioned in sufficient detail for the results to be taken as," true, correct, complete and believable reports of their views and experiences" (1987: 27).

Hakim (1987) also cautions us to be aware that a major weakness of the interview, as a research technique, is the use of a small number of respondents. She argues that the relatively small number of respondents who can practically be interviewed means that their responses cannot usually be taken as representative of the subjects of the study. In the planned study, the data gathered by using interview techniques were not taken to be representative of the full group. Rather, the same information was gathered from the rest of the school community by using a postal questionnaire.

The analysis of interview data also raises several issues. May (1993) talks of this stage of the research as being a long process which requires perseverance and an eye for detail. As the interview can elicit large quantities of data, May suggests that the support and opinion of others be sought on the data, the interviewing process and coding and mode of analysis. In this school self review research, all data analysis was undertaken by groups of at least three key group members. The concept of the key group members is discussed in Chapter Four. This action was partially in keeping with our philosophy that everything carried out in the review would be done by using principles of collaboration but, primarily, group analysis meant that we could triangulate and check the validity of data and interview processes used.

Questionnaires

According to Bouma, (1996) the questionnaire or survey is a research technique for measuring variables by asking people questions. Bouma writes that observation techniques are not always possible or even desirable for collecting data and that sometimes asking people questions is more suitable for the research task. Hakim (1987) adds that surveys are multipurpose in that the design can be adapted to almost all social science disciplines and research topics. What is less well recognised, according to Hakim, is that the survey design can be used to study "not only individuals but also social roles and networks and organisations"(1987:50). Smith (1978) writes that the use of questionnaires in research allows collection of data which enhances the scope, density and clarity of constructs while also allowing for triangulation and cross checking of information.

The purpose of the survey is usually to collect data on people's, "knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, feelings, motivations, anticipations, future plans and past behaviour" (Kidder et al.,1981: 150). Kane (1987) adds that the survey can either be self administered or delivered in a face to face situation by an interviewer.

In the planned study of a school's core values, a mailed questionnaire was used to elicit information from all parents in the school's community. The mailed questionnaire was chosen for this task because it was considered the most efficient use of time and effort to gather the data required from a large group of people.

According to Kidder et al., (1987) the primary advantage of the questionnaire is that this is usually a low cost method of data collection. The survey can collect data from as few as one person or as many as hundreds or more depending on the purpose of the survey. They also argue that the mailed questionnaire avoids potential interviewer bias; a problem which is inherent in interviews. Kidder et al. (1987) list the anonymity of respondents as a third advantage of the questionnaire. As questionnaires can be anonymous, respondents may feel freer to express views that may be disapproved or may have "got them into trouble". To a lesser degree, Kidder et al. argue that the questionnaire puts less pressure on respondents than do interviews. This may result in more honest replies from questionnaires than from interviews. In the planned study, the issue of anonymity of the questionnaire raised several issues. In particular, it was suggested that, if the case study school had a collaborative culture, as they believed they did, then the questionnaire should not have to be anonymous as all school community members should feel comfortable enough to be able to proffer honest replies with the respondent's name being supplied. Opposition to this notion took the form that we should not assume that we had a truly collaborative school culture and, therefore, if we desired honest replies, then we should make it optional for respondents to supply their names with their replies, as is recommended by Cohen & Manion (1990). The latter stance was adopted, as will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Hakim (1987) writes that another key advantage of the survey is that it facilitates replications as the survey can readily be repeated in different locations at the same time or at the same location at other times. Hakim also argues that a further attraction of survey design is its, "transparency or accountability" (1987: 48). This is because the methods and procedures used in a questionnaire can be made visible and accessible to other parties so that

the research design can be assessed by others. However, she adds that this transparency and accountability makes survey research more open to criticism and debate than is the case with most other research designs.

The principal weakness of the survey method, according to Hakim, (1987) is that it involves the use of a structured questionnaire. She argues that a structured questionnaire means there has to be some loss of 'sensitivity and quality' of data, as compared to the interview. She adds that the degree of loss will depend on the structure of the questionnaire and how it is administered.

Correct construction of the questionnaire, both questions and format, is vital to the success of the questionnaire, according to Kidder et al. (1987). Frary (1996) argues that questionnaires should be brief and concise because a long questionnaire can cause annoyance and frustration on the part of the respondent, resulting in non-return of mailed questionnaires. The survey questions, according to May (1993), also need to be relatively simple and straight forward as the researcher has no control over how the respondents will interpret them. Kane and Frary suggest that the use of open ended questions in a survey may pose difficulties as coding and analysis of these questions is not easy (1987, 1996). Frary also adds that open ended questions should be avoided due to variation in willingness and ability to respond in writing. An open ended question was used in the questionnaire in the planned study as it was deemed to be the type of question most suited to elicit the required information. However, we experienced several difficulties with our choice of wording in our open ended question and these will be discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Frary (1996) also advises that questionnaires must be aesthetically pleasing to the respondents, by being neither too simple nor too complex in layout. Frary suggests that questionnaires which use colour printing or graphics have a higher return rate than questionnaires which are presented in black and white. In the planned study, the questionnaire took account of being attractive in presentation but colour printing was not an option for a school on a restricted budget.

Another important aspect of the questionnaire development process, according to Blalock (1970) and Frary (1996), is pre-testing. These writers advise that several revisions may be needed before the survey is finalised, in order to ensure that it elicits the information expected of it. Frary adds that pre-testing and feedback on a questionnaire should be obtained from a small but

representative sample of potential responders. In the planned study, the questionnaire, which was destined for current school parents, was pre-tested on five parents who had had children at the school in the past two years as these people were deemed to be most representative of the present school parents.

The survey, as compared to the interview, is also constrained by the fact that it is limited to the written response. The interview also allows the interviewer to clarify responses and to observe the reactions and behaviour of the interviewee. Lavan in Kane (1987) say that his is not possible with the survey.

According to Kidder et al. (1987), the validity of data obtained from questionnaires is a difficult issue because 'true' answers are not often available for checking purposes. However, Kidder et al. add that, whenever possible, such criteria should be sought and used. These writers also state that, when analysing data collected from surveys, one has to presume that the respondent has answered truthfully and honestly.

Finally, May (1993) advises that the response rate from questionnaires can be a further weakness of using surveys for collecting data. The researcher has little control over the response rate of the survey although they can optimise chances of return by providing a return, stamped envelope and by making subsequent approaches, such as phone calls, to the participants (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). In the planned study, we achieved a response rate of 34.61%, which according to Hoinville, Jowell and Associates (1977) was reasonable for a survey of this nature. We also followed up some questionnaire responses with phone calls to clarify points so that all returned information could be considered in the analysis.

Field Diaries and Personal Journals

Data in the planned study were primarily gathered using field log books and personal diaries. Each of the key members of the research team was asked to keep a personal journal of their feelings, attitudes and questions about the review. The idea for personal diaries was developed, by the writer, from a notion of Winter (1982) who suggests keeping a 'descriptive diary' when doing research of this nature. He suggests that these diaries be not only a record of field observations but also that the diary keeper's feelings and thoughts also be recorded. The personal journals in the planned study were to be a record of personal reflection on the research process and it was envisaged

that the journals would provide a valuable source of rich text data for analysis of the self review processes in the research.

At the beginning of some activities and the end of each activity in the planned self review, time was specifically put aside for discussion and reflection on the self review activities and the participants' thoughts and feelings on the research. The key members in the self review research were also asked to record, in their journals, feelings and thoughts as they came to hand in their own time. However, as will be shown later in Chapter Four, there was reluctance over the use of the journals and they did not prove to be a valuable source of data for the research.

The writer also kept a personal diary in which she reflected upon and recorded her own feelings, experiences and perceptions throughout the research and she also kept a field diary of observations and notes on the research task. These notes were valuable in developing Chapter Four of this thesis as they provided both data for analysis and information to reflect upon the effectiveness of the processes which were undertaken.

In summary, the following table demonstrates the purposes for which data collection methods were used in the planned study.

Table 3.2 Data Collection Methods and their use in the writer's Core Value Research Trial

Data Collection Methods Used	**Purpose**
1. Participant Observation	- to enable researcher to be full member of group under investigation
2. Interviews	- used to gather data from small groups of staff - used to gather data from individual staff members and parents - used to gather data from large groups of students
3. Questionnaire	- used to gather data from all school community members

4. Field Diaries and Personal Journals	- a field diary was used by the writer to record her observations and reflections on processes used - personal journals were kept by all members of the key research group. The purpose of the journal was to be a written record of the members thoughts, comments and feelings about the research programme.

DATA ANALYSIS

Goulding wrote, in 1984, that, when undertaking any small scale investigation, the researcher must clarify at the designing stage of the research, " the methods by which the information or data collected may be analysed and presented" (1984: 230). As already stated, this research aimed to improve, so to this end, descriptive statistical methods of data collection and analysis were used. Goulding states that, "descriptive statistical methods provide 'pictures' of the group under investigation: these 'pictures' may be in the form of charts, tables, percentages, averages, and so on"(1984: 230).

Data analysis was implemented using the following analytical framework (see Table 3.3 below) which was informed by the work of LeCompte, Millroy and Preissle (1992), and Miles and Huberman (1994).

Explanation of Analytical Framework

Data collection in the planned study involved a group of five people, including the writer, taking responsibility for the collection of the data from nine activities which were devised and implemented by the key group members with input from the full school community, where applicable. Data collection methods used in the study are summarised on page 79.

Data description involved the writer recording observations and interview results in a field log book. The results of group activities were sometimes recorded in the form of group charts. (See example of group chart below in Figure 3.1) The study also planned to use personal journals as a vehicle for recording the participants feelings and thoughts about the study.Unfortunately, the use of the personal journals was stopped for reasons that will be explained

Table 3.3 Analytical Framework

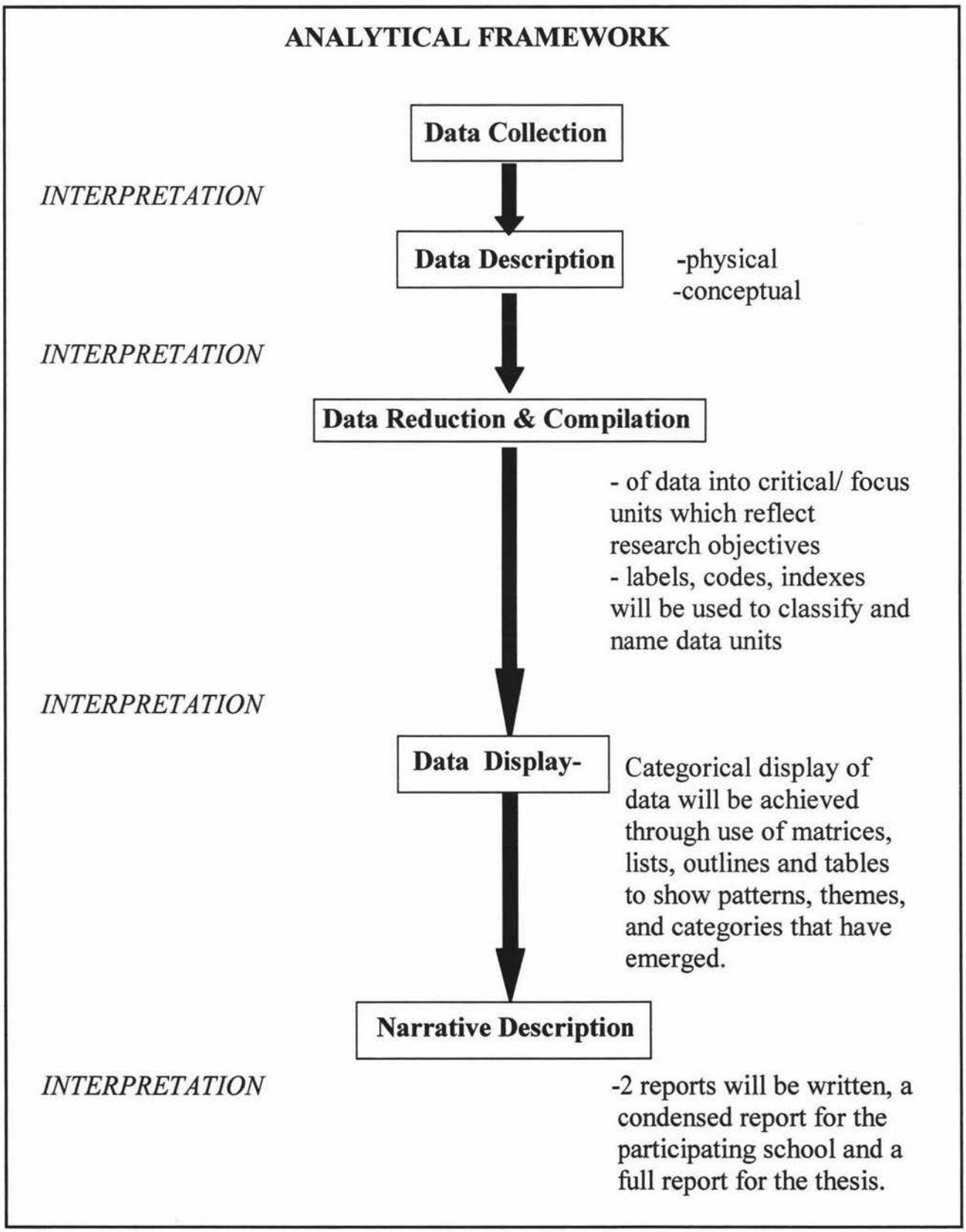
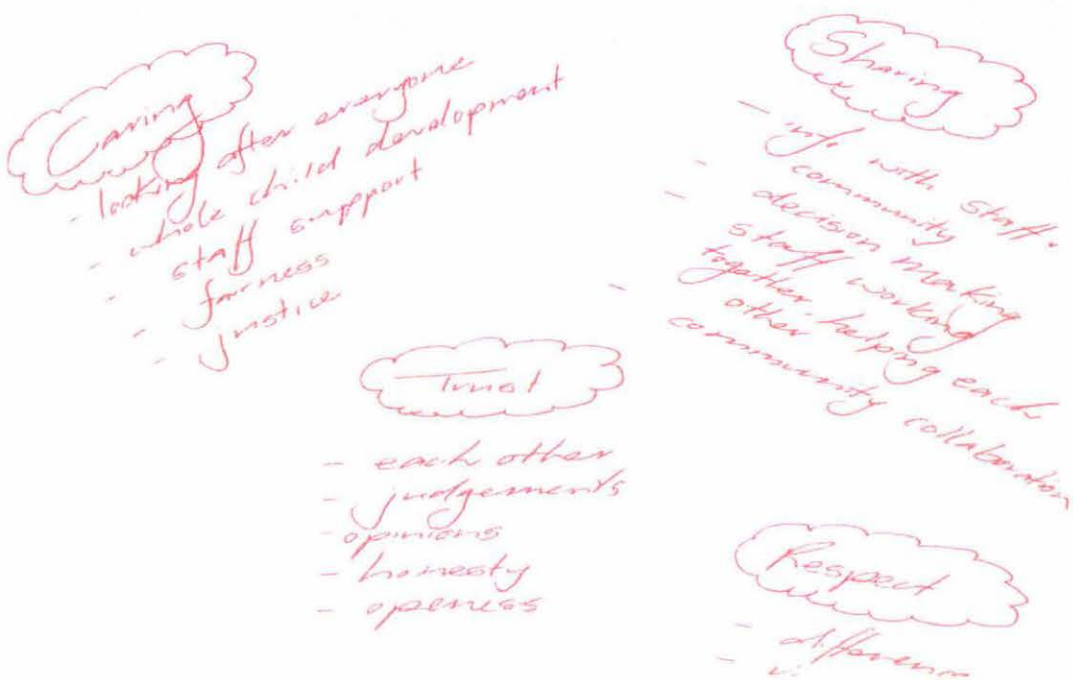


Figure 3.1 Example of group chart (data description)

This chart was written by the staff in Activity one. It shows 4 of the values that they identified and indicators for those values.

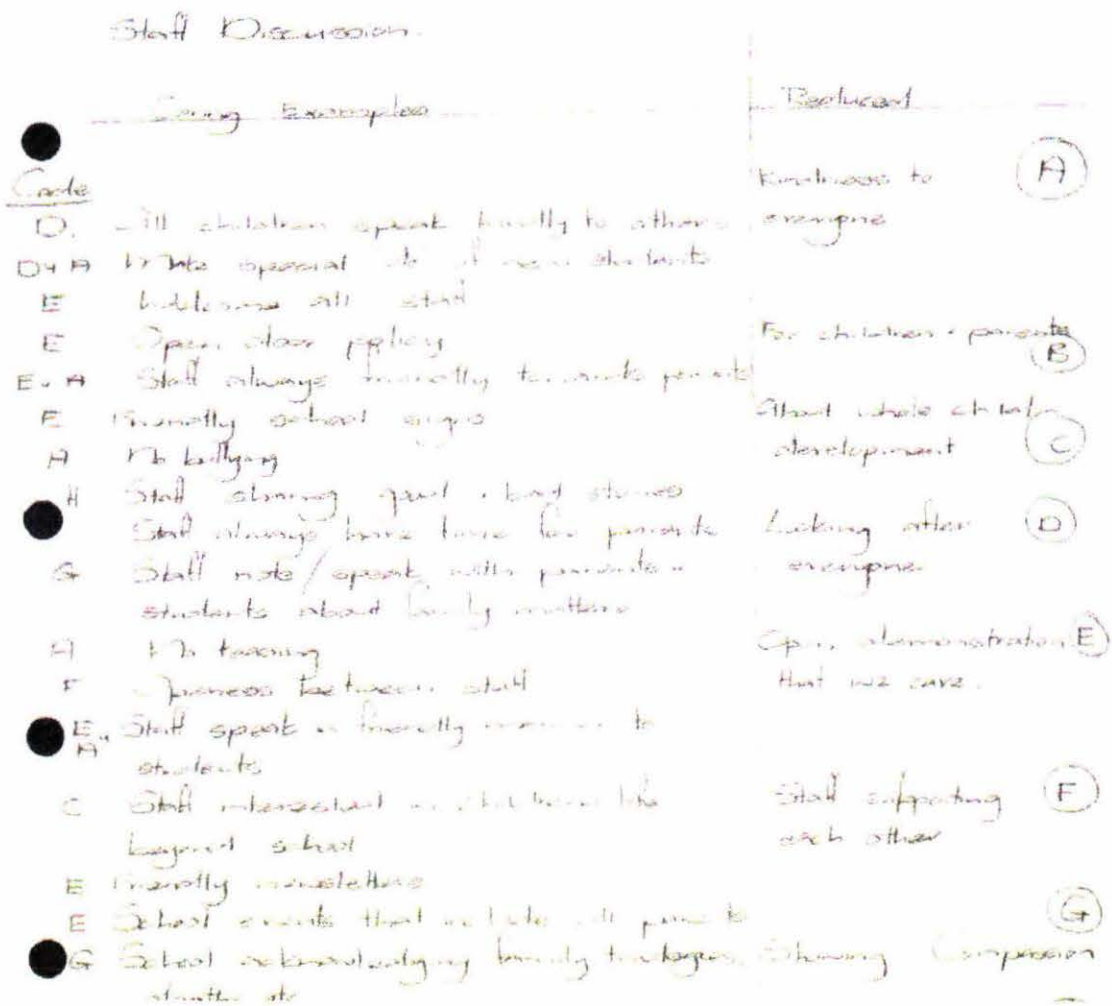


in Chapter Four.

Data reduction and compilation was undertaken by at least three members of the key group. Data was reduced and compiled by using mainly labels and codes (see example of coding in Figure 3.2 below). The full example of this coding is presented in Appendix One.

Figure 3.2 Example of Data Coding and Reduction Method Used

This figure shows the system of coding used in Activity One for matching examples/indicators of values with the appropriate identified values.



In the planned study, data are displayed in the form of tables and diagrams. (See example of data display in Table 3.4).

In the planned study, narrative description took the form of two written reports, one for the studied school and the other as part of this thesis. The school's written report is contained in appendix seven.

Table 3.4 Example of data display from planned study

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	for all children children usually care for each other staff look after and support each other for the parents and the whole community
Consideration	staff are kind and thoughtful to each other children are considerate to each other
Pride	lacks pride in its grounds takes pride in its sporting achievements
Acknowledges Achievement	certificates mentions at assembly mentions in newsletters principal's good work

RESEARCH ISSUES

Key concerns of all research methodology must be ethical considerations and reliability and validity of information.

Ethical Considerations

In the conduct of this research, the researcher took particular care at all times to " respect the rights, wishes, beliefs, consent and freedom of the individual subject" (Bouma, 1984:193). In particular, the ethical issues considered were consent, confidentiality, the right to withdraw from the research and access to information.

Consent
Free consent to carry out this research was sought in writing from the school staff and the school board of trustees who also gave permission to include the school community in the trial research. The staff and school board members of the trial school were fully informed as to the goals of the research, their

role in it and procedures which were to be used. The school community was informed via the school newsletter that the school board had given the researcher permission to seek their assistance in the trial. The school newsletter outlined the goals of the research and informed possible participants of confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any stage from the trial.

Confidentiality
The researcher took appropriate steps to protect the confidentiality of each participant by using codes for participants and a name change for the school. However, it should be noted, that the key trial participants felt that, if the school community was a truly collaborative community, as they believed themselves to be, then participants should not wish to be anonymous within the bounds of the trial and the research report to the school. Rather, it was felt, all participants in the trial should be comfortable in putting their name to replies if this school community shared values of openness and honesty as they believed it did. However, it was decided, following lengthy discussion, that all participants were to be given the right to be anonymous if they so wished. It is interesting to note that fewer than ten per cent of all participant replies were anonymous.

Right to Withdraw
The participants were informed in writing at the commencement of the study that they had the right to withdraw their consent to further participation at any time during the research.

Access to Information
Raw data were made available only to the persons who had supplied it and, on completion of the project, the researcher undertook to furnish a written report to the school community.

Verification of Information

Edwards (1986: 156) notes that: "Validity is concerned with ensuring that the ideas and propositions which emerge from a study are well grounded and soundly reasoned from a reliable data base".

To ensure the internal validity of data in her research, the researcher used triangulation, mentor checking, participatory modes of research and took in to

consideration possible researcher bias.

Triangulation
Data were gathered from multiple sources and checked by a range of participants, where possible, to determine that meanings and interpretations were fairly represented.

Mentor Checking
Participants were asked to verify the writer's or the group's interpretations.

Participatory Modes of Research
Some of the school participants were involved in all stages of the study, including the design, checking of interpretations and formulating of conclusions.

Researcher Bias
At the beginning of the study, the writer discussed with the key participants personal values, biases or assumptions, which she felt may have impacted on this study. Also, throughout the review, interpretations and analysis were always carried out by two or more people to minimise researcher bias.

Reliability of Information

Reliability refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated (Poskitt, 1989). Poskitt writes that, " reliability in science lies in the requirement that another observer, using the same methods on the same group, will obtain the same results" (1989: 78). To achieve this end, the writer paid particular detail to ensure that her research trial includes detailed descriptions of the site, techniques used, specification of who provided the data, identification of data analysis processes and retrospective accounts of how data was examined in accordance with the recommendations of Goetz and Le Compte (1984, cited in Poskitt, 1989). All stages of this project were also subject to the scrutiny of my two supervisors, Dr Wayne Edwards and Dr David Stewart, as recommended by Cresswell (1994).

Reliability of information is premised, according to Tolich and Davidson, (1999) on its ability to be compared and then generalised. Generalisation of data is possible from research of this nature as this review provides a 'word picture' for others to use. By carefully documenting the steps that were taken

in the review, this report provides an understanding of what we did. This report, therefore, could be used by others to make comparisons with similar situations.

Groupthink

When discussing data validity and reliability, Janis cautions us to consider what he termed 'groupthink'. In 1972, Irving Janis invented the word 'groupthink' to describe what happens in group situations when people stop thinking as individuals and let group thinking take over (Janis, 1972). "Groupthink occurs when members of a cohesive and strong group emphasis agreement among the group at the expense of critical thinking" (http://www.austrainer.com/archives/ 1385.htm, 1999). In these situations, people ignore opposing views and accept that which is in keeping with the 'group' as they feel they should.

Janis (1972) wrote that groupthink occurs in groups with rigid rules, strong membership pledges and powerful belief systems. He adds that groupthink happens in all kinds of groups; from family groups through to political groups. Janis argues that groupthink is virtually inescapable. However, he contends that it is not bad in itself, providing that what the group thinks is not detrimental to its members or to the rest of society.

It is my contention that groupthink may be a necessary component of group interaction as it serves to keep group members pulling in the same direction to attain the same goals. In fact, if we do not have a degree of groupthink then groups will not remain cohesive and focussed on the same goals but, rather, we will fragment and achieve little. However, the crucial factor in successful group interaction is the balance between group members having the freedom to express their own views whilst still adhering to the group's aims and objectives.

According to Janis, there are eight symptoms of groupthink:

1. Illusions of invulnerability, meaning that a group over estimates its power.
2. Over estimation of morality, where there is an inherent belief in the morality of the group.
3. Collective rationalisation, where the group rationalise their stance

even when evidence suggests they are wrong.

4. Out- group stereotypes, meaning the group is close minded to other opinions.
1. Self censorship is when the group will not listen to, or tolerate criticism of the group.
6. Illusions of unanimity, meaning people in the group will not speak their own opinion and therefore the group is all in agreement.
7. Direct pressure on dissenters, is when the group tries to suppress negative reactions.
8. Self appointed mindgroups, are when people are designated to protect the leader of the group.

(http://oak.cats.ohiou.edu/~af977194/afgroup.html, 1999)

To overcome the possible effects of groupthink, Janis recommends assigning the role of critical evaluator to every member of the group to ensure close scrutiny of favoured actions and solutions (1972 and http://oak.cats.ohiou. edu/~ sk260695/ skthink.html).

Unfortunately, the writer was not made aware of groupthink until after the planned study had been completed. However, she was able to comment upon effects it may have had on the study and was able to make recommendations about how to guard against the possible effects of groupthink in a study of this nature.

Research Reports

As this is a qualitative study, the findings have been reported in descriptive narrative text. A separate condensed report was prepared at the end of the trial for the trial participants. The school board also asked that they receive regular up dates of the research findings at their monthly meetings so the researcher attended school board meetings throughout the duration of the trial to discuss, and share with the board, the research findings of each month. It was also decided, by the school staff, school board and researcher, that, as the school community was involved in the research, they, too, should be informed of research findings when applicable. To this end, the researcher was asked to write short, regular reports for the school's newsletter. For an example of these, see Appendix Five.

In this chapter the writer has examined the characteristics of collaborative action research and has discussed why she chose this research method as the

one best suited to meet the objectives of the planned study. The writer also explains the methods of data collection, analysis and reporting which are used in the planned study. In particular, the planned study employs participant observation, interviews and a survey to gather data. Data analysis is carried out by groups of people using the procedures, which are set out in, the Analytical Framework presented on page 90. The chapter concluded with discussion on the ethical issues, which pertain to the planned study.

Chapter 4

Methodology in Action
-Self Review in the Case Study School

Overview of Chapter

This self review of a school's core values took place over a fourteen month period in a rural, New Zealand primary school. The full school community, including school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, school board of trustees members, students and parents and caregivers were all involved in some or all of the review stages and strategies.

In Chapter Four the writer describes, analyses and comments on each of the processes and the steps within each process that were taken by the school, staff and researcher as they worked collaboratively to plan, trial and reflect upon the strategies they had devised to review the core values of their school. In particular, Chapter Four reports on the:

- overview of review phases;
- formulation of review objectives;
- review timeline;
- review activities;
- participants' reflection and comment on review; and
- researcher's analysis of the review.

The review activities are presented in the chronological order in which they took place, to illustrate the thinking and development behind the review process.

To ensure consistency of reporting, each step of the self review process is reported in the following format:

1) statement of aims and objectives;
2) statement of method/s used;
3) report of results; and

4) reflection.

Review Phases

The review process can be divided into four phases. Phase One was the preparation stage which involved outlining to the parties involved, the aims, objectives and possible outcomes of such a case study. Permission to carry out the study was also gained during this phase. The second phase involved educating the school members about the concepts of school culture, school effectiveness and school improvement. Phase Three contained the planning, trialling, analysis and casual reporting of the self review trial to the school community. The final phase of the review consisted of the writing and presentation of the two written reports.

PHASE ONE: OVERVIEW OF PREPARATION

This phase happened at the commencement of the trial and encompassed all the activities that had to be undertaken to implement a trial of this nature.

Table 4.1 Overview of Preparation Phase

1998	
20 July	Meeting of researcher with school principal/ chairperson of BOT to present proposal for self review trial in their school
15 August	Meeting of researcher with school principal/ chairperson to speak in more depth about the aims/ objectives of possible trial and to ascertain which members of the school community might be involved.
20 October	Letter seeking consent for trial was sent to school BOT. Writer required to attend BOT meeting to describe proposed plan for trial self review programme.
23 October	BOT granted permission for the writer to carry out review in school. BOT asked that they and school community be included where ever possible in trial and that they be kept informed through regular reporting to both board and school community.
3 November	Meeting of researcher with chair and teaching staff/ school secretary to outline proposed trial, to set trial objectives and to consider teacher time commitment and trial time-frame.

PHASE TWO: OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION

The education phase was the second stage of the trial and involved examination of key concepts and understandings and discussion on research methods and issues.

Table 4.2 Overview of Education Phase

18 November	First background education session with principal, teaching staff, BOT chair and researcher. Introduction of trial folders and personal journals.
2 December	Education- recapitulation of concept of school culture. Discussion- What trial to involve, who to be involved?
1999	
18 February	Education- further development of notion of school culture and relevance to school effectiveness/ improvement. Discussion- trial to be carried out in two stages
3 March	Education- recapitulation of concept of school culture Introduction of notion of principal appraisal as part of whole school review. Introduction to collaborative action research. Discussion/ Planning - Stage 1 Identification of school's core values.

PHASE THREE: OVERVIEW OF TRIAL

The third stage of the trial encompassed all the activities that were developed, trialled and reflected upon by members of the school community.(See table 4.3)

Table 4.3 Overview of Trial Phase

5 March	**Stage 1 of trial-** identification of school's core values Activity 1- School teaching staff- Focus Question- What are the core values you hold for School X? How will this data be analysed and who will do it?
8 March	Activity 2- Interview School secretary- What are the core values you hold for School X?
8 March	Activity 3- Development of School BOT and parent survey- What Kind of Place is This?
16 March	Meeting with school BOT Education- What is school culture? What is the importance of school culture? Activity 4- BOT survey - What Kind of Place is This?
23 March	Meeting with school staff Finalise methods of data analysis for survey- What Kind of Place is This? Activity 5- Parent survey sent out.- What Kind of Place is This?
25 March - 15 April	Activity 6- School Student Survey- What Kind of Place is This?
28 April & 3 May	Activity 7- Analysis of survey data- What kind of place is This?
2 May	Clarification of some parent replies
13 May	Activity 8- Development of processes for construction of value performance indicators. Plan- stage 2 of trial - What would these core values look like in practice at School X? Are these core values evident in current school practices?
25 May	Report of trial stage 1 findings to school board Education- presentation of Hopkins, Ainscow and West's (1992) school typology. Planning- full group selected the 3 core values, beliefs and understandings which have the most impact on teaching and learning at School X at the present moment.

PHASE FOUR: OVERVIEW OF REPORTING

This fourth and final phase of the trial contained the activities that were undertaken to meet reporting obligations to the school community.

Table 4.4 Overview of Reporting Phase

28 May	Report of trial Stage 1 findings to school community via school newsletter
	Stage 2 of Trial
1 June	Report- of Stage 1 of trial to community consultation meeting
10 June	Report to school staff/ BOT of indicators produced
14 June	Decision made to conclude trial at this point
24 June	Activity 9 - Final evaluative session with school staff, secretary, selected BOT members and selected parents
September	Trial report completed and circulated to staff, BOT and parents
2000	Thesis report completed

TRIAL ACTIVITIES

Table 4.5 Codes used for Key Group Members

The codes used in the research to ensure anonymity of participants were-

School Name-	**X**
Principal-	**P**
Teachers(2)-	**T1 and T2**
School Secretary-	**S**
BOT Chairperson	**BOT chair**
BOT Members-	**BOT 1-4**
Researcher-	**R**
Key Group Members	**Refers to P, T1 and T2, BOT chair and R**

Trial Group Membership

It was decided by the principal, teaching staff and BOT chair that there would be a small group of key people who would be known as the trial key group members. This group was made up of the principal, teaching staff and the researcher. It was decided to make these people the key members as it was felt they brought a range of suitable skills to the task. It was also felt that as these people were closest to the school, they would have a vested interest in the trial and therefore would bring enthusiasm and commitment.

The group's purpose was to take major responsibility for planning, organising, and developing trial processes. It was also decided that, in consultation with the wider community, they would collate and analyse data and take responsibility for reporting trial outcomes to the community. These people played a major role and put many hours into the trial.

However, on reflection, it would have been useful to have increased the number of key members by another three school parents. As the trial progressed, it became apparent that the staff viewed the trial as an 'extra' rather than as an integral part of school development, and they increasingly appeared to have difficulty finding time for some of the trial activities. More key group members would have meant that the work load could have been spread and may have avoided the staff feeling of 'over load'. By including more school parents there would also have been a more balanced ratio of staff to parents, with the benefit of a wider base of skills and opinions for use in the trial.

PHASE ONE: PREPARATION

The preparation phase of the trial took place over a four month period in 1998. The purpose was to present the concepts of self review and core values to the school BOT, to gain their consent to carry out the self review of their school's core values and to negotiate terms for the review.

The initial meeting with the principal and board chair proved to be an appropriate first step in the review process as it gained their early support for and interest in the trial. They both helped to drive, motivate and encourage the other participants throughout the trial.

Another important and beneficial feature of this phase was the personal attendance of the researcher at the board meeting to speak to her letter requesting consent for the trial. Being present at this meeting meant that it was possible to discuss, face to face, the purposes and potential benefits of the trial to the school, and also to clarify points and discuss concerns before formal consent was given.

At this meeting, the board raised the question of potential benefits of the trial to the school. In reply, the researcher spoke of the work of Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) and Creemers, Peters and Reynolds, (1989) which demonstrates the connections between school self review and school self improvement. She also spoke of Deal (1988) and Stewart and Prebble's (1993) findings which indicate that a strong school culture is the centre of an effective school and of Plunkett's (1990) contention that, at the heart of a strong culture, is a set of shared core values. The board also raised the concern that the trial may involve undue amounts of staff and community time. It was decided to involve input from the whole school where possible and practical, in order to spread and minimise the amount of time that individual people would have to contribute to the trial. The board also stated that full participation should be used because they believed theirs is a collaborative school.

However, full school community participation did lessen the amount of time that some people spent on trial activities but overall it increased the trial time, mainly because more meetings were held. On the other hand, use of full school consultation was feasible and worthwhile in that the outcomes of the trial represent the full community's belief and opinion. The school staff and board also felt that the trial was a very good public relations exercise, because it pulled the community together in an exercise where they saw themselves as being asked to do something of educational worth for the school. Finally, on the matter of full school participation, full school community involvement in the review was workable and beneficial, in a school of this size but, because of the increased time factor, this would not be recommended for schools of much larger size.

Self Review Objectives

As discussed in Chapter One, the trial had two sets of objectives. The first was constructed by a group of school members, primarily to identify the core

values of their school. The second set was compiled by the researcher, to produce a conceptual model of the processes that could be used to identify a school's core values. The school's objectives were to:

- learn more about school culture, school improvement and school effectiveness;

- identify the core values of their school by addressing the question: Did their school community possess a set of shared values?

- ascertain whether the shared values were evident in current school practices by addressing the questions: Did school policy and practice reflect the school community's identified core values? If they did not, how might this be influencing the effectiveness of the school and what could be done to improve or change the situation?

The researcher's objectives were to:

- develop and trial a system of school self review which focuses on one of the core activities of learning and teaching, management and development of a school's culture and, in particular, identification of a school's core values (Stewart and Prebble, 1993);

- incorporate principal appraisal into school self review to determine if principal appraisal is, in essence, review of the whole or part of a school's performance (Stewart and Prebble, 1993);

- ascertain whether it is feasible for a group of school staff, students and parents to devise processes for self review of a school's core values;

- produce a conceptual model of the review of a school's core values which could be used by other schools to meet part of the National Administrative Guidelines (1993) which require each school board of trustees to maintain an on going programme of school self review (N.A.G., 1993,4,ii); and

- to experiment with and learn about research methodology by being involved in a true collaborative action research exercise. This

objective is a very important aspect of the planned study as this is the researcher's first experience in research of this nature.

The objective setting took one and a half hours of face-to-face discussion at the school. The role of the researcher in this discussion was set by the principal and chair prior to the meeting. It was agreed that her role would be to provide background information, to clarify points if required and to record the results of the discussion.

The school objectives were determined by a group consisting of the two full-time teaching staff, principal, board chair and researcher. This group was chosen by the principal and board chair, as they felt that these persons fairly represented the interests of the school community. It was decided to use a small group, just four persons plus the researcher, since the principal and chair felt that a large group of participants might hinder in-depth discussion. The principal and chair also believed that small group discussion would be the most productive use of participants' time, as it would enable informal, free and open discussion to take place and would minimise the number of times that people would be asked to come to the school to participate in review activities.

Levels of participant contribution had been discussed previously by the staff, BOT and researcher and it was agreed that the amount of time any one person was asked to contribute to the review must be limited. This decision was based on their belief that, as the level of parent participation was currently dropping in the school, the parents should not be called upon unduly to engage in this review, as this might limit their valued participation in other school activities, such as reading support and transport for school trips. They also felt that the teaching staff currently have very high demands placed on them and that they too should not be called upon excessively to give large amounts of out of classroom time to the core values review.

These decisions made by the principal and chair raise a number of questions about the school and the review processes. The core questions were:

- did these people consider school review an important facet of school development and improvement;
- do these decisions reflect a lack of understanding of the importance of school culture, core values and their relationship to school improvement; and

- were these people in an informed position to decide who should be involved in the objectives setting discussion?

These issues are discussed below, when factors which hindered the preparation phase are considered.

On reflection, this objectives-setting discussion was hindered by three important factors: sequencing of trial activities; lack of understanding of core concepts; and researcher assumptions. The main factor was the timing of the discussion in relation to other review activities. It is now apparent that the principal and chair were asked to decide who should be involved in the process of objective setting before they had sufficient background information about the key concepts of school culture, core values and school improvement. It is also evident that the objectives setting discussion was held before the chosen group also had sufficient background information on the key concepts. This meant that the researcher had to take a larger than anticipated facilitation and advisory role in the discussion, which may have resulted in the school's objectives reflecting more of the researcher's opinion rather than objectives which truly reflected the school community's needs.

The second problem was a lack of understanding as to what core values were, both on the part of the researcher and the school participants. At this meeting, little time was spent clarifying our understanding of the terms core values, beliefs and understandings. This omission was to have ramifications later, resulting in confusion and misunderstandings that hampered some of the review processes.

A third hindrance was the researcher's assumptions that this school understood and valued school self review, that the participants understood that school self review is a mandated government requirement and that they understood the connections between school self review and school effectiveness. It was also assumed that the participants understood how identification of their school's core values could improve practices at their school.

However, it emerged that the participants did not have a sound understanding of these key concepts in the early stages of the trial. This led to repeated discussions on clarification of the key concepts, which slowed and interrupted the flow of the trial. The trial would have benefited from more and earlier school community education and discussion of the above issues.

It would also have been more effective to have conducted the education activities with the full community, including the staff and board, before the objective setting exercise was attempted. To have given the trial a firm foundation, the education of the full school community should have taken place after consent from the board had been obtained. It would have also been useful to have included more discussion on school self review and its relationship to school effectiveness and improvement at that early point. The terms 'core values, beliefs and understandings' should have been discussed at this juncture, to clarify and agree upon their usage throughout the review.

If the events had been undertaken in this recommended sequence, it might then be both feasible and more productive to have a large group of participants design the trial objectives. In this situation, it would be possible to have all those people who attended the education session formulate the objectives as part of the education session. This large group participation in objective setting would ensure a truer representation of full school community opinion than is possible with a small group; a notion supported by Hakim (1987) who cautions against the use of small groups of participants, as she argues they are not a reliable representation of the subjects of the study.

These changes would not necessarily have lead to different trial outcomes. Rather, as time commitment to the trial was of concern to the school staff and board of trustees, in particular, these changes would reduce some of the time spent in repeated discussion of the same points.

PHASE TWO: EDUCATION

As part of the agreed to objectives for the trial, the researcher was asked to provide the staff and board of trustees with education on the key concepts of the trial. The education phase of the self review task commenced in November and continued over a four month period. Early discussion with the staff and chair of the board ascertained that these people had virtually no prior knowledge of the concept of school culture and its relationship to school self review and school effectiveness. The principal was the only person with some knowledge of school culture.

It was decided by the principal, chair and staff that the education sessions would be divided into three sections: in-depth education for the staff; general

education for the board of trustees; and, later, general education for the community. It was decided to have three separate education sessions because it was felt that the needs of each of these groups were different, involving different levels of explanation and length of meeting. The researcher prepared notes and overhead transparencies which were used for each of the three groups. The main points presented at the meetings were that:

- according to Plunkett (1990), Stewart and Prebble (1993) and Deal and Peterson (1999), school culture is a set of shared core values and beliefs that motivate and shape the behaviour inside a school, and keep those inside the school pulling in the same direction;

- according to Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989),Creemers, Peters and Reynolds (1989), and Stoll and Fink (1996), effective schools are those schools which have strong cultures;

- according to Sergiovanni (1984), Stewart and Prebble (1993), Stoll and Fink (1996), and Deal and Peterson (1999), the role of the principal is critical to managing and developing the culture of a school, and it can be said that it is the most important thing that they do;

- according to Deal (1988), Schollum and Ingram (1991), and Ruth Sutton (1994), school self review is about change that is generated from within a school and which leads to worthwhile improvement. To lead to improvement, school self review should involve the whole school community in a process of collaborative process of self improvement; and

- according to Sagor (1992) and Calhoun (1994), collaborative action research is the process of collecting data about a school with the purpose of improving practice, and it should involve as many of the school community as is possible.

The full notes prepared for these discussions are attached as appendices.

Appendix 2- School Culture/ Effectiveness-
The role of the school principal in a school's culture
Appendix 3- School Self Review
Appendix 4- Collaborative Action Research

Education work with the staff and board chair was divided into two sessions of approximately three quarters of an hour each. This came about because one of the teachers was called away unexpectedly during the first session. Having this education in two sessions was ideal as one long session on new topics would have been too much for these people to absorb. They had a reasonable knowledge of self review but they perceived its main purpose to be for external accountability purposes rather than for self improvement. The concept of school culture was new to all except the principal and was received with little discussion.

Similarly, little was asked about core values and, as later review discussions would reveal, we should have spent more time forming a shared understanding of this term because lack of agreed to meanings lead to misunderstandings and wasted trial time. It was noticeable at these two education sessions that the board chair was, in her own words, 'out of her depth' in these discussions. She asked that the education for board and community be simplified to lay persons' terms.

The lack of discussion at these two staff education sessions was interesting. It appeared that these people did not care greatly for the concepts behind the trial but, rather, that their sole interest was centred on trial outcomes. The lack of discussion left the researcher questioning whether the presentations were appropriate but feeling that they were carefully chosen and appropriately presented. The staff did comment that they had found the two sessions useful and appropriate and that they felt prepared for and were now looking forward to proceeding with the trial.

Education of the board, with two of the staff members present, took place as part of the board's monthly meeting. A half hour slot was allocated to this session. The presentation addressed the same points as for the staff education but the points were presented in simpler language. This education session generated little discussion although the members were attentive and showed interest. The group said that they understood the key concepts and could see the potential benefits of the trial. They gave their support for the trial. It was evident from the agenda that the board had a full night ahead of them, so the members may have been reticent to prolong the evening. A further twenty minutes of time, however, would have been beneficial if spent discussing core values as it is now evident that we assumed we understood and shared a common meaning.

It would also be worthwhile moving this education session into a time slot of its own at the beginning of the trial and not as part of a board meeting. If this was done, the board and community education session could be held together as a separate or part of one of the regular consultation evenings that this school holds. A joint, BOT and parent education session would possibly have the advantage of generating more discussion.

As already discussed, the community education session was not held until about half way through the trial when the researcher gave feedback on the first sections of the review. This was too late. The community education session generated lively debate as, by this stage, these people had engaged in the first survey and wanted feedback as to what the results were and what they signified. However, although the group listened attentively to the presentation and asked a number of questions, their main interest lay with the outcomes of the trial and not with the education behind it.

During the education phase of the trial, the key members, the principal, teaching staff and BOT chair, put the above notes, supplied by the researcher, into personal folders which also contained each member's personal journal. The purpose of the journals was to provide a place where team members could note their feelings, thoughts, comments and questions in diary form. These journal entries were intended to be used as discussion points at the beginning of the next session.

SELF REVIEW TRIAL ACTIVITIES

It should be noted at the commencement of the review activities that analysis of the results of the value surveys was not the researcher's main focus for this thesis. The researcher's main focus was on the methodology used. Therefore, reflection on processes used in all five value surveys will take precedence over analysis of results.

ACTIVITY 1- March 5

The purpose of Activity One in the trial was to devise methods that could be used to identify the case study school's core values. In particular, we aimed to identify the teaching staff's core values. We also wished to establish who should be responsible for, and how data from Activity One would be analysed. This activity also aimed to devise methods for gathering the same core value information from the school secretary and school BOT members.

Method (as devised by key group members)

1) Step One- Group discussion with P, T1 & T2 , BOT chair and R, R acted as recorder.
   Opening discussion- Values - What is a value?
2) Step Two- Each group member was asked to write down own answer to the focus question.
   Focus question- What do you consider are the core values of our school?
3) Group members were unable to get started and asked for more discussion on values in education. R had to supply examples of educational values.
4) Group members asked to change method of activity as they thought it would be easier if we carried out the activity as a joint group discussion.
5) Group now discussed focus question again and R recorded the results.
6) On completion of Step Five, the group decided that it would like to regroup the identified core values into five sub groups as they felt there were many commonalties between the values.

Results:

The staff identified five groups of values that they considered were central to all practices at School X. The values were caring, sharing, trust, respect and encouragement. The staff also provided illustrations of each value. See table 4.6, Staff identified core values and illustrations of these values.

Table 4.6 Staff identified core values and illustrations of these values

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	kindness to everyone for the children and their parents about the whole child's development looking after everyone demonstrating openly how we care for others staff supporting each other showing compassion to everyone staff sharing work and feelings with each other fairness and justice at all times in all activities
Sharing	school sharing information with parents and full community decision making with students and parents staff working together, planning, solving problems staff sharing thoughts, feelings, knowledge with each other BOT, staff, parents sharing responsibility for what happens in school
Trust	other people's judgements and opinions one's own ability and judgement honesty
Respect	for individual differences in children for each other's viewpoints for other staff members and parents self respect
Encouragement	encouraging children to reach potential encouragement to take risks/ challenges staff praising children. staff encouraging each other to take risks encouraging everyone to succeed at something high expectations for all everyone to be learners, including staff and parents attitude of positiveness

Reflection on Results

Pauline Leonard, in Begley, (1999) provides a framework for analysing educational values. She suggests that educational values can be divided into four main groups and that the fundamental purpose of a school can be appraised by deciding which group or groups of values have the most emphasis placed on them. The four groups of values are social development, personal development, career development and intellectual development. Leonard states that:

- social development values include co-operation, tolerance, caring, respect, participation and standards of behaviour such as punctuality, compliance;
- personal development values include, self-esteem, self discipline, life-long learning, emotional well-being and personal meaning;
- career development values include, career education skills, technology skills and specialisation; and
- academic development values include, literacy, numeracy, problem solving skills and developing thinking ability.

Using Leonard's reference, we see that these people placed greatest emphasis on social development values, followed by personal development and then further back academic values. Career development values do not feature at all but this is probably not unexpected for a primary school.

George, Stevenson, Thomason and Beane (1992) wrote that values, which underlie practices in exemplary schools, are:

- that student's healthy growth and development are paramount;
- optimism and positiveness prevail;
- high expectations for all abound;
- adults understand and support the school's mission;
- teachers believe they make a difference;
- people pull together;
- principals lead by example;
- conditions promote innovations; and
- change that works and lasts is owned by the changers.

The staff of School X also placed high emphasis on the student's healthy growth, particular the social development of the student. The staff also mentioned high expectations, positiveness, working together, supporting each

other and risk taking. In sum, these people placed emphasis on most of the values for an exemplary school identified by George et al. (1992).

It is noted with interest that the staff identified a number of values such as shared decision making, trust and respect, sharing information with the full school community, staff sharing work experiences with each other, and caring for each other, students and community which are all valued components of school collaboration as identified by Sergiovanni (1992), Costa and Kallick (1995), Fullan and Hargreaves (1996), and Purkey and Novak (1996). School X espouses high commitment to collaboration in all school practices so it is interesting to note that their list of identified values backs and supports this commitment.

Research by Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) suggests that when teachers place their greatest value of caring, justice and inclusion then everything they do begins to change for the better. These teachers placed very high value on caring, justice and inclusion, so it could be argued that School X is placed in a favourable position for lasting improvement.

From these observations it is concluded that the staff of School X has a 'good' set of values as these people said they currently hold in high regard the majority of the values identified by George et al. for exemplary schools. They also placed greatest value on whole child development, which both George et al. and Leonard argue must be at the 'heart' of all school purposes. The identified values also support their stated commitment to full school collaboration.

Reflection on Process

The group had difficulty getting started on this activity as the word 'value' presented problems. The ensuing discussion became focused when it was suggested by T1 that we consult The Concise Oxford Dictionary Dictionary (1991). This stated that a value is "one's principles or standards; one's judgements of what is valuable or important in life"(1991: 1357). Deal and Peterson (1999) state that educational values are the expressions of what an organisation stands for, and that they define standards of goodness, quality or excellence. They also contend that values are not simply goals or outcomes, but rather that they are a deeper sense of what is important in a school. It would have been useful to have a definition such as this for this exercise, as it would have given the discussion immediate focus and direction and would have avoided the awkward start that was experienced in Activity One.

Discussion of the differences between values and beliefs should have taken place here because misunderstandings of these two terms were to dog the whole trial. As discussion of these terms was not considered, the people in the review used the two terms interchangeably with the result that some surveys, staff and secretary, returned value responses while the BOT, parent and student surveys returned belief responses. As the intent of the review was to identify School X's core values, this became problematic when the results of the five values surveys were brought together in Activity Seven. The lesson learnt from this experience is that a values survey must establish at the beginning what a value is and its difference from a belief or understanding.

Discussion then moved to what are School X's core values. The group had difficulty getting started on the question of educational values, so the researcher directed the group to consider values that we live our everyday lives by. To this they responded readily with values such as trust, respect and commitment. However, when the discussion was turned back to educational values, they were unable to see the connections between values that guide everyday life and values in education. It was only after the researcher suggested that values such as trust and respect might also be applicable to schools (Plunkett, 1990, Purkey and Novak, 1996 and Deal and Peterson, 1999) that the discussion was able to progress. The group commented at this point that, they had been unable to see values in life as the same as educational values because they were trying to think of different, 'higher', 'more intellectual' values for education. Once these connections had been made the exercise was able to proceed without difficulty.

It should be noted that it was not clarified at this point whether we were talking about ideal values for School X, or whether the values identified were those that the group considered underlay current practices in this school. The original intention of the exercise had been to identify those values that we would ideally like to guide practices in School X. Rather, this activity compiled a list of values that this group thought guided current practice. This could be avoided by more careful wording of the focus questions as is discussed on page 126.

Activity One took approximately one and a half hours to complete, during which the group worked collaboratively and amicably to compile the set of values that was agreeable to the whole group. It could be asked, whether as this activity was carried out in a group situation, the results were affected by groupthink, had the participants said what they really thought, or had they said

what they thought the rest of the group wanted to hear?

To avoid the possible influences of groupthink, this activity could have commenced with group discussion on the questions, what is a value, what values, standards or principles do you live your own lives by, and is a value the same as a belief or understanding. The group members could then have individually recorded the values that they believe School X should base its practices upon. Further group discussion and sharing could follow, and a common list of values could be compiled from the individual replies, therefore ensuring that groupthink did not influence replies.

At the end of the activity, the Principal commented that he had found the activity really difficult as 'teachers are not used to thinking and talking about values in education'. Teacher One also commented that, once we commenced the activity, it made her really think because she, too, was not used to thinking about education in this manner. Teacher Two commented that she had found the activity both interesting and worthwhile because she, likewise, had never bothered, or been asked, to think about values in education. Plunkett (1990) supports these comments when he argues that asking teachers to identify their own educational values is a 'rare occurrence', as he contends that teachers are more used to thinking in terms of content rather than values. This argument is also supported by Willower and Licata (1997) and Hargreaves and Fullan (1998).

The BOT chair experienced real difficulty with this activity. Her comment was that everything about education seems to be difficult. However, she also expressed her interest in the topic and her desire to learn more about it.

On reflection, it is apparent that the focus question, "What is a value?" presented difficulties when asked in isolation. A better way to have sequenced the discussion would have been to firstly ask the question, what values, standards or principles do you live your own lives by. This would allow the people to speak about values from their own knowledge and experience. The next focus question could be, if you live your own life by these values, on what values do you think School X should base its practices? It would also be important to emphasise the point at this stage that we are discussing ideal values at School X and not necessarily what may be currently happening there.

The forward planning stage of this exercise involved agreeing to ask the

board, school secretary and parents the same questions or similar questions. It was agreed that the researcher would discuss the same questions with the school secretary in a face-to-face interview at the school, so that she received the same treatment as the rest of the staff, as she had been unable to attend the staff activity. This method would also allow the researcher to check the use of the revised questions and question format.

It was further decided that the same information should be gathered from the BOT and parents using a questionnaire. It was decided that the BOT questionnaire should be administered at the BOT education session to allow for clarification of points, and also to appraise the appropriateness of the survey before it was sent out to parents.

A mailed out questionnaire was considered the most appropriate data gathering instrument for the parents, as the key group members did not want to ask parents to come to the school too often, and they thought that they should restrict parent visits to later sessions which would involve feedback on the trial. More discussion of this issue takes place in Activity Three.

The group was unable to devise a suitable questionnaire format for BOT and parent use, so the researcher was asked to seek advice from her colleagues and her supervisors. After discussion with David Stewart, and further reflection upon Activity One, it was decided that another way to identify the core values, beliefs and understandings of the school, would be to use an adaptation of an idea from Aspinwall, Simkins, Wilkinson and McAuley,(1992). Aspinwall et al. suggest the use of the question, "What Kind of Place is This?" as a staff development exercise (1992: 122). It was decided, for our purposes, to adapt the question to, "What kind of place is our school?" We believed that with explanation, this question would result in a list of values identified by the BOT parents of School X. The explanation was to inform the parents of the purposes of the trial and the survey in particular, and was also to contain examples of appropriate replies. This question and explanation proved to be flawed in several respects and resulted in identification of not only current rather than ideal values for School X, but also it resulted in comments that were not values. Full discussion of this point takes place under Activity Three.

At the conclusion of Activity One, the researcher noted that only one group member had recorded comment in a personal journal. On asking why this was so, the group members explained that they had forgotten and that they had not had time to think about the review since the last session. The researcher now

wonders if these excuses were the real ones or rather, could these people just could not be bothered with this activity or were the journals an unnecessary extra for them? Lack of journal entries also raises the questions: Were these people well prepared for the task; did they fully understand the importance of the journals; and was it unreasonable to ask these busy people to spend time in reflection on the trial? The researcher felt that these people were well prepared for the journal keeping as explanation of their use and importance was carried out at the beginning of the trial and it was signalled then that they fully understood the importance of the journals and that they considered them a worthwhile activity. The group also indicated that they felt the time spent in making journals entries would be valuable and worthy of the time that it would take.

Lack of journal entries was disappointing for the researcher as it was hoped that the journals would play a significant role in the trial. Therefore, she again emphasised the importance and explained the use of the journals in an effort to encourage their use.

Forward Planning (by key group members)
The researcher was to interview the school secretary using the revised focus questions. The researcher and Teacher One were to draft a parent survey which used the new focus question/s and this survey was to be approved by the group and then pre-tested for clarity of explanation by five non- school adults. Only two people were appointed to this task in the belief that we should attempt to minimise each member's input. These people were not chosen for their particular skills but rather they offered their services. Their brief was to produce a draft survey which was to be commented on by the key members before being trialled.

ACTIVITY 2- March 8

The aim of Activity Two was to identify the school secretary's core values for School X through an individual interview with the secretary.
Method

- R interviewed school secretary using the adapted focus questions (See Activity One)
- R recorded replies.

Results

The school secretary identified four core values for School X and she provided illustrations for each of these values.

Table 4.7 Secretary identified core values and illustrations of these values.

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	for all children children usually care for each other staff look after and support each other for the parents and the whole community
Consideration	staff are kind and thoughtful to each other children are considerate to each other
Pride	lacks pride in its grounds takes pride in its sporting achievements
Acknowledges Achievement	certificates mentions at assembly mentions in newsletters principal's good work

The sorting, grouping and assigning of a value to the secretary replies did not take place at the conclusion of this activity, rather it took place as part of Activity Seven. The reasons for this are discussed in Activity Seven.

Reflection on Results

Compared to the teaching staff, the secretary identified a short list of values which lacked the richness of the staff values. However, like the others, she placed greatest importance on social development skills and, in particular, caring. She did not mention personal or career development skills and she only alluded vaguely to academic development as defined by Leonard (1999). Therefore, the greatest point of convergence between the secretary's and staff's values is around caring, which, according to Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) may be the most important value that teachers can hold. The secretary

identified pride, which was not a value identified by the staff. As mentioned, the secretary has been with the school for some fifteen years, substantially longer than any of the teaching staff. Because of this long service she is the 'keeper' and 'story teller' of much of the recent history of the school and takes great pride in this position and in the school's achievements. It is perhaps not surprising that she would mention pride as being important in School X.

Reflection on Process

This interview was carried out at school during school time so as not to have to ask the secretary to return after school and it took approximately half an hour to complete. The researcher was asked to conduct this interview as the group considered she was the best person to ask the questions and clarify any points that may be raised. This time the questions were presented slightly differently, opening with the definition of a value, this time supplying the secretary with the Oxford Dictionary definition. The questions, "What values do you live your life by, and what values underlie practice at School X?" followed. Once again the researcher omitted to clarify that we were talking about ideal values for School X.

The school secretary reported that she had no trouble undertaking the activity. This could be attributed to the revised questions and to researcher clarification, which had also been refined from points that arose at the staff education session. However, the researcher realised during the course of the interview that it was not appropriate to ask a person in a one-on-one discussion what values they live by. This question had been suitable for group discussion, where people spoke in general rather than individual terms, but the question became personal and inappropriate in this situation. A more apt question would have been: What values do you think people should live their lives by?

By using the personal interview technique, the researcher was able to check responses with the respondent and clarify some of her replies during the interview. However, on reflection, the researcher wondered if the secretary should have been offered the opportunity to undertake the activity with the parents to ensure she felt able to give honest replies. It was my feeling that she was trying to please me and give the correct answers, rather than what she may have wished to have said about the school. This suspicion is based on comments she had made some time ago, which indicated she had very strong feelings about certain school practices of which she did not approve. This situation would have been avoided if the point had been made at the interview

that we were looking to identify ideal values for School X.

Conducting this interview during school time was valuable in that it demonstrated to the secretary that self review was a valued activity and, as such, it should be carried out as part of the normal school day where possible. The issue of how much school time should be used on the trial was never properly discussed at the beginning of the trial. Rather, the trial was assumed to be something 'extra' that would need to be done largely in 'spare' time. This is definitely not what school self review is about. Ruth Sutton (1994) argues very strongly that school self review must be an integral part of school practice, something that is part of teaching and learning.

An in school time approach would not be easy for the teaching staff in a small school like this, as it would mean combining classes or employing a reliever. However, on reflection, it would have been useful to have discussed the possibility of using more in school time for the review as this would demonstrate that the school believed review was a valuable and worthwhile part of normal school practice.

ACTIVITY 3- March 8

Activity Three aimed to develop a questionnaire that would identify BOT and parent core values for School X.

Method

1) R and P drafted questionnaire.
2) Key group members considered draft questionnaire.
3) Draft questionnaire was pre-tested by five non-school adults.

Results

- Completed BOT and Parent Survey, see Table 4.8
- Five trial survey participants completed questionnaire with no reported difficulties and their replies meet the aims of the questionnaire as it was worded.

Table 4.8 Questionnaire

SCHOOL SELF REVIEW

As part of our on going school self review, we would like to ask parents/ guardians to help us by filling in a short survey which aims to collect information so that we can understand and improve our school. We will report back to the school community any general trends we find in the survey data.

To obtain this data, we would ask that at least 1 adult from each family fill in the form below. However if other adults also wish to do so, they can by simply making a second list in the space provided in the box below.

Could you please return this survey to the school office by Friday 26 March so that we can move onto the next stages of our review. Thank you very much for your co-operation

This survey was completed by _____

If you wish your reply to be anonymous do not supply your name.

WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS OUR SCHOOL?

Write a list of up to 10 words or phrases, which can be both positive or negative, which you think best describe our school.

For example - Happy Valley School is -
- Hardworking
- Unfriendly

.....

School is:-

Reflection on Process

The researcher and principal drafted the survey using the focus question discussed with David Stewart, that is, "What kind of place is our school?" This exercise was undertaken after school, at the school, and it took approximately one hour to complete. The researcher and principal were selected for this task as the key group members felt that they had the most expertise in questionnaire development. They also believed that the process of questionnaire checking by the key group members, then pre-testing by five non school adults, would ensure the questionnaire had no significant faults before it was used by BOT members and staff. The researcher also believed that this was an appropriate process.

At the meeting of the researcher and principal to draft the questionnaire, the main issues considered were that the questionnaire must explain the overall purposes of the review and questionnaire, as this was the first formal notification parents received of the trial, and it must serve to identify the values these people held for School X. The researcher explained that, according to Blalock (1970) and May (1993), a questionnaire should be of straight forward format that can be readily understood by the school parents and it must also be short, so as not to discourage completion.

As seen on page 124, Table 4.8, the questionnaire took the form of a short introduction and explanation and one open-ended focus question. It was not a deliberate choice to use an open-ended question and no consideration was given to the form of the question, just the content. Kane (1987) cautions against the use of open-ended questions in surveys of this nature, as he argues that they can pose difficulties for the coding and analysis of replies. This was to be so in this trial. This matter is considered in Activity Three.

The format was kept to one side of an A4 page so that respondents would not feel daunted by the task. The explanation was deliberately kept simple and in terms considered appropriate for school parents. The explanation was supposed to inform the respondents of the self review trial and the purpose of the values survey. On closer inspection it is now apparent that the questionnaire explanation failed to explain that this survey aimed particularly to identify the core values for School X. The questionnaire did not state that it was a survey of values and it also omitted to make clear the connection between possession of a set of shared core values and school improvement. Also omission of the point that we wanted ideal values, meant that replies contained both ideal and current values and also negative comments which

were, in fact, beliefs. This meant that coding and analysis of the data became very difficult.

The questionnaire instructions contained the provision for optional name inclusion. This issue had been discussed earlier by the key group members and they had made this provision in the belief that replies may be more forthcoming and honest if respondents did not have to supply their names. This point is supported by Kidder et al. (1987) when they state that one advantage of the questionnaire is that it can be anonymous, which may make respondents freer to express views that might be unpopular. The contrary comment was also made by a key group member, that if this were a truly collaborative school, then parents would want to be part of this review and would also want their opinion recorded in their name. Therefore, it was agreed that the questionnaire be worded so that it could be either named or anonymous to take into account the above two points. The question of anonymity is discussed more fully in Activity Five.

The focus question was deliberately kept simple as, according to May (1993), a researcher has no control over how the respondents will interpret it. To aid interpretation, examples of values were supplied. However, the explanation, to write up a list of up to ten words or phrases, which can be both positive or negative, which you think best describe our school, was at variance with the intent of the survey, as it directs the respondents to identify current and not ideal values which was the original intent of the review. Also the explanation does not contain the word values in it. This was deliberate because it was believed at the time of drafting the questionnaire that the word values would present difficulties to the parents and, therefore, should be avoided. However, it is now apparent that for identification of ideal values to have been possible, the questionnaire should have spoken of ideal values and given examples of these. Taking into consideration the points that have been discussed, a revised questionnaire format could look like this.

SCHOOL SELF REVIEW- Values Survey

All schools are required by the government to have in place an on-going programme of school self review, which is a process of school improvement that aims to look at selected practices in the school to assess if they are contributing to improved teaching and learning. This year, as one part of our self review programme, the staff and BOT are looking at the core values of

School X because we know that if a school has a set of core values which are shared by staff, parents and students, then that school has a high probability of being able to put in place changes that will lead to improved teaching and learning.

Therefore, we ask all parents to help us identify ideal core values for School X. To obtain this information, we ask at least 1 adult from each family to fill in the survey below. If 2 adults in the family wish to complete the survey, you may either make a combined list on this form, write 2 lists on this one form, or ring the school and ask them to send another form to you.

We ask that you return the survey by _____in the stamped addressed envelope provided. We thank you very much for your help with our school self review, your opinion is very valuable to us, and we intend informing you of the results of this survey either via the school newsletter or a community consultation evening.

Signed- School X Board of Trustees

This survey was completed by_____
If you wish your reply to be anonymous, do not supply your name.

What values do you want School X to base everything it does upon?

Values are our deeply held beliefs about what is important.
Write a list of values that you believe should be the basis for everything that happens in School X.

For example- School X should-
Care for everyone
Take pride in its grounds
Have high learning expectations for everyone
Should encourage all children to succeed

This revised format still uses an open-ended question as its focus, but the instructions, question and the examples are now focused and more tightly structured, and therefore should direct the respondents to supply the required information. The survey is now slightly longer than in the first format, but it still falls within the length range that Hakim (1987) suggests is ideal for a good response rate.

The draft questionnaire was commented on by key members at a short, twenty minute meeting held at the school. These people were only asked to comment on the format and were not asked to complete the questionnaire, as it was decided they would complete it when they would all be in attendance at the next BOT meeting. Each member reported that they had understood the explanation and that they believed the questionnaire would elicit the information required of it.

On reflection it would have been better to have sent the draft questionnaire to the remaining key members with no explanation. This approach would have pre-tested the survey under the same conditions the parents were going to be given. Had the key members completed and discussed the results of the survey at this point, we may have realised earlier the changed direction the survey was taking, a direction that was not the original intent of the review.

The questionnaire was next posted to the five non-school adults who had agreed to pre-test it. These five non-school adults were chosen for the task because they had all been parents of the school within the past two years and were therefore considered in the best position to be able to reply as though they were parents of the school. The questionnaire was posted to these people with no explanation other than that they were being asked to trial a questionnaire that was part of the school review process. This information was given to them over the phone by the researcher when they were asked if they would take part. They were deliberately given no additional information, so that they would have to complete the questionnaire under the same conditions as the parents.

These people were given only a week to complete the survey, before their replies were collected by the researcher since time was limited by a forthcoming BOT meeting at which they wished to use the pre-tested questionnaire. The researcher collected the replies to ensure they were returned and so that she could ask the respondents to comment on the questionnaire format.

The five respondents all reported no difficulty in understanding the questionnaire nor with the limited time of one week to complete it. They reported that they had been able to complete it within approximately five to fifteen minutes. The researcher and principal scanned the replies and reported to the other key members that the replies answered what the focus question and explanation asked of it. It was decided by the key members that the questionnaire was ready for BOT trialling and comment.

At the meeting to consider the draft questionnaire, the researcher again noted that only one key member had made an entry in a journal. When asked again why this was so, some of the members looked awkward as though they were being told off. They replied that they talked about the review amongst themselves when the researcher was not at school and had concluded that, as the researcher was often at the school or in contact, they were able to discuss issues as they arose, therefore doing away with the need to write down replies. They stated that they felt that this form of reflection was as good as journal entries.

However, the researcher got the impression that the journals were something of an imposition and that maybe, because teachers are asked to record everything these days, these people saw the use of the journals as just another nuisance thing to do. This observation also raises the question of the value of the trial, did these people see the review as just an add on or did they view it as something valuable and of worth to themselves. This issue should have been raised at this point but was not picked up by the researcher until later. Discussion at this point would have clarified this point and may also have changed the direction of the review if the group did not understand or accept that the trial was going to be of value to their school.

It was agreed by all that they would try to use the journals in their intended form as they said they could still see the value of private reflection. However, the researcher felt this was a hollow commitment made to appease her and wishes now that journal use had been discontinued at this point when it was apparent the group did not value their use. Continued expectations that the journals would be used resulted in more uncomfortable moments which may have affected enthusiasm and commitment to the trial.

Forward Planning (By key group members)
It had been decided earlier by the key group, that the BOT should be the first

school parents asked to complete the survey, because their completion of the questionnaire would serve as a further test of the questionnaire's worth before consent was given and the survey was sent to parents. The researcher was to be present at the BOT meeting but not specifically to administer the questionnaire. Rather, the BOT had asked her to give a short presentation to BOT members on the key concepts of the trial and to update them of activities to date and planned activities.

At this meeting the BOT were to be asked whether the survey should be anonymous or not, and who should analyse data from Activities One, Two and Four.

ACTIVITY 4 16 March

The fourth activity aimed to educate the school's BOT members about the key concepts and understandings of school culture, core values and school improvement, and to further trial the values survey with the BOT members.

Method

1) R gave a short address to BOT and teaching staff on school culture, the role of the principal in school culture, the connections between school culture and school improvement and the relationship of self review to school improvement.
   The address used the same material as was used for the staff education in Activity One but the explanation was given in terms suitable to a group of parents. R was aware of educational language suitable for this audience as she has worked in similar ways with them many times in the past (see appendices 2,3, and 4).
2) Values survey was conducted and format discussed.
3) R reported on the trial activities completed to date.
3) P outlined proposed trial activities.

Results

It is at this point that the ambiguous nature of the survey focus question became more apparent. Whereas the intent of the activity was to identify the BOT's core values for School X, the survey in reality identified things that the BOT believed to be positive and negative about the school. This was not picked up by the key group members who analysed the data. They did discuss and decide that negative comments could not be values, so put them into a

separate group, but they made the assumption that positive comments could be translated into values for the school. This assumption raises the question, are positive beliefs the same as values for the school. They are not. Values as discussed in the literature review are "deeply held beliefs about what is important" (Lawley, 2000:1). Values therefore are a type of belief, but they are beliefs which are the very 'essence' of what you consider valuable. Values, according to Begley (1999) are very deep, meaningful beliefs which guide your actions.

Therefore, it was erroneous for the key group members to give the grouped beliefs an overarching, descriptive value since beliefs and values are different things, as discussed in Activity One and therefore cannot be compared. Thus the intent of the activity, to identify core values for School X could not be attained from this survey design. To be able to achieve the survey goal, the suggested values survey in Activity Three should be used (see page 126).

However, as this issue was not realised at this point, the key group members coded and grouped the replies by commonality, and then assigned each group an overarching value that best described the intent of the comments in each group. Each group is recorded below with a few illustrations of the most commonly recorded beliefs listed to illustrate the type of reply. The coding and grouping of the BOT replies was carried out by four key group members, it took place at the school, and it took approximately fifty minutes to complete.

Table 4.9 BOT members identified core values and illustrations of these values

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	Is friendly and inviting Welcoming A happy caring place Is kind and considerate
Positive	Has a positive learning environment Looks for the best in the children Praises and acknowledges achievement Is proud of what it has achieved Children are enthusiastic

Has a good sense of community	Has the backing of the community Includes everyone in things Shares decisions with the community
Has dedicated staff	Highly skilled staff Hard working

It should be noted that the sorting, grouping and assigning of a value to the BOT replies, did not take place at the conclusion of this activity, but rather it took place as part of Activity Seven. The reasons for this are discussed in Activity Seven.

Because of the nature of the focus question used in the survey, several negative beliefs were recorded by the BOT members. As it was realised these replies could not be coded with the positive replies or translated into values, the key group members decided that they should be handed back to the BOT who said that they would discuss them and make changes to school practice where necessary and appropriate.

BOT Discussion

BOT and key review group members decided that:

- survey should be sent to all school parents;
- survey should provide a place for participant's name but should state clearly that people did not have to supply names if they did not wish to;
- all students in the school should be asked the same focus question, or a similar one suitable to student age level;
- R and P to prepare and carry out appropriate activity with each class to gather this information. Key group to approve her student survey methods; and
- values survey data is to be analysed by at least three of the key group members and reported to BOT in person and to school parents by newsletter or at a parent community meeting if there was one during the self review period.

Reflection on Results

The BOT results give a strong message that these people believe School X is a caring, positive school. These results indicated, as did the replies from the staff, that currently School X places much emphasis on the social development of the child, as described by Leonard (1999). Interestingly, these people, who are all parents, made little mention of the academic development of the child. From reflection on results in Activities One, Two and Four, it could be asked whether School X places sufficient emphasis on academic development, as each set of results has made little mention of this taking place currently at School X.

From my own experience in School X, it would be fair to say that this school does display strong social development values in its practices. It is also evident that they place considerable emphasis on the academic development of all children. However, it would seem that academic values are currently accorded lower status than social development values in School X. It could be asked how this will affect the education of the children in School X compared to another school which places greatest emphasis on academic development values.

It is not possible to use either George et al. (1992) or Leonard's (1999) value frameworks to ascertain whether the BOT members identified 'good' values for School X, because this survey did not identify values, so much as beliefs that the BOT members held about their school.

After reflecting on the three values surveys developed so far in this thesis, it is apparent that the staff and secretary were able to identify values, be they current rather than ideal, whilst the BOT members identified beliefs. There are two main reasons why these three activities which had the same intent, ended up with two different sets of results. The first is that the staff and secretary were able to supply value responses because their surveys were undertaken using interview strategies which enabled the people to discuss values, what they are, and examples of educational values. The second reason is that the survey used for the BOT asked the respondents to supply beliefs about current practices in School X. This lack of consistency in information gathering techniques makes further analysis and comparison of data gathered in a review of this nature difficult. Unfortunately, the key members did not have the necessary expertise to realise this, and therefore, they continued with the review process unaware of the problems.

Reflection on Process

This meeting was the usual monthly board meeting and, as per usual, it was held at the school. The agenda was rearranged to have the trial business as the first item for the evening so that the researcher and T2 could then leave if they wished. The principal and T1 were in attendance as board members and T2 decided to attend to be part of the trial discussion. The education session took approximately twenty minutes, the values survey took twenty minutes to conduct and the update and outlining of proposed trial activities took a further fifteen minutes. A total of about an hour being spent on this task. The education portion of the meeting has already been discussed on page 130.

The values questionnaire was introduced to the board members with the comment that, as this was a trial of the questionnaire, they would receive no explanation, nor could they ask questions, and they were asked to answer it on their own without consulting other members. The BOT members were agreeable to this and were told to take as long as they needed to complete it as parents would also be able to take all the time they needed. The first questionnaire was finished in seven minutes and the last took fourteen minutes to complete. It was noted that the BOT members appeared to complete the task with comparative ease.

The BOT members commented that the survey instructions had been clear and that the supplied value comments had guided their replies. The members supplied a range of between three to fourteen replies per questionnaire and the responses, both negative and positive, answered what was asked of them. It was noticeable at this stage that there was high level of similarity between values identified by staff and BOT. This issue is discussed fully under Activity Seven.

It was decided that the survey did not need any modification before being sent to parents via the school newsletter with the request that it be returned to school by the children. At this point, two of the BOT members expressed concern that the survey might reveal things that they did not wish to hear. These people did not elaborate on what they feared hearing, but the researcher wondered if they were afraid of feedback on their own BOT performance as these two people are relatively new to the board and may still be unsure or insecure in their positions. Other members argued that if the BOT really wished to improve School X, then they must be aware of exactly what people think so that the points raised can be investigated and acted upon if necessary.

The group agreed that risk taking was part of the process of self review and school improvement. The researcher endorses these comments on self review and would argue, as does Ruth Sutton, (1993) that for a school to work effectively together and progress, they must listen to the good and bad that its members may wish to say.

The issue of the anonymity of the survey generated much discussion amongst the BOT members as it had amongst the key group members in Activity Three. This group raised similar points to the key members, with some people feeling that the survey should be anonymous so that parents could be truly honest in their replies, while other BOT members felt that if we are a truly collaborative, open school community, then people would be honest with their relies and wish to supply their names. In the end, it was decided to use the draft format which made provision for the questionnaire to be named or completed anonymously. The researcher agreed that to enable the survey to return honest replies then the anonymity provision should be included, a notion which is supported by Kidder et al.(1987).

The issue was raised by the principal as to whether it would be useful to ask the school students to identify School X's values, as he believed that as the school currently involves the children in goal setting and discussion of selected school practices, then it would be appropriate and useful to include them in the values survey. Discussion followed as to whether the students were capable of thinking about values. The staff argued that as long as the questions were appropriate to the age of the child, then these children should be asked their opinion on values for their school. It was my belief that the task would be suitable for both the senior and middle classes of the school, but that the junior room, comprising children of age five to eight years would have difficulty with the concept of values. This doubt was to prove founded in Activity Six.

The BOT decided that the key group members should devise a suitable method to obtain this information from the students. The BOT members did not ask that the student survey be brought back to them for approval. The researcher agreed that the school students should be part of the values survey as she believed the students would bring another perspective to the complete picture, being a side of the school which teachers and parents do not perhaps see. This point was borne out when the students brought up the issue of 'unkind' children and bullying in their school. At the time this did not appear to be an issue with the staff or parents. However, it was very shortly to

become an important issue.

On reflection, it is now apparent that at all stages through the trial, the BOT was only really interested in the outcomes of the trial which was their main trial objective. This observation begs the question, did the key group members need to have included the BOT in each development stage of the trial or should they have carried out more of these tasks themselves. This issue was not clarified at the beginning of the review, rather, the BOT had made the statement that full community involvement should be used, therefore, the key members believed that this meant consultation with the BOT at most stages of the review. The BOT should have been asked what they understood full community consultation to mean. This point should have been clarified at the beginning of the review to avoid unnecessary over use of any group of participants.

Consideration of data processing methods and who should be involved generated very little interest or discussion from the BOT. They said that they would be willing to be involved if needed but that the key group members should make the decisions about this. It was noted that the BOT did not say that they would like to be involved, only that they would be if needed. On later discussion with the key group members, it was decided that the BOT may have taken this attitude because they have in the past often commented on how busy they are, and how much they are already doing for the school. The BOT chair later reinforced this comment by saying that the BOT fully supported the trial and its aims and intentions but that they felt they did not personally have the time to give to it, and that if help was needed it should come from parents.

At a meeting of the key group members, held shortly after this BOT meeting, it was decided that collation, coding and analysis of the data from the BOT, parent and student values surveys should be performed by a group of at least three key group members. It was also decided that the researcher should be one of the three members, and that she should be present at all analysing sessions so that she could both participate and observe. It was noticeable at this point that the key group members were hesitant about this job as they stated they had no expertise in analysis of data of this nature. The group did speak of getting outside 'expert' help for this job but decided against it in light of one of the objectives of this review being to ascertain whether school communities can develop their own worthwhile core values surveys.

As discussed on page 104 under key group members for the review, it was suggested that inclusion of three more parent representatives in this group would have made for a more balanced, staff to parent ratio and would also have spread the work load. This is one instance when more parents in the key group could have reduced the BOT's commitment to the review, if the BOT had made it clear that they wished to reduce their review work load. The BOT members were not asked to give an unreasonable amount of time to the review but, rather, that the review came at a time when they were under pressure to assimilate two new members and as stated, it appeared that they were more interested in the outcomes than being involved in the processes.

The activity closed with an update of the trial activities to date and an outline of proposed activities. This presentation generated no discussion, just the reminder that the BOT had earlier asked that trial feedback also be given to the parents. On being asked how they saw this being done, the BOT agreed that it was up to the key group members to decide on appropriate ways to report this information. At this point the self review section of BOT business was concluded.

ACTIVITY 5- March 23

Having devised, trialled and implemented the core values questionnaire with staff and BOT members, Activity Five was designed to use the questionnaire to identify parent core values for School X.

Method

1) Survey form (page 124) was sent to all parents via the school newsletter asking that they be returned to the school by the children during the next two week period.
   - 29 copies of the survey were circulated to the school families
   - Of the fifty two people who received the survey, there were fifteen replies of which twelve were named and three were anonymous.

Results

- The fifteen returned surveys contained 78 statements about the kind of place School X is
- Of the 78 statements, 64 contained positive statements about School

X and 14 negative statements about School X.

As discussed in Activity Four, the ambiguous nature of the survey focus question is apparent in these parent replies. The intent of Activity Five was to identify the parent's core values for School X, but in reality the survey identified positive and negative beliefs about school practices. Once again, the key group members who were coding the data made the assumption that positive beliefs could be translated into values. This assumption was to have major effects on the outcomes of the core values survey.

However, without this realisation, the key group members again coded and grouped the parent replies by commonalties as they had with the BOT replies in Activity Four. The coding and grouping of the parent replies took place at the school, and took three group members approximately one hour and ten minutes to complete. Each group of comments was given an overarching value. This was done by the three group members selecting and agreeing to a value that they thought best described the intent of the grouped comments. The values are listed below with a few examples recorded to illustrate the nature of the comments. The examples recorded below represent the most commonly recorded replies.

Table 4.10 Parent identified core values and illustrations of these values

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	Is positive and encouraging Is friendly and welcoming Makes new people welcome Makes you feel comfortable Respects people's opinions
Sharing	Regular communication Ask parents for their opinion Lets parent take part in decision making
Is Positive	Happy children Peaceful Safe Encourages children to do well at school

Skilled/ Committed Staff	The staff are hard working Well organised and highly skilled Dedicated Professional
Is well resourced	Attractive buildings and grounds Many material resources
Has a strong sense of community	Has backing of community Parents help willingly at the school

It should be noted that the sorting, grouping and assigning of a value to the parent replies did not take place at the conclusion of this activity but, rather, it took place as part of Activity Seven. The reasons for this are discussed in Activity Seven.

Response Rate to Questionnaire

The response rate for the questionnaire was 34.61%.
The composition of the target group was, 52 people, comprising 6 single parents and 23 couples.
The responses were from 4 single and 14 married parents.
Of the 14 responses from married persons, 2 were combined lists from 2 couples (4 people) and the remaining 10 were single responses, all from women.

Reflection on Results

The parent replies in general, gave positive affirmation of practices in School X. The replies mention most frequently the caring, sharing, positive nature of School X which was in common with the findings of the other three values surveys carried out. The parent replies also contained seventeen references to the positive nature of their staff, a stance which is affirmed by the BOT replies.

In the parent survey the majority of the beliefs centred on the social and personal development of the child as described by Leonard (1999). In common with the secretary and BOT replies, these parents returned few

comments on the academic development of the children. In light of this observation it could be asked, do these parents value academic development or did they not mention it because the focus question did not direct them to. It would appear that this omission was due to survey design error as discussed in Activity Three, rather than parent dissatisfaction, as academic development was not mentioned in the negative replies either. As the survey focus question asked what kind of place is our school, it failed to direct the parents to look more deeply at what are the purposes and the core values that support these purposes in this school. Had it done so, these parents would have had a higher probability of commenting on the academic development of their children.

The parent replies report a strong sense of community, as did the BOT replies, and to a lesser extent the secretary and staff relies. This may indicate that parents are aware of and view positively the moves that this school has made in recent years to develop a sense of community primarily through introduction of collaborative decision making practices.

The parent values survey returned fourteen comments of a negative nature, so these were given to the BOT for their consideration. However, the BOT had asked that all results to be reported to parents so the full results of the parent survey were distributed to parents via the school newsletter. The BOT made this decision based on their belief that they wished to be honest and inform parents fully so that all members of the school community could take responsibility for both the positive statements and the negative comments (Appendix 5). Discussion on parent reaction to the values survey results is presented in the Report Phase, page 156.

It was interesting to note that within the time the researcher was completing the writing of this thesis, the BOT upheld their commitment to revisit the negative replies supplied to them. This was seen in a school newsletter which outlined the agenda for a parent consultation evening. The agenda contained a section which was to specifically address the negative comments contained in the values surveys. This action shows BOT commitment to both self review and school improvement and this is in line with their espoused values of openess, community and collaboration.

These results and discussion indicate again that the development of a core values survey is a difficult, complex and exacting task. As was suggested in Activity Three, and as is again demonstrated in this activity, the development of a valid core values survey instrument is probably beyond the means of

school communities of this nature, and therefore, should involve external 'expert' assistance.

Reflection on Process

The questionnaire was sent home to all parents via the weekly newsletter, and it was asked that they be returned to school by the children within the next two weeks. Hakim (1987) argues that for a questionnaire of this nature, a two week return period is sufficient. The researcher also believed that a two week return period is sufficient because in her experience, barring reasons such as illness or absence, parents who are interested will have made the effort in this time period.

There is no reason to believe that distribution via the newsletter was not a suitable method as these parents are very good at ensuring they receive their weekly school newsletter. However, return to school by children may have presented some difficulties as we do not know how many replies were lost or were left sitting in children's bags. To overcome this problem, a stamped addressed return envelope should have been provided as recommended by Hakim (1987), but as discussed under Activity Four, the BOT did not think the cost of postage, $11.60 was necessary.

The researcher believes that the cost of postage was not the real issue for not including a stamped addressed envelope, but rather, that the school always send notices that require reply, for example transport requests, to parents via the newsletter, and because this method has worked well, the key group members believed it should be used here. We failed to discuss the point that a survey of this nature was different to what these people were used to completing and returning, so therefore, may need a different return mode. According to May (1993), to achieve a higher response rate, a stamped addressed envelope should be provided, because if school valued self review and in particular a postal survey, the postage cost could be justified.

A further suggestion to raise the return rate would be to place reminders that the surveys were due back, in the school newsletter. This was not done with this survey, such was the assumption that parents would want to be part of the exercise, and would therefore return their replies. Follow up phone calls could also be made to participants as another method to raise return rate (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). Chadwick, Bahr and Albrecht (1984) raise the issue of using inducements to increase response rate. They state that the

use of monetary rewards produces better results than ones without. They add that the decision to use monetary inducements will be dependent on the type of questionnaire and the survey population. Monetary inducements were not inappropriate in this situation where it was assumed the community would wish to be part of the survey, but the key group members could have considered the use of a small token, such as a chocolate fish as an inducement and a token gesture of thanks.

According to Hoinville, Jowell and Associates(1977), a response rate of 34.61% would be considered reasonable for the type of questionnaire survey strategies we used. As we did not: advise the respondents in advance of the survey; provide inducements to respond; provide a stamped addressed return envelope; and did not make follow up calls or place reminder notices in the school newsletter, then the response rate received according to Wadsworth (1997) should be considered moderate to high.

However, in the absence of this information, the key group members considered a response rate of eighteen out of a possible fifty two people to be disappointing. They had hoped that at least fifty per cent of the people would reply, as they believed a fifty percent return rate would indicate a high level of parent interest in the subject, that it would indicate a culture of collaboration, and would also ensure that the replies were representative of the group. They wondered if this response rate indicated parental apathy, lack of understanding about the importance of self review, lack of a culture of collaboration or maybe parent approval and affirmation of what is currently happening in their school. A high return of questionnaires by females was the expected pattern for this school, as past experience has shown that it is nearly always the female parents who support meetings, return forms and provide support for the school.

The response of the key group members to a 34.61% return rate was interesting, as they surmised that this 'low' return rate was due mainly to apathy, as they considered that as the questionnaire had been pre-tested it should not have presented any problems. The group did acknowledge that they had expected parents would want to be part of school self review. This expectation failed to recognise that in the past these parents have seldom been asked to take part in review practices of this nature, making this a new and different experience for them.

On reflection, the researcher wondered why the key group members were

surprised with the return rate when these people had themselves experienced difficulty with the same exercise in Activity One. At that point, they had commented that they had trouble with the activity, because they usually did not think about educational values. Plunkett (1990), Begley (1999) and Lawley (2000) support this point when they argue that school staff members seldom think and speak about values in education. This may have also been the case for these parents, because if school staff do very little thinking about educational values, then it is highly probable that parents do even less. The key group members failure to make entries in their journals also indicated that they were having difficulty responding to the review, but the connection was not made between their own difficulties and possible parent difficulties.

The question of the questionnaire format being responsible for the 'low' response rate was not discussed at any length after the survey. Rather, the key group members felt that their pre-testing process would have uncovered any problems, and as it did not, they considered that the questionnaire must have been suitable. The unintended direction the questionnaire was heading the values survey was not picked up at this point.

It is interesting to note that the key group members assumed that the 'low' return rate told them things about the culture of their school rather than questioning the survey method and design. This assumption occurred because of the key group members lack of expertise in research design and analysis. As was demonstrated in Activity Three, these members did not have the expertise to construct a survey instrument, so it is not surprising that they were unable to question the format and design of the questionnaire at this juncture.

It was noted with interest that twelve of the replies were named, and only three were anonymous. The key group members were very pleased with this observation, believing that it indicated that the majority of these people felt comfortable enough to be able to put their names on their replies. However, they did not question whether they thought these people had also been honest with their replies as the argument had been stated that people may feel more able to give honest replies if they are anonymous, a notion supported by Kidder et al.(1987).

The issue of anonymity of the survey had generated considerable debate, but in the end it does not appear to have had significant influence on this survey. However, if the exercise was repeated, it is my recommendation that the provision for anonymity be retained as it provides the opportunity for all

people to participate, and indicates to the community that every response is valued.

Clarification of data was undertaken in this activity, as some of the parent replies were either ambiguous or difficult to read. Rather than discarding these responses, the key group members decided that each response should be treated as valuable and therefore they decided to contact the respondents and ask for clarification of reply. One key member was assigned to the task of contacting by phone the three respondents whose survey replies needed clarification. The key member reported that clarification of reply took only about five minutes per respondent.

The taking of the extra time to contact respondents served two valuable functions in the review. Firstly, it clarified data that the key group members may have incorrectly grouped if clarification had not been sought. But more importantly, the action of contacting these respondents gave the community the message that this review was valued, and that each person's contribution was important and worth the extra effort it took to obtain correct replies. Sutton (1994) argues that it is very important to ensure that all members taking part in school self review feel that their contribution is valued.

In conclusion, Activity Five has demonstrated that in this self review exercise, the use of a questionnaire for gathering core value data was not as effective as the use of face to face interviews. As commented on it Activity Four, the questionnaire contained a flawed focus question and lack of appropriate explanation, two factors which were not an issue in the interview situation because discussion and explanation were possible. However, it has been argued that if a group of school members such as these sought external 'expert' advice, then a correctly designed questionnaire would be an effective and cost efficient method for gathering core value data from parents.

The researcher decided, at this juncture to discontinue use of the personal journals, because the key members reported that they did not need to keep them as they were in a position to ask questions and discuss issues when the need arose as they were all together most days. They also commented that as they were also in frequent contact with the writer they were able to discuss issues as they thought of them. As Teacher Two replied, "we just talk about things when we need to, we don't need to write things down".

The journals were also discontinued by the researcher because it was evident

they had become an awkward issue which the majority of the group wished to do away with. It is my belief that the journals asked for more time than the group members were willing to give to the review. Teachers often complain of today's requirements that they write down everything that they do, and it appeared that as this review was not part of their 'ordinary' requirements, then it represented extra work to these people.

In hindsight, the researcher also wonders if failure to keep the journals might have been also due in part to the double agenda of the review. Maybe having review school objectives which focused on the outcomes of the trial meant that the staff were not particularly interested in the trial processes which is what they were being asked, in the main to record their reflections on. If this was the case, this issue could have been avoided if more in depth discussion about the purposes of the journals had taken place at the beginning of the trial. At this point it should have been established which aspects of the review reflection would be focused on. This discussion would have allowed the members to decide which aspects were most important to them, thus hopefully ensuring use of the journals as they had made the decision.

The researcher decided that it was prudent to discontinue the use of the journals because to continue them might have jeopardised commitment and enthusiasm to the review. This outcome was disappointing to the writer because it had been envisaged that the journal entries would provide additional rich text for the analysis of the review activities. The failure of the journal keeping exercise meant that analysis of process and data did not have benefit of the rich narrative and deep thought that is often contained in written reflection, but rather, had to rely on researcher recorded conversation comment. This may mean that researcher analysis of review processes and results is not as rich as could have been possible if the personal journal exercise had been successful.

ACTIVITY 6- 25 March

The purpose of Activity Six was to identify the student's core values for School X by asking all students, "What Kind of Place is our School?" or modifications of this question depending on the age of the student.

Method

1) Senior Room (Yrs. 7 and 8) researcher opened survey with discussion about "What kind of place is our school?" Working in pairs, students each wrote down at least five things that described the good things about School X and also things they did not like about their school. After five minutes the pairs combined into groups of four and made a new list combining the four people's views. These lists were then shared and discussed as a class. The teacher was not present as the key group thought their presence might stifle discussion.
2) Middle Class(Yrs. four, five and six) used same method as above.
3) Junior Class (Yrs. one to four) class discussion lead by R with teacher present as recorder. Focus questions, "What things do you really like about School X and what things do you not like about School X?"

N.B.- To ensure that the discussion did not become personal, the children in each year group were told that they could not use people's names, rather, they had to speak/ write in general terms such as, a boy, some girls, a teacher.

Results

The key group members and the researcher, undertook coding of the student data which took one and half-hours to complete. It was decided to use the same sorting method, by commonality, as was used for the staff, secretary, BOT and parent surveys. Again each identified group was ascribed an overarching value that best described the intent of the replies. The examples listed below represent the most commonly recorded replies.

Table 4.11 Student Identified core values and illustrations of these values

Senior Room

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	Is friendly Has teachers who help and care for us Children share their things Older children look after younger children

Is well resourced	Has lots of equipment like computers Has good buildings and grounds
Hard working teachers	Who work long hours Do extra things for you Go to lots of courses to get better at teaching Who are fun and play with us

Table 4.12 Student identified core values and illustrations of these values

Middle Room

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	Has nice teachers who care and look after us Most children look after each other Most children share with each other The teachers are friendly and kind
Resources	Has lots of equipment to work with and play on Has nice clean buildings

Table 4.13 Student identified core values and illustrations of these values

Junior Room

CORE VALUE	ILLUSTRATIONS OF CORE VALUE
Caring	The big students help us Has nice teachers
Has good resources	Has lots of things for us to play on

It should be noted that the sorting, grouping and assigning of a value to the student replies did not take place at the conclusion of this activity, but rather, it took place as part of Activity Seven. The reasons for this are discussed in Activity Seven.

This survey generated a number of negative replies as the survey questions directed the children to do so. The negative replies are not recorded here as the key group members realised at the analysis session that negative replies were not values, so returned them to the BOT who decided that the staff should comment on them first and then discuss them with the BOT.

Reflection on Results

The ambiguous nature of the focus question, What kind of place is our school? affected the student replies in the same manner as it had the BOT and parent surveys. Whereas the key group members had wanted the students to identify values for School X, the nature of the focus questions and discussion meant that the children identified positive and negative beliefs about School X.

As with Activity Five, the key group members again made the assumption that values and beliefs are the same thing when they coded, grouped the responses and assigned each group a value which they considered best described the intent of the replies. By this stage of the review, it is apparent that the five 'values' surveys conducted had returned a mixture of current values and beliefs, a combination that makes identification of School X's core values difficult.

However, we can say of the beliefs identified by the students, that they affirm that School X cares for everyone, is a sharing community, has staff that the students perceive to be caring and nice, and is well resourced. These beliefs mirror those of the BOT and parents, so it can be said that there is a high degree of congruence between BOT, parent and student identified beliefs for School X. The majority of student responses pertained to the social development of the child (Leonard, 1999) as had the staff, BOT and parent replies.

Reflection on Process

The methods used in Activity Six were devised by the principal and the

researcher as was decided at the BOT meeting in Activity Four, and were then discussed by the key group members at a meeting held on 23 March, 1999. It took the principal and the researcher thirty minutes to decide on the methods and the focus questions to be used. The key group members discussed the proposed methods briefly and gave their approval for them to be used.

The group, still unaware of the flawed nature of the main focus question, did not discuss it here, as it was their belief that the same question had elicited the required information in Activities Four and Five. To the group's knowledge they were conducting a valid values survey that would identify core values for School X.

The issue of whether the teachers should be present during the student surveys was discussed and it was decided that the senior and middle room teachers not be present when the researcher conducted the survey, but that the junior room teacher be present. The group based this decision on their belief that as the focus question asked for both negative and positive responses, then the senior and middle room children might feel freer to give honest replies with the teachers absent. Although the children knew the researcher, the key group members considered her presence to be more neutral than that of the teachers.

The group decided to allow the junior room teacher to be present during the survey because they considered children of this age to be comfortable with giving both positive and negative replies in front of their teacher. They also thought her absence might mean that the children would not speak freely with the researcher, who was not so well known to them.

Had the focus question/s been designed for the purpose they were intended, to identify the core values of School X, then the presence or absence of the teachers would not have been an issue. Rather, as the question would be about values and not beliefs, then the possibility of negative replies being given is removed and the topic should not be controversial.

1) Senior and Middle Room Processes

It took both the senior and middle room students forty-five minutes to complete this activity and the number and range of responses recorded indicate that they experienced no difficulty with this activity. The group method of working in pairs, then fours and then group discussion worked well as it motivated the children and encouraged them all to participate. The concluding discussion revealed a number of replies that required clarification

so this was done during the group discussion, therefore eliminating the need to go back to the children for clarification at a later date.

It is my belief that the data gathering method used with the senior and middle children was appropriate for the task, and that, had the focus question not been ambiguous, then these students could have made a valid contribution to the school wide core values survey. To improve this activity, the new focus question presented on page 126 should be employed along with the explanatory discussion, developed in Activity One. Had these students discussed what a value is, what the difference between a value and a belief is, and clarified that the survey asked for ideal values, then they should have been able to identify core values for School X. It should be noted that some middle room students could experience difficulty with the concept of values, so therefore, more time than that taken by the senior students might need to be spent discussing values in their lives before moving onto values for School X. However, it is my contention that middle school children could make a valid contribution and should be given the opportunity to take part in a survey of this nature.

2) Junior Room Process

It took the junior room students about forty minutes to complete this activity. The group discussion method used was appropriate for this age level and appropriate to the given task. However, my experiences with the adults and the topic of values would indicate that even using group discussion and the new focus question, there would be no value in including children of this age in a discussion about school values as according to Klausmeier and Ripple (1971) the concept of values is well beyond the scope of their cognitive ability.

Stage 2 of Trial

ACTIVITY 7- 28 April and 3 May

The first activity in the second stage of the trial aimed to collate and analyse the data gathered from the five values surveys, Activities One, Two, Four, Five and Six to ascertain whether the surveys had identified a set of ideal core values for School X.

Method (All key group members)
It was at this stage, after the four surveys, excluding the staff survey, that all data from the surveys was coded, grouped and given an overarching value that best described the intent of the replies. The staff survey results did not require collation and grouping at this point, as they had grouped their own replies as part of their survey (Activity 1). Data processing was not at the completion of each activity as it may appear from the reporting format of the activities in this thesis, rather it was left until after the five surveys had been completed. This was not an intentional planned strategy, but rather, at the beginning of the review, the group was unsure how to collate, code and analyse the data. Therefore, they decided to wait until some or all of the surveys were complete in the hope of seeing patterns emerge that could be used as the basis for the data processing and analysis. This resulted in the data from the secretary, BOT, parent and student surveys not being processed until all surveys were completed.

Data processing steps used-

1) Data from secretary survey were sorted, grouped by commonality and then each group was assigned a value that the key members considered best described the intent of each group. See results on page 121.
2) Data from BOT survey were treated in the same manner as secretary data, see step one above. See results on page 131.
3) Three parents were contacted by phone to seek clarification of their replies.
4) Once clarification had been completed, parent replies were sorted, grouped and given an overarching value as in step one above. See results on page 138.
5) Student replies were processed using method described in step one above. See results on page 146.
6) Secretary results were regrouped with staff results as it had been the original intention that she be part of the staff survey, but she had not been available at the time it was conducted.
7) Staff, BOT, parent and student 'value' groups were collated into a venn diagram which showed the areas of congruence between the four groups of replies. The group believed that the central area of congruence represented School X's core values.

These data processing steps were developed by the key group members when

they came together at the school on 28 April, 1999 to commence Activity Seven, although informal discussions about possible processes had taken place during the course of the surveys as patterns became evident in the gathered data. Steps One and Two of the data processing took the members one hour to complete. As discussed, the ringing of the parents took one key member approximately five minutes per phone call. Steps Four, Five, Six and Seven of the data processing took place at the school on 3 May, 1999 and took nearly two hours to complete.

Results

See Figure 4.1 below.

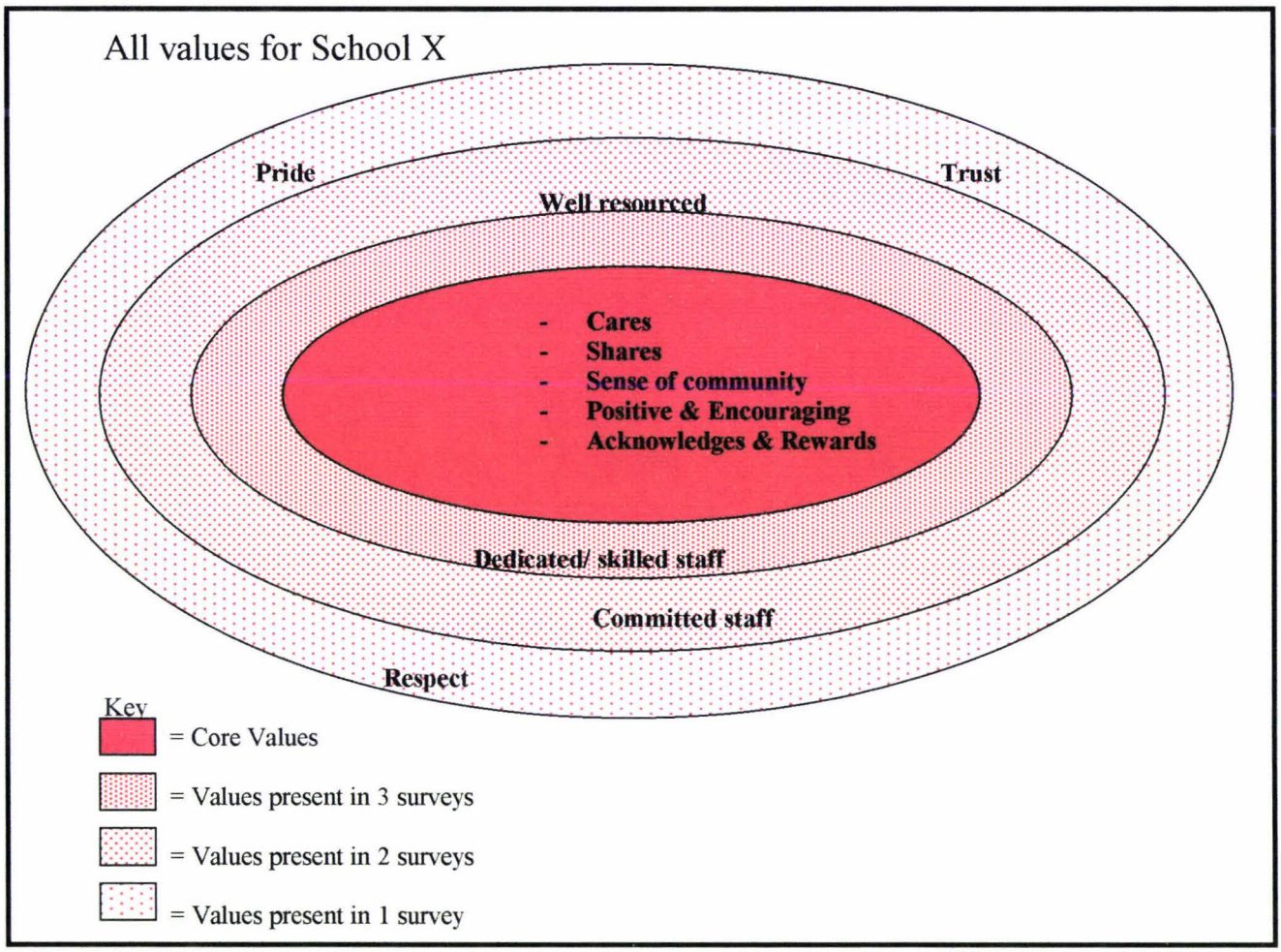
Reflection and Comment on Results

The centre of this venn diagram reflects what the key group members believed were the identified ideal core values for School X and the surrounding circles demonstrate the ideal values that were held respectively by three, two and one of the surveyed groups.

As was discussed in Activities Four, Five and Six, we now know that because of the design of the questionnaire and student questions, this final diagram contains a mixture of current beliefs and values, rather than ideal values for School X. Therefore, this diagram does not contain a core of shared ideal values for School X but rather a core of shared current values and beliefs about School X.

As this change in the intent of the trial was not identified, the staff, BOT and parents came to the conclusion from this diagram, that School X had a set of shared core values that were based mainly on the social and personal development of the child. The group did discuss the number of, or percentage of values that would have to be shared by all groups to be able to consider them core. The group was unable to answer this but felt from the results that a high enough number of similar values were identified by each group to be able to consider them core to all groups. The literature study in the course of this thesis found no reference or discussion on this issue. However, it is my view that the data gathered from the four surveys did indicate a reasonably high level of congruence between the four surveyed groups, and that therefore, School X could justifiably claim that it has a core of shared values and beliefs.

Figure 4.1 Combined Results of 4 Values Surveys



Of the identified core values, the principal asked, "Can we say these identified values are representative of our whole school community when not everyone has contributed to the survey?" The key group members decided that these values could be called representative of the group as replies had been received from all staff, all board members, all children and some parents.

Reflection on Process

The group members decided to work together on each step of the data processing with the exception of Step Three, rather than allocate a few

members to each step, as they believed working together throughout would ensure consistency in collation, assignment of values and analysis. This method did succeed in ensuring consistency of procedure for each step, but it is my belief that they decided on the group approach primarily as a means of support, as they were unsure of the task they were undertaking.

The use of all the key group members for the final data processing and analysis meant that they were able to discuss, challenge and cross check ideas and responses as they worked together. However, the group approach probably made the data processing a longer activity than had the members divided up into smaller groups and each group taken on a step of the process and then come back together for the final collation and analysis.

The group worked collaboratively on this task and experienced little difficulty once they had established the pattern of grouping by commonality and assignment of an overarching value to each group. The decision to group by commonality and then to assign each group an overarching value was suggested by the principal and agreed to by the other members, as they felt it had worked in the staff survey, and that it was a straightforward and appropriate method for the task.

However, Step Seven of the data processing provided the group with a challenge and it took considerable discussion to decide that the combination of results from all four values surveys would best be presented in diagrammatic form. It was decided to use a venn diagram to show this information as the group wanted a simple representation of the results and they believed that it best illustrated visually the concept of core values being at the centre, the heart of their school. They also believed that it would be a useful tool for presenting and explaining the results of the surveys to the parents at the consultation evening.

Had the four values surveys all returned value responses, then the data processing steps used here would have been a valid method for processing the accumulated data. However, the mixture of beliefs and values meant that although the steps followed were logical and consistent, the results were not valid and should not have been reported as the identified core values for School X.

The venn diagram shown above was presented to the BOT on 25 March and also to the parents on 1 June. The presentation of the final data in this form

proved to be both worthwhile and appropriate for these audiences. Both the BOT and parents had sighted the full results of the parent survey which were published in the school newsletter, and then they could see the final results in the venn diagram. It would have been possible to have shown all school members the results from all surveys but the BOT stated that they were primarily interested in the final identified core values and that as they represented the parents, they believed that the parents would also only want the final processed information. It is my belief that the majority of the parents did not wish to see the raw data, but rather, just the final results and that the above diagram served this purpose well.

The decision to leave the processing of the data from Activities Four, Five and Six until all surveys had been completed was not a good decision in light of the problems with the survey questionnaire. Had the data from Activity four been processed at the end of that activity, the problems with the questionnaire focus question might have been revealed and acted upon, therefore averting the problem of gathering both current beliefs and values for School X. To have avoided this situation, it would also have been advisable to seek external advice about data processing methods at the beginning of the trial rather than waiting for patterns to emerge that would dictate the methods to be used. Had more external help been sought early in the trial then the members efforts would have culminated in a set of ideal core values for School X which is what they thought they had achieved.

The data processing activity in this review has shown that data processing of this nature is a complex, time-consuming task that requires a level of expertise that was beyond the skills of this group of school members. For a school of this type to be able to conduct a valid core values survey they are going to need help with the development of survey instruments and data processing procedures. In the present climate of self management, restricted budgets and very busy school staff, it is not likely that many schools would employ an outside consultant for this task, so schools that wish to identify their core values will have to wait until appropriate survey methods are developed by outside agencies, and then made available for school use.

Forward Planning (by all key group members)
The results of the full survey- "What kind of place is our School?" were to be presented to the BOT by the key group members. The researcher was also asked to present and discuss the Ainscow, Hopkins and West's (1992) school culture typology, as discussed on page 26 of the literature review, in

conjunction with the survey results (see Appendix 5).

Following the BOT meeting, the results of the parent survey were to be circulated to parents via the school newsletter and then the final results were to be presented and discussed at a forthcoming community consultation meeting. The BOT asked that the key group members provide parent education on the key concepts of the review at this meeting and they also asked that the parents be given the opportunity to discuss the Hopkins, Ainscow and West Culture Typology in conjunction with presentation of the final results of the values surveys. The next stage of the review, Stage Two, was to involve the full BOT and key group members in the development of indicators for the identified core values and beliefs.

PHASE FOUR: REPORTING

Reporting of Activity Seven Results to Parents at the Community Consultation Evening

The final step of Activity Seven was the sharing of the survey information with the full school community on June 1 at one of the school's regular community consultation meetings. As has already been discussed in Activity One, an important factor of this self review was the full community participation, education and feedback of survey results to the community, therefore, one of the purposes of this meeting was to meet this review objective. Parent education was an important part of this meeting and this has already been considered in the Preparation Phase of this thesis and the recommendation has been made that this parent education should have taken place at the beginning of the trial. The distribution of parent results has been considered in Activity Five and improvements for future practice have been made.

The feedback and discussion on survey results at the consultation evening was lead by the principal, BOT chair and researcher with all key group members present. The presentation, which took approximately half an hour, outlined the five survey methods that had been developed and the trends that emerged in the collected data. The venn diagram on page 153 was presented and the chair discussed what the key group members had concluded about the findings, that is that the surveys had identified a set of core values for School X. Parent

interest centred on the conclusion and what this would mean for School X and its future practice. In particular, they wished to know how this information would be used to improve practices in School X. In reply, T1 stated that the next step of the review involved the development of performance indicators which would then be used to ascertain whether the identified values were currently the basis for all practices in their school.

No time was given at this meeting to discussion of the survey methods used as the BOT chair had commented earlier that the outcomes and the development of school improvement strategies based on the results of the surveys were the main focus of this meeting. Incidental parent feedback to the researcher indicated that they had found the questionnaire easy to respond to.

The researcher concluded this section of the meeting with a presentation of Hopkins, Ainscow and West's (1992) typology of school culture (Appendix 6). This typology cites four types of school culture from 'moving' to 'stuck' or desirable to least desirable in terms of possible sustained school improvement. It also provides a user friendly, parent appropriate framework which schools can use to decide which kind of culture they have in their school.

After explanation of each type of culture, see discussion of these on page 26 of the literature review, the researcher asked the parents to consider which type of culture they thought School X had in light of the results of the surveys and their own perception of the school. The parents present (82% of all school families had at least one parent at the meeting) considered School X to have a promenading to wandering culture which is in my view a fair assessment of their current school culture.

The importance of the values survey and the typology is that they made the group think about their current emphasis on the social and personal development of the children. The point, does School X place sufficient emphasis on the academic development of its students was raised by the BOT chair. The parents present decided that they were content with the current balance of social and personal development having greater importance than the academic development of the students, as they generally felt that their children were achieving at satisfactory levels.

However, away from this public meeting, this issue concerned the staff considerably and they spent much time questioning whether they held sufficiently high academic expectations for these children. This issue was not

resolved when the review concluded and the staff indicated that they were going to seek outside advise on this issue. Interestingly, an ERO review nine months later indicated that some areas of the school's achievement was below national standards. Subsequent contact with this school has shown that the staff and BOT are working to change this aspect of their school's culture. After consultation with the parents, they sought outside advise, they visited and spoke with other similar sized schools, and they now feel that they have put in place strategies that are designed to meet their new shared value of high expectations of all children.

ACTIVITY 8- 13 May

The purpose of Activity Eight was to develop a process that could be used by the school community to construct performance indicators for the identified core values of School X, so that they could be used to ascertain whether the identified core values were evident in current school practices. It was decided, by the key group members that this process should be developed by the key group members in collaboration with the BOT as they believed this was in line with their thinking that self review should be a school wide, collaborative activity. It was also decided to carry this activity out at a regular BOT meeting as it is normal for additional parents to be in attendance at this meeting and therefore, they too, could be involved in the development process.

Method

At monthly BOT Meeting on June 10

1) The staff, BOT members, R and 6 visiting parents were present at this meeting. R gave an address (30 minutes) on performance indicators. The main points presented were that performance indicators:

- are, according to Hopkins and Leask, "statements against which achievement in an area or activity can be assessed" (1989:6). Oakes in Richards, defines a performance indicator as, "a statistic about the education system that reveals something about its performance or health"(1988:495);

- have as their main purpose the stimulation and improvement of the quality of education and that, according to Hopkins and Leask (1989),

Edwards (1990),Wyatt (1990), and OECD (1992), performance indicators provide educators with evidence that schools are doing what they intended to do;

- used at the primary school level take three main forms. They are input, process and output indicators. Input indicators are concerned with resources such as human, financial and physical and are associated with staffing, buildings, consumables and equipment. Process indicators relate to the way the education is being delivered and involves notions of effectiveness, efficiency and quality. Dochy, Segers and Wijnen (1990), and Edwards (1990) note that output indicators are concerned with what has been achieved in the organisation and these centre of issues such as skill achievement levels and standardised test levels;

- must reflect each school's philosophy, goals and objectives, a notion supported by Porter (1988), Hopkins and Leask (1989), Edwards (1990), and Carter, Klein and Day (1992);

- must be carefully designed so that there is a high probability that they will measure their objective. Porter (1988), SIS (1988), Hopkins and Leask (1989), Collins (1990), Dochy, Segers and Wijnen (1990), and Annesley (1996) advise that indicators should be few in number and that they should be explicit and unambiguous and that they must be capable of producing data which is accurate and credible; and

- are complex and can be controversial as they involve terms such as quality, effectiveness and good and bad performance. To overcome these potential areas of dissent, Annesley (1996) recommends that performance indicators be developed by the full audience for whom they are intended.

2) Selection of one of the identified values to use as an example for the development of indicators exercise.
3) Development of the indicators

Results

The group decided that they would choose just one value to use for this indicator process development exercise, and the one chosen was a sense of

community. The group selected this value because they argued that School X had become a 'better' school since the school had become a learning community that involved parents in decision making and in the children's learning. They argued that it was very important to continue fostering the sense of collaboration because they believed that this was a major contributor to their children's current successful progress.

It was not known to the researcher at the time, but was known to the staff and BOT that a major issue of alleged bullying was surfacing in the school at the time of this exercise. Therefore, in hindsight, it could be asked whether the staff and BOT selected this particular value in light of an issue which they perceived was going to need strong community support to reach a satisfactory outcome. On looking back at the meeting, it is possible to note that the decision to choose this particular value was initiated by the principal and fully endorsed by the BOT chair, the two people who were most aware of the coming bullying issue. The six parents in attendance took very little part in the value selection process, but rather, they gave their support to the group decision.

In light of the bullying issue, this meeting made a prudent choice in selecting the value, a sense of community and discussing it here, because the staff, BOT and parent discussions that followed the allegations required the community to work together to support and share decision making as they worked towards resolving the issue.

Identified Core Value: A Sense of Community
Indicators developed by the people present at the BOT meeting.

1) The full school community will regularly be involved in decision making.
    a) full school community is defined as staff, BOT and all parents
    b) regularly is understood to mean an average of at least once a term

2) The full school community will be kept informed weekly of school activities via the school newsletter.
    a) full school community is defined as staff, BOT and all parents

3) There will be parent consultation meetings at least twice a year to keep parents informed of school policy and practices.

a) all new school policies will be discussed at these meetings
b) all changes to existing policy will be discussed at these meetings
c) practices that should be discussed at these meetings include
    - achievement results in the core subjects at all levels
    - major changes to curriculum
    - new curriculum initiatives
    - significant BOT spending (over $5000)

Reflection on Results

To ascertain whether these are 'good' performance indicators, each of the indicators will be evaluated against the criteria that were established in the discussion on page 158. In short, performance indicators should:

- reflect the school's philosophy and objectives;
- be explicit and unambiguous;
- produce data that is accurate and credible; and
- be few in number.

Indicator 1- The full school community will be involved regularly in decision making.

This indicator clearly reflects the school's philosophy and objectives as the school's Charter goals state that the school community will be encouraged to be involved where possible in school activities. The criterion, full school community involvement is defined concisely in the statement, staff, BOT and all parents. The term ' regularly' is defined as an average of at least once a term. These criteria are explicit and would produce data that is accurate and credible. However, the statement 'in decision making' does not meet the criterion for a good indicator. In its present form, this statement fails to define what particular aspects of decision making the full community should be involved in. In its present form, this indicator might mean that the full community has to be involved in all decision making, which certainly was not the intent of the indicator. To make this indicator accurate and credible, the types of issues the full community could be consulted on should be defined explicitly here. The types of decisions that might benefit from full community involvement could include, major financial considerations (i.e. over $10,000), Charter and policy review, and changes to curriculum.

It should be noted that the people present at this meeting realised that this indicator was not complete, and that the term 'decision making' would need further discussion and definition. However, this did not take place here because it was decided that a special parent meeting should be held at a later date to complete the writing of the performance indicators for all of the identified core values. However, the group did acknowledge that this exercise had demonstrated that the development of credible indicators was a time consuming exercise, and that this factor should be taken into account when planning the parent meeting.

Indicator 2- The full school community will be kept informed weekly of school activities via the school newsletter.

Indicator two states precisely who the school community are and that they will be informed weekly via the school newsletter. These criteria reflect the school's current stated goals of communication with parents and should produce data that is measurable, accurate and credible. However, the criterion 'school activities' lacks definition and therefore this performance indicator is incomplete in its present form. To make this indicator meet the criteria for a 'good' indicator, the words 'school activities' must be defined and stated clearly.

Once again the staff, BOT and parents were aware that they had only gone part of the way to developing a workable indicator, but they felt that completion was going to take some time, and that it would be better completed at a meeting held solely to develop performance indicators. However, it was the group's belief that, given time they would be able to define to their satisfaction terms such as 'decision making' and 'school activities'.

Indicator 3- There will be parent consultation meetings at least twice a year to keep parents informed of school policy and practices.

Indicator three is in line with the school's goals which state that parent communication is a high priority. The criterion, at least twice a year is explicit and could be measured. The group made an attempt to define the criterion, school policy and practices. The definitions they listed are unambiguous and clear in intent with the exception of, 'major changes to curriculum'. This group still needs to decide what they collectively understand 'major' to mean in this context.

It is not possible to comment on whether the indicators developed were few in number because there was only time to develop three at this meeting. It is my contention that this group would have difficulty limiting the number of the indicators as their discussion showed that they had a large number of indicators in mind for this value. It is apparent from this exercise that to limit indicators to just the few that the group consider have the most impact on teaching and learning, will take much discussion to reach a consensus.

Reflection on Process

This performance indicator development exercise took fifty minutes to complete, excluding the time that was spent on education. The group worked harmoniously with all members making some contribution to the discussion. It was noticeable however, that the staff, the BOT chair, and one other BOT member had the greatest say in the discussion. The parents did make worthwhile contributions but may have held back from contributing more freely because they were in the position of being visitors to the BOT meeting. For this reason, the suggestion to hold a special parent meeting that was solely concerned with performance indicator development would be advantageous, because the parents might feel more comfortable in a parent forum that is not dominated by BOT meeting protocol.

This short exercise demonstrated that it would be both beneficial and in line with school policy to use the full school community in performance indicator development. The staff, BOT and parents all showed that they would bring valuable differing perspectives to the task, and that this would ensure that the indicators developed reflected full community opinion. This exercise also demonstrated that indicator development of this nature would be best implemented in a face-to-face situation, as it facilitated explanation, cross checking of replies and reinforced the value of a sense of community. It is my belief that, it would not be suitable to develop performance indicators by means of a written parent survey. This exercise illustrated that developing indicators is complex and that much discussion and explanation is needed, factors that could not be accommodated in a written survey situation.

The process developed here to produce indicators for a school's core values demonstrated that the full school community can be involved in the development of value indicators which are credible, workable and reflect the beliefs of their school community. It also showed that group discussion is a suitable vehicle for this task as it allowed all members to participate, it offered

the opportunity for debate, cross checking and explanation of replies, and it served to foster the sense of community by bringing the school community together in a meaningful and worthwhile task which they perceived would lead to school improvement.

It could be asked whether the type of indicators developed here are going to lead to improvement in teaching and learning if implemented, monitored and reviewed. The literature reviewed in the course of this thesis and my own experience and reflection would conclude that, if these particular indicators are implemented, monitored and reviewed then they will help to develop a strong school culture and that this will as argued by Deal (1988), Creemers, Peters and Reynolds (1989), Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) and Stewart and Prebble(1993), lead to school improvement and effectiveness.

As discussed at this meeting, it was decided that the next stage in the performance development task should be to hold a special parent meeting. It is my recommendation that this meeting commence with education and discussion about the criteria for 'good' indicators. As indicator development has shown itself to be a time consuming task, the parents, BOT and staff could be divided into homogenous groups, and each group could be assigned one value to develop indicators for. After each group had discussed and recorded their draft indicators the groups should come together and present their indicators for further discussion and agreement on by the full group. It might be useful to consider having an 'outsider' such as a neighbouring school principal present at this meeting so that they could play the role of 'the devil's advocate' in questioning the decisions made from an outsiders perspective. This, according to Janis (1999) would minimise the risk of groupthink influencing the decisions made.

These draft indicators should then be sent via the school newsletter, to all parents for comment. After these comments have been considered by the BOT, staff and parent representatives and a set of indicators agreed to, the core values and their indicators should be written into their School Charter to demonstrate the importance accorded to the school's shared core values. It must be noted that identification of a school's core values and development of performance indicators for those values is not a one off exercise. Rather, like all topics for school self review, these values must be reviewed regularly, perhaps as often as every second year, as they will change as staff, BOT, parents and students move in and out of the school, bringing with them different opinions as to what constitutes ideal core values for School X.

At the commencement of this trial it had been planned that Stage Two of the trial would involve the identification of performance indicators and then investigation as to whether these values were underlying and informing practices in school X. Unfortunately, the issue of alleged bullying emerged in the school at this juncture in the review and it was decided by the key group members that this self review exercise should end so that all school development time and resources could be redirected to this issue. The decision to conclude the self review exercise was made on the belief that most of the tasks had been completed and therefore most of the school's objectives for the review had been meet. The group felt that they had a process in place to complete the indicator development at a later stage and they also believed that they would be able to investigate whether the values were evident in current practice and the principal's role in developing and managing the core values. As the group were unable to indicate when this self review exercise might recommence, the decision was made to end my own formal involvement in the review, so that writing up of this thesis could commence.

The decision to discontinue the trial at this point was disappointing as it meant that one of my own trial objectives, to incorporate principal appraisal into school self review to test if principal appraisal is, in essence, review of the whole, or part, of a school's performance, could not be investigated. Fortunately, this omission did not jeopardise the worth of the work developed in the rest of the review as a model for the identification of a school's core values could still be formulated from the work completed to this point.

If the trial had continued it is envisaged that the next review exercise would have been the investigation of selected school practices to ascertain whether they reflected the value indicators. My recommendation would have been that, the each key member select a value and a school practice to investigate. The type of school practice suitable for this exercise would include school policy, the school charter, the school newsletter, signs around the school, and the weekly school assembly. Each member would investigate their allotted practice against the value criteria they had selected, and report their findings to the combined staff and board. This process would then be analysed and modified where needed. When a process that was satisfactory had been devised, the key members, in discussion with the board, could select other school practices that they wished to be investigated. Parents and senior students could also be involved in this exercise. To conclude this activity, the key members, BOT and perhaps parents would make recommendations for

action that would then go back to the school staff for implementation. These actions should in turn be reviewed at a later date to decide whether they are indeed contributing to improvement in teaching and learning.

Once the process for ascertaining whether practices reflect school's values has been refined, the role of the principal in managing and developing the school's values should be considered. This should be done by the BOT chair in consultation with the principal. Together they should assess how well the principal is managing and developing the school's values as an integral part of his everyday practice. In particular the question should be asked, does everything the principal do reflect and foster the school's core values.

The final activity of the self review exercise, Activity 9 concluded the review by reflecting upon, and critically assessing the worth of the trial activities undertaken. Conclusions to the study, reconsideration of methodology used and the presentation and discussion of a model that could be used to inform a similar review of a school's core values, are examined in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

Conclusions from Self Review Study

Overview of Chapter

In Chapter Five the writer brings together the findings and lessons from the self review study with information from the literature review and links this information together into the production of a model that could be used to inform similar review of a school's core values practices. In particular, Chapter Five reports on:

- Activity 9 of the self review trial;
- school and researcher reflection on trial;
- reconsideration of trial methodology and discussion on issues learnt from this study; and
- presentation of a model for review of a school's core values.

ACTIVITY 9- May/June

The purpose of this final trial activity was to conclude the self review trial by reflecting upon, and critically assessing the worth of the trial activities undertaken.

Method

1) Group discussion with all staff, secretary, BOT and R. The BOT chair who had been present through the previous eight activities of the review had by this stage left the school and a new chair had not been appointed.

   Focus questions developed by the researcher
   Did the review meet the school's objectives?
   - Did you learn about school culture, school improvement and school effectiveness?
   - Did the review identify a set of core values for School X?
   - Did the review ascertain whether the values were evident in current school practices?
   - Did the review demonstrate that it is feasible and worthwhile

for a school community to develop its own core value identification, and performance indicator processes?

Has this review been useful to you, in what ways?

- What did you think about the results of the review?
- Have there been parts of the review which were not useful, explain?

In terms of personal time and effort, do you think the review was worthwhile?

- Was the time the staff and BOT put into this review reasonable,
  unreasonable?
- Was the time parents put into this review reasonable, unreasonable?

Reflection

This final session of the self review exercise, which was held at the school, took approximately one hour and ten minutes to complete. This exercise took the form of informal discussion based on the questions above which were prepared by the researcher. This report on the discussion will take the form of:

- stating each question;
- reporting the staff and BOT comments; and
- researcher comment on the question.

Question one asked, did the review meet the school's objectives for the review. The group reported that they had found the education which was an integral part of the review very beneficial, as they knew more about school culture, core values, and school improvement and effectiveness at the end of trial than they had at the beginning. The staff commented that the education was useful, because it had shown them that there is more to school improvement than improving academic achievement. They said that they were now starting to recognise and believe in the connections between core values, a shared school culture and school effectiveness, concepts they were unaware of at the beginning of the trial. The principal stated that the education phase of the review had taught him a lot more about school culture, and the relevance of it to his position and responsibilities. He said that it was unfortunate that the review was not completed because he wished to learn more about how he could manage and develop the core values, as a means for school improvement.

The BOT agreed that they too had enjoyed the education aspects of the review but stated that they were sceptical and did not understand how the

identification of core values could lead to school improvement. They commented that they would have liked the education sessions to have included evidence and discussion from other schools that had improved school practices through the identification of their core values. As stated earlier, research of this nature was not available and that is why we had to develop our own core value self review exercise.

Question one also asked whether the review had identified a set of core values for School X. It was the group's belief that the review processes developed had identified a set of ideal values for School X. As has already been discussed, the group were unaware that the core values they had identified were really a mixture of beliefs and values and that they were not ideal, but rather, current. The group agreed that due to the early closure of the review, the objective to ascertain whether the values were evident in current practices was not meet. However, they believed that they were now in a position to be able to develop explicit performance indicators which would enable straight forward investigation of their existence.

On the question of whether the review had demonstrated that it was both feasible and worthwhile for the full school community to be involved in an exercise of this nature, the group agreed that it had worked well and had produced useful outcomes. The staff felt that full school community participation had been very beneficial as it had involved virtually all school members in an important school development exercise. The principal reported that the involvement of parents and BOT in the review had meant a lot of time and work for some people, but he added that he believed it had been worthwhile, in that, he saw the review as both a school development and public relations building exercise.

The BOT also believed that full community participation had been beneficial, in that it had brought the community together in a joint exercise to improve practices in their school. They believed that this collaborative work meant that the parents felt valued and that they now genuinely perceived they had a stake in the school's direction.

My own reflection on the trial leads to the conclusion that the review had met most of the school's objectives. The aim to provide education to all on the key concepts of the trial was meet. All key concepts relevant to the trial were explained and discussed in sufficient depth and in language that was appropriate to each audience. The timing of some of the education sessions has already been discussed and suggestions have been made for changes to the timing of the education sessions so that all participants would be fully

informed of the trial purposes and key concepts at the beginning of the review.

As has been discussed, the processes developed and used to identify core values for School X had problems so that what were thought to be a set of ideal core values for School X were in fact, a set of current values and beliefs. It was not the processes used that were at fault, but rather, the survey designs that lead to this outcome. It is my belief that if the survey designs were modified in the ways that have been recommended in this thesis, then the processes used would have had the desired outcome of identifying ideal core values for School X.

The early closure of the trial meant that the school's objective to ascertain whether the identified values were evident in school practices was not meet. However, it is my contention that the values indicator exercise had demonstrated that these people had the skills to be able to develop credible, contextual indicators for their core values. It is also my view that these people had from their previous experiences with school self review, and with what they had learnt from this self review exercise, the necessary skills and expertise to develop processes that would ascertain whether these values were evident in current practice. One area of concern might be the prioritising and limiting of indicators to a workable, meaningful number, and outside opinion could be sought on this if it proved too difficult for the school community.

This review showed that it is both feasible and worthwhile to use full community participation in a self review exercise of this nature. The review found that because of the nature of the activities, that is group discussion, parent meetings and postal surveys, all community members can be involved in some or all of the activities. This full participation meant that the results of the surveys reflect a wide range of opinions, and are therefore, truly representative of the group surveyed. This is an important factor in a core values identification exercise because as argued by Plunkett (1990) and Begley (1999), if the identified values are going to form the basis for school goals and aims, they must be a true representation of that school's collective beliefs. One negative aspect of full participation was the amount of time and effort it takes. This issue is considered under focus question three.

The second focus question asked, has this review been useful to you? The principal commented that he had found the trial really useful because it had educated him, and in particular, it had made him reconsider his role and responsibilities as the head of the school. He said that the core value review

had also made him rethink the purpose of and strategies that should be used for school self review. His thinking had now changed because of the trial education and dialogue and he could see value in Stewart and Prebble's (1993) contention that we often review the things that boards know a lot about anyway, and that we may overlook or avoid the issues that really matter such as management and development of a school's culture.

Teacher One said that she had found it quite difficult to get going in the first review activities because she was unsure of what the review would lead to. However, at the conclusion of the trial, she reported that the trial had been useful to her, as it had educated her on current educational thinking and made her question some of her classroom practices in light of the identified values. She also said that a valuable part of the exercise had been getting to work with, and know better the BOT members and many of the parents.

Teacher Two noted that she too, had found the review useful both as a teacher and as a parent. In particular, she said that she had enjoyed learning about school culture and how it related to school change and improvement. She also commented that she had particularly enjoyed the education sessions as they had made her think differently about the school and its purposes.

The school secretary had remained a little detached from the whole review, mainly because she was not usually present after school when most of the activities took place, and the group did not feel they could ask her to come back too often just for the review activities. However, she was present at all meetings and activities with the board and so made her contributions in this way. The secretary said of the review that, it was all very different to her, and that she had never been involved in anything like this in all the time she had been at the school. She reported that she had really enjoyed being included in the activities as it made her feel important and not just the secretary.

It was unfortunate that we could not have included her in more of the activities, because it would have been interesting to have heard more of her opinion in light of research (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989) which suggests that she is likely to be a key cultural figure in the school. In hindsight, we should have made a determined effort to change the times of meetings so that she would have been present at more of the planning and implementation of activities.

The BOT felt that the review had been useful to them because the willingness of people to participate was affirmation of the school's collaborative ideals. They believed that this support indicated shared responsibility, and that this would be a sound basis for making school improvement on. One board member made the following comment on the review," This type of review was all new to me and I felt a bit out of place. I found the results of the surveys interesting and I can see how the indicators could be used to improve things in the school." This board member also thought that the whole review had been a very worthwhile public relations exercise with the school parents, as several parents had reported to him that they had liked being involved and kept fully informed of the results, as it made them feel they had a real part to play in the success of the school.

Another BOT member commented that the review had demonstrated to the full school community that the school was serious in its intent to improve itself. They felt that this self review had been valuable as it asked and received most of the communitys' support, and therefore, laid the foundations for including parent input in other school self review exercises.

Incidental parent feedback on the review, showed that generally, parents saw the review as positive, as they saw it as an attempt by the school to take stock of their position in the hope of being able to see domains of congruence and areas for improvement. Several parents also commented that they had supported the review, as they thought the school was asking the parents to take a real role in this initiative to improve itself.

On the issue of the review's usefulness, it is my belief that from the school's perspective the trial was both successful and useful in several key ways. Firstly, this review demonstrated that a group of school community members were able to work collaboratively, to plan, implement and analyse various activities which served to identify the core values and beliefs of their school. At the commencement of the review, several members of the community expressed their concerns at the prospect of a group of 'ordinary teachers and parents' being able to work together to develop processes that involved a concept as abstract as core values. These doubts were unfounded because the review demonstrated that, in the main, an 'ordinary' school community of this nature can develop their own processes for self review of core values. However, it should be noted that, one area of review that can contain pitfalls is the design of survey instruments. This thesis contains the recommendation that schools get help with this task, as it is complex and problematic.

This self review exercise was also valuable to the school as it educated the full school community about important educational concepts that directly affect the success of their school. The education not only provided them with new knowledge, but it also made the school community think and re-evaluate the purposes of education, the aims of School X, and what constituted the essence of their school, things they had not considered as a group before.

The review exercise had also been useful because it had shown that School X currently had a shared set of core values and beliefs and the school community understood that as long as School X had other important characteristics of a ' strong ' school culture, then changes and improvements made at the school would have a high likelihood of being effective (Fullan, 1985, Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Caldwell and Spinks, 1988 and Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989). If this theory proved to be correct, the group would then consider the review to have been useful to them.

Finally, the review task had been useful to the school community because it had involved all of the school members in a collaborative school development exercise. The collective planning, sharing of ideas, solving of problems and the critical reflection were enhanced and enriched by the diversity of perspective that was brought to the task through collaboration. As argued before school (Sergiovanni ,1992, Smyth , 1993, and Stoll and Fink,1996) the full collaboration served to strength the sense of community, and shared purpose and responsibility in the improvement and success of their school.

From the research perspective, the trial had been successful and useful in several significant ways. This review had demonstrated that it is possible for an 'ordinary' school community to develop, implement and reflect upon its own processes for core value identification. Despite the problems with survey design, the lessons learned from it show that with assistance, a school can develop its own credible processes for core value identification.

This review exercise and reflection upon it were also successful from the researcher's perspective because they served to teach her a number of important lessons about research design and in particular about collaborative action research methodology. These issues are considered in the following section. (See page 176)

Focus question three asked, in terms of personal time and effort, do you think the review was worthwhile. The staff acknowledged that the review had taken up a lot of out of school time, however, they did state that the

time and effort had been worth it as the learning and results were beneficial to themselves and the school. It is very difficult to estimate the amount of time that staff members would have spent on this review, but as a guide it is estimated that the principal would have spent between fifteen and twenty hours over the eight month period of the review. It is estimated that the two teaching staff would each have spent between seven and twelve hours on formal activities and in reflection on activities over the eight month review period.

The issue of in-school review time was discussed and the staff agreed that the BOT should consider making available some in-school time for review activities as an acknowledgement of their understanding of the worth of school self review. The BOT agreed to discuss this, but pointed out to the staff that they only have a limited budget, and if they allocate money to this item then some other item must take a reduction in its budget. The BOT suggested that parents be used more in self review exercises as a money saving device. The BOT argued that a high level of parent input had worked well in this review so should be used again. The staff agreed that while full community participation had been useful in this exercise, they argued that it was not practical in many self review activities as the co-ordinating and organising of full parent participation had involved the staff in a great deal of time.

It is my estimation that the BOT chair put in between thirteen to eighteen hours of work on this review and that each board member put in an average of four hours. The BOT chair commented that she had been willing to give this time to her school, and she felt that the trial outcomes validated the time she had put into it. However, she did comment that her position as a female currently not employed in the workforce, meant that she had the time available for this work, and she wondered whether other BOT chairs would be able to make the same commitment if they had outside employment.

One board member stated that he felt the review had taken up a lot of valuable board time, and suggested that maybe parent sub-committees could have done more of the work and reported back. This particular member also commented that boards have enough to do already, and that maybe, if reviews of this nature were valuable to the school, they should be carried out by outside people. The principal replied to this, by saying that the whole purpose of the exercise was to involve the school community in looking at themselves in depth and from a different perspective.

Parent input into the review ranged from between twenty minutes to an

upper limit of three hours per person over the six month period that the parents were involved in review activities. The average parent input into the review would have been in the vicinity of one and a half to two and a half hours. Incidental comments from parents indicated that they had not found the time asked of them for review activities, unreasonable.

The issue of time and effort spent on the review activities was raised several times during the course of the review. Interestingly, the majority of queries and doubts about time and effort were raised by the BOT members with regard to their own input. As was discussed, these board members appeared to be feeling the strain of having a new chairperson and two new board members and the additional work that was involved in bringing these new people up to date with board matters. The impression was also gained from two of the board members that they already have enough to do, and that self review should be a task primarily for the staff with some degree of parent input.

From my experience on school boards and from working with several other school boards, these feelings of being overworked are common and not unjustified. However, these board members put in only an average of four hours to this review over a six month period. It is my view that this was not unreasonable and that perhaps the issue was not really time, but rather, that they had to learn about another new facet of education and that this was stressful. Boards are constantly under pressure to keep up to date and informed about new legislation and curriculum changes and this puts 'ordinary' parents under a lot of pressure. It is my belief that an input of four hours over a six month period is a reasonable ask of BOT members who have as one of their mandatory requirements, the review of all school practices.

As stated, the BOT chair put in between thirteen to eighteen hours of work on this review. She commented that she had greatly enjoyed the experience and thought that the outcomes validated the time spent on the exercise. However, this time spent on review might not be possible with another BOT chair and while their importance in the key group member team was very valuable, this position could have been shared with another one or two BOT members who could have reported back to the full board. It is very important to have some BOT members involved in a review of this nature because it is the board who ultimately have to take responsibility for the review therefore they need to be involved so that they fully understand what the review had entailed.

The staff, and in particular, the principal, put considerable time and effort into the review and did not find the time and effort unreasonable, as they argued it had been spread over an eight month period. This principal's input was substantial, as he was eager to learn how to improve his school. However, another principal may not wish to, or be in the position to give so much time to just one facet of self review, so it would be possible to share this key member role with one or two other staff members and still retain the continuity of the review. Also, with a larger school staff, it would not be necessary to have all staff members involved in all activities. However, it would be advisable to maintain continuity by retaining a core of key group members who would be present at all key activities, but then different staff members could be allocated to different activities to spread the workload.

Parent input of an average of one and a half to two and a half hours over a six month period is not an unreasonable expectation as long as the same parents are not being asked to support the school in too many other ways at the same time. If full parent participation is desired, then the parents could be invited to participate in just some of the activities so that all parents would be invited to be involved in at least one activity as well as the education and feedback sessions which should involve all participants.

Research Methodology Reconsidered

As stated in the trial objectives on page 106, a very important aspect of this study for the researcher was the opportunity to be involved in a research exercise of this nature so that she could be part of the experimentation process with the expectation that she would gain more knowledge about research design and methodology from learning gained along the journey.

The processes used in the core values review exercise and those, in particular, which did not deliver the anticipated or hoped for results, offered the researcher many opportunities to learn about research methodology. In particular, the main lessons learnt from the study are that:

- collaborative action research was an appropriate methodology to use to achieve the objectives of this self review exercise;
- full and early education for all is important in collaborative action research;
- survey construction is a complex and exacting exercise;
- survey distribution and response must be handled carefully to ensure a high response rate;

- collaborative data gathering, analysis and presentation is both feasible and useful in an review of this nature;
- reporting and feedback to all involved is an important aspect of collaborative action research of this nature; and
- the possible effects of groupthink should be considered in research of this nature.

Collaborative Action Research

Collaborative action research was chosen as the method best fitted to meet the objectives of the research task, as, according to Carr and Kemmis (1986), collaborative action research aims to 'improve and involve'. This school trial involved all members of its school community and resulted in several outcomes which provided the school with possible directions and strategies for future school development and improvement. As a group we felt that we had achieved our aim of being a community of critical learners working together to find ways to change and improve the education of our school. The self review task demonstrated that it is feasible to use both teachers and school community members as 'researchers' in a task of this nature which aims to improve practice in the case study school.

Using collaborative action research did have some shortcomings for this trial, the main one being the amount of time that was spent on the trial. As we had made a commitment to full collaboration, consultation and participation, achieving this goal meant enormous amounts of time were expended in discussing, consulting and waiting for convenient times for meetings. In this particular trial, however, we felt the outcomes warranted the time spent on the activities. However, if a trial of this nature was to be carried out in a larger school, then reasons for and methods used to achieve full participation would have to be considered carefully so that the trial did not become unmanageable in terms of time put into the exercise.

Full and Early Education for All Involved

An important aspect of this self review trial, as supported by Stoll and Fink, (1996) was its education component. The case study school had asked that the full school community be informed about the key concepts on which the trial was built, so that they would be able to understand the purposes of the trial and would be able to participate in it in an informed manner.

As was stated in Chapter Four, the researcher held information sessions for the staff and the school board members at the beginning of the trial. These

people commented that these sessions had prepared them well for the review exercise. However, it was also noted in Chapter Four that the school community education session was not held until the middle of the trial when the community gathered together for feedback on the parent survey and the trial findings to that date.

It is my recommendation that in a review of this nature, education for all should be retained, but that all members of the school community should receive the background education at the beginning of the trial so that fuller understanding of the trial purposes and key concepts would be gained from the commencement of the review.

Survey Construction

One questionnaire was used in the self review task (Chapter 4, Activity 5) to gather information from the full school community. Despite what we thought was careful consideration being given to the formation of the questionnaire and the fact that the questionnaire was pre-tested before being sent to the school community, we still experienced difficulties with the type of question used, in that the question used did not return the exact information we thought it had asked for. Much was learnt from this experience and these issues are discussed in Chapter Four. In particular, we learnt that the construction of questionnaires is a complex and exacting task, a notion supported by Blalock, (1970). It is my recommendation that in a situation like this, a school should seek expert assistance with questionnaire construction. Had this been done and then the survey pre-tested as it was, the survey should have returned the data that was asked of it. It is my contention that had the questionnaire been worded correctly, then the it was still the most suitable survey form to use for this task which involved eliciting information from a number of people.

Survey Distribution

In this study, the parent survey was distributed to the parents via the school newsletter and was returned to the school office, by the children. As has been discussed in Chapter Four, this distribution method was considered satisfactory, as these parents are very good at ensuring that their weekly newsletters reach home. However, relying on the children to return the replies may have contributed to the 34.61% response rate, which, although considered reasonable by May, (1993) was deemed to be disappointing by the members of the key group. Hakim (1987) recommends that a stamped addressed envelope be included with postal surveys to increase the response rate, and Frankfort-Nachmias and

Nachmias (1996) suggest that follow-up phone calls also be used to encourage return of surveys. Both these recommendations should be used in a self review exercise of this nature.

As was discussed in Chapter Four, the response rate to the survey may have been higher if parent education had been supplied at the beginning of the trial, as this may have increased the interest in and support of the trial.

Data Collection and Analysis

Participant Observation

The writer was asked by the school research team to adopt the role of full participant observer in this trial so that she could be both a full member of the group whilst also providing some 'expert' input and knowledge. The role of participant observer generally worked well for the writer but, in hindsight, more use of a tape recorder would have been useful so that the writer did not have to record observations at the same time as participating as a full member of the group. Sharing the recording of observations with other members of the group worked well as, at the end of each session, we always verified the recorded data by going back over it with the group involved to ensure that it fairly represented what had been said and done in that session.

Interviews

In depth interviewing was used several times in this trial and this data collection method was felt to be a useful and worthwhile method for gathering data from small groups of participants. Once again, in hindsight, the use of a tape recorder in these situations would have facilitated easier data collation and analysis. Considerable time was lost during our group interviews as we spent time at the end of each session verifying the raw, written data with the full group. If a tape recorder had been used, then data collation could have been more efficiently carried out by just one or two of the key research people.

Field Diaries and Personal Journals

The use of a field diary was very valuable to the writer. My diary was a very full indicator of activities covered, discussions, possible new directions, thoughts and feelings which greatly focused the planning of research activities and my own critical reflection. However, the use of personal diaries by the rest of the research team proved to be a wasted task.

As stated in Chapter Four, the key group members failed to write down their own observations or feelings so, at about the half way point of the trial, a joint decision was made to discontinue the use of personal journals. It is my opinion that time played a large part in the non-compliance with this action. These people had only so much time to give to the self review trial and this time did not allow for personal writing. The key group members stated that the verbal critical reflection on each activity provided adequate and appropriate time to share thoughts and feelings about the trial with the rest of the research team and so, therefore, they felt no need to record these reflections as well. It is my recommendation that the use of personal journals be encouraged in a review task of this nature to make the participants aware of the importance of personal reflection and to provide valuable narrative for analysis with the other forms of data.

Reporting to all Involved

This self review exercise placed importance on the reporting of trial outcomes to all the people who had been involved in the trial. The school board had asked for this at the beginning of the trial, as they felt this was in keeping with their current school culture of collaboration which pays particular attention to keeping the school community informed of all interesting and important school happenings. This request was also, according to Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988), in keeping with the tenets of collaborative action research which recommend that all people involved be given regular feedback about the research.

In this study, regular feedback to the full school community took the form of newsletter items and face-to-face reports such as that given at the community consultation evening. It is my contention that the reporting methods used in this trial were suitable for the task.

Groupthink

As mentioned in Chapter Four, more attention should be paid to the possible influences of groupthink in a review such as this, as it is possible that groupthink may have negatively influenced opinions and actions in this review. It could be asked whether the review outcomes were influenced by group members who were unable to express their true feeling and thoughts, as they were afraid, or intimidated by the seemingly cohesive nature of the group? Janis (1972) recommends that to counter the possible effects of groupthink, a critical evaluator be assigned to every member of the group. The role of the critical evaluator would be to scrutinise favoured solutions

and actions. This would not have been practical in this exercise, where the whole school community was involved, but an alternative might be to involve outside, that is non school community, people as critical evaluators in some of the activities to prevent 'groupthink' becoming 'groupstink' (http:// www. austrainer.com/archives/1385.htm, 1999).

Another strategy that could be employed to ensure that groupthink does not mean a loss of reality would be to get an 'outsider' to scrutinise the group's operation. In this particular review, a colleague of the writer's, a principal from another school or a person from outside of the community might have been able to carry out this role.

With her new knowledge of groupthink, the writer, if involved in another similar review, would introduce two new strategies to lessen the possible effects of groupthink. Firstly, time would be spent educating the whole group and making them aware of the concept of groupthink and its possible application to a review of this nature. Education would then be followed by the writer deliberately playing 'devils advocate' in order to alert the group members to other possible ways of viewing things.

In conclusion, this collaborative self review of a school's core values has produced a substantial amount of information on the development of a self review processes that can be used to review a school's core values. Therefore it is now possible produce a model of self review of a school's core values which is informed by the literature read in the course of the study, and by the lessons learnt from this self review exercise.

MODEL FOR REVIEW OF A SCHOOL'S CORE VALUES

Explanation of the Core Values Self Review Model

This model of school self review for a small New Zealand rural school, is based on the position that self review should be collaborative, involve the full school community, and lead to school improvement, a concept which is supported by Sutton (1994). The first step to achieving this outcome is to establish the purpose of the review.

Purpose

This first stage should involve the principal, staff and at least the BOT chair but preferably the full board, and should take the form of a discussion on why the school would wish to identify their core values so that they

form a shared understanding of the possible benefits of self review of this nature.

Aim and Objectives

The aims and objectives for the review should be formulated and agreed to by the principal, staff, and school board as it is important to include these people in the objective setting task so that they take full responsibility for the review processes and outcomes. The objectives for the review might be the same as for the review in this thesis but they must reflect each school's own context and expectations. A group of key members comprising the principal, two or three staff, BOT chair and perhaps one other BOT member and possibly two to three parents, should be established. It will be the responsibility of these people to organise, implement and analyse the review activities.

Education of all involved in the review.

Education is a very important aspect of this core value review model and the first education session must be held in the early stages of the review. This first education session should be for the full school community, that is, staff teaching and non-teaching, BOT members and parents. The key concepts of school culture and school effectiveness, the principal's role in the management and development of school culture, and collaborative school self review should be introduced and discussed at this session. This information sharing could be lead by the principal or a staff member using the information contained in appendices two, three and four of this thesis. If there is not a suitable school person to lead this discussion, an education consultant or advisor could be employed to deliver this education.

Core Values Survey

In this model, three core value surveys are used to gather data from the full school community. The first survey aims to get the school staff to identify ideal values for their school. This task takes the form of a face-to-face discussion which opens with a discussion on what values you. The definition that values are our deeply held beliefs about what is important (Lawley, 2000), can be used to focus this discussion. If the group have difficulty starting on the topic of educational values, they should discuss values in their own lives. The opening discussion must also include debate on the difference between values and beliefs and current values and ideal values so that a shared understanding that this survey is about the identification of ideal core values is established.

MODEL FOR SCHOOL SELF REVIEW
-Review of a School's Core Values

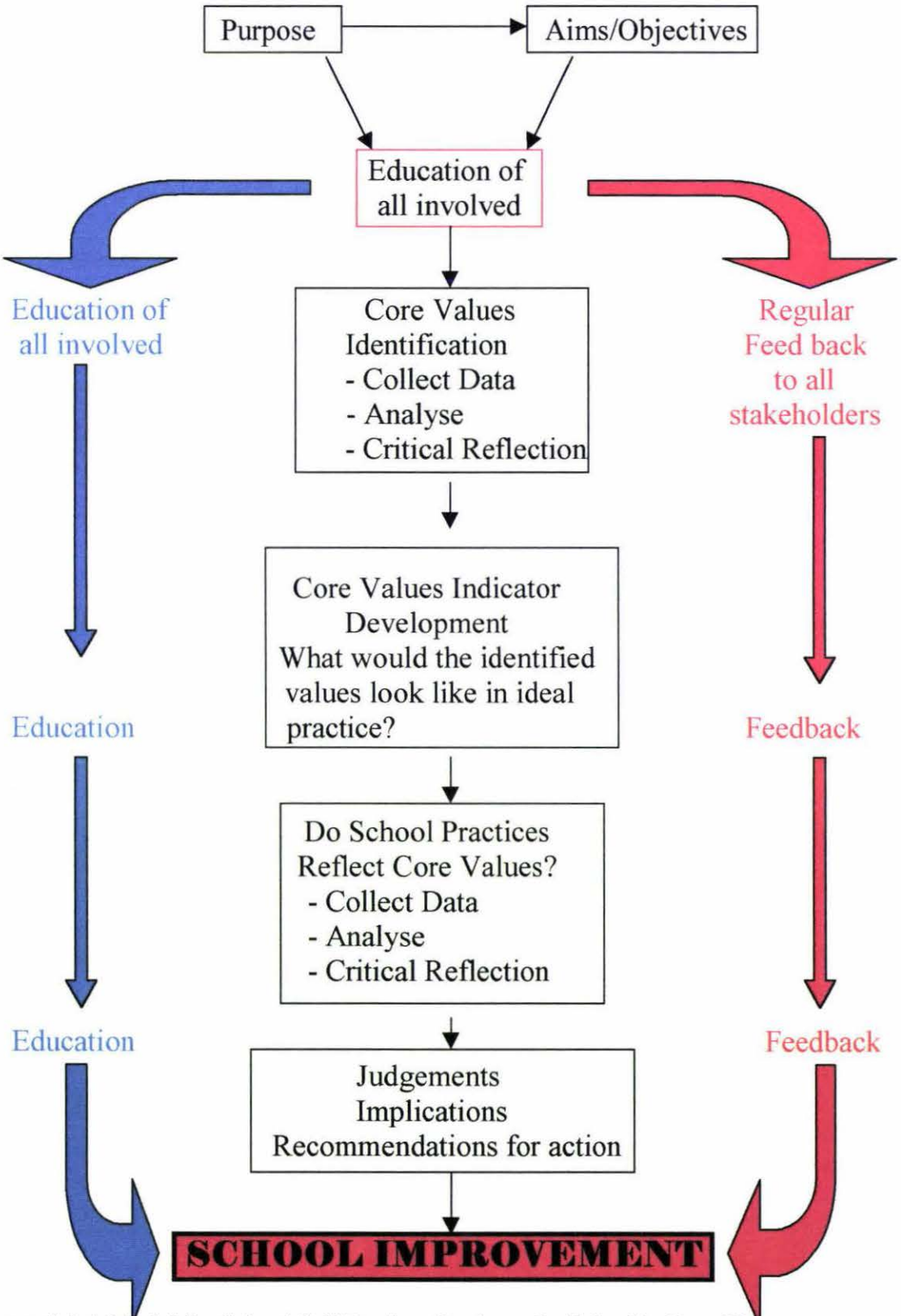


Figure 5.1 A Model for School Self Review-Review of a School's Core Values

Next the staff working in pairs, write down what they think should be core values for their school. On completion of this step, the full group should share their identified values and a master list should be compiled that groups values by commonality and assigns an overarching value to each group. This survey concludes with reflection and discussion as to whether these are 'good' sets of educational values using the value frameworks suggested by George, Stevenson, Thomason and Beane (1992) and/or Leonard (1999).

The purpose of the second survey is to identify BOT and parents ideal core values. The BOT information can either be gathered using the same method as that used by the staff or the BOT and parents can be surveyed using the postal questionnaire presented on page 126. Consideration should be given as to whether the survey should be named and/or anonymous. A stamped addressed envelope should be provided for return of the survey and a two week response time should be allocated with follow up phone calls to parents to ensure that they return their survey forms. It is the job of the key group members to collate and group this data into commonalties and then assign an overarching value to each group as was done in the first survey. The results of this survey should be feedback to parents via a communal medium such as the school newsletter.

The third values survey involves asking the students from years five to eight to identify ideal core values for their school. It is recommended that only students of year five and above take part in this survey. This survey takes the form of a class discussion which is lead by the teacher. This discussion uses the format that was used with the staff. On completion of the discussion the students working in pairs discuss and record their identified ideal values. The pairs then combine into fours and share and record again, finally ending with a class discussion and combination of all the student identified core values. The replies from this survey should be collated, grouped by commonality and assigned an overarching value by the key group members. At the conclusion of the three surveys, the key group members gather the results from the three surveys and compare them, seeking to establish those values which are common to all three surveys. These values are the ideal core values for their school.

To complete this exercise the key group members should use George et al.'s (1992) and Leonard's (2000) value frameworks to reflect on the results of their survey. Discussion should focus on what the values they have identified say about their expectations for their school and their overall purposes of education.

Education and feedback for all
Another full parent meeting should be held to present and discuss the final results of the survey. The discussion should include consideration of George et al's (1992) and Leonard's (2000) value frameworks in light of the survey results. This section of the meeting should conclude with discussion on the kind of culture that current exists in their school. The focus of this discussion should be Hopkin's, Ainscow and West (1994) typology of school cultures. See page 26.

The second section of the meeting aims to set up procedures for the development of performance indicators for the identified core values. Information must be presented about what performance indicators are, their purposes and criteria for 'good' indicators. This should be presented by one of the staff or a consultant if the staff do not have the necessary knowledge. The information presented on pages 158 and 159 could form the basis for this presentation. Who will be involved and how the indicators will be developed should also be decided at this meeting. It is recommended that all staff, BOT, some parents, and possibly some senior students be involved in this task and that it take the form of a face-to-face group discussion.

It is my recommendation that the development of indicators take place at a later date, rather than at this meeting, as our experience would suggest that it is easier to do this task with a small group of people. The performance indicator development involves taking each identified ideal value and formulating indicators that reflect what that value should look like in practice in the school. It is very important that these indicators are few in number and meet the criteria for 'good' indicators. See pages 158 and 159 of this thesis. These draft indicators should be presented to the school community for comment. This could be done by circulating them in the school newsletter. Following consultation and modification if necessary, the core values and their indicators should be recorded in the school's Charter and reviewed on a regular basis. It is recommended that this review be bi-annual.

Do School Practices Reflect Core Values? Judgements, Implications and Recommendations for Action.
This step in the model should be an on going, ever present part of a school's development plan. Using the developed indicators, all school decisions should be made with reference to the value indicators. Future self review exercises and in particular Charter, policy and principal appraisal, should take account of these indicators. Part of a school's annual self review could take one important occasion such as end of year

assembly, open day for prospective students or pet day and use it as a case study to evaluate whether the school's stated values are reflected in the practices of this occasion. This model of review concludes its cycle with regular feedback of the findings to the school community.

In conclusion, in this chapter the writer has drawn together and discussed the findings from the self review trial. In particular, she has highlighted the many lessons about reviewing a school's core values and the methodology that can be used to do this, that were learnt from this trial. From these lessons and from the information gathered in the literature review, she has produced a model for review of a school's core values. The intent of the model is that it be used as a guide for other schools that wish to develop methods to review their own core values.

Chapter 6

Linking The Strands

Overview of Chapter

Chapter Six concludes this thesis by linking the multiple strands from the thesis. In particular, the writer considers the stated hypotheses, (Chapter Two) and makes suggestions for further research.

Linking the Strands

This thesis explored a number of hypotheses. They were that:

1. It is important for schools to evaluate what they value and to take responsibility for their own improvement;
2. For school self review to be effective, the review must be for self accountability purposes and it must involve all of the school community;
3. If understanding the symbols and culture of a school is a prerequisite to making a school more effective, then part of school self review should involve looking at the ' larger picture', that is, the core values and beliefs of the school community; and
4. To improve the core activities of a school, that is teaching and learning, indicators must be developed for the school's core values so that it can be ascertained whether the values are in fact the basis for all school practices.

Each of these hypotheses is considered on page 188.

It should be noted that in order to give this review focus and usefulness, the key group members, that is, the school staff, board chair and the researcher, had to establish what they understood the concept of an effective school to mean in the context of School X. After considerable debate it was decided that, effectiveness in School X is characterised by five main factors: high levels of achievement for all students, continual improvement, a learning rich school where learning is for everyone, a strong school and community partnership and a safe environment.

It had been hoped to explore the additional hypothesis that, principal appraisal is a integral part of school review but, unfortunately, the early closure of the

school review trial meant that it was not possible in the self review trial to either investigate or gather sufficient data to support or contradict this proposition.

Hypothesis 1- **It is important for schools to evaluate what they value and to take responsibility for their own improvement.**

The review of related literature indicated that effective schools monitor their own performance and achievement (Edmonds, 1978 cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West ,1994, Purkey and Smith, 1983, Mortimore et al. 1988, cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West 1994, and Stoll and Fink,1996).The case study school has a long history of carrying out self review as it is their belief that, in order for improvement to be made in their school, they must engage in frequent, on-going review of their own progress and achievement and take responsibility for school improvement. It was from this background that the school agreed to be involved in a school self review trial that would identify a school's core values and establish indicators for these values. It was also acknowledged by several of the people involved, that a review such as this was risky in that it might reveal things about the school which they did not wish to know. However the group shared the belief that, in order to change and improve their school, they needed to evaluate what they value. Martyn (1996) supports this notion when he speaks of self review as reflective dialogue by a community of critical enquirers who wish to review and improve that which they value.

To test this hypothesis, review of School X's core values was carried out by a team of people comprising the school staff, Board chair and the writer. This group of people shared the day to day responsibility of the review. However, to ensure school community ownership of and responsibility for the review, the review deliberately involved all members of the school community, a notion which is proffered by Schollum and Ingram (1991), the Education Review Office (1994), Sutton (1994) and Stoll and Fink (1996).

To help encourage the school to take full responsibility for the review, the writer was asked to educate the group about school culture and core values and their relationship to school improvement and effectiveness. Mortimore et al. (1988) make the point that education is a very important component of school development and school improvement practices. In the self review task,

the school principal and BOT chair also felt that education on these topics would help the key group members understand the objectives of the review and thus take ownership of the processes and outcomes. The school staff, in particular, commented that they had found the education sessions of particular worth both for their own professional development and for the development of the trial and future school improvement strategies. On reflection, these professional development, education sessions formed a very important, pivotal role in the trial as they did give the participants a sense of ownership in the task as these people felt sufficiently informed to be able to make valuable and worthwhile contributions.

Another strategy employed during the course of the review to encourage full responsibility for the project was frequent feedback and opportunity to discuss each stage of the review. At each board meeting during the six months of the trial, the review's progress was updated and future plans developed and discussed. The school community was also kept informed of the review's progress through regular articles in the school newsletter and a sharing session at a community consultation meeting. Regular review feedback, such as described above, is promoted by ERO (1994) and Stoll and Fink (1996) as being an integral part of good self review practice. During the course of the trial, these feedback sessions appeared to command a lot of time which we were not sure was time well spent. But, by the conclusion of the trial, it was apparent that the regular feedback to the community had been a very important aspect of the trial as it had provided the on-going motivation, enthusiasm and focus that was needed to sustain a trial of this length and nature.

It was the belief of the school's staff and school board that the self review task had constituted a school improvement process that would lead to eventual school improvement given more development and time. It is the intention of the group to continue the process of school improvement in the first instance, by applying the experience gained from this review to an examination of the cultural values, symbols and messages present at their annual Pet Day. In particular, they wish to examine whether the values, symbols and messages at their Pet Day are consistent with their identified core values and their accompanying indicators.

From the outcomes of this self review task the school members concluded that this review confirmed proposition one: that, in order to achieve school effectiveness, a school must evaluate what they value and take full

responsibility for their own improvement. This judgement was based on the shared understanding that the review had met two of the school's effectiveness criteria. That is, the review had involved the whole school community in a learning experience which had served to strengthen the school community partnership through involving the full community in taking responsibility for a review of what they valued (Martyn, 1996 and Stoll & Fink, 1996).

From the writer's perspective, this self review task found the hypothesis that, it is important for schools to evaluate what they value and to take responsibility for their own improvement, to be true. The outcomes of this self review exercise support the notion, as put forward by Sutton (1994), Nevo (1995), Stoll and Fink (1996) and The New Zealand Ministry of Education (1997), that to make school improvements, schools must take responsibility for reviewing what they value. The self review task in this thesis demonstrated that when a whole school community is involved in the planning, development and implementation of a self review task, it can lead to a school taking full responsibility for a school's development and improvement. Willms (1992) argued that imposed forms of school evaluation can meet with much resistance and have few long term positive effects, whereas, self review which is initiated by a school for the express purpose of self improvement has a much higher probability of being successful. This notion was found to be true in this self review task, because not only did the task lay the foundations for future improvements in the school, but it was also self initiated and home-grown, in that the school developed all their own review processes in the absence of suitable models to use. The review task was a positive example of a school taking full responsibility for evaluating something that they valued.

Hypothesis 2- **For school self review to be effective, the review must be for self accountability purposes and involve all of the school community.**

At the beginning of this review, the school staff, board chair and the writer held the theory that, for school self review to be effective, the review must be for self accountability purposes and involve all of the school community. This hypothesis was based partially on previous successful school review practices in the case study school, but it was also informed by related literature which supported this proposition. In particular, the related literature review (Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1989, Schollum and Ingram,1991, Stewart and Prebble,

1993, Hopkins, Ainscow and West,1994, Sutton,1994, Martyn,1996, and Stoll and Fink,1996) indicated that school self review is only effective when it is school wide and personal, is for self accountability and not external evaluation purposes, values reflection with a purpose and uses the concept of a critical friend.

Sergiovanni, (1992) Smyth, (1993) and Stoll and Fink,(1996) would add that, for school self review to be effective, it must also involve all the school, including students and parents, and must be carried out in a collaborative fashion which involves shared decision making and problem solving and collective support and mutual respect. Stoll and Fink also argue that, when involving parents in school activities, the parents must be considered as partners. Stoll and Fink's concept of "parents as partners" fits well with Martyn's concept of school self review being carried out by the full school community or, as he terms them, a "community of critical enquirers"(1996: 142).

At all times, the key group members ensured that as many members of the school community as possible and feasible were included in the planning, implementation and reflection upon all review activities. To ensure full school community involvement, all levels of students were also included in some of the review activities as is recommended by ERO (1994), and Stoll and Fink, 1996.

To ensure that this self review was for self accountability purposes, that is, for the benefit and improvement of practice in the case study school, the review was school-based and all activities were planned, implemented and reflected upon only by school community members of which the writer is one, as a parent of the school. The reports, which resulted from the review, were only given to the school BOT and school community in line with the beliefs of Sutton (1994) and Martyn (1996) who argue that self review should be for the benefit of the school in which was performed.

To test this hypothesis, that for school self review to be effective it must be school based and should involve all members of the school community, the planned study in this thesis took the form of a school based review of one school's core values. This review involved developing processes to identify core values and also methods for designing core value indicators.

It was the school staff and board members' contention that this school based

self review had been valuable to the school as it had educated and involved the school in a shared review that had laid tentative foundations for possible future school improvements. In particular, it was felt that the review had educated the staff and BOT in another facet of education, school culture and in particular, school core values, which they now saw as having relation and importance to improvement in their own school. In particular, the school members saw that their previous methods of school self review, which had included reviewing everything that happened in the school, had had little effect on improvement in their school. As a result of the review task, they could see that there are other ways of conceptualising school self review and in particular they could see value in looking at the larger issues which impact on teaching and learning, in this case, the importance of a set of shared core values. It was also the group's opinion that the review exercise had been valuable in building and fostering the school- home partnership.

It is my contention also, that the self review task demonstrated that self review that is aimed at self improvement and that involves the full school community can lead to school improvement. The direct benefits that this school community achieved from the self review task were education for all, identification of a set of core values, and construction of a process that would allow the school to develop indicators for their core values. Indirect benefits for the school included: a sense of well being from full school collaboration on a self improvement task; a sense of satisfaction that a school of this size and nature had been able to develop successful self review procedures that meet their own needs and lead to school improvement; and a gaining of confidence in the potentials and possibilities of self review as a vehicle for meeting self accountability needs and gaining school improvement.

In conclusion, the self review of a school's core values supported hypothesis two, by finding that this school based review for self accountability purposes, involving all members of the school community, had contributed towards the effectiveness of School X.

Hypothesis 3- **If understanding the symbols and culture of a school is a prerequisite to making a school more effective, then part of school self review should involve looking at the 'larger picture', that is, examination of the core values of the school community.**

Deal (1988) states that, in education, the primary 'operating units' are classrooms and schools and that current mind set in educational circles sees a linear connection between policy and behaviour. Deal contests this point, arguing that research in recent times supports a more loosely coupled view of the links between policy and behaviour. He contends that policy making, evaluation and research are all important rituals and ceremonies in the larger picture of a school's culture. Deal (1988) maintains that it is actually the core values, beliefs and understandings of the school which provide the connections between policy and behaviour.

It is this important link between school culture and school effectiveness which informed and guided this school review. Deal states that, "strong performance (both in the business world and schools), is dependent on a cohesive culture, a set of shared values that motivates and shapes behaviour inside the company and inspires commitment and loyalty from customers or clients" (1988:203). The literature review in this thesis also strongly supported this contention. In particular, the literature review found that effective schools have a strong school culture. The following writers (Edmonds, 1978 cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Rutter, 1980 cited in Reynolds, 1992, Purkey and Smith, 1983, Fullan, 1985 cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1987 , Mortimore et al.1988, cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994, Caldwell and Spinks, 1988 and Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989, and Stoll and Fink 1996) describe a strong school culture as one which, amongst other things:

- has a set of shared values which are considered important;
- is a learning community which values learning for all;
- encourages parental involvement;
- values trust, commitment, collaboration and loyalty; and
- values self review which assesses achievement and progress.

Stoll and Fink (1996) would add that it is not good enough to merely think and assume that we have a strong culture in our school. They argue that the self motivated school engages in self assessment of their culture. It was the hope of the key group members in the self review task, that this review would show whether the case study school possessed a set of shared core values which they considered important and which impacted on, and were reflected, in all

school practices. Unfortunately circumstances in the case study school did not permit us to investigate the latter aim, that was, to test whether the identified values were reflected in all school practices.

To answer this question, the key group members, the BOT, students and parents of School X devised and trialled methods which they hoped would identify the core values of their full school community. The development of the core value identification methods had to be carried out in the absence of models for school core values identification, as it had not been possible to source any methods or procedures for doing this. The literature search for this thesis revealed that whilst there is considerable literature written about the general topic of values in education, there is very little that pertains directly to core values in schools and their identification.

D. Plunkett's book, Secular and Spiritual Values- Grounds for Hope in Education, (1990) and Stoll and Fink's book, Changing Our Schools (1996) were two valuable references that were used to inform the development of the core values review. In his book, Plunkett (1990) argues that values in education have largely been ignored in education because they have been perceived as difficult to identify, intangible, unimportant and lacking in connection to school improvement, despite the findings of the school effectiveness movement. Plunkett also adds that this lack of interest in educational values is fostered by the economic ideology of education which many governments currently apply to educational policy (1990).

It could be asked whether Plunkett's views which were written in 1990, are applicable to education in New Zealand in 1999. Lawley (2000) supports Plunkett's contentions when she argues that there is a lack of dialogue on core values in New Zealand education in 1999. It is my opinion also that there is little mention made of core values in current New Zealand education and policy. However, this may be changing as the notion of school culture is presently gaining popularity in New Zealand education, and this may in time, lead to more interest in core values, as educators come to realise the connections made by writers such as Caldwell and Spinks(1988) and Stoll and Fink (1996) between strong effective school cultures and core values.

The values identification methods and values indicator processes which were developed in the course of this self review exercise, were based on a notion of Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) which looked to identify the climate of sections of educational practice. Our review comprised a set of surveys, both

written and oral, which were administered to all members of the school community, including all students in the school. The planning, development and trialling of the surveys was carried out by as many members of the school community as possible, as the literature (Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1987 and Stoll and Fink, 1996) had indicated that, to achieve school improvement, schools must use self evaluation and self review strategies which involve all members of the school. Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987) also contend that, for self review to be effective, it must also be collaborative, open and honest. Every endeavour was made to ensure that all stages of the review were collaboratively planned, developed, trialled and reflected upon as evidenced in Chapter Four of this thesis. Openness and honesty were sought through frequent open discussions and regular feedback of all information to all members of the school community. However, as acknowledged in Chapter Four (Janis, 1982), openness and honesty, in this review, may have been stifled by groupthink.

The main outcome of the core values review was the identification of a set of core values which the school members considered were important to teaching and learning in School X. The review also allowed School X to be able to identify their school culture using Rozenholtz' school culture typology (Cited in Hopkins, Ainscow and West,1994). As a result of the review, the staff and BOT generally perceived their school to have a 'promenading' to 'moving' school culture as described by Rosenholtz. The school felt that this identification and understanding gave them a starting point and a focus for future school improvement, a notion that is supported by Hopkins, Ainscow and West, Caldwell and Spinks, (1988) and Stoll and Fink (1996).

It is also my contention that the self review task discussed in this thesis, demonstrated that it is important for schools to consider the 'heart' of their school, their core values. The case study school found that they did have a set of shared core values, but the education and discussion which accompanied the review, did show that the identified values, according to Leonard (1999) favoured the social and personal development of the students with little emphasis being placed on academic achievement. This finding directed school discussion to the purpose of education in School X. The subsequent debate and dialogue on this subject resulted in very interesting and worthwhile discussions and it has been reported to me that these discussions continued for some time after the closure of the review. It is my contention that discussions of this kind should be at the 'heart' of school planning and review and that it is only discussions of this nature that will lead to real school improvement. It is

my recommendation that School X continue to refer back to their core values and the purpose of education in their school each time they make decisions about policy and practice, as it will be attention to their core values that will allow them to make on-going school improvement.

In conclusion, the literature in this review suggested that one part of school self review should include the identification of a school's core values. To be able to test this hypothesis, the case study school developed a culture instrument to identify its school's core values. It was the general belief of the key group members and the writer that development of methods and procedures which identified the core values of School X had been both an interesting and worthwhile activity in two important ways. First, the exercise had demonstrated that School X did possess a set of shared core values and, secondly, the people involved acknowledged that the review had demonstrated to them the potential that this form of self review held for future possible school improvement developments and increased school effectiveness. Therefore, the school self review exercise outlined in this thesis confirmed hypothesis three.

Hypothesis 4- **To improve the core activities of a school, that is teaching and learning, indicators must be developed for the school's core values so that the indicators can be used to ascertain whether the values are the basis for all school practices.**

At the beginning of this study, it was the key group members' belief that the identification of a school's core values would not, in itself, lead to a more effective school. Rather, the group believed that, for a school to become more effective, it must have school practices which reflect the core values of that school. Apart from the writing of Lawley (2000), the literature search revealed few direct references to this concept. However, Plunkett (1990) and Stoll and Fink (1996) write that all school practices must reflect and promote the core values of an organisation if the organisation is to be able to attain its purpose and vision.

The key group members also believed that the full school community should be involved in the development of the indicators to ensure that these were a true expression of the beliefs and local context of the school. This belief also linked with the earlier notion that full community involvement would raise

self accountability and ownership of both the review processes and outcomes as is advised by ERO(1994), Sutton(1994), and Stoll and Fink (1996).

Unfortunately, the early closure of the review meant that very little time was spent on the actual development of indicators for the school's core value. The trial only had time to allow the BOT members, school staff and a few parents who were in attendance at a BOT meeting, to engage in the first steps of indicator development for one of the school's identified core values. Due to the final rush at the end of the review, the method used to develop these indictors included a brief introductory speech given by the writer on performance indicators, their characteristics and their relevance to this review and then the group collaboratively developed indicators for the selected value. (See Activity Eight)

As a result of this review activity, the key group members concluded that the activity outcomes had demonstrated that this school community had the collective resources, expertise and knowledge to develop core value indicators which could be used to ascertain whether the core values were reflected in their school's practices. It was also the group's belief that indicators such as these had the potential to improve teaching and learning in their school by ensuring that all school developments were based on the same shared school culture and vision (Beare et al.1989, Reid, et al. 1987,and Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994).

This review of a school's core values demonstrated to me that it is not only sufficient for a school to identify their values but that they must also set standards or indicators for each value so that they can review whether their school practices reflect the values. This review task showed that school community members do have the ability and collective expertise to develop indicators which reflect their own beliefs and needs. The education and discussions which took place around the indicator development process also demonstrated that these school members were beginning to become aware of the impact and importance that a set of core values with identified indictors had on teaching and learning in their school. From this realisation grew the awareness that this school community would need to include the identified values and their indicators in their school charter so that consideration is given to them at all strategic planning and policy making meetings. The group also realised that for on-going school improvement to be made, they would have to ensure that their core values and their indicators be reviewed regularly to take cognisance of the point that school communities change in makeup and

beliefs, therefore the shared core values and their indicators are likely to need regular change and modification.

Therefore, the members of the case study school and the writer found tentative support for hypothesis four. However, more work on developing and using performance indicators for school values would need to be carried out before a firm confirmation could be made for this hypothesis.

If this performance indicator development exercise were to be carried out again, it would be prudent to take substantial time to educate the participants fully on the development and use of performance indicators. This is because, according to Stoll and Fink (1996), performance indicators are both complex and difficult to develop if they are to produce the results required of them.

Possible Directions for Future Research

This thesis suggests several areas for future research. The first involves the issue of values in education. As mentioned in this thesis, the writer was only able to find a few readings on core values identification. If, as Deal, (cited in Westoby ,1988), Plunkett (1990) and Stoll and Fink(1996) all suggest, that core values in education have direct influence on the effectiveness of a school, then more attention should be directed to this subject. In particular, one area for examination might be the part which school values play in affecting school effectiveness. Research that demonstrated direct connections between certain school core values and particular areas of successful school improvement would be of value to educational practitioners.

Another area for investigation in the field of values in education might involve the development of different instruments to help schools identify their core values, rather than leaving each school the time consuming task of developing their own instruments. If a model instrument was produced, then schools could modify and adapt it to meet their own local needs and context.

A further useful exercise would be the development of sample performance indicators for educational values. Ever mindful of how busy school staff and boards are, it is probable that schools would be more likely to examine their own school core values if there were suitable models and examples available for them to adapt and apply to their own situations. Longitudinal research could examine whether, in fact, self review of a school's values does lead to

lasting school improvement and change.

The whole question of the success of school self review also needs further investigation. Martyn (1996) reported that UK school self review practices in the 1970's and 1980's had failed to bring about on going and lasting school improvement. Was this attributed to the self review practices themselves or did it involve the larger issue of educational politics? Did teachers at this time have the necessary expertise to make self review work and were they ready to take the responsibility for self evaluation?

Martyn (1996) also wrote that many school based self review practices failed in Australia in the 1980's and were replaced mainly by external reviews. Why did their practices fail and are we following just the same paths as they did? Have we learnt nothing from overseas experience? Can school based self review really lead to lasting school improvement? Finally, an interesting course of future study for the writer would be to take three different New Zealand schools and follow their attempts at self review over a period of time to ascertain whether school self review can attain lasting school improvement.

Epilogue

School self review is a mandated requirement for all New Zealand schools (NAG,4ii,1993). How schools elect to meet this requirement will depend largely on the culture and philosophy of each school.

This study has demonstrated that school self review can be conceived as an holistic process which aims to review those school issues which impact directly on teaching and learning; one such issue being the core values of a school which was the topic for the focus for this study. This thesis found that it is possible for a school to devise methods to identify their own core values. This thesis also concludes that without the basis of a core of shared values the success of a school's self review practices and subsequent school development and improvement initiatives may be impaired.

Not only should school self review embrace those aspects of school structure and organisation which directly impact on teaching and learning but also this thesis suggests that school self review should be undertaken in a climate of collaborative, continuous self learning and self improvement.

In conclusion, as this self review trial has demonstrated, school self review can be a useful school development and improvement tool when it aims to 'involve and improve' and is carried out by a community of critical enquirers.

Appendices

1. Example of Data Coding and Reduction used in Chapter Four

2. School Culture and school effectiveness
   - Role of the school principal in school culture

3. School Self Review

4. Collaborative Action Research

5. Results of parent/ BOT survey- Activity Five in Chapter Four

6. Hopkins, Ainscow and West, (1994) School Typology

7. Final report to School X

Staff Discussion.

Caring Examples		Practical
Caste		
D.	All children speak kindly to others	Kindness to everyone (A)
D & A	Make special effort of new students	
E	Welcome all staff	
E	Open door policy	For children + parents (B)
E & A	Staff always friendly towards parents	
E	Friendly school signs	Meet whole child development (C)
A	No bullying	
H	Staff sharing good + bad stories	
	Staff always have time for parents	Looking after everyone (D)
G	Staff note / speak with parents + students about family matters	
A	No teasing	Open demonstration (E) that we care.
F	Openness between staff	
E & A	Staff speak in friendly manner to students	
C	Staff interested in children like beyond school	Staff supporting each other (F)
E	Friendly environment	
E	School events that include all parents	(G)
G	School acknowledging family bereavements, deaths etc.	Showing Compassion
E	Warming box for new people / people leaving	(H)
I	Treat all children kindly + consistently	Staff sharing work + feelings with each other
I	BOT keeping a 'guard' employer	
C	Care for moral values of students?	(I)
C, A, D	No putting down of children.	Fairness + justice at all times.
C, A, D	No sarcasm towards children	
A & D	Do not speak down to parents	
F	Induction process for new staff	
F	Staff 'get together' to encourage	

SCHOOL CULTURE/ EFFECTIVENESS

What is School Culture?

- A set of shared values, beliefs that motivate and shape behaviour inside a school.
- The way we do things around here.
- Culture is an expression that tries to capture the informal, the implicit and often the unconscious side of the organisation.
- It consists of patterns of thought, behaviour and artifacts that symbolize and give meaning to the workplace.
- Values and beliefs are summarized in philosophy, symbols, rituals and ceremonies, stories and network of cultural players.
- School Culture keeps everyone pulling in the same direction
- Every school has a culture made up of many subcultures, e.g., teacher culture, parent culture.
- School staff may have shared roles and expectations but may carry them out in personal ways which are not congruent with the school's stated objectives.

QUESTIONS

What are our shared goals?
Are they reflected in the Charter, policies, our actions and practices?
How do we know they are being transmitted to the children?
In what ways are they being shared with the students?

What is the connection between school culture and school effectiveness?

- 1960's, School Effectiveness Movement - Belief that schools do make a difference.
- Research asked, but how, why are some schools more effective than others? What is 'effectiveness' and what are the characteristics of effective schools?
- Findings;- amongst other things, that effective schools are those that:-
  - -have a positive school climate (culture),a set of shared values and beliefs
  - -'a strong core culture is the hub of an effective school'.(Stewart & Prebble,1993, p.189)
  - -there is evidence of "pride, a sense of community, and a sense of spirit". (Creemers, Peters & Reynolds,1989,p.332)

-Role of Principal in effective schools is very important, critical as the cultural builder-building a sense of shared mission and culture.

- Cultural aspects of leadership are essential to excellence in schooling.(Sergiovanni,1984, p.9)
- A key role of leadership is to 'build unity and cohesion within the school community by identifying a core set of beliefs and practices which support the direction in which the school should be developing, and then take every opportunity to promote those core values, and to socialise organisational members in those values.(Stewart & Prebble,1993,p.188)
- Seeks to 'define, strengthen, and articulate those enduring values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity'. (Sergiovanni, 1984,p.9)
- Models important goals and behaviour which signals to others what is of importance and value in the school.
- Communicates their sense of vision by words and examples.
- Building, managing and developing the school culture may be the most important thing a school leader has to do.

QUESTIONS

In what ways does our principal build, develop, manage and model the school's culture?
How does our principal ensure that all school members are modeling, teaching, purposing the same values, beliefs?

SCHOOL SELF REVIEW

School Self Review

- Is about change generated from within a school rather than being imposed from outside.
- Leads to worthwhile improvement.
- Involves the whole staff, students and the school community in a collaborative process of self improvement
-Schools do far more than just produce learning, there are also moral and symbolic aspects to schooling.
-School review needs to"look at what is signaled, expressed or represented, rather than only that which is accomplished".(Deal in Westoby, 1988, p.200)
-We need to look inwards, to review and revitalize school culture and thus school effectiveness. (Deal, 1988)

Principal Appraisal and School Review

-Principal appraisal and school review should be one process as no person is purely autonomous in a school.

- 'Appraisal of the principal's performance must also be, in a sense, an evaluation or review of the whole school, or a part of it'. (Stewart & Prebble, 1993,p.186)

References:

Creemers,B., Peters,T.& Reynolds,D.(1989) School Effectiveness and School Improvement. Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Deal, T.E.(1988) in Westoby, A.(1988) Culture and Power in Educational Organizations. England: Open University Press.

Sergiovanni,T.(1984) 'Leadership and excellence in schooling', Educational Leadership41,5,pp.4-13)

Stewart,D.,& Prebble,T.(1993) The Reflective Principal- School Development Within A Learning Community. Palmerston North: ERDC Press, Massey University.

Westoby, A.(1988) Culture and Power in Educational Organizations. England: Open University Press.

COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH

Action Research is:

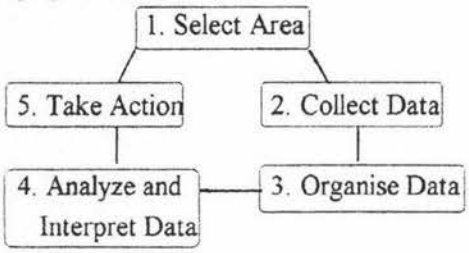
- the process of collecting data about a school with the purpose of improving practice
- disciplined inquiry to improve an organisation and its performance
- a fancy way of saying" Let's study what's happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place"(Calhoun,1994)
- action research is for school self renewal.
- school wide action research is both "formative assessment and collective inquiry"(Calhoun, 1994,p.68)

Where, why and how?

- action research is situational, on the spot, just to understand that situation
- participatory, as many as possible of school community should be involved and an external agent may be used
- collaborative, small groups or larger groups working together
- action research is self evaluative ,- teachers control their own evaluation (democratic)

What does it look like?

- action research is flexible and adaptable, we make it meet our needs
- relies mainly on observation and behavioural data
- maybe a 5 step cyclic model



Collecting Data (Everyone to be involved)

- 2 main sources Behavioural and Perceptual
  about what people doing/done about feelings, opinions, values
- there should be a balance between these 2 sources
- we should gather data from many sources as this will give greatest understanding

References

Calhoun,E.(1994) How to Use Action Research in the Self Renewing School. Virginia: ASCD.
Sagor,R.(1992) How to Conduct Collaborative Action Research. Virginia: ASCD.

SCHOOL SELF REVIEW-
WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS OUR SCHOOL?

Here are the results of the school self review survey, which asked for BOT members and parents a to answer the above question.

In the parent survey there were 15 replies of which 12 were named and 3 were anonymous.

The parent survey showed that these parents see School as:

POSITIVE (60 replies approx)

GENERAL-

Positive / Encouraging (5)
Friendly/ Welcoming (12)
Well organised (7)
Caring / Sharing (4)
Happy Children (1)
Safe (3)
Communicative (2)
Hopeful (1)
Peaceful (1)

STAFF-

Hard Working (3)
Well organised (3)
Highly Skilled (5)
Dedicated (2)
Efficient (1)
Professional (2)
Committed (1)

FACILITIES/ RESOURCES/ ASSETS

Well resourced- good buildings/ surroundings (1)
- materials (2)
- backing of community (2)

Clean & Tidy (2)
Community asset (1)

NEGATIVE (12 replies approx)

Transport- Too reliant on parents (2)
Aloof-Snobby (1)
Lack of teacher duty in playground (2)
Closed shop - reluctance to have parent help in classrooms (1)
information does not always get passed on to parents (1)
reluctance to give up control,(1) management is myopic (1)
Inflexible and traditional - over regulated/ too many rules (1)
Lack of parent commitment (1) Lack of pride in school/ rubbish around grounds (1)

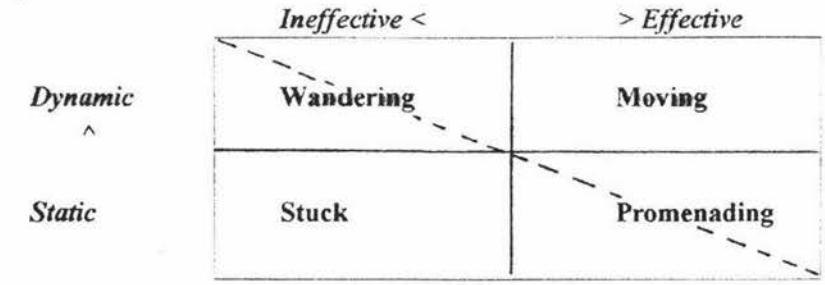
We thank all those people who took the time to complete this survey. We value your opinion.

School Self Review: March 31

SCHOOL CULTURE- WHAT KIND OF CULTURE DO WE HAVE IN OUR SCHOOL?

Hopkins, Ainscow and West,(1994) School Improvement in an Era of Change. Wiltshire: Cassell.

4 Expressions of Culture



Stuck School
- often failing school
- teacher uncertainty
- low commitment
- isolation
- learning impoverished
- low expectations
- sense of powerlessness

Promenading School
- living on past achievements
- does not move fast or far
- often traditional schools, stable staff
- reluctant to change
- why change, we are happy with things the way they are?
- attract pupils with successful learning histories

Wandering School
- too much innovation
- staff exhausted, fragmented
- lot going on but little clear direction

Moving School
- ideal type of active school
- healthy blend of change and stability and balanced development and maintenance
- calm and successful as adapts to rapid changing environment.

*** As a rule of thumb, Hopkins, Ainscow and West suggest that schools above the diagonal line are the most desirable types of cultures and those below need work on their school culture before they can succeed. WHICH ONE ARE WE??**

Appendix 7

School X

Self Review Report

1999

SCHOOL X SELF REVIEW 1998/1999

Background To The Review

During my time as Chairperson of the school board, the government mandated the requirement that all schools were required to have an on going programme of school self review.(NAGs, 1993,4ii) Over the years from 1993 to early1998, our school board struggled, with little help, to try and put in place a programme of school self review that would lead to on going improvement in the school. Over these years we did put in place a rather ad hoc programme of self review that lacked real structure and rigour. Our efforts met ERO requirements but left me thinking that school improvement would not come alone, from an approach such as that we had adopted.

By the end of my time with the school it was becoming apparent to me that school self review should concerntrate on some of the larger school core activities that lead directly to improved learning and teaching, rather than attempting to review every little thing that happens in a school. To this end I came back to the new board of trustees in July 1998 and talked to them about my proposed self review programme.

This proposal involved looking at the larger issue, a school's shared values as a vehicle for reviewing a school's culture, and hence its basis for effective school improvement. The school board agreed (23 October, 1998) to allow the school to be involved in a collaborative process of school review in 1999 that would review the core values of the school under the supervision of myself.

The Review

A) What we wanted to do
B) What we did
C) What we found
D) What this means to our school

A) What we wanted to do

- to carry out a systematic process of school self review which would ascertain whether School X has a set of shared core values
- to identify the core values of School X
- to develop performance indicators so that we can ascertain whether the core values are evident in current practices at School X
- to collaboratively plan, develop and implement activities which aim to identify the core values of School X
- to involve as many school community members as possible in the review process
- to learn more about the importance and relevance of school values to lasting school improvement at School X

B) What we did

July – December 1998 *Preparation and Education Phases*

Planning for the review began in July with discussion of review aims and objectives . I also commenced education sessions with the school staff and chair of the board during this period. The sessions included looking at the following topics:

- School culture and school effectiveness
  The important role the principal has to play in developing and managing a strong school culture
- School Self Review
- Collaborative Action Research
  See appendices 2, 3,4

February – June 1999 *Trial Phase*

During these months various activities, aimed at identifying the core values of the school, were devised, trialled, carried out, implemented, analysed and reported back on. All groups of the school community were consulted or surveyed on the topic of 'What kind of place is our school?'. All preparation and analysis of the activities was carried out by groups of people including staff and board, to ensure the validity of the analysis.

C) What we found

Three main surveys were carried out using the focus question' What kind of place is our school?'

The surveys found the following that:

1) The school staff belief that school practice at School X is based on the following values and beliefs:

- Caring
  - for all children & adults
  - for health & well being of everyone
  - aiming for high academic achievement for all children
  - staff support, encourage, trust each other
- Sharing
  - information with each other, students and parents
  - newsletters, assemblies, gatherings
  - open door policy for parents
- Respect
  - for children's differences, needs
  - for other staff, trust, listening to each other's viewpoints
- Encouragement
  - positive reinforcement for all children
  - risk taking and personal challenges for children and staff
  - pushing the boundaries
  - praise, support and acknowledgement for other staff

2.The parent / BOT survey found that-
See appendix 5.

3. The student survey found that the students of School X share the following values and beliefs, that School X,

- cares for everyone
- has plenty of equipment for the children

- is a nice place to be at
- has a few children who are mean and are bullies
- has teachers who are kind and nice to us

Conclusions from surveys

1. That School X does have set of core values that are shared by the majority of students, parents and staff. In summary the surveys found that **School X is:**
   - **a positive and encouraging place**
   - **friendly and welcoming to all**
   - **hard working (staff & students)**
   - **well organised**
   - **a caring place**
   - **a place that values sharing**
   - **well resourced**
   - **a safe environment**

2. Discussion with staff, BOT and parents at the consultation evening concluded that School X is currently a promenading school to moving school according to Hopkins, Ainscow and West's (1994) School Culture topology.
   See appendix 6.

What does a set of shared values mean to School X?

According to current literature and research on school culture, School X has one of the main ingredients for a strong school culture, that is a set of shared core values. This means that the school has a firm foundation on which to base school improvement as the members of the school community generally believe in and want and value the same things for their students. School improvement based on a set of shared values usually leads to successful change and lasting improvement. In summary, the school and its community are 'pulling in the same direction.'

What should these values and beliefs look like in ideal practice at School X?

To be able to ascertain whether the shared values are the basis for all practices in the school, it is necessary to develop indicators as to what the identified values would look like in ideal practice in our school. Following discussion at the consultation meeting, it was decided that the 3 values that most impact on learning in our school at this moment are, a positive and encouraging environment, a safe environment and good communication. BOT members and a group of selected parents were asked to write indicators for these values and beliefs. The results of this survey can be found in appendix 7. This survey indicated, that with time and further education the school community could develop workable indicators that could be used to ascertain whether all practices in School X were based on the set of shared core values.

It was decided to stop the review at this point as other issues of importance had arisen in the school and time had to be devoted to these issues.

Conclusions to School Self Review

This school self review exercise showed that School X does possess a set of positive, shared core values which give the school a sound foundation for successful and lasting

improvement in their school.

Signed

Dated

Please note the appendices are not printed again as they are the same as appendices 2-7 (pages 203- 209) in the appendix section of the thesis.

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