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MinistryOfTeaching



EDITORIAL

Lana Hibbard

“That’s amazing!” When did you last say this aloud? Or even to yourself? Our familiarity with everyday things can strip them of their wonder.

Having young children ensures that my sense of amazement remains on high alert. They are amazed by butterflies, snails, gadgets, birthday cakes, high bounce balls, slime, hovercraft, and the list goes on.

Amazing things are those that cause great surprise, those that induce a sense of awe and wonder. For me, several key conditions provoke a feeling of amazement. The first is the wonder of the natural world. I marvel at the beauty of God’s creation, sometimes at its pure simplicity and other times at its majestic complexity.

Unexpected outcomes are a source of amazement. Magicians depend on this in order to wow their audience. I am amazed by stories of people who overcome tremendous odds. Immaculée Ilibagiza, in her book, *Left to tell*, describes how she not only survived the Rwanda genocide in 1994 by hiding in a bathroom for 91 days with seven other women, but how she later embraced the importance of forgiveness.

Lastly, a new way of thinking or a new explanation for some phenomena amazes me. Netz (2002), describing the writings as Archimedes, says, “Proof and amazement are related, because Archimedes amazes us by proving that something very surprising is in fact true” (p. 967).

What is our response to being amazed? Does it leave a lasting impression? Do I believe or behave differently because of the experience?

Rind (1992) found that a person is more likely to comply with a request if they have first felt amazed. Rind had an actor astound shoppers in a mall with his apparent calculating skills. When he did so, the actor was subsequently able to sell more than three times as many raffle tickets, compared with the amount he was able to sell when he made no impression.

Amazement may result in cognitive dissonance due to simultaneous but conflicting ideas being held. Science and Mathematics teachers use discrepant events to amaze students and to create cognitive conflict by challenging naïve but strongly held conceptions (Gonzalez-Espade et al., 2010).

In His time on earth, Jesus amazed people. According to the Gospel of Mark, people were amazed at Jesus’ miracles (Mark 2:12, 20, 42; 7:37). Jesus also introduced new ways of thinking. The crowds were amazed at Jesus’ teaching (Mark 1:22, 1:27, 6:2, 11:18), as were the disciples (Mark 10:24), and even Jesus’ enemies (Mark 12:17). Jesus taught of a God of unending love, of mercy and of grace.

In John 6, the crowds, many of whom had witnessed the feeding of the 5000, caught up with Jesus and asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?” (v. 30, NIV) Jesus replied, “But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe” (v. 36).

Jesus’ purpose was not to simply amaze people with miracles and knowledge of Scripture but to lead them to change their attitudes, beliefs and actions in alignment with God’s Kingdom. Many were amazed but did not alter their beliefs to accommodate Jesus as their Saviour.

Christian teachers have an opportunity to design ‘moments of amazement’ for their students. Some of these moments will result in deeper understanding; however, those ‘moments of amazement’ that unveil the wonder of God and draw students closer to Him are life changing and therefore, truly amazing. **TEACH**

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“**Those ‘moments of amazement’ that unveil the wonder of God and draw students closer to Him are life changing and therefore, truly amazing**”



[Photography: Ann Stafford]

Teacher registration

Does it improve teacher quality?

Malcolm Coulson

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This article describes aspects of the national teacher registration program, especially the expectation that registration has a role in raising student learning outcomes through improved teacher quality.

While this article doesn't set out to trace the documentary evidence which has led to the *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership* (AITSL), such a review would confirm that the current organisational structure has been attained through the accumulated research and wisdom from a large collection of research papers, government and industry sponsored reviews of education and teaching. It would also illustrate the current determination to complete a series of interrelated educational reforms on the part of state, territory and federal government (see for example Council of Australian Governments: National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality, 2009).

Introduction

Teacher registration, which was formerly regulated by the states and territories, now comes under the management of the AITSL, with a mandate to promote excellence in teaching and school leadership. This is to be in keeping with the broad goals of its predecessor, *Teaching Australia*, which articulated aims to improve teacher quality, school leadership, the status of the teaching profession, and the learning outcomes of students.

Under centralised federal government control, education reform has engaged in a program which directly seeks to address the quality of teaching through accreditation of teacher preparation programs, curriculum design and development, management and description of professional standards for teachers, and the processes of recognition of teacher accomplishment throughout their professional career. In acknowledgment of the relevance of school leadership to learning and teaching, the registration process also extends to the development of similar standards and processes for school principals.

The research literature repeatedly asserts that the quality of the teacher is among the most significant factors influencing student learning outcomes (e.g., Dinham, 2008; Hattie, 2003; Rowe, 2003; Wright et al., 1997); therefore, an agenda seeking to raise the quality of learning and teaching through development of quality teachers is both a worthy and value-adding enterprise for any system of education.

Parental demands for quality teaching

Determining how teaching influences learning is not only a matter for academic pursuit but of interest to parents and the wider community. Many parents are familiar with the benefits of their child receiving instruction in the classroom of a highly accomplished teacher. Armed with increased knowledge of good practice, parents expect to have their child educated by the teacher of their choice—notably those who are highly effective. Marzano (2003, in Miller, 2003) highlighted the impact of quality teaching on student achievement.

A student scoring at the 50th percentile who spends two years in an average school, with an average teacher, is likely to continue scoring at the 50th achievement percentile. That same student, having spent two years in a “most effective” school with a “most effective” teacher, rockets to the 96th achievement percentile. The converse also holds: If this same student spends two years in a “least effective” school with a “least effective” teacher, that student's achievement level plunges to the third percentile.

One significant negative factor arising from the elevated level of community expectation and understanding is the unfortunate publication of measures of student learning such as those on the MySchool website, which do little to inform parents of the real learning gains being made by their child.

Quality teaching and student learning—seeking the causal link

Though teacher registration processes differ between Australia and the USA, it is in the US context that most of the large data analyses have

“The quality of the teacher is among the most significant factors influencing student learning outcomes”

been conducted to determine the link between teacher registration and student achievement. Not surprisingly, the results of this research vary. Using a longitudinal analysis of data from North Carolina, Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007) concluded that student achievement is positively impacted by a teacher's experience, test scores (based on curriculum, instruction and assessment knowledge) and regular registration. However, research by Buddin and Zamorro (2009), Kane, Rockoff and Staiger (2008), and Leak and Farkas (2011) found that average academic achievement for students was not affected by teacher certification status.

The inconclusive nature of these results suggests that teacher registration as a gatekeeper for professional entry is not an assurance that student achievement will be improved. Registration needs to be a process rather than an event, and it needs to be incorporated into a wider process of professional development that is founded on credible professional learning theory and research.

Elements of the home schooling community cite those findings from within the research literature that conclude no positive correlation exists between teacher certification requirements and student performance (e.g., Clicka, 2003). Though this perspective is consistent with the home schooling preference by parents to personally retain control over the education of their children, it is a defensible position to uphold.

Describing quality teaching—the foundation of professional standards

The establishment of nationally agreed professional standards and procedures for professional recognition through four career stages is regarded as an important milestone in the national education agenda. Those devising the model of quality teaching through defined professional standards have proposed that the standards offer a basis 'for teacher reflection and development and a guide for professional learning' (MCEECDYA, 2011). The 2009 *Standards for accomplished teachers and principals* statement by the Teaching Australia Network includes the bi-line, "a foundation for public confidence and respect". The document subsequently listing the purposes of the standards as including: making the values, beliefs, knowledge and practices of the teaching profession known to the public; guiding professional reflection and improved practice; providing a framework for professional learning; differentiating the specialised practice of teaching; informing assessment and promotional procedures; recognition and reward of accomplishment; and, raising self-esteem within the profession and commitment to accountability.

The development of the agreed standards has been through a long and consultative process. Standards have been informed by the very significant body of teacher and school effectiveness research and arranged into three domains—professional knowledge, professional practice, and professional engagement. The case for an additional domain outlining skills and attitudes relevant to education systems which seek to offer a fourth dimension to the education they provide has been described elsewhere and is a point for productive discussion within the private school sector.

Throughout the AITSL documentation there are statements recognising that a set of professional standards has little impact on student learning outcomes without genuine engagement by teachers through individual professional learning. This is one of the strong arguments for including school leadership as a key component in the success of the new registration program. Concerns about the failure to achieve a lasting impact and integration of teacher professional standards within the professional dialogue and mindset of teachers and school leaders have also been expressed. The advice given by Ramsey (2000, p.31) has not gone unheeded.

The evidence indicates that failure, including at a national level, either to establish standards of professional teaching practice or to embed them deeply into the profession is now impacting in a negative way on the direction and quality of initial and continuing teacher education, and hence teaching.

Whether the current development toward national teacher and school leader registration is a positive process or not may depend on one's views about quality management theory and how it should inform the ongoing professionalisation of teaching. Those holding a view that quality management within a professional context should empower self-regulation and address mechanisms for professional renewal and learning will find centralised management structures frustrating and inconsistent with some of the commonly held characteristics of a profession. Those who embrace the implementation of quality assurance and accountability mechanisms for achieving quality will find that centralised management processes under the direction of the emerging education industry offers a sense of direction and a structured mechanism for defining and managing career progression. The AITSL approach offers the potential for both perspectives to be accommodated. The registration process provides a mechanism for assessing teacher practice and determining when a higher career stage has been reached.

Teacher registration as a gatekeeper for professional entry is not an assurance that student achievement will be improved

The risk with a highly centralised process administered by a distant government and education bureaucracy is that teachers will not have any sense of being part of a self-regulating group and see the process as an employment requirement. The AITSL literature recognises this risk.

A compelling reason for the profession to assume collective responsibility for standards of practice is that regulation and prescriptive approaches cannot in themselves assure the quality of a child's education. (Teaching Australia, 2009, p. 3)

The goal of quality teaching is dependent on effective professional learning and the leadership of the school

Therefore, while a great deal has been said about registration and standards, the goal of quality teaching is dependent on effective professional learning and the leadership of the school.

Professional learning—bridging the gap between standards and quality teaching

Aware that the establishment of standards is not a guarantee of professional development, and seeking to attain continuous professional improvement, Teaching Australia, and the AITSL have 'enshrined' professional learning into the standards (Standard 6—Engage in professional learning and Standard 7—Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community).

Achieving and sustaining a professional learning environment for teachers needs to reflect a set of principles emerging from the professional development literature. Timperley (2008) describes ten principles of professional learning.

1. Focus on valued student outcomes—centre the professional learning process around the desired student outcome rather than teacher skill acquisition;
2. Worthwhile content—develop effectiveness in skills which are evidence-based;
3. Integration of knowledge and skills—meaningful change requires theory which is demonstrable and skills which are embedded in research areas such as processes of learning, curriculum development, instruction, assessment and reporting;
4. Assessment for professional inquiry—what students need to know and do informs what teachers will know and do;
5. Multiple opportunities to learn and apply knowledge—change in practice requires multiple opportunities to learn new information, in environments characterised by trust and challenge;
6. Approaches responsive to learning processes—acquiring new knowledge and

skills is influenced by a teacher's existing knowledge, skills and outlook;

7. Opportunities to process new learning with others—collegial dialogue, focused on student outcomes is highly beneficial;
8. Knowledgeable expertise—bringing in external expertise helps to challenge existing perspectives and build new knowledge and skills;
9. Active leadership—educational leaders are pivotal to developing expectations and organising engagement in professional learning opportunities;
10. Maintaining momentum—continuous improvement requires a supportive working culture.

Achieving a culture of professional learning may not be easy.

Some organisations and groups appear to suffer from learning disabilities. These disabilities need to be diagnosed, assessed and addressed through suitable interventions in the same ways in which we would help students. (Dinham, 2009, p. 114)

From an educational enterprise perspective, all students should be encouraged toward new goals and levels of achievement and this principle applies well to schools that aspire to be known as quality learning communities. To that extent at least, the new national teacher registration program will have contributed to the quality teaching agenda and the consequent improvement in student learning outcomes.

For teachers to accept responsibility for their own professional learning, informed by the professional standards corresponding to their career stage, is not unreasonable. The pragmatic reality for many teachers will be the unrelenting pressures on their time to continue to attend to the day-to-day responsibilities of teaching, despite the desire and acknowledgement of the need for, and benefits of, professional renewal, learning and development of a quality culture. It will therefore be important that the same people who established the standards and the processes associated with teacher and school leader registration, give teachers time to develop—as expressed in the ten principles above. For the reforms currently being implemented to achieve their goal, it will be important to ensure that the resources and funding used to develop the bureaucracy of teacher registration is matched by the funding and support needed at the school sites where the real changes will need to take place. **TEACH**

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“For teachers to accept responsibility for their own professional learning, informed by the professional standards corresponding to their career stage, is not unreasonable”

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The National Professional Standards for Teachers

Towards an authentic integrating domain for teachers in Christian schools

Wilf Rieger

Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW

Introduction

Every serving teacher and ‘teacher to be’ will be moulded decidedly by The National Professional Standards for Teachers¹ (NPST). Officially released on 9th February 2011, after piloting, they become the benchmark for what constitutes teacher quality in Australia. The question is: Are these norms—plus a ‘coating of religiosity’—all that there is to being a quality *Christian* teacher? Or is there more?

This article explores and proposes a new integrating ‘teaching domain’: *Teaching Ministry*, and three attendant ‘teaching standards’ together with specific descriptors for various focus areas.

- Engage in a teaching ministry informed by a Christian worldview;
- Cultivate and nurture spiritual growth and discernment;
- Commit, belong and contribute to a servant-hood community of faith.

These proposed categories are intended for practitioners in Christian faith-based schools and form an integral part of outlining an authentic integrating teaching ministry. The categories are *distinctly different*—some might say counter-cultural, in today’s secular educational climate—but follow on from, and are a ‘coda’ to the existing three domains and seven standards that comprise the mandated NPST.

Context

The recent NPST come on the heels of a *national* approach in the areas of curriculum and assessment. The Commonwealth Government’s establishment of The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) supersedes the disparate efforts by state and territory jurisdictions to establish clear professional standards for teachers through

various bodies, although it should be noted that, significantly, many of the NPST were derived from the standards developed by the NSW Institute of Teachers, which in turn—as a perusal of available literature and websites should plainly show—accessed, utilised, and built on earlier work of several overseas education bodies;² including other Australian state jurisdictions. It is envisaged that the NPST are likely to ‘normalise’ the registration and certification of teachers, perhaps permitting a greater movement of teaching expertise across state borders, as well as bringing rigorous quality control, but possibly a tedious sameness³ to teacher education courses in tertiary institutions.

An overview and brief introduction to the NPST is succinctly provided by AITSL:

The National Professional Standards for Teachers comprise seven Standards which outline what teachers should know and be able to do. The standards are interconnected, interdependent and overlapping.

The Standards are grouped into three domains of teaching: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. In practice, teaching draws on aspects of all three domains.

Within each Standard, focus areas provide further illustration of teaching knowledge, practice and professional engagement. These are then separated into Descriptors at four professional career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead.⁴

In essence, the four career stages above represent the perceived continuum of a teacher’s professional growth and expertise, beginning as a graduate from a recognised tertiary institution and then a competent practitioner through to being highly accomplished and culminating as a leader in the teaching profession.

“AITSL has been addressing and making progress on the important issue of teacher quality”

The purpose of education

AITSL has been addressing and making progress on the important issue of teacher quality, which affects the whole tenor of the Australian educational enterprise. Others—among them university academics—have been concerned about an equally important issue. They have questioned the very *purposes* of Australian public education that are currently being pursued by the incumbent federal government, whose education policy focuses primarily on the economic purpose of education. Critics point to the policy's serious shortcomings:

This narrowing of educational vision to seeing students as human capital to be enlisted in the cause of economic recovery and growth, marginalises the important cultural, social, political and relational aspects of education. It understands students as potential workers and consumers rather than local and global citizens... [T]he central work of schools in a democratic society is the development of the capacities for social practice. These include capacities for citizenship, work, intercultural understanding, community involvement, communication and so on—capacities that build the common good.⁵

The Vice-Chancellor of Sydney's Macquarie University expressed a similar view in an address to a recent meeting of the Australian College of Educators. Professor Steven Schwartz pointed out that according to the federal government, the purpose of universities is to grow the knowledge-based economy. Furthermore, he used the example of the UK parliamentary expenses scandal and the shameful and unethical behaviour in the banking and investment fraternity as revealed by the Global Financial Crisis—both cases involving some of the brightest graduates from stellar universities—to assert that universities need to “remoralise”. He argued that from their earliest origins, one of the universities' main tasks had been that of character building; a mission that most universities pursued until the 19th century, but that has been lost sight of. It has been the aim of Macquarie University, he said, to reclaim education's purpose of character building, in its new undergraduate curriculum structure.⁶

In a pluralist secular society, such an endeavour will surely be regarded as either courageous, bordering on revolutionary, or quaintly naïve; although it would strongly resonate with most Christian educators.

Character building

Increased attention is presently given to student character development at the primary and secondary education levels; whether in public or private

schools, as a scanning of the literature should show. It is evident from the delivery of curriculum programs of varying nomenclature—values education, human virtues, citizenship—and the contribution of many reported service learning projects. A Sydney school has even taken the step of appointing a Director of Character Education.⁷ Importantly, the authoritative and influential 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians asserts that young people:

Develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others...act with moral and ethical integrity... [and] understand the spiritual, moral and aesthetic dimensions of life.⁸

The significance of character has been highlighted by one Christian author as follows:

True education does not ignore the value of scientific knowledge or literary acquirements; but above information it values power⁹; above power, goodness; above intellectual acquirements, character. The world does not so much need men [and women] of great intellect as of noble character.¹⁰

In the above contexts, *character* generally refers to a person's durable ethical and moral strength.

What connection, if any, is there between the NPST and character building? The NPST cast teaching principally in terms of technical and cognitive competencies and tasks. A closer examination should disclose that, other than Standards 7.1 and 4.5, which require that *professional* ethics and responsibilities be met and the ethical use of Information and Communications Technology, the NSTP appear to have no *personal* moral or ethical dimension. It borders on incomprehensibility that teachers who oversee the education of future generations in public schools must meet strict standards of professional knowledge and skills; yet society has few ethical and seemingly no clear moral expectations of them other than the absence of a police record.

In some respects, this is not surprising given the absence of a broad consensus of what constitutes ethical personal behaviour in postmodern society. We see this compartmentalisation of the individual self into the 'professional' and the 'personal/private' life of the individual—*vis-à-vis* an 'integrated life'—played out frequently in the media. When, in 2010, the propriety of a NSW state government minister's visit to a questionable 'establishment' came under public scrutiny, a seemingly typical justification offered was:

“ Society has few ethical and seemingly no clear moral expectations of teachers other than the absence of a police record ”

Teaching ministry

Standard 8 — Engage in a teaching ministry informed by a Christian world view

Focus Area	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
8.1 Belief system reference point	Demonstrate a knowledge of Bible-based beliefs, and the perspectives of different Christian faith traditions	Relate Christian beliefs and faith to students' lives, educational practice and everyday living—from the school's sponsoring faith tradition specifically and other faith traditions generally	Communicate and explain commonalities and differences of faith traditions and build 'bridges' of goodwill and understanding between students who identify with them	Take a leadership role in articulating the school's Christian culture in light of the school's sponsoring faith tradition and also the wider Christian community
8.2 Vocation and ministry	Understand the basic principles of a servant-hood teaching ministry	Demonstrate commitment to an on-going teaching ministry based on biblical principles and virtues	Act collegially in building a teaching ministry team that is characterised by biblical wisdom	Model, promote and advance a relational school-wide servant-hood teaching ministry
8.3 Integration of faith, learning and practice	Understand and apply strategies of integrating faith, learning and practice in lessons and units of work	Demonstrate creative integration of faith, learning and practice in curriculum planning and teaching practice	Develop and share cross-curricular materials and resources for integrating faith, learning and practice	Take a leadership role in making Christian faith relevant to learning, living, and teaching in contemporary society

“
The proposed delineated domain, *Teaching Ministry* applies Kingdom values and virtues in developing transformational standards for teaching

If it's someone's private life and it does not impact on his job or potentially impact on his job, it's a private life, but if it impacts on his portfolio or potentially on the execution of his duties, I think it's a matter of public interest.¹¹

Similarly, when a clergyman was stood down by the professional standards board of his denomination, a parishioner was reported as expressing the view he did “not really care what [the clergyman] did in his private life, because... he was a good minister... He is a nice looking, very personable young man.”¹² It is evident from the examples given that there appears to be a popular and commonly held notion that professionals should not be held accountable for their private life and morals; whether as members of parliament or of the clergy—unless they are breaking the law; quite apart from behaviour that is ‘perfectly legal’, but may be unethical, immoral or even corrupt. The ethics of the two areas of life—professional and private—simply are not perceived as intersecting.

For a Christian, on the other hand, wisdom literature poses the question: “Can a man carry fire in his bosom and his clothes not be

burned?”¹³ Mindful of the observation about the foundations of human behaviour: “Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it flow the springs of life,”¹⁴ Jesus further challenges the validity of the ‘compartmentalised life’, “No sound tree bears rotten fruit, nor again does a rotten tree bear sound fruit.”¹⁵ Jesus does not leave us the option of leading a life of double standards.

The proposed delineated domain, *Teaching Ministry*¹⁶ applies Kingdom values and virtues in developing *transformational standards* for teaching in Christian faith-based schools.

Authentic Christian teachers

The values and virtues underpinning the proposed standards are reflected in the focus areas; they make for an authentic Christian teacher identity.¹⁷ The latter may be illustrated and briefly explicated along several parameters.

Role perception: The call to servant-hood ministry means following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is a call to integrity, submission, humility and contentment (Matt 5:37; Luke 22:26–27; Phil 2:3–5, 8; 1Tim 6:6) but also to tremendous joy, privilege and responsibility (John 15:1–17).

Teaching ministry

Standard 9 — Cultivate and nurture spiritual growth and discernment

Focus Area	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
9.1 Spiritual formation	Recognise the importance of, and cultivate a personal relationship with God	Develop and nurture a habit of personal devotions and Scripture reading and study	Mentor and guide colleagues in their personal spiritual formation, guided by the Holy Spirit	Promote and cherish an active school culture of spiritual formation and character development
9.2 Faith development	Demonstrate a knowledge of the stages of students' faith development	Apply principles of faith development in teaching students of different ages	Share experience, literature and research relevant to advancing the understanding of students' faith development	Draw on and mobilise church and community resources to enhance the faith development of students
9.3 Spiritual decisions	Understand the importance of students' spiritual choices and commitments	Utilise spiritual insights, understandings and opportune learning situations to facilitate students making age-appropriate spiritual choices and commitments	Assist colleagues in upholding environments free of pressure and indoctrination to permit students to 'own' their spiritual decisions and commitments	Sponsor/lead school programs and activities that nurture staff and student spiritual discernment and growth, facilitating a personal commitment to Jesus Christ
9.4 Giftedness	Appreciate the diversity of God-given gifts and skills in all students	Identify, respect and nurture the spiritual gifts and skills in every student	Devise strategies for developing, nurturing and mentoring students' spiritual gifts and skills	Give leadership to activities and programs that advance students' particular spiritual gifts and skills

Service and orientation to it: A servant-hood teaching ministry also implies appropriate modelling of service. A respected Christian educator makes the point compellingly:

We can only prepare our students for lives of service—lives of responsive discipleship—if our schools, our families, our churches, are places suffused by service. We cannot for twelve years foster and focus on individual success and achievement and expect that thereafter our students will walk the paths of sacrificial service. The goal of the “Christian good life” will not be replaced overnight by that of a truly Christian good life. It will only be as our students learn day by day to honour weakness, to serve one another rather than themselves, that we will play our part under God’s gracious guidance in nurturing successful servants rather than those who serve the idol of success.¹⁸

Rather than a means to an end, service is an end in itself. Some may regard service as instrumental to the acquisition of specialist skills,

recognition in the profession, satisfaction of self-interest and attainment of self-actualisation, or just plain pragmatism. It should not even be seen as a stepping stone to ‘nobility’; instead, service *is* nobility, according to Scottish theologian, Thomas Manson.¹⁹

In secular leadership literature also, service has long been recognised as a means of bonding leaders and co-workers, providing the former with moral *vis-à-vis* bureaucratic authority.²⁰

Claim to expertise: Christian teachers are trustees of their gifts and talents (Matt 25:14–30). Unlike some ‘self-made’ persons who delight in their architect, Christian teachers acknowledge the source of their abilities which are developed in co-operation with the Lord who gave them. Talents are to be developed for the uplifting, guiding, nurturing and benefit of the faith community (Eph 4:8, 12), which subsumes the school.

Identity formation: The reality for many professionals ‘in the wider world’ is that the

“Talents are to be developed for the uplifting, guiding, nurturing and benefit of the faith community”

Teaching ministry

Standard 10 — Commit, belong and contribute to a servant-hood community of faith

Focus Area	Graduate	Proficient	Highly Accomplished	Lead
10.1 Pastoral care	Exhibit familiarity with, and understanding of Christian schools' pastoral care tasks that focus on healing, wholeness, community and management	Show genuine agape love for students and provide effective Christian nurture and pastoral care for students from diverse backgrounds	Monitor and ensure that the school's pastoral care activities and program meet ethical and biblical criteria	Build the school into a community of grace, care and nurture through servant-hood leadership; where members learn, contribute and are loved and valued
10.2 Altruism	Demonstrate a knowledge of the benefits of student service learning activities that reflect biblical values	Plan and facilitate altruistic student/staff learning activities and projects, both within and beyond the classroom	Advise and assist colleagues to monitor, evaluate and debrief student/staff learning activities and projects	Mobilise whole-school service involvement in identified, just and valued local, national or global causes
10.3 Lifestyle	Demonstrate a lifestyle in keeping with Christian values, ethics, and practices that reflect positively on the Christian faith	Exhibit a lifestyle that supports the school's sponsoring faith tradition and is indicative of a personal relationship with Jesus	Develop support for, and encourage loyalty to the lifestyle expectations of the school's sponsoring faith tradition	Model and promote the culture and lifestyle of the school's sponsoring faith tradition and develop mentoring strategies
10.4 Mission and ethos	Attend and participate in meetings having a spiritual focus and/or Christian worship services, on a regular basis	Worship at, show support for, and contribute to the activities of a Christian church/fellowship on a continuing and regular basis, being a member of the "priest-hood of all-believers"	Build and maintain an ethos of Christian worship during school chapels or services, that honours an authentic relationship with God	Lead in organising and presenting worship services for students, parents, staff and the wider community for the school's sponsoring faith tradition
10.5 Guidelines, ethics and expectations	Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the mission and ethos of Christian schools	Support and implement the educational philosophy and mission of the school's sponsoring faith tradition	Monitor and review school practices, programs and policies to ensure they reflect the school's mission and ethos, and the broader principles of Christian education	Provide servant-hood leadership in promoting Christian education to parents, churches and the wider community and developing the school's ethos and accomplishing its mission
10.6 Fellowship	Know the basic governance, structure, and employment procedures of selected Christian schools/education systems	Act in harmony with the code of ethics and policies outlined in the school's/Christian education system's handbook	Support staff with expertise, advice and opportunities for interpreting and implementing policies perceptively	Take a leading role at the school level in policy assessment, review, and formation, in light of socio-economic and educational change

“
Teachers and members of the school community would put in writing their mutual commitment and accountability to each other and their Lord
 ”

profession gives them their identity and often provides them with an answer to the existential question: Who am I? Moreover, that professional groups perform an important socialising function; with their frames of reference, values and views frequently adopted by inductees, has been acknowledged in the literature.²¹

In contrast, teachers engaged in a teaching ministry, are led by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:14). In the first instance, they find their identity in Jesus Christ, and relate to a loving community of believers and colleagues who are able to provide, according to Heb 13:18, a powerful support group and prayer network.

Recognition and status: Scripture teaches that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). While the service of specialised teachers in Christian schools should be appreciated, caretakers, receptionists, gardeners, canteen workers, teacher aids and administrators, together *with* teachers, should be seen as valuable members who contribute to a whole-school teaching ministry.

Governance of conduct: The Australian College of Educators is typical of organisations that have a laudable code of ethics. The code spans a spectrum of values and consists of a “statement of broad principles regarding professional conduct to function both as guidance and ideals for members.”²² For Christian educators, the biblical concept of a ‘covenant’ might be a useful suggestion; providing a ‘cameo’ of general principles to guide their servanthood ministry. Teachers and members of the school community would put in writing their mutual commitment and accountability to each other and their Lord. In making a covenant they would agree, for example, to: Believe in the hope and forgiveness of Christ, live integrated Christian lives, listen to and pray for each other, communicate openly and honestly, show respect and sensitivity, work for the common good of the school community; among other pledges, some of which may be shared with a caring school community.

Acting in harmony with such a covenant and shaping one’s pedagogy and relationships in line with the proposed teaching ministry standards, cannot be coerced. It is a voluntary decision by teachers who want to identify with, and commit to norms and values that are communally held. Agape love, according to Jesus, should characterise Christian relationships (John 13:35).

Power and control: ‘To empower each other as servants of Christ’ could also be included in the covenant of a school community. Those engaged in servant-hood ministry should promote the sharing of knowledge and skills; demonstrate inclusiveness;

and empower and enable students, parents and community in the mental, social, physical, emotional and spiritual spheres of life, bearing in mind that Jesus is the vine and we—his disciples—are the branches (John 14:15). Also, teachers should never forget that in place of exercising power or control, they are to be channels of God’s love and that their students are fellow citizens of God’s kingdom; at the foot of the cross, all people are equal.

Teaching ministry: A point of departure

As predicated in the introduction, this domain and the attendant standards differ, *in essence*, from the existing mandated NPTS—despite their apparent conformity to NPST ‘formatting’. The difference is notable in two *critical* areas: First, in their *philosophical conception*; and second, in their intended *implementation*.

The language of the NPST appears to be one of performativity; competence; technical knowledge, skills and tasks; and audit requirements, within what is often perceived as a bureaucratic framework.

The use of technical or instrumental language assumes that ends or ultimate purposes and values are either already agreed upon and can be taken for granted or that they cannot be agreed upon and are best left out of consideration.²³

Consequently, this means *how* we do things—rather than *why* they merit our efforts—becomes the focus of our attention.

In contrast, the proposed *teaching ministry standards* are spiritually and morally embedded. They embrace not only a biblical world view, but also, as David Smith advocates, view teaching as value-laden.

[Teaching is] rooted in relation, above all, the relation between student and teacher; and relation in turn—the nature of our interactions with our fellow humans—is essentially moral in character... [A]ll teaching aims to change people; any attempt to change another person has to be done with the assumption, usually implicit, that the change will be for the better...[T]he decisions we make as teachers...ultimately also have to be based on moral rather than objective or scientific principles: That is...on what we believe is right and good...We recognise that our deepest and best instincts as teachers arise from belief or faith rather than pure logic.²⁴

In what respects should the implementation of the proposed *teaching ministry standards* be different? It is not intended as another burdensome ‘audit load’ for teachers; an increase of 35%! Neither is it mandatory, prescriptive or exhaustive. It is *descriptive and illustrative* and should be regarded

“Teaching ministry standards should be regarded as a ‘mirror’ in which teachers in faith-based schools might collegially reflect on and closely examine their ministry of teaching”

as a 'mirror' in which teachers in faith-based schools might collegially reflect on and closely examine their ministry of teaching.

Such reflections, whether in pairs, groups, departments, or the whole staff may take various forms. The latter could range from observations, sharing of experiences, discussion and journaling, to colleague reviews, surveys, questionnaires, and feedback—formal and informal—from different 'insider' and 'outsider' stakeholders. The groups should also search for appropriate 'evidence' to authenticate their endeavours.

These reflexive exercises, whether *ad hoc* or generic, thus move from mere idealism to realistic, authentic practice.

Conclusion

What general conclusion can be reached in response to the initial question posed? It seems evident, the posited teaching ministry standards manifestly exclude the notion of a 'veneer of religiosity'. Instead, they are a challenge to engage in an authentic, transformative Christian teaching ministry.

Finally, a postscript: With the publishing of The National Professional Standard for Principals,²⁵ just recently, in July 2011, an interesting complementary question arises. What might categories for an authentic, integrating *servant-hood leadership for principals* in Christian faith-based schools look like?

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Endnotes

¹ See AITSL website: <http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/Standards/Overview>, retrieved on 27th June, 2011.

² For example, education bodies in Canada, Hong Kong and Scotland; also refer to websites listed on: <http://www.wacot.wa.edu.au/index.php?section=51>; retrieved on 16th November, 2010.

³ The NPST may have a similar effect on teacher education courses (and those who 'deliver' them) as NAPLAN has on reported teaching practices in some schools. Refer to: Rieger, W. (2010). Pastoral care, action research, and teaching as a profession. *Teach Journal of Christian Education*, 4(1), 18–23.

⁴ AITSL website, *ibid*.

⁵ Reid, A., Cranston N., Keating, J. and Mulford, B. (2011). Bringing back the public purposes of education. *Professional Educator*, 10(4), 20–23.

⁶ Schwartz, S. (2011). An address to the Australian College of Educators. Homebush, NSW, June 11.

⁷ See <http://www.cathnews.com/article.aspx?aeid=27465>; retrieved on 18th August, 2011.

⁸ Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians (2008). See Goal 2, p. 9; also: A commitment to action, p. 13.

⁹ The *power* referred to here is not the Nietzschean 'will to power'—the sense of predominance and ambition—but potential cognitive, creative ability.

¹⁰ White, E. (1903). *Education*. Mountain View, CAL: Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 225.

¹¹ Moore, M. (2010). Seven defends outing, despite false claim. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, weekend edition, May 22–23, p. 11.

¹² Maley, J. (2010). Defrocked and fired. *Ibid*. p. 6.

¹³ Proverbs 6:27, *Revised standard version*.

¹⁴ Proverbs 4:23, *ibid*.

¹⁵ Luke 6:43, *The Moffat New Testament*. London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton.

¹⁶ The first draft of the 'teaching ministry' domain was developed by the writer in 2006, during a consultancy with the Dept. Ed. of the SDA Church, Greater Sydney Conference. The 'graduate' category of the standards was developed jointly with members of the Faculty of Education, Avondale College.

¹⁷ The writer draws here on his article published in *Adventist Professional*, 9(3), 7–11.

¹⁸ Blomberg, D. (1993). The great commandment. *Nurture*, 27(4), p. 21.

¹⁹ Manson, T. (1948). *The church's ministry*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

²⁰ Brandt, R. (1993). On rethinking leadership: A conversation with Tom Sergiovanni. *Educational Leadership*, 42(2), 46–49.

²¹ Redecop, C. (1982). Can I be a creative subversive? In Kraybill, D. and Good, P. (Eds.), *Perils of professionalism*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, pp. 220–221.

²² The Australian College of Education (1992). Code of ethics. *Members handbook*. Canberra, ACT: ACE, pp. 4–5.

²³ Sullivan, J. Reading habits, scripture and the university. In Jeffrey, D. and Evans, C. (Eds.), (2007). *The Bible and the university*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, p. 235.

²⁴ Smith, D. Biblical imagery and educational imagination, quoting B. Johnston, *Values in English language teaching*, 4–5, 9. In Jeffrey, D. and Evans, C. (Eds.), (2007). *Ibid*. p. 205.

²⁵ See the AITSL website, <http://www.aitsl.edu.au>

“The posited teaching ministry standards manifestly exclude the notion of a 'veneer of religiosity'”

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International students in independent schools

The divide between attitude to Mathematics class and perception of classroom environment

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Abstract

The experience of students with a non-English-speaking background (NESB) studying in Australian independent school classrooms is an ongoing concern for administrators of these schools. This paper reports on research by Kilgour and Rickards (2009) into the perceptions these students have of the learning environments of their Mathematics classrooms along with the same students' attitudes to Mathematics as a subject. Data collected by survey and interview revealed that NESB students have a more positive attitude to Mathematics as a subject than their Australian classmates, but their perception of their learning environment is more negative than their Australian classmates.

Introduction

While there is a current plateau in the arrivals of overseas students to study English in Australian schools, the twenty year period from 1985 to 2005 saw the number of overseas students entering on study visas grow more than ten times from 30,000 to 375,000 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). In this study, the term NESB (non-English-Speaking Background) students will be used to refer to overseas students who hold a study visa and those Australian resident students who were born overseas and do not speak English at home.

While many may assume that Mathematics is an area of study where NESB students, particularly Asian students, may excel, both quantitative and qualitative data tell a story of discrepancy between these students' positive attitudes to Mathematics as a subject and their far less positive perceptions of their experiences within the Australian classroom.

While learning conversational English for new students from overseas may only take around two years, learning English sufficient for the study of

academic subjects often takes five to seven years (Chamot, Dale, O'Malley & Spanos, 1992). In recognition of this, Chamot et al. (1992) suggest that the teaching of academic language in ESL classes is a useful way to help NESB students in their academic subjects. If this was offered along with support for the development of language specific to Mathematics, it may help to change the perception NESB students have of their Mathematics classes.

Planas and Gorgorio (2004) found that NESB students are less likely to engage, acculturate, and be part of the Mathematics discourse in the classroom. This may be surprising because many have incorrectly assumed that Mathematics is less language reliant than other subjects. Planas and Gorgorio (2004), offer a possible cause for this unexpected finding:

[Students from minority groups] experience difficulties when trying to participate in contexts of mathematical practices where they do not feel themselves represented, when others do not recognise them, or when they have to cope with actions and behaviours that are different from those they would expect. (p. 16)

Planas and Gorgorio (2004) observed that though the teacher may have the very best of intentions and may believe that they run an inclusive classroom, NESB students' ideas and contributions were perceived to be less valued by their classmates and the teacher than those of the English-speaking students.

The practicalities of providing the optimal learning environment for NESB students are difficult for teachers. Reeves (2006, p. 139) reported that although "teachers want to welcome ELLs [English Language Learners] into the mainstream, the data also reveals a teaching force struggling to make sense of teaching and learning in multilingual school environments".

“*NESB students are less likely to engage, acculturate, and be part of the Mathematics discourse in the classroom*”

Table 1: A description of the sample

	Upper stream				Lower stream				Total			
	English speaking		Non-English speaking		English speaking		Non-English speaking		English speaking		Non-English speaking	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Year 9	52	50	10	6	42	35	13	7	94	85	23	17
Year 10	54	65	17	11	43	49	15	11	97	114	32	22
	106	115	27	17	85	84	28	18	191	199	55	35
Totals	221		44		169		46		390		90	
	265				215				480			

Much of the research in learning environments has shown that attitude to the academic subject and experiences in the learning environment are connected. For example, Rickards (1998) reported a positive relationship between student attitudes and student-teacher interpersonal behaviour as a measure of perceived learning environment.

Boaler, William and Zevenbergen (2000) define success in Mathematics classes as a feeling of 'belonging' rather than an issue of 'ability'. Students may want to succeed at Mathematics as a means to an end but they may have no desire to become 'successful mathematicians'. Boaler et al. (2000) found that the Mathematics classroom becomes a "community of practice" where "learning is a social activity which encompasses the relations between people and knowing" (p. 4).

Studies conducted over the last three decades have contributed to improvements in classroom learning environments (Anderson, 1982; Fraser, 1991, 1998; Fraser & Walberg, 1981) and shown the association between student learning and the way students perceive their classroom learning environment (Fraser, 1994).

The current study

With these issues in mind, this study was designed to move away from the measurement of academic performance. This study examines the differences between NESB and English-speaking students' perceptions of their learning environment. It also investigates the differences between NESB students' attitudes to Mathematics as a discipline and the way they perceive learning environments in Australian schools. The initial hypothesis was that students with a positive attitude to Mathematics would also find their Mathematics classroom a positive environment.

Methodology

The participants in this study were 480 students from seven schools in Australia. Participants were in Year 9 or 10 at the time of the study and included both males and females from a range of ability level classrooms. Of the 480 participants, 90 were categorised as NESB and of this group, 16 were selected for interviews in focus groups. The data collected was analysed by year level, academic ability and language background.

Of the 90 NESB students in the sample, 49 were from Asian countries, 15 were from Pacific Island backgrounds and 11 were from South American countries. The remaining 15 were from other countries.

The instrument used to survey students' attitudes to Mathematics was based on the Test of Science Related Attitudes (TOSRA), (Fraser, 1978). The TOSRA was condensed and modified to suit school-based Mathematics. A 5-point Likert Scale was used with the lower scores representing a more positive attitude toward Mathematics. This attitude inventory included prompts such as, *Mathematics is fun*, and *I feel satisfied after a Mathematics lesson*.

The instrument used for researching the students' perceptions of their classroom environment was the "What is Happening in this Class?" (WIHC) (Fraser, Fisher & McRobbie, 1996).

[This instrument] was developed for use in any classroom environment context. It combined the best features of the existing instruments and included new dimensions of contemporary relevance. (Chua, Wong & Chen, 2000, p.367)

This instrument was originally a 90 item survey with 9 scales but the version used in this study was reduced to 56 items with 7 scales.

“*The Mathematics classroom becomes a “community of practice” where “learning is a social activity which encompasses the relations between people and knowing”*”

The scales of the WIHIC are: *student cohesiveness, teacher support, involvement, task orientation, investigation, cooperation and equity*. A 5-point Likert Scale was used where lower scores indicate more positive responses. A brief description of each scale along with a sample item can be found in Table 2.

Interviews with NESB students were included to validate and add meaning to the quantitative data. Four groups of NESB students were selected to form focus groups. At the time the sample was taken, Asian students represented the largest cultural group in the NESB category. Therefore, two of the groups contained Asian students, one contained Pacific Islanders and one contained South American students.

In order to facilitate discussion and aid comprehensibility, the interview participants had at least an intermediate level of competency in spoken English. Participants were asked to recall how they had felt when their English language skills were emerging and how they perceive current NESB students perceive classroom environments.

The quantitative data from the surveys was entered into the SPSS application in order to perform such operations as factor analyses, alpha reliability, correlations, and analyses of variance and to collect descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. Of particular interest in these analyses was the relationship between perception of classroom environments and ability streams; and the relationship between attitude to Mathematics and the scales of the WIHIC. Cultural differences in perceptions of classroom environments and attitude to Mathematics were also analysed.

Results and Discussion

Attitude toward Mathematics: Quantitative data

From a comparison of students' attitudes to Mathematics, it is evident that NESB students (2.95) have a more positive attitude to Mathematics as a discipline than do their English-speaking (3.20) counterparts (see Table 3). This gap is more pronounced in the upper ability stream than the lower stream Mathematics students.

This attitude score is likely to be influenced by the large Asian contingent of students in the sample schools who have a strong affinity with Mathematics.

[Asian students] hold significantly different beliefs about their math ability, the constructs to which they attributed successful performance, their perceptions of their parents' beliefs with respect to their math ability, and their conceptualisations of math as a domain. (Whang & Hancock, 1994, p.302)

NESB students have a more positive attitude to Mathematics as a discipline than do their English-speaking counterparts

Perception of classroom environment: Quantitative data

A key finding of this study is that although NESB students have a positive attitude towards Mathematics, they have a more negative perception of their classroom learning environment than do English-speaking students (see Table 4). The data indicates that in five of the seven scales (the exceptions were *involvement* and *investigation*), the NESB students rated their classroom learning environment less positively than the English-speaking students with differences in perception ranging from 0.10 to 0.20.

The scales with the largest difference are *teacher support* (0.17) and *equity* (0.2). In both cases, the difference between NESB students and English-

Table 2: WIHIC scale description and sample items

Scale	Description of scale	Sample item
<i>Student cohesiveness</i>	This scale contains items that examine the way students facilitate each other's learning	Members of the class are my friends
<i>Teacher support</i>	This scale seeks to establish the perceived help the teacher provides to students	The teacher takes a personal interest in me
<i>Involvement</i>	This scale contains items that examine student input into the learning process	My ideas and suggestions are used during classroom discussions
<i>Task orientation</i>	This scale asks students how much on task behaviour is happening in the classroom	I try to understand the work in this class
<i>Investigation</i>	This scale seeks to establish the amount of inquiry-based learning happening in the classroom	I carry out investigations to answer questions coming from discussions
<i>Cooperation</i>	This scale seeks to find out how much students work together to achieve outcomes	I cooperate with other students when doing assignment work
<i>Equity</i>	This scale seeks student perceptions on whether the teacher treats all students in the class equally	The teacher gives as much attention to my questions as to the other students' questions

Table 3: Mean attitude scores

	Upper stream		Lower stream		Total	
	English speakers	NESB students	English speakers	NESB students	English speakers	NESB students
Year 9	3.19	2.80	3.09	3.08	3.14	2.94
Year 10	2.92	2.51	3.58	3.41	3.25	3.96
Totals	3.04	2.66	3.35	3.24	3.20	2.95

n=480

speaking students is significant at the 95% level. These two scales are in fact related; the factor analysis of the WIHIC survey showed that while all other scales were quite independent, there was a crossover between the scales of *teacher support* and *equity*. The relationship between the two factors is understandable given that the perception of equity in the classroom is, to a certain extent, determined by the way the teacher allocates their time and resources to the students.

Possible reasons for these discrepancies in perceptions of learning environments are explored in the qualitative data.

Attitude toward Mathematics: Qualitative data

Interview data indicated that NESB students believe their positive attitude towards Mathematics is due to their culture's appreciation of Mathematics and desire to achieve highly in it. One student said that in Korea most students are tutored in Mathematics from a very young age and they are led to believe that it is the most important subject. NESB students also indicated that they feel more positive about Mathematics because they see it as a subject they will be able to deal with, even though their language skills are still developing. In addition, interview subjects reported knowing of a number of other Asian students who had come before them in their new Australian school and had succeeded in Mathematics. As a result of these factors, their expectations for success were high.

Perception of classroom environment: Qualitative data

When interviews were conducted with NESB students, particularly Asian students, the discrepancy between attitude to Mathematics class and perception of classroom environment was confirmed. The NESB students gave a range of factors that they believe explain why their perception of their learning environment does not match their attitude to the subject. Communication factors included a feeling of intimidation and embarrassment

when emerging language skills hampered their efforts to communicate their thoughts effectively.

Jung: They [NESB students] would probably get the support if they asked more but they are embarrassed because of the level of their English and so they don't ask.

Furthermore, new arrivals often have an expectation that interactions in the classroom should only require speaking to the person next to them and the teacher. NESB students' comments made it apparent that those coming to Australia from Asia sometimes feel embarrassed to ask questions and may not mix very well with other students either inside or outside class. They may not even mix with other Asian students who have been in Australia for some time.

Tom: I don't think the new Asians to the school socialise very much. They are more comfortable just mixing with each other.

Poor ratings of *teacher support* and *equity* may be due to feelings of marginalisation as a result of communication difficulties. In addition, NESB students may perceive a lack of equity when they see their English-speaking classmates understanding explanations and instructions and going on with set work.

Su: Some things could be better. The teacher gets into the work too fast and we don't get it. It would be good if it was broken down more.

The way the NESB students saw *student cohesiveness* and *cooperation* was investigated with the question: Do the students help each other with the work? A typical answer is given below.

Kim: Not really. They [new NESB students] stay to themselves a bit. That's the way the classroom is arranged.

Even when cooperative learning tasks were assigned to groups, NESB students found it difficult to feel included.

Poor ratings of teacher support and equity may be due to feelings of marginalisation as a result of communication difficulties

Classroom behaviour factors were also seen to be significant. NESB students felt that many class members were poorly behaved, unfocused and therefore distracting. In many cases, NESB students are a little older than their counterparts are and find the perceived lack of maturity difficult to cope with.

Kim: Sometimes after the class, they [NESB students] will tell you how terrible it was or something.

These factors contribute to student stress because of the expectations parents place on student achievement in school, particularly in Mathematics.

The *Task orientation* scale was discussed with the students. This question was asked: Does it stop you working when other kids are mucking around?

Tom: Yes. I can't stand it. It's OK to blame the teacher but the students have to cooperate as well.

In addition, preconceived expectations that were not fulfilled led to dissatisfaction. NESB students reported feeling that they had the skills and ability to understand the Mathematics content but that they could not understand the questions as presented in class. Furthermore, some students felt that they had been placed in a class below their mathematical ability due to a language deficit.

The interview data showed that NESB students felt they could cope with the work very easily if they had a greater understanding of the language.

These students come to Australia with a positive attitude towards Mathematics as a subject but when they struggle with their Mathematics classroom environment, they are disappointed.

Conclusion

A key finding from the combined data is that NESB students from the sample had a more positive attitude to Mathematics as a discipline than the rest of the sample but a more negative perception of their Mathematics learning environment. This finding was especially true for the upper stream students who reported that their high expectations for success in Mathematics were not being met by the learning environments in their Mathematics classrooms.

This finding is significant for schools. If a school advertises itself as a provider of education for NESB students on student visas, then it needs to ensure that it caters for their needs. Given that this research found that NESB students are struggling with the learning environments of Mathematics classes, and are particularly concerned about teacher support and equity, teachers and schools need to become more aware of individual students in the class who may want to succeed but have language as a barrier to learning.

NESB students would benefit from the constructivist learning environments many teachers are providing. Though the learning environments in their home countries would be more traditional, the interaction with English-speaking students in solving problems, doing group work and learning by experience, would enable them to interact

“*These students come to Australia with a positive attitude towards Mathematics as a subject but when they struggle with their Mathematics classroom environment, they are disappointed*”

Table 4: Comparison of NESB and English-speaking students' means for each scale of the WIHIC

WIHIC scale	Scale mean			Standard deviation	
	English speaking	NESB	Differences	English speaking	NESB
<i>Student cohesiveness</i>	2.02	2.12	-0.10	0.61	0.75
<i>Teacher support</i>	2.51	2.68	-0.17*	0.99	0.88
<i>Involvement</i>	2.80	2.79	0.01	0.82	0.89
<i>Task orientation</i>	2.09	2.23	-0.14*	0.73	0.74
<i>Investigation</i>	3.04	2.84	0.20	0.90	0.91
<i>Cooperation</i>	2.19	2.32	-0.13	0.83	0.93
<i>Equity</i>	2.06	2.26	-0.20*	0.99	1.02

English-speaking students n=390; NESB students n=90; *p<0.05

more with English speakers. This would give them an opportunity to build self-esteem in their new environment by sharing their prior knowledge that, in some cases, is substantial.

Though helpful for NESB students, this may not be the most comfortable environment for them initially. Firstly, there is the hurdle of getting the students to use their emerging English to engage in discussion. Secondly, NESB students would find a classroom organised around group processes even more foreign to them than a traditional Australian classroom.

Despite these limitations however, it is well documented that it is vital for ELLs to be placed in positions in a mainstream classroom where they are encouraged to communicate. Cummins (2003) suggests that ELL students need the engagement with other students as a means of supporting their ability to acquire English. This not only helps their social integration but also their grasp of academic language.

“**Utilising techniques that promote increased interaction between students and with the teacher is likely to build language skills, Mathematical understanding and positive perceptions of classroom environment**”

Students must be involved in conversational and interactive opportunities in the classroom if they are to experience the concepts of the curriculum while simultaneously engaging in meaningful language about these concepts. (Warner & Moore, 2008, p. 14)

To facilitate better language acquisition by NESB students, more content-focused discussions on a student-to-student basis are needed. Whilst helping NESB students' academic language acquisition, this approach will aid concept development for all students.

By utilising some of the techniques discussed, and making NESB students feel more included in the classroom, the gap between student attitude to Mathematics and perceptions of learning environments will be addressed. This study pointed to a need to address NESB students' perceptions of *equity* and *teacher support* within Australian classrooms. Utilising techniques that promote increased interaction between students and with the teacher is likely to build language skills, Mathematical understanding and positive perceptions of classroom environment. **TEACH**

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Eternal H&S Issues

Walk into any school and you will see visible evidence that the personal safety of its students and teachers is taken seriously. Signs such as *Mind the step*, *Slippery when wet* and *Hazchem* create an awareness of possible hazards, and prompt staff and students to take their safety seriously. Kitchens, workshops and science laboratories take the notion of safety to the next level. In kitchens, knives are carefully stored, chopping boards colour coded and work surfaces kept meticulously clean. Signs, appropriately displayed, remind students of these safety precautions. Workshop machines are treated with respect. Signs such as *Make sure guard is in place before using machine* and *Are you wearing goggles?* remind students of safety issues. In science laboratories, all chemicals are clearly labelled and stored appropriately, and safety signs alert users to be careful when using certain apparatus.

Wherever you turn in a school, you see signs that exist for the sole purpose of keeping the students and staff safe. Are we as intentional in creating visible reminders that the Eternal Health and Safety of our students is our first priority?

In many Christian schools, the first impression is that administrators take the Eternal Health and Safety of their students seriously. Framed mission statements, values statements, slogans and posters tastefully decorate walls and foyers. What is your school like? Are the logos, crests, mottos, icons and items on display consistent with the Christian purpose and values of the school? Many schools are intentional in creating decor and even displaying children's work that indicates the Christ-centredness of the school program.

Individual classrooms often show evidence that the teachers have the Eternal Health and Safety of their students at heart. What is your classroom like? What displays, slogans or posters remind your learners that they are the children of God?

I recently visited a school that had a beautifully crafted mosaic in the pavement at the main entry to the school. For me, it was more than a work of art; it was a reminder that this school had direction. The compass, the Bible, the cross, the world and the flame left me with no doubt that this school was intentional in putting out the 'signs'.



Hearing protection
must be worn

The visible displays in your school may appear to be of little consequence, but they are another way of reminding students and parents of the core business of your school. Make them attractive, make them intentional, make them part of the culture of your school. This can be one more way of surrounding students with the message of God's love for them. **TEACH**

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[Macquarie
College's emblem]

Pedagogy: A lexical oddity

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Despite the games we often play with words, they are seldom defined by their derivations (etymology), more frequently their meanings are governed by their usage in sentences (semantics). Once we do that, we discover that the *paidagōgos* was not and never was a teacher. That is why the choice of ‘pedagogy’ for the English meaning, ‘the art of teaching’, is so odd; it’s derived from a Greek word and custom that had little to do with the noble art of education. True, the *paidagōgos* led or followed his charge to school, but this was simply one of the many places to which he accompanied the child, and such a role was hardly educational.

Introduction

Most education faculties have courses with units in pedagogy, and many even use the term itself in their subject listings. Books in the field of education frequently use ‘pedagogy’ and cognates in their titles. Avondale College of Higher Education Library has sixty-seven books in its collection that contain the term ‘pedagogy’ or related words in their title.¹ This is a rather modest total compared with Sydney University Library and The National Library of Australia, which list respectively 1,930 and 2,070 titles.

English usage

The earliest usage listed in the OED for ‘pedagogy’ is the date 1623 with the meaning ‘skoole-mastership’.² Even earlier, William Tyndale in 1526 rendered the Greek text of Galatians 3:24–25 (*paidagōgos*) with ‘schoolmaster’.³ This was followed by the Authorised Version of 1611. Given the widespread and prolonged use of the Authorised Version, both in public and private worship, it is not surprising that the Greek term *paidagōgos* entered the English language as ‘pedagogue’, or ‘pedagogy’ with the meaning ‘schoolmaster’.

Webster’s 2nd edition of 1968, though giving ‘a teacher’ for the word ‘pedagogue’, adds an historical note.

Among the ancient Greeks and Romans, [the *paidagōgos* was] a slave who attended the children of his master and conducted them to school, often acting as a tutor.

For ‘pedagogy’ Webster’s dictionary, without qualification, provides “the profession or function of a teacher; teaching”. The same dictionary also offers “the science or art of teaching; especially instruction in teaching methods”. This is echoed almost verbatim in the 4th edition of the Macquarie Dictionary (2005). Indeed, it suggests for ‘pedagogue’, “teacher of children, a school teacher”. The Concise Encarta (2001) reflects the same definitions, though it too reminds us that the Greek *paidagōgos* was a “slave who leads a child to school”.

Dictionaries and other educational sources often unpack the etymology of the word ‘pedagogy’ by pointing out that it derives from the Greek *paidagōgos*, which is formed from *pais* (‘boy’, ‘girl’, ‘child’)⁴ and *agein* (‘to lead’, ‘to bring’). Hence, the conclusion is usually drawn that the *paidagōgos* led his charge to school. The application to the role of the modern teacher often then proves irresistible: that is, to define the modern Christian teacher’s task as gently leading children to understanding, or to wisdom, or even to Christ as per Galatians 3:24 (Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, KJV).⁵ In fact, the *paidagōgos*, carrying his charge’s musical instrument or texts, more often walked behind the student.

The *paidagōgos*

To understand the role of the *paidagōgos* in antiquity we must examine ancient sources. The person of the pedagogue, as opposed to his role, often attracted the ridicule of the philosophical Greeks. Firstly, he was usually a household slave, generally foreign, and often a prisoner of war. Hieronymus, the Peripatetic, reportedly censured fathers for placing their children into the care of barbarous pedagogues.⁶ Since they were foreign prisoners of war, the pedagogues gave their admonitions in poor Greek, which was derided by those who had Greek as their mother tongue, and that no doubt included the children in their care.⁷ Because the younger and stronger slaves were more productively used for manual labour, the pedagogues were frequently old (by no means always) or damaged. The numerous terracotta figurines of a pedagogue are usually grumpy-looking old men.

“*The person of the pedagogue often attracted the ridicule of the philosophical Greeks*”

When Pericles once saw a household slave fall from an olive tree and break his leg, he cynically commented, “a new pedagogue has just appeared”.⁸ Hieronymus complained that Greek fathers gave the most important task—the training of their sons—to the least costly (that is, old or injured slaves).⁹ Plutarch regarded as stupid the Greek custom of appointing the most talented slaves to positions such as stewards and money managers, while leaving their sons to the oversight of the wine-bibber, the glutton and the most useless slave.¹⁰ Of course, not all *paidagōgoi* (plural) were of this character, but many were and thus were not the best model for the modern teacher of children.

Four aspects of the ancient *paidagōgos* will be explored in this discussion. After noting the temporary nature of the role of the *paidagōgos*, this paper will discuss the role of the *paidagōgos* as a disciplinarian, a protector and an educator.

The temporary nature of the role of the *paidagōgos*

When the boy was about six or seven years of age, or when he had some understanding of speech, the *paidagōgos* took over the care of him from the nurse.¹¹ He remained in the *paidagōgos*' care until just after late puberty.¹² Thus, the boy was in the care of his twenty-four-hour minder for approximately twelve years. Hence, when the *paidagōgos*, Charidemus, tried to control the youthful Martial, the latter asserted his independence by boasting of the growth of his beard and his prowess with his mistress.¹³ When Socrates found it puzzling how the youthful Lysis, though heir of all, could still be under the control of his *paidagōgos*, a slave, Lysis explained, “I have not yet come of age.”¹⁴ Once of age, the lad was free of his *paidagōgos*.

Xenophon expresses the nature of the transition.

When a boy ceases to be a child, and begins to be a lad, others release him from his *paidagōgon* and from his teacher; he is then no longer under them, but is allowed to go his own way.¹⁵

If one was an *ephēbos* (a youth), one was no longer under the control of a *paidagōgos*, whose charges were babes (*nēpioi*) and boys (*paidēs*).¹⁶ It was a common jibe, if one wished to ridicule someone's maturity, to accuse them of still being under the care of a *paidagōgos*.¹⁷ Ideally, the transition to manhood involved the recasting of the controlling principle; a hired slave (*paidagōgos*) is replaced by reason, the divine guide (*theion hēgemonā*).¹⁸

The *paidagōgos* thus had clearly defined limits regarding the duration of his control of the child, to that degree, he was similar to today's teachers.

The *paidagōgos* as a disciplinarian

The *paidagōgos* was type-cast on the stage in general as a strict killjoy. Whilst, some *paidagōgoi* were gentle with their charges (like Mary Poppins), others were severe and cruel. They pinched and threatened, shouted and ranted, and cuffed and caned.¹⁹ “Your anger hardly leaves off the cane”, complained Martial of his *paidagōgos*.²⁰ Libanius likened the pounding of a boat's oars on the sea to the *paidagōgos*' lash on a boy's back.²¹ Claudius' *paidagōgos* was a former muleteer, who was appointed expressly to administer punishment. His former trade eminently qualified him for his latter role, since he was adept with the whip. Indeed, the leather strap was a standard accessory for the *paidagōgoi*.²²

Libanius confesses to having a dread of the *paidagōgoi*'s strap, and Theodoret of Cyrrhus, a Father of the early church, noted that “students are scared of their *paidagōgoi*”.²³ Quintilian's frank admission is understandable.

I blush to mention the shameful abuse which scoundrels [that is, the *paidagōgoi*] sometimes make of their right to administer corporal punishment.²⁴

A popular disciplinary technique with the *paidagōgoi* was to twist the boy's ear.²⁵ Photo 1 depicts an angry *paidagōgos* ready to punish a naughty boy, who is running away on the other side of the vase.

As the boy entered puberty, curtailment of youthful hormones was also part of the *paidagōgos*' task: “You don't allow me to frolic, nor do you allow me to woo”, lamented Martial to his *paidagōgos*.²⁶ When accosted by an irate father concerning his son's wanton behaviour, the philosopher protested that he was not the lad's *paidagōgos*.²⁷ Physical punishment was commonplace in the classical world, and the *paidagōgoi* were not the only ancient disciplinarians: nurses, teachers, trainers and even fathers meted out corrective force on their charges.



Photo 1

[Photograph: Norman Young; Reproduced courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologia della Puglia, Taranto, Museo Nazionale, Bari]

“The many headstone inscriptions that praise and identify a man's former *paidagōgos* indicate that neither their names nor the early affection was forgotten”

It is not that long ago that many schoolteachers followed the *paidagōgos*' pattern of discipline. I can recall the names of some very brutal teachers in my time as a student. Thankfully, discipline measures have changed in most western countries. However, as it was with the *paidagōgos*, today's teachers are expected to act as disciplinarians.

This aspect of the *paidagōgos*, the duty of care, is one worthy for modern teachers to emulate

The *paidagōgos* as a protector

Cicero points out that the first persons a man loves are his nurse and his *paidagōgos*.²⁸ The *paidagōgos* often took the blame for some childish misdemeanour so as to spare the child any parental punishment. The many headstone inscriptions that praise and identify a man's former *paidagōgos* indicate that neither their names nor the early affection was forgotten. Given the widespread pederasty of the classical world, the *paidagōgoi* acted as a fortified wall or guard that protected the child from such abuse. The *paidagōgoi* were as "barking dogs to wolves".²⁹ Hence, they accompanied their charges to the athletic field, the theatre, the courts, and to school or lectures (see Photos 2 & 3). They were twenty-four-hour minders; even from bedtime to rising at dawn, the attendant slave was always present.

It was not unknown for the *paidagōgos* to die in defence of his charge. Appian tells the touching account of how a *paidagōgos* threw his arms around his orphaned charge and would not release him to his would-be murderers. This occurred en route to school and both were killed.³⁰ Libanius praised the *paidagōgos* as the most devoted of all a child's influences: he supervised the child's studies more constantly than either the father or teacher; when the child became sick, he acted as a nurse and

tended his charge more tenderly than the mother; and if the child died, he mourned more genuinely than the dutiful parents.³¹ On reaching adulthood, it was common for men to emancipate their former *paidagōgos*.

Whilst some *paidagōgoi* were harsh and punitive, others were gentle with and devoted to their charges. This aspect of the *paidagōgos*, the duty of care, is one worthy for modern teachers to emulate.

The *paidagōgos* as an educator

Although some children were fortunate that the slave appointed as their *paidagōgos* was well educated, this was more often by chance than parental design. However, Roman fathers did try to obtain a Greek speaker for their son's *paidagōgos*. Even though they assisted the child with any homework (see Photo 4) and sat in on the teacher's lessons (see Photo 5), the *paidagōgos*' instruction was mostly limited to social trivia.

And yet what do the *paidagōgoi* teach? To walk in the public streets with lowered head; to touch salt-fish with but one finger, but fresh fish, bread, and meat with two; to sit in such and such a posture; in such and such a way to wear their cloaks.³²

Aristides provides a verbatim catalogue of the *paidagōgos*' chidings.

'It is not proper to stuff yourself full', and 'walk on the street in a seemly way, and rise for your elders, love your parents, do not be noisy, or play dice, or 'cross your legs'.³³

Seneca's report of a *paidagōgos*' advice is in the same vein: "Walk thus and so; eat thus and so, this

Photo 2

[Photograph: Norman Young; Reproduced courtesy of the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad]

Photo 3

Heracles being followed by his nurse, Geropso, as his pedagogue.

[Photograph: Norman Young; Reproduced courtesy of the Staatliches Museum, Schwerin]



is conduct proper for a man and that for a woman; this for a married man and that for a bachelor.”³⁴

As apposed to the limited educational role of the *paidagōgos*, today’s teachers aim to develop the whole person (mentally, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually).

Conclusion

What relevance does the ancient role of the *paidagōgos* have for twenty-first century teachers? The teacher, like the *paidagōgos*, has a temporary role. The lessons learned in school must nurture the child towards independence and the love of learning. Most importantly, as teachers fulfil their duty of care, they must have a purposeful intention to foster schools as safe places for children. Teachers are called to be protectors of children. In addition, *paidagōgoi* were sometimes likened to shepherds or a ship’s pilot because of their role in guiding the children. In a society where many are looking for direction, teachers can perform this vital role. **TEACH**

Endnotes

- ¹ This includes variant forms such as ‘pedagogical’.
- ² The OED also gives a reference from 1583 meaning ‘instruction’, ‘discipline’.
- ³ This is retained in the editions of 1534 and 1536.
- ⁴ The stem of the noun *pais* is *paid*; the dental ‘d’ is dropped when the nominative singular ‘s’ is added.
- ⁵ This is an inaccurate translation in two serious ways: “Schoolmaster” should read “slave child-minder,” and “to bring us unto Christ” should be rendered “until the time of Christ.”
- ⁶ *ap. Stobaeus, Ecl.* 121 (Wachsmuth 2.233).
- ⁷ *Aristides, Or.* 2.380 (Behr); *Plato, Lys.* 223A.
- ⁸ *ap. Stobaeus, Ecl.* 121 (Wachsmuth 2.233).
- ⁹ *Ibid.*

- ¹⁰ *Plutarch, Mor.* 4B; *Julian, Mis.* 352C.
- ¹¹ *Plato, Prot.* 325C.
- ¹² *Teles ap. Stobaeus, Flor.* 72 (Wachsmuth 5.848F).
- ¹³ *Martial,* 11.39.
- ¹⁴ *Plato, Lys.* 209A.
- ¹⁵ *Lac.* 3.1. Cf. *Plutarch, Phil.* 4.1.
- ¹⁶ *Plato, Laws* 808E; *Ps. Plato, Axioch.* 366D–367A; *Teles, ap. Stobaeus, Flor.* 72 (Wachsmuth 5.848F). For boys seventeen was usually considered the age of puberty, and thirteen for girls.
- ¹⁷ *Lucian, Jup. Trag.* 29.5; *Philo, Flacc.* 15; *Gaium,* 26.
- ¹⁸ *Plutarch, Mor.* 37D–E; *Philo, Quod Det.* 146.
- ¹⁹ *Quintilian,* 6.1.41; *Plato, Lys.* 223A; *Libanius, Ep.* 139.2.
- ²⁰ 11.39.
- ²¹ *Ep.* 1188.3–4.
- ²² *Diogenes, Ep.* 29; *Libanius, Or.* 2.380 (Behr), 58.9.
- ²³ *Libanius, Ep.* 911.2; *Theodoret, Ep.* 36.
- ²⁴ *Quintilian,* 1.3.17 (Loeb).
- ²⁵ There is a terracotta image of a *paidagōgos* from Myrina doing just this (C. Daremberg and E. Saglio [eds], *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines IV/1*, 1907. Reprinted Graz: Akademischen Druck und Verlagsanhalt, 1969) IV.272, figure 5449. See also *Plutarch, Cat. Mal.* 20.4.
- ²⁶ 11.39.
- ²⁷ *Lucian, Herm.* 82.
- ²⁸ *Cicero, De Amic.* 20.74.
- ²⁹ *Libanius, Or.* 58.7.
- ³⁰ *Appian, BCiv.* 5.30.
- ³¹ *Libanius, Or.* 58.8–11.
- ³² *Plutarch, Mor.* 439F–440 (Loeb).
- ³³ *Aristides, Or.* 2.380 (Loeb). Cf. *Xenophon, Lac.* 3.2f.
- ³⁴ *Seneca, Ep.* 94.8–9 (Loeb).

Photo 4

[Photograph: Norman Young; Reproduced courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum, London]

Photo 5

[Photograph: Norman Young; Reproduced courtesy of the Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (West)]



Guiding principles for cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures in an era of change

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Abstract

This article presents a selection of findings arising from a recent study that analysed and investigated how sustainable Christian school cultures can be cultivated during changing times. The inquiry was positioned within the contextually bounded system of Christian schools which, according to the literature, have historically struggled to maintain core ideology and distinctiveness beyond the consolidation or mid-life phase of cultural development. The study was framed within a qualitative paradigm of inquiry that utilised a multiple case study design to investigate how principals within six Christian schools were seeking to cultivate sustainable school cultures that preserved core ideology whilst responding to change imperatives within an ever-increasingly complex and market driven socio-cultural milieu.

The research findings identified four guiding principles that leaders were using to cultivate sustainable Christian school cultures within these site specific settings. These principles formed a foundation upon which cultural meaning-making and core ideology, expressed as cultural processes and practices, may be sustained and perpetuated during a Christian school's organisational mid-life or consolidation phase of cultural development.

Research relating to the intentional cultivation of Christian school cultures that sustain core ideology whilst responding to change and contemporary socio-cultural realities have not been significant in both the range of studies undertaken or in the rigour of such studies to build and extend knowledge within this field (Belmonte, 2006; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Willard, 2003). Within the organisational theory literature, a range of cultural development models have been developed that seek to highlight the critical imperatives of intentionally and consistently

re-aligning the enterprise or institution with founding vision, identity and values. Whilst beyond the scope of this paper to explain in detail each model, some frameworks that may be of particular relevance to Christian educational institutions could include Berger and Berger's (1976) adaptations of Weber's (1947) cycles of movements; Edgar Schein's seminal work on the phases of culture (Schein, 1989, 2004); Collins and Porras' (2001; 1995) landmark study on preserving the core/stimulating progress paradox; and Limerick, Cunnington and Crowther's (2002) meta-strategic management cycle. Of recent times, a range of Christian authors, including Lowney (2005), Willard (2003) and Hirsch (2007), have also proposed ideas and perspectives that seek to identify and articulate the processes of maintaining a distinctively Christian ethos and identity beyond the first and second generations. Table 1 summarises these frameworks relating to the cultural phases of development within an organisation.

What is significant about each of these models is the imperative that leaders in each generational phase intentionally link back to and re-align their strategies and structures with founding vision and core ideological values. This preservation and perpetuation of core cultural ideology and values is therefore especially pertinent within Christian schools and colleges, as these institutions have historically struggled to maintain their cultural resiliency beyond organisational mid-life (Bartel, 2004; Belmonte, 2006; Dosen, 2001).

The current study: Method

To investigate how principals within Christian schools and colleges were seeking to sustain core vision, values and institutional resiliency, research was undertaken across a range of Christian schools that were entering into organisational mid life or consolidation phases of cultural development and had experienced leadership succession since their inception. The study adopted a qualitative paradigm

“*This preservation and perpetuation of core cultural ideology and values is therefore especially pertinent within Christian schools and colleges*”

Table 1: Synopsis of theories of cultural development / dis-integration within organisations

Generation	Weber / Berger (1976)	Schein (2004)	Limerick et al. (2002)	Hirsch (2007)
1st generation pioneer generation	charisma	founding / early growth	founding phase	movement ethos
2nd generation prosperity generation	routinisation	mid life	consolidation and continuity	settling movement ethos
3rd generation perishable generation	rationalisation	maturity and decline	renewal phase: discontinuity and reconfiguration	institutional ethos

of inquiry that used a multiple case study design to specifically investigate how principals within six purposively sampled Christian schools were seeking to cultivate sustainable school cultures that preserved and perpetuated a distinctively Christian school culture and ethos whilst simultaneously responding to change, progress, growth and development within an ever-increasingly complex and market driven socio-cultural milieu.

The purposive sample of the six principals, who were the primary unit of analysis in this case study design, had suitably met the inclusion criteria protocols for the study and were selected “because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorising, about a still larger collection of cases” (Stake, 2003, p. 138). Significantly, five out of the six principals selected for this sample had more than 20 years experience in Christian education and three of these leaders had ten or more years experience within their current schools.

Complementing these principals’ stories, and assisting in the triangulation of the data sets, a range of interviews were also undertaken at each school with board representatives, experienced and new teachers. These participants provided further insight into the personal stories of the principals and the contextualised processes, principles and practices that were being used to cultivate sustainable Christian school cultures in these settings.

Due to the contextually bounded settings where each principal was endeavouring to cultivate sustainable Christian school cultures, it was imperative that a suitable description of each site was articulated. In doing so, the researcher was able to map the specificities of each setting and use these data for meaningful analysis and generation of the “stories within the story”. The research findings of the within case data revealed distinctive site

based narratives that encapsulated the stories of how principals were cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures within these settings. Figure 1 highlights how the findings from each school informed and substantiated the unfolding story that emerged as a collective, multiple case site narrative within this inquiry.

These within-case findings were analysed across all case sites and the relevant categories and sub-categories from these findings contributed to an unfolding meta-story regarding the cultivation of sustainable school cultures in these schools. The study revealed that, within these contextually bounded settings, principals were cultivating sustainable cultures through the utilisation of a range of principles, processes and practices for sustainable cultural meaning making and capacity building. Specifically, the findings arising from the across-

“*Principals were cultivating sustainable cultures through the utilisation of a range of principles, processes and practices*”

Figure 1: Relationship of within-case and across-case stories analysed in this study



case analyses revealed four key guiding principles for sustainable Christian school cultures that were being utilised by principals in these contexts.

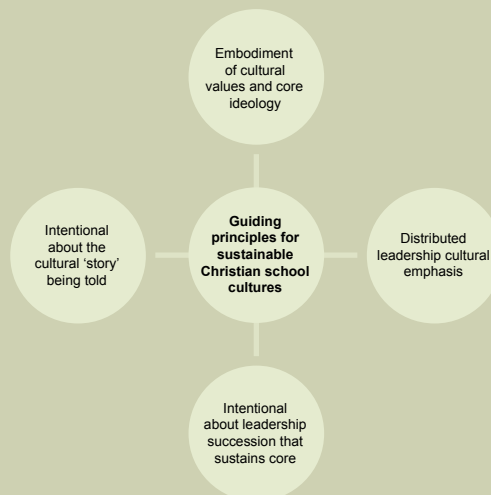
Results and discussion

Guiding principles were identified as a range of pre-dispositions regarding the role of the principal in the cultivation of sustainable Christian school cultures that enhanced culture-building and meaning-making capacities within these settings. These guiding principles were defined, within the context of this study, as “overarching and tacit assumptions that inform, enhance and promote sustainable cultural practice, action and behaviour”. Figure 2 presents the four guiding principles that emerged regarding how principals, the key actors within this study, were seeking to cultivate sustainable Christian school cultures during changing times in these settings.

These guiding principles were evident across all case study sites and were deeply embedded within the site-specific settings where each school leader was enacting and actively demonstrating these principles. It is also important to note that these principles were not about a singular and individualised model of leadership that was the sole domain of one person, but rather a distributed and de-centralised commitment to leadership configuration and structure that actively and intentionally placed the onus of responsibility for cultural sustainability upon a range of school community stakeholders.

“Sustainable cultures were cultivated when leaders ensure that the cultural story is always being told”

Figure 2: Guiding principles for the cultivation of sustainable Christian school cultures



Guiding principle 1: Intentional about the cultural story being told

The findings of this inquiry revealed the importance of the principal in both shaping and sustaining the Christian school’s culture. The participants across all sites consistently made mention of the role of the principal as an integral, and in many cases, indispensable component in the cultivation of sustainable cultures. One participant described the role of the principal in cultivating sustainable cultures as “absolutely critical”.

[Principals need to] have a very clearly articulated vision of where the school is heading...It’s our stake in the ground, basically that we try and link everything else to. So I see him as absolutely pivotal in that role. (Teacher, School C).

The across-case findings also found that the role of the principal in cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures was not merely about leadership per se but a particular and highly intentional leadership that focused upon the specific cultural elements and imperatives within a given school context.

[The principal] has to be the paramount person He’s the...leader...that’s where your culture develops well. It doesn’t actually develop from him but he grabs hold of the culture of the school to perpetuate that culture. (Teacher, School A)

I think the role of a principal is paramount in the direction that a school goes...It is like you are one degree off. In a short period of time that doesn’t really matter. Over time it does...I know the principal is a key person in any school, for tone, for direction (Principal, School E).

Numerous studies have also identified that it is the principal who is pivotal in shaping and modifying effective school cultures and that leaders need to be strategic, purposeful and intentional about cultivating cultural elements within their schools (Cranston & Ehrich, 2009; Deal & Peterson, 2009; Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

The findings also revealed that principalship, within these contexts, was grounded upon an assumption that sustainable cultures were cultivated when leaders ensure that the cultural story is always being told. The within and across-case analyses highlighted that leaders were intentional in perpetuating their core cultural distinctives through the explication, re-iteration, and perpetual telling and re-telling of their organisational “sagas” or corporate narratives (Abrahamson, 2004; Clarke, 1975; Denning, 2005).

It is not my role to merely tell the story...I must ensure that the story is being told. (Principal, School B).

The findings would suggest that these cultural storytelling imperatives can occur through verbal, symbolic, first hand/second hand narratives, written and/or oral forms, and tangible and intangible mechanisms and are not the responsibility of any one person and/or leader within a given school culture. Furthermore, the findings suggest that whilst some schools were more clearly exemplified as 'storytelling' cultures (as the within-case analyses of School B identified), the principle of ensuring the 'cultural story gets told' was a recurring theme for principals across each school participating in this study.

The within-case vignette from School B provided a portrait of how these storytelling principles and priorities were enacted and highlighted the critical role that consistent and well explicated story-telling of the cultural distinctives had upon the cultivation of School B's culture. Within School B, these opportunities for the telling of the cultural narrative were distributed, where possible to a range of storytellers.

I only know the story second hand...I think it's inherent where possible that stories are told in a first hand narrative. So that's where...we use the [Hillview] heroes to be sharing those stories on primary assemblies, secondary assemblies, in staff meetings. And retell that with their passion and memory. (Principal, School B)

The intentional use of these organisational heroes reflected the manner in which the principle of telling the cultural story can be sustained and perpetuated to all members within a school community. Such a diffusion of the cultural story to many voices within these settings built the social capital of all participants and allowed for personalised expressions on an unfolding and collective narrative that was being told and celebrated across the school.

I guess what I have seen over the years is that you need to tell a story, and you need to tell a story regularly...it needs to be celebrated as often as you possibly can...The job of a principal I believe is to guard that, it is not all my responsibility alone to see that happen...But the staff will not do that... unless they're encouraged in the journey by a leader, or leaders who share that regularly, with integrity. (Principal, School F)

This highlighted Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) assertion that if "we don't talk about our collective memories we will lose them" (p. 248). The findings suggest that, within these settings, the capacity for both sustainability and shared meaning-making within a school community entering the organisational mid-life phase of development was

greatly enhanced when principals were intentional about the repeated and creative telling and re-telling of their cultural stories.

Such a priority is supported by Sergiovanni (2006) who contends that story-telling emphases assist in creating purpose, meaning and a "community of mind" within school cultures (p. 138) and assist schools in keeping the organisational narrative alive during each phase of cultural development. A range of other authors have also identified the importance of ensuring the story gets told during each phase of cultural development (Abrahamson, 2004; Deal & Peterson, 2009; Denning, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Limerick, et al., 2002) and research findings arising from specifically Christian school contexts further support the perpetuation of the core cultural narrative by both principals and other key actors in the school community (Belmonte, 2006; Long, 1996; Twelves, 2005).

However, other authors have challenged the assumptions that underpin the intentional perpetuation of a dominant cultural story by principals and have raised concerns regarding governmentality, agency, and suppression of alternate stories within such contexts (Argyris, 1999; Bates, 1986). Bates asserts that these contextually embedded cultural stories are "both constructed and contested" and that sometimes these dominant stories, rather than serving as cornerstones for cultural sustainability, can also act as "mechanisms of suppression" to protect the dominant hegemony.

It is the maintenance and contestation of what is to constitute the culture of organisational life that provides the dynamic of rationality, legitimation and motivation in organisations. This dynamic is the praxis of administration. (Bates, 1986, p. 83)

Bates highlights the interpretive tension between maintenance and contestation that is an administrative reality within the cultivation of sustainable Christian school cultures. It is for this reason that principals need to ensure that the intentional telling of the cultural story remains collective, interpretive and well disseminated through a range of meaning-making cultural emphases that provide personal understanding to all stakeholders within the school community.

Guiding principle 2: Embodiment of cultural values and core ideology

The study's findings also reinforced the importance of principals embodying and exemplifying the core ideology that was being promoted in their schools.

“*Story-telling emphases assist in creating purpose, meaning and a “community of mind” within school cultures and assist schools in keeping the organisational narrative alive*”

[Leaders] should have the vision and the values of the school, the Mission Statement...They should know it...so that the people who are following them...would look to them in their actions and their behaviours...and be able to follow that...They are really the shining light. They set by example. (Teacher, School B)

Similarly, a teacher at School E suggested the principal exemplified the values that he was trying to cultivate and sustain within this College community.

[Our principal is consistently] modelling to the school...What he lives, his core values that he expects other families to have in the school, both as staff and as family members in the school, is exactly what he lives in his own personal life and I think that speaks volumes. (Teacher, School F)

Not only were core cultural values being modelled by principals within these contexts, but the ethical decision-making processes that were being demonstrated by principals were also perceived to be important considerations for cultural sustainability.

We may or may not agree with every decision made but it's never a values decision. So what does it matter? It doesn't mean that was the wrong thing...That wasn't a values decision; that was a business decision...But a values decision can be more destructive to a school when the values are not lining up with the values of the Bible...and that is where you see mischief and the school really struggling to find its direction. (Teacher, School C)

These findings further reinforced the imperatives of personal character, integrity and the embodiment of core cultural values within the life and leadership of principals. What was particularly revealing from the findings was that core cultural values and identity must be exemplified by some *body* or some *bodies*, and needed to go beyond nicely presented prospectus documents, mission statements, symbolic elements and promotional materials. Whether this was expressed through terms of endearment when referring to their staff members and their 'living' core ideology (observed in School C), or through the modelled examples that were representative of leaders at School B, D, and E; the imperative of *embodiment* was identified as a key factor in the cultivation of sustainable cultures in these settings. The leadership literature reinforces this principle.

The leader's character is a strategic source of power for infusing the culture of his/her organisation [sic] with a code of ethic, moral vision, imagination and courage. Leadership excellence cannot be evaluated without an assessment of the leader's character. (Sankar, 2003, p. 54)

Sankar's observations are supported by other research relating to moral leadership, transparent and ethical principalship imperatives (Limerick, et al., 2002; Lingard et al., 2003) and the links between the personal character and authenticity of the leader and collegial and highly effective school cultures (Clement, 2003; Cranston & Ehrich, 2009; Duignan, 2006; Fullan, 2003; Peterson & Deal, 2002).

Guiding principle 3: Distributed leadership cultural emphases

Another principle identified was the collaborative and distributed nature of how principals were leading within each case school.

[The reality of the contemporary role] of the head has changed. He's not only a teacher, he's [an] administrator. He's in the public eye. He's got to be a real people person. He's got to promote the school. A whole facet of things. It's so different. (Board Chairperson, School D)

I think the principal is quite demanding in the sense that I think a good principal needs to be multi-gifted, multi-talented. There's probably more principals out there than there are ones that are gifted across the board. I think schools struggle when they have got principals who focus on particular areas to the detriment of other areas. (Teacher, School E)

This comment identified the multi-faceted role description of the modern day principal and the challenges that they encounter when seeking to cultivate sustainable school cultures in an era of change.

Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) analysis of contemporary schools contends that "no one has to distribute leadership in a school; it's already distributed" (p. 136).

[Schools are not entirely dependent]...just upon a principal. I think definitely the management in a school—I think in a school the size of this one here at [School C], I probably would say of the middle management that [principal] has employed...[are] very important in establishing a culture. I don't think in a school of this size it necessarily comes down to one person, but obviously his leadership of that core group does a lot. (Teacher, School C)

I think the key role of a principal is...more of a CEO role here. But...it's got to be transformational to start with...then moving into a distributed leadership where, I think, the size of schooling these days...it absolutely demands a team. (Teacher, School C)

The repeated manner in which distributed models of leadership were being adopted and promoted across these schools also reinforced that leading

“The ethical decision-making processes that were being demonstrated by principals were also perceived to be important considerations for cultural sustainability”

a school was not a singular and individualised responsibility. The principal of School C elaborated on these distributed processes that cultivate cultural sustainability.

I don't think [the principal is] the only person who has that responsibility. In fact I think it needs to be engendered that a wide group of people own the vision, know the values, know the way things tick around this place in particular and why it's worked in the past that way... But the leader plays a good part in making sure that ownership continues and is understood. (Principal, School C)

The collective commitment, particularly but not exclusively from a leadership team, to a distributed model that intentionally reinforces the cultivation of sustainable core ideology was, according to these findings, a highly effective strategy in the cultivation of sustainable Christian school cultures.

This commitment to distributed leadership is a well researched theme within the wider literature. The concepts of “transformative” leadership and “distributed” leadership emphases (Caldwell & Spinks, 2008; Gronn, 2009; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss, 2009; Macbeath, 2009; Sergiovanni, 2006), and the subsequent benefits that such models have upon staff agency, empowerment and retention (Gronn, 2000; Leithwood, et al., 2009; Sergiovanni, 2006), student performance (Leithwood, et al., 1999), and school culture and organisational distinctiveness (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Macbeath, 2009; Spillane, et al., 2001) are well developed themes in the educational leadership literature. The findings from this research supports these studies and reinforces that cultivating sustainable cultures within these contexts was not about a ‘one man’ approach to leadership but rather a collaborative and intentional commitment throughout the entire school community.

Guiding principle 4: Intentional about leadership succession that sustains core cultural values

A final guiding principle that arose from the across-case analyses was that, within these contexts, sustainable cultures were cultivated when principals were intentional about leadership succession that sustains the core vision and values. The findings revealed that the capacity for principals to develop aspirants who ‘carry the flame’ of the school’s cultural distinctiveness and core ideology was perceived as an important feature in these schools’ cultural sustainability.

One of the most significant events in the life of a school is a change of leadership. Yet few things in education succeed less than leadership succession. (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006, p.57)

The findings arising from this study reinforced that leaders within these contexts were intentionally seeking to make ‘leadership succession succeed’ and were seeking to cultivate leadership succession principles that were integrated with their core ideology and cultural distinctives.

The principal of School B asserted that leadership succession had always been an intentional priority of working with staff who “are coming up through the school and embracing the culture to carry it on”. Whilst not intentionally limiting new successors to the role of principal only to “insiders” (Wenger, 1998), the intention was to ensure that cultural distinctives were sustained by any new leader within the school community.

Whether it's from the accounts lady to the business manager. They'll try and have anywhere from three months to six months transfer...time. (Teacher, School B)

The rationale for such a transfer period at School B was based upon a commitment to guarding the distinctive cultural elements and a firm commitment to ensure these distinctives were not diluted by new leaders and staff within the school. A range of cultural artefacts were used through these leadership succession transitions including memorabilia, urns, a principal’s Bible that was passed to each successor, and a ‘raising of the standard’ symbolic plaque. These symbolic artefacts combined with a highly intentional induction into not just the principal’s roles and responsibilities, but most importantly to the school’s distinctive cultural emphases.

The intentional embedding of core cultural values as part of leadership succession processes were also evident at School C. The school had recently purchased two large crystal chalices, one for the board chairman and one for the principal, that were presented during an induction of the newly appointed leader. The principal’s chalice was inscribed with the following statement:

RAISING THE STANDARD

Every principal of [School C] Christian College is entrusted with the responsibility of ‘raising a standard’. A standard is a proud banner that openly declares the convictions of a group of people. [School C] was established to provide excellent Christian Education—For Character, For Excellence, For Christ. As this crystal chalice is passed from one principal to another, it represents an ongoing commitment to ensure that what was ‘started in the Spirit is completed in the Spirit’.

“Cultivating sustainable cultures within these contexts was not about a ‘one man’ approach to leadership”

The principal of School C explained the use of these symbolic elements and their role in ensuring that leadership succession remains grounded in the school's core ideology.

We set these chalices up that were presented as ongoing mementos...when a new leader comes... they're charged with the responsibility of continuing to raise the standard and hold the core values, whether they're explicit or implicit. To seek them out and to take on the responsibility of not letting the vision slip. Not letting the standards go down... It becomes something that gets passed on from generation to generation. (Principal, School C)

These examples of the value of sustaining cultural distinctives during leadership succession reinforce Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) research which suggests that schools that are intentional about succession "build strong and broad professional cultures with firmly held and courageously defended purposes that will inoculate schools against mediocre and indifferent successors" (p. 76).

Whilst cultural symbolic elements are one expression of how Schools B and C were cultivating leadership succession principles that sustained core cultural distinctives, both schools were also highly intentional about cultivating leadership succession *management* rather than merely succession *planning* within their school contexts (Hargreaves, 2005; Schall, 1997). Both principals spoke of transition and induction phases during their succession into their principalship roles. These induction experiences provided both newly appointed principals with opportunities to orientate themselves to the rhythms and rituals of their specific schools and ensured that core ideology was being sustained.

Furthermore, the principal of School C reinforced the importance of succession management when he described the distributed nature of his leadership structure and how such an approach is developing leadership capacity amongst his staff. The principal of School D concurred with these distributed initiatives and articulated how succession management was developed within his context.

Obviously in a school, because you have stratification there will be a lot of things happening that demonstrate to middle management and to other staff what the next role up occupies. It is inherent; it is in the nature of the school. (Principal, School D)

The intentional manner in which core ideology is being sustained through the cultivation of succession management strategies and initiatives within these sites is also a well supported process in the wider

literature relating to leadership succession and succession management (Garchinsky, 2008; Gronn, 2009; Hargreaves, 2005; Leithwood, et al., 1999; Schall, 1997; Wenger, 1998).

In contrast to the cultivation of cultural emphases and distributed approaches to leadership succession that were identified at Schools B, C and D, School F was specifically intentional about the naming and development of a successor from within the school setting.

I think that's important for a community to know that a senior leader has a clearly anointed successor and that successor is a viable alternative who has the confidence of the community. So that's an intentional thing and when we appointed our deputy, he needed to be somebody who could viably step in and become principal should anything happen to me. (Principal, School F)

This intentional model of leadership succession adopts what the literature refers to as a planned continuity approach, whereby a successor is identified, appointed and groomed whilst the current leader is still in the school (Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Such an approach to leadership succession is highly intentional and reflects a planned and strategic approach to succession principles and sustained cultural distinctiveness. However, the literature relating to leadership succession would caution that the appointment of a 'chosen one' can have adverse affects within the school community, who may fear nepotism or favouritism; cloning of leadership styles and abilities; and the very real possibility that the appointed successor may ultimately leave the school before a leadership position becomes available (Garchinsky, 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

In some schools this is a very deliberate intent and they see that part of the process is the grooming of the next generation of leaders. I don't buy it. I subscribe more to 'chaos theory' on that issue!...I think a lot of leadership things are contrived. And who is making the decision about who is going to be the future leader? (Principal, School D)

This question reinforces the challenges of succession planning and succession management and highlights the complexities of seeking to suitably prepare aspirants for principal leadership roles (Cranston, 2007; Cranston, 2008; Gronn, 2009; Sergiovanni, 2006). Whilst many schools tend to overlook the principle of leadership succession and how such succession will ensure sustainability of core cultural emphases (Garchinsky, 2008; Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006), the

“**Induction experiences provided principals with opportunities to orientate themselves to the rhythms and rituals of their specific schools and ensured that core ideology was being sustained**”

across-case findings revealed that the importance of principals being intentional about sustaining core ideology through a range of leadership succession and leadership capacity building initiatives.

Conclusion

This article has presented a selection of findings relating to how principals are cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures during changing times. The research highlighted that the role of the principal in cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures was a multi-faceted, challenging and above all intentional one that was underpinned by a range of key principles regarding the cultivation and perpetuation of the distinctive cultural emphases and expressions within these site-specific contexts. The findings revealed that leaders were using four guiding principles to assist in cultivating sustainable cultures. These principles included: being intentional about the cultural story being told; embodiment of core cultural values and ideology; distributed leadership emphases; and being intentional about leadership succession that sustains core vision. **TEACH**

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“The research highlighted that the role of the principal in cultivating sustainable Christian school cultures was a multi-faceted, challenging and above all intentional one”

The nexus between principals' leadership characteristics and primary teachers' response to challenges of change

Teachers are functioning on the outside but how are they coping on the inside?

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Abstract

Significant change is occurring in the education systems in most countries around the world. This article, based on a larger educational change study, examines perceptions of Australian primary teachers employed within the Seventh-day Adventist Church education system (Adventist Schools Australia, ASA) regarding the impact of change. Teachers indicated that an increase in parent expectations is having a significant impact on their ability to manage change, both functionally and emotionally. It was found that the leaders in this system are perceived to be relatively effective across nine leadership characteristics. Modelling, based on linear regression, suggests that teachers perceived that different leadership constructs are needed to enable teachers to successfully deal with change functionally, emotionally and with a positive view of future change. In addition, teachers perceived that leaders are best able to support the change process when they are *Relators* and *Collegial Managers*. However, the *Adaptor*, which was the highest significantly significant construct, has a negative impact on the change process as the teachers perceived it.

Introduction

In an educational context, the modern world is fast, compressed, complex and uncertain; this presents new problems and challenges everyday for school systems and the teachers who work in them (Fullan, 2005, p. 127). The compression of time and space is creating accelerated change, innovation overload

and intensification in teachers' work. Further, as Hargreaves, (1994, p. 9) suggests, ideological uncertainty is challenging the Judaeo-Christian tradition on which many school systems have been based, raising crises of identity and purpose in relation to what their new missions might be. This is also the case in the ASA setting.

Teaching has become harder than ever before because of the impact of these changes. Shrinking budgets, critical media headlines, crowded curricula, increased cases of litigation and unrealistic expectations (from the teachers' perspective) impact day-to-day teaching. Collectively they can ultimately undermine a teacher's sense of adequacy and self-respect, and may lead to low levels of motivation and career satisfaction.

A motivated staff is a powerful catalyst for school improvement. Competent leadership by the principal is seen to be essential to build and nurture the motivation of staff, particularly to engage in change. In Fullan's (2005, p. 127) view, motivation is the key to engaging in change, he asserts that "the holy grail of change is to know under what conditions hordes of people become motivated to change".

Competent leadership involves the optimising of the human resources available in any organisation. Leaders need to be sensitive to the needs and experiences of supervised colleagues and help to develop their skills and qualities to the advantage of the individual and to the benefit of the organisation as a whole. It is the principal's responsibility and role to lead effective change thereby avoiding crisis and chaos as well as staff alienation, dissatisfaction and detachment from change.

“Competent leadership by the principal is seen to be essential to build and nurture the motivation of staff, particularly to engage in change”

This article, based on a larger educational change study, contributes new insights for leaders by linking previously identified research on desirable leadership attributes to specific ‘levels’ teachers deal with change—managing in a *functional* sense, coping in an *emotional* sense and being willing to positively view change in a *future* sense. It examines perceptions of primary teachers employed within ASA schools regarding the aspects and extent of change within the education scene that impact on their practice. Further, it explores these teachers’ views on how school leaders can best help them deal with the challenges resulting from constant change in their work environment.

Literature Review

Leadership

Research has shown that leadership within the school, particularly that of the principal, has a significant influence on the success of school change and improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). McEwan (2003) contends that certain leadership characteristics or styles are central to enabling teachers to deal successfully with the challenges associated with change.

One such style is a collective and shared leadership style (Spillane, 2006, p. 18) often termed a devolved leadership style, where power is shared among layers of leaders within the school. Relationships between administrative and teaching staff have been identified as one layer of this devolved model. For successful change to occur, teachers and administrators need to be connected. Fratz (1989) suggested that competent principals support improvements that are responsive to the classroom context and provide support for teaching staff and, in doing so, reaffirm the linkage between administration and teaching.

Communication between administration and teaching staff is a crucial variable in the implementation of school change (Murphy, 1994); however, ethos is central to a good connection between the two entities. In order to facilitate and maintain change that gains the support of teachers, and enhances understanding and support of these teachers, the ethos of the school administration needs to move from the generally bureaucratic-type task orientation to more people-orientated leadership styles and managerial practices (Frederick, 1992).

The devolved or distributed leadership model (Gronn, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2006; Hatcher, 2005; Spillane, 2006) has had a significant influence on change management in recent years. Although there is little agreement as to the meaning of this style of leadership, it is suggested that it be considered

a ‘way of thinking about leadership’ rather than a strategy, technique or model. Transformational leadership, which is visionary and “provides intellectual direction and aims at innovating within the organisation while empowering and supporting teachers as partners in decision making” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 371) provides a ‘thinking’ framework within which devolved leadership could develop.

Sustainable planned growth and development of a school requires leaders (and participants) to have an understanding and appreciation of the factors that influence the change process. Planning and monitoring changes is necessary, for as Kimbrough and Burkett (1990, p. 127) observe, “Change can be achieved without realising the desired improvement, but it is impossible to have improvement without having change.” Leadership is tasked with shaping change within unique environments and by differing locally appropriate processes to achieve desirable outcomes. Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL, 2000, p. 3) report that all educational institutions in Australia face change processes that are fundamentally different not because the institutions are fundamentally different (although they may be) but because there are distinctly different change processes occurring.

Change

Incremental change has been identified as being part of a normal aspect of the ordinary life of any organisation. It is the basic adjusting of current patterns of behaviour and action to address the ever-changing environment in which the organisation or school functions.

Fundamental change, on the other hand, is the kind of change that typically involves altering the very essence or identity of a system—in other words, transforming the system (Reardon, Reardon & Rowe, 1998, p. 133). It requires that teachers “depart drastically from the status quo and often that they do so in a limited period of time”. Frequently, knowledge and understanding are lacking, current skills fall short of those required and potential outcomes are difficult to define.

In general terms, whether the change is incremental or fundamental, the perceived impact will consequently influence the kind of feelings that teachers experience. The greater the number or scope of changes teachers encounter, the more likely they are to experience feelings of stress and inadequacy. McREL’s (2000, p. 5) research concluded that because deep changes are so unsettling, many prefer incremental change, even though this kind of relatively focused change may be insufficient in a given situation. Dealing with problems incrementally is

“Sustainable planned growth and development of a school requires leaders (and participants) to have an understanding and appreciation of the factors that influence the change process”

Table 1: Nine leadership characteristics

The nine constructs were:	
The leader as a <i>Change Communicator</i>:	where the leader communicates the need for and importance of change
The leader as a <i>Feedback Provider</i>:	where the leader provides effective feedback relating to teachers' professional work
The leader as a <i>Professional Developer</i>:	where the leader provides opportunities for teachers to be involved in relevant professional development
The leader as a <i>Relator</i>:	where the leader relates well to and empathises with staff, having a personal approach and is open and honest
The leader as a <i>Learning Facilitator</i>:	where the leader enhances the learning environment
The leader as a <i>Collegial Manager</i>:	where the leader has a participative and inclusive management style, being an active listener and empowering others
The leader as a <i>Analyst</i>:	where the leader is able to deal proficiently with a significant volume of data and evaluate context
The leader as a <i>Adaptor</i>:	where the leader is able to demonstrate a changing leadership style as is needed
The leader as a <i>Change Implementer</i>:	where the leader is able to facilitate the change, convincing the staff to contribute to and be involved in this change process

much more familiar and, therefore, more comfortable for most teachers. A fundamental change, on the other hand, requires teachers to learn new ways of interacting with problems and stakeholders.

The fact that incremental change is more comfortable for most teachers, should not motivate those implementing or leading change to fall back on incremental change over fundamental or rapid change. There are times when the change process should function in small, incremental and, therefore, generally less threatening steps. Nevertheless, there are also circumstances when, for the sake of school improvement and student learning, fundamental change is necessary. The impact of change on individuals needs to be addressed, though it cannot be the sole consideration to the exclusion of moving an education system or school in more productive directions.

Change has an impact on people's lives, stories, hopes and identity. As Stoll (2001, p.39) observes, "The human side of change is all too often ignored. Change is an intensely personal experience." The effectiveness of the change process will be influenced by the degree to which teachers understand the conditions that led to the need for change and indicate their willingness to personally engage in the process. Leadership practices can influence and shape both understanding and commitment.

In an Australian study, Hubbard and Samuel (2002), assert that organisations should uphold *captain-coach* leadership. Interestingly, this

leadership style represents a key difference between Australian findings and those in other countries. Australians' expectations of leadership are not that of generals providing subordinates with a vision and telling them what to do. Instead, Australians want their leaders to be coaches who are 'with them on the field', building effective relationships and providing a cause to follow (Hubbard & Samuel, 2002). Coaching is about becoming a partner in the team-member's journey toward enhanced competence and effectiveness, along with enabling teachers to deal successfully with the challenges associated with change. The impact the various leadership styles have on ASA primary teachers, however, is unknown.

Methodology

Data for this quantitative component of the study was collected using an empirical survey completed by 282 (66%) of the 425 primary teachers within the ASA system from 48 (84%) out of a total of 51 primary schools.

The validity and reliability of the survey items were the major controlling factors in the selection of the respective construct items. Consultants used to examine the validity of the survey were, or had been, teachers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church education system thus providing an increased likelihood of having, or being aware of, views similar to those of the respondents, views that could shape responses to the survey. The consultants' input was

“*The impact of change on individuals needs to be addressed, though it cannot be the sole consideration to the exclusion of moving an education system or school in more productive directions*”

Table 2: I am able to deal with the impact of change at work

	not dealing well	dealing well
Coping	35%	65%
Managing	25%	75%
Willingness to face change in the future	17%	83%

compared and finally derived using a modified Delphi Technique (Hsu & Sandford, 2007, p. 1).

The reliability of the survey was enhanced by piloting the collection of data from a sample group of schools in New Zealand which are very similar to those for whom the instrument was designed.

The empirical survey consisted of three sections. Section One of the survey included seven questions on demographics. Section Two included 39 statements, 38 of which required the respondent to rate (using a 6 point Likert scale) the leadership characteristics of his/her principal or head of primary school. Factor analysis of these items generated nine leadership characteristics or constructs (Table 1). The remaining question, the leader “effectively assists in implementing change within the school environment”, was considered an outcome. The nine leader characteristics chosen are not intended to be an exhaustive list; however, they cover most of the characteristics identified in the literature and pilot phase.

Section Three of the survey included 37 statements requesting respondents to rate themselves in terms of dealing with the challenges associated with change.

Three statements (using a dichotomous scale, well or not well) investigated how the respondents perceived they were dealing with challenges associated with change. The first related to how they were **managing**, in a **functional sense**, the impact of change factors. *Manage* implied the ability to be ‘on top’ of the changes at work and see themselves to be ‘doing well’ in their professional roles in spite of the impact of surrounding change. The second statement addressed perceptions of the degree to which they were **coping** in an **emotional sense**, with the impact of the change factors. The third statement questioned the extent to which the respondents were **willing** to deal with the impact of **future** change factors.

One statement investigated the extent to which the respondents perceived their *spiritual commitment/service orientation* assisted them to deal successfully with the impact of change.

Three statements assessed respondents’ perception of the extent of change taking place across three specific areas, society’s expectations, parental expectations, and rate of change in the curriculum.

The final 30 statements in Section Three were used to determine four constructs relating to teachers’ self perceptions and their reactions to the changes taking place in the work environment (*dissatisfied*—where the teacher becomes disengaged with the teacher role, *confident*—where the teacher remains optimistic with the teaching role, *seeks external support*—where the teacher feels he/she is supported and is able to link with external groups, parents and community or *seeks internal support*—where the teacher feels support from and is able to link with internal groups of teachers, general staff and administration). Level of agreement with each statement was indicated using a 6 point Likert scale (1 = Very Strongly Disagree and 6 = Very Strongly Agree).

Results

Teachers’ reactions to change

Dealing with change

It is interesting to note that even though teachers were feeling the pressure of continual change taking place in their professional environment, most perceived that they were able to still function well (75%) as they *managed* change within their work environment (see Table 2). There was, however, a significant *emotional* toll for many of the teachers, with 35% of respondents giving a negative response to the *coping* statement. The teachers also appeared to see the *future* in a more positive light than the present. They rated the ability to face their professional role in the *future* (83%) higher than their ability to *manage* at the present time.

Impact of types of change

Primary teachers indicated their perception of the impact of change in three domains. These included *the rapid rate of change in relation to school curriculum*, 85.5% of respondents indicated that they felt pressured by this challenge, while 85.8%

“Even though teachers were feeling the pressure of continual change, most perceived that they were able to still function well”

“
Teachers rated the ability to face their professional role in the future higher than their ability to manage at the present time
 ”

of respondents reported that *the increase in parent expectations* was perceived to be a challenge. Further, at a slightly lower level, 82.2% of respondents reported an *increase in societal expectations* as being a challenge.

An initial exploration using regression analysis was undertaken to investigate the potential relationships between primary teachers' perceptions of the impact of change in these three domains (rapid rate of change in curriculum, expectations of parents and expectations of society) and their ability to deal successfully with the impact of change in their professional working environments in terms of their ability to manage, cope, and adopt a positive view of future change. Of the three domains, the *Increase in Parent Expectations* was the only significant predictor ($p < 0.05$) of both the teachers' ability to manage and to cope with change. That is, as the teachers' perceptions of parent expectations, in terms of outcomes for their children increased, teachers' ability to manage and cope with change also increased. There was no significant relationship between any of the change domains and the teachers' willingness to positively view change in the future.

Leadership and change

Leadership constructs: A teacher's perspective

The primary teachers rated their respective school leaders using nine leadership characteristic constructs (See Figure 1). The extent to which a school leader was seen by the teachers as exhibiting the various leadership constructs was measured on a 1 to 6 scale where 1 indicated that the school

leader did not exhibit this leadership orientation and 6 indicated that they exhibited this leadership orientation to a significant extent. A mean rating of 3.5 or above, then, indicates that the school leaders were seen by the teachers as exhibiting this leadership construct to some extent.

Teachers perceived that the leaders were quite effective across all the leadership characteristics measured (all means > 3.5). The *Adaptor* construct rating, where the leader is able to demonstrate a changing leadership style, however, was statistically significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) than all other construct ratings, further the *Analyst* construct rating, where the leader is able to deal proficiently with a significant volume of data and evaluate context, was statistically significantly ($p < 0.05$) lower than the others.

Leadership constructs that promote effective change implementation

The potential relationships between primary teachers' perceptions of a school leader's leadership characteristics and the ability of the leader to carry through, with the help of his/her staff, a change agenda was considered. To do this, exploratory regression analysis was carried out ($n = 282$) using the *Leader as a Change Implementer* construct as the dependent variable and the remaining eight leadership characteristic measures (of the principals) as the predictor variables.

This data explains 13% of the variance in the ability of the leader to deal with change successfully (see Table 3). It suggests that the most effective characteristic, as perceived by the teachers, to deal successfully with the impact of change was for the principal to be a *Relator* ($\beta = 0.29$). This leader relates well to and empathises with staff; is accessible and approachable, has a pleasing personality, effectively negotiates and resolves conflict and most importantly is open and honest.

This data also suggests that in addition to the *Relator* attributes, the *Collegial Manager* ($\beta = 0.14$) construct contributed to teachers being able to deal successfully with the impact of change. The *Collegial Manager* has a participative and inclusive management style with qualities including involving others in decision making, passing on relevant information to staff, being an active and skilful listener, and empowering others.

The negative Beta for the construct, the *Adaptor* ($\beta = -0.14$), where the leader is able to demonstrate a changing leadership style, indicates that the more the teachers perceived the leader displaying the characteristics of the *Adaptor*, the less effective the leader was as the *Change Implementer*.

Figure 1: School leader's leadership construct: The teachers' perspective



This study found that leaders displaying the *Relator* and the *Collegial Manager* attributes were more effective in implementing change. This further enhances what is suggested in the literature, particularly regarding the captain–coach leadership model where the leader relates well and is open and honest with his/her staff, thus facilitating a collegial atmosphere.

Leadership constructs that support teachers dealing with change

An exploratory regression analysis was carried out to investigate the potential relationships between a school leader’s leadership characteristics (as perceived by the teachers) and the ability of teachers to deal successfully with the impact of change in their professional work environments. The leader as a *Relator* predicted both *managing* change ($\beta=0.20$), and *coping* with change ($\beta=0.27$) while the leader as *Collegial Manager* only predicted being *willing* to deal with *future* change ($\beta=0.17$). Further, the leader as a *Change Communicator* construct was significantly negatively linked ($p<0.05$), with teachers *coping* ($\beta=-0.18$) and the leader as *Feedback Provider* construct was significantly negatively linked ($p<0.05$), with teachers being willing to deal with change in the *future* ($\beta=-0.12$).

Discussion

Teachers dealing with change

In terms of teachers’ perceptions of the areas of change, the data indicated that only one of the three areas of change studied had a significant impact on the teachers’ perceived ability to deal with the challenges associated with change: an increase in parent expectations. An increase in parent expectations impacted positively on the teachers’ ability to both *manage* change in a *functional* sense and *cope* with change in an *emotional* sense but had no impact on being *willing* to deal with change in the *future*. This is somewhat paradoxical. One would initially expect that as the pressure from parental expectations increases, ability to manage would decrease. However, it appears that this pressure most often results in the teachers rising to meet such expectations. Coping in an emotional sense if expectations are met suggests there may be intrinsic and extrinsic affirmations for the teacher. However, there is probably a limit to this effect, one would suspect extremely high expectations may be interpreted as unrealistic expectations and this may have negative consequences in terms of teachers dealing with change.

Leadership characteristics: Dealing with change Effective change implementer

The results suggest that if the leader is to be a successful *Change Implementer* then he/she must relate well to staff and be open and honest (*Relator*), be inclusive in their management style (*Collegial*), and consistent in their approach to leadership (*Adaptor*). The data shows that the teachers felt that leaders who often changed their leadership approach impeded the change process.

Effective teacher supporter

The data indicated that only four of the nine leadership characteristics had a significant impact on the teachers’ ability to deal successfully with the challenges associated with change. These four characteristics were: the *Relator*, the *Change Communicator*, the *Collegial Manager*, and the *Feedback Provider*. As indicated in Figure 2, these characteristics impacted the teachers’ ability to deal with the challenges associated with change in at least one of the following three areas: *managing* change in a *functional* sense, *coping* with change in an *emotional* sense or being *willing* to deal with change in the *future*.

The School Leader’s Leadership Characteristics Model (Figure 2) highlights the point that a school leader displaying the *Relator* characteristics had a significant positive association with both teachers’ ability to *manage* change in a *functional* sense and *cope* with change in an *emotional* sense. Leaders displaying the *Relator* characteristics (relating well and being open and honest with teachers) appear to facilitate teachers to function well in spite of significant change, having the largest influence on teachers’ change adaptations ($\beta=0.27$ for coping; $\beta=0.20$, for managing), most strongly impacting the personal emotional response. Administrators wishing to develop positive teacher responses to change would gain the strongest improvement by enhancing the personal *Relator* attributes of integrity and open relationships. The *Relator* leadership characteristic however, is not associated with teachers’ willingness to deal with future change.

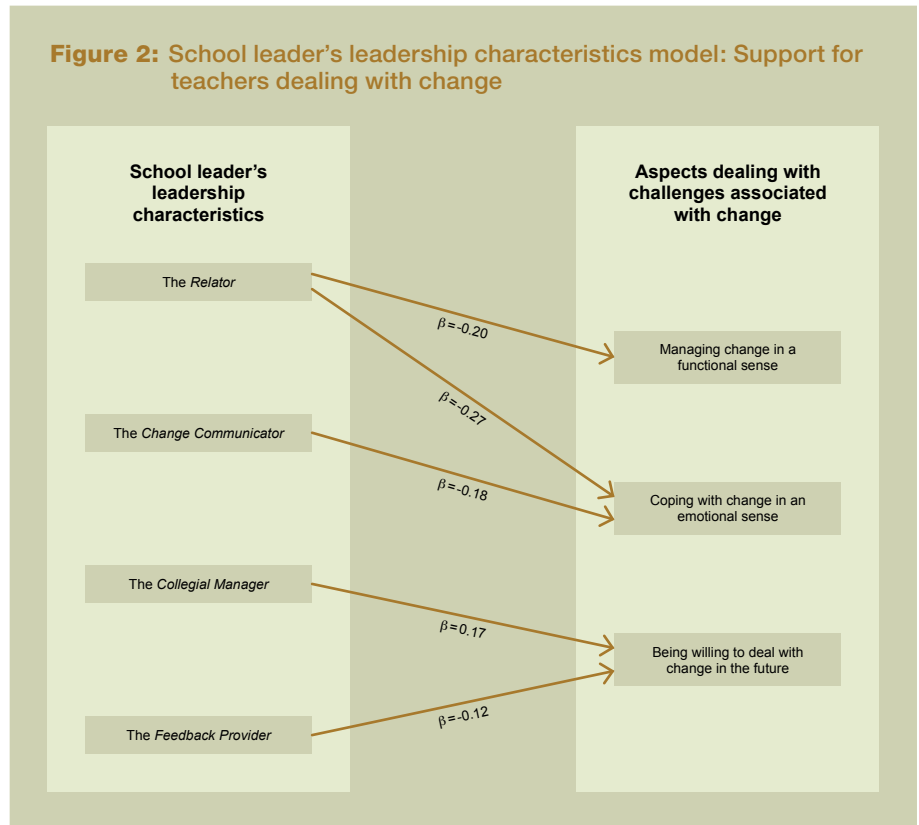
“This study found that leaders displaying the *Relator* and the *Collegial Manager* attributes were more effective in implementing change”

Table 3: Regression analysis for predictors of the change implementer construct ($R^2=0.13$)

Independent variable	Beta	t	Significance
The <i>Relator</i>	0.29	3.93	0.00
The <i>Collegial Manager</i>	0.14	1.98	0.05
The <i>Adaptor</i>	-0.13	-2.06	0.04

Dependent variable: change implementer

Figure 2: School leader's leadership characteristics model: Support for teachers dealing with change



The only significant positive predictor of teachers' willingness to deal with change in the future is the school leader with *Collegial Manager* characteristics. The *Collegial Manager* leadership characteristic includes a participative and inclusive management style that involves others in decision making, passes on relevant information to staff, listens actively and skilfully, and empowers others. The *Collegial Manager* leadership characteristic however, does not influence the teachers' ability to manage in a functional sense or cope in an emotional sense.

Finally, in this modelling, both of the leadership characteristics, the *Change Communicator*, and the *Feedback Provider*, are negative predictors of teachers' ability to deal successfully with change, with the *Change Communicator* potentially having a negative impact on coping with change in an emotional sense and the *Feedback Provider* potentially having a negative impact on being willing to deal with change in the future. The *Change Communicator*, who continually conveys the need for and importance of change, actually reduces the ability of teachers to cope with change or is closely associated with factors causing lower coping. It appears that teachers might be already

sufficiently change aware and find the repetition potentially increases negative emotions, perception of inadequacy, anxiety, fear and despondency. Likewise the *Feedback Provider*, where feedback is given on professional work, is also perceived as a potential deterrent to being willing to deal with change in the future. Perhaps teachers perceive that by acknowledging feedback, they may be surreptitiously coerced into further involvement with change in the future and be held personally responsible for outcomes, especially negative ones. This is a significant finding considering the increased emphasis on accountability within the current 'economic business' modelling of the educational enterprise.

Conclusion

This article has examined perceptions of Australian primary teachers employed within the ASA system regarding the aspects and extent of change within the education scene that impacts on their practice. It further explored these teachers' views on how school leaders can best help them deal with the challenges resulting from constant change in their work environments.

“The Feedback Provider, where feedback is given on professional work, is also perceived as a potential deterrent to being willing to deal with change in the future”

The study suggests that leaders need to understand that teachers are experiencing the impact of the rapid rate of change in curriculum, together with higher parent and societal expectations and are dealing with these changes at three 'levels': *functionally, emotionally* and with a positive view of the *future*. In addition, leaders need to utilise different leadership constructs to address responses at these three 'levels'.

The descriptive statistics of this study of change in ASA schools across Australia demonstrated that leaders are quite effectively implementing leadership characteristics and 13% of the variation in the successful implementation of change can be explained by three of these characteristics, *Relator* and *Collegial Manager* being positively related and *Adaptor* negatively.

To help teachers deal successfully with change in the *functional* sense and the *emotional* sense, the study indicates that the leader needs to improve the *Relator* characteristic. However, the *Change Communicator* characteristic needs to be minimised as it reduces the ability of teachers to cope with change in an *emotional* sense.

In order to increase teachers' *willingness* to positively view change in the *future* sense, the leader needs to enhance their use of the *Collegial Manager* characteristic. However, the *Feedback Provider* is associated with deterring *willingness* to positively view change in the *future*.

This research identifies perceptions made by participants in an education system in which limited research into change has occurred. It claims that leaders in the ASA system have rated quite effectively on the leadership characteristics constructs, and identified which of these leadership constructs are associated with specific teachers' ability to deal with change in these primary schools. **TEACH**

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“In order to increase teachers' willingness to positively view change in the future sense, the leader needs to enhance their use of the Collegial Manager characteristic”

Maps and mentors in the journey to manhood

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“*The transition to manhood is rarely simple—a major source of stress for some, a great roller-coaster of adventure for others*”

Boys are on a journey to manhood. With reference to academic literature and data from two studies undertaken by the author, this article explores that journey. Particular attention is given to the opportunities and challenges for educators. Aspects of the territory through which boys travel are considered, and the contribution of schools and teachers as maps, signposts and mentor/guides is discussed.

Introduction

This article explores the question, “What contributions can schools and teachers make to the transition of a young male from boyhood to manhood?” In discussing the issue, the article makes use of the familiar analogy of transition as a journey. The analogy will be developed to consider the territory through which the journey occurs, and the maps and guides which might facilitate that journey. The article incorporates personal reflection, a review of relevant academic literature, together with data from two research projects which the author has undertaken in the previous five years.

Before developing the discussion, a brief description of the two research projects is necessary. The first (Smith, 2006) was an inter-generational investigation of experiences and perceptions of the transition to manhood, with a focus on the intersection of spirituality with that transition. Six trios of son, father, and paternal grandfather, were individually interviewed. All owned a personal Christian faith. Questions were asked about how they understood masculinity, where their ideas had come from, and specifically how they saw their faith and church experiences influencing their understanding. In the discussion that follows, this study is referred to as Project One. The second is a more recent study (Smith, 2011) conducted while journeying with a group of teachers and a small group of students as their school implemented a ‘rites of passage to manhood’ program within the Year 10 (New Zealand) classes. Interviews with the staff delivering the programme (as a group), and a random sample of the boys (interviewed individually),

focused on perceptions of manhood, and their experience of being a part of the program. This study is referred to in this article as Project Two.

From a personal journey through manhood, and from observations gleaned from a working life as consecutively hospital doctor, church pastoral worker, counsellor and currently tertiary lecturer and academic, a perception gained is that the transition to manhood is rarely simple—a major source of stress for some (and consequently also for those around them), a great roller-coaster of adventure for others. Schools, given the amount of time boys spend (or are expected to spend) within their care, are a significant part of the journey. No school as an institution and no teacher as an individual can abdicate their role as contributor, as map or signpost, or as fellow-traveller and guide.

This article will first pay attention to some of the issues relevant to a discussion of boys growing up in contemporary Western societies. Subsequently, aspects of the specific opportunities and challenges faced by schools will be considered.

The territory of transition

1. What makes a male a man?

The destination of the journey is manhood, but it would appear that thinking on the nature of manhood and masculinity has changed over recent years.

Historically, sex-role theory and essentialist views predominated. Sex-role theory views men and women as having pre-determined specific roles—classically, the worker/provider male and the home-maker/nurturer female. These roles arise from innate gender differences. This way of thinking is well illustrated by reference to books written in past decades as advice for boys—for example, Shryock’s, *On becoming a man* (1951) and Knight’s, *Everything a teenage boy should know* (1980). Such a view “misses the complexities within femininity and masculinity” (Connell, 2000, p. 18). Often overlooked is the realisation that stereotypes may have a cultural basis (Law, Campbell & Dolan, 1999) and tend to change over time (Connell, 2003). Biological essentialism has seen the primacy of biology as a

determinant of masculine characteristics. 'Being a man' in this paradigm implicitly involves physical attributes and specific character traits, particularly physical strength. While in the current academic climate such a perspective struggles to maintain credibility, Connell (2000) points out, "This is the concept of gender underlying most pop psychologies of masculinity" (p. 18), which would likely be true in both the secular and Christian arenas. Authors writing from this perspective, such as Gray (1992) in the secular world, and Smalley and Trent (1992) from a Christian viewpoint, have been highly popular and influential within their different spheres.

More recently, post-structural thought has challenged essentialist ideas. That masculinity is socially constructed has become taken for granted in much contemporary writing (e.g. Berger, Wallis & Watson, 1995; Buchbinder, 1994). From this viewpoint, Boyd, Longwood and Muesse (1996) refer to three key concepts. Firstly, they highlight the distinction between maleness and masculinity. Maleness (sex) is to be seen as a biological category, whereas masculinities (gender), "as cultural constructs rather than a biological inevitability, are inextricably connected with the economics, political, social, psychological and religious dimensions of life" (Boyd et al. 1996, p. xiv). Secondly, they discuss the concept of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity "has come to be a technical term designating the dominant construction of masculinity in our culture" (Boyd et al. 1996, p. xv). Thirdly, as suggested in the quote above, contemporary thought thinks in terms of masculinities rather than the singular, masculinity. Connell (2000) writes that, "There is no one pattern of masculinity that is found everywhere" (p. 10).

The 'views of masculinity' landscape then, through which contemporary boys are journeying, seems very different to that experienced by their fathers. While the breakdown of rigid stereotypes may allow for a greater level of experimentation and finding a personal sense of 'fit', it can also cause a disorientation and sense of being lost in the ill-defined territory. If the journey to adulthood has not one but a range of potential destinations, how does one decide, if indeed the decision is conscious, in which direction to go? (Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2002).

2. Boys and their social scene

The following discussion has two parts. Firstly, there is the issue of boys and their families, and father-son relationships in particular. Secondly, brief consideration will be made of boys and their social behaviour.

Historically, industrialisation created a significant shift in family dynamics and in the parenting roles of both men and women. As men increasingly spent time away from home in paid employment, the home became a predominantly women-and-children environment and, accordingly, the burden of parenting fell to mothers (Adams & Coltrane, 2005; Balcom, 1998; Longwood, 1996; Mackey, 1998). One consequence of this pattern is the effect on boys' learning about their future role as fathers.

There is a strong argument which says, in Australia a man's own upbringing does not prepare him readily for the duties and responsibilities of child-rearing. (Burdon, 1994, p. 17)

Femiano (1998) believes that the disintegration of social constructs that govern men's lives has resulted in a sense of being adrift in the complexities of fathering.

Recent decades have seen two significant but very different changes. On the one hand, there has been a diversification of family structure and many more children growing up without the presence of their biological father, or even of an alternative male role-model. On the other hand, in line with recently changed perspectives on masculinity in general, paradigms of fatherhood have shifted to a more nurturing involvement (Mackey, 1998).

Burgess (1997) and Balcom (1998) both note that historically, father-absence generally had positive connotations. The father may have been away from his family for prolonged periods for work or military service, but he usually retained an emotional presence and the prospect of return. Both writers go on to comment that most contemporary situations do not carry the same positive connotations. The reasons for an absent father are many (Balcom, 1998) and are not confined to one stratum of society (Donaldson, 2003). The effects on sons are to some degree related to those reasons. While the effects are also modified by the developmental stage of the son (Beaty, 1995), the literature overwhelmingly describes a negative impact on sons abandoned, either willingly or reluctantly, by their fathers. This negative impact includes difficulty in the development of a masculine self-concept (Beaty, 1995). However, as Marsiglio and Pleck (2005) point out, discussions of father-absence and father-presence are complex and at risk of simplistic interpretation.

Pragmatically of more significance than the views of researchers on fathers, are the views of children.

Although the contribution of Australian fathers to the care and upbringing of their children is often criticised, many children talk about their fathers in very positive ways. (Burdon, 1994, p. 19)

“*The 'views of masculinity' landscape then, through which contemporary boys are journeying, seems very different to that experienced by their fathers*”

In Project One, one of the strong themes to emerge from the interviews was the sense that the interviewee saw his father as very significant in shaping his growing up. The influence, however, seems to be more passive or coincidental than intentional.

Well—obviously I think now that he was very significant in that I think, I mean we'd never talked about things but I—in watching him and how he did life, so I mean that's obviously helped shape my view of things. (son: Theo¹)

No one has ever told me that that's sort of the way it should be, it's just, kind of, the way that I've, kind of, sort of, been around and you just assume it's normal, that's how it is...Our relationship mostly just seems to be doing stuff together rather than sort of sitting down and having long chats or anything like that, it's just kind of getting stuff done and just being around each other mainly. (son: Michael)

Turning the focus to boys' social behaviour, it is worth stressing that the majority of young males do not fit the 'boys behaving badly' category, and it is too easy to brand all young males with a generic negative label. There are factors, however, which need to be considered when comparing boys and girls. Firstly, rates of suicide in New Zealand (as with other Western nations) are approximately four times higher for males than females in the 15–24 year old group. The rate of suicide for this age group has been rising over recent decades (Beautrais, 2003). Secondly, and appropriate to an educationally-oriented discussion, statistics show that boys are suspended and excluded from school at higher rates than girls. Lloyd (2000) reports from the UK, an exclusion rate of boys three to four times higher than that of girls. In New Zealand, exclusion of boys is 2.5 times more common than that of girls (Education Counts, 2007). These examples show that, while many boys are doing well, a higher proportion of boys are showing signs of stress and distress than their female peers.

Boys' anti-social behaviour has been specifically linked to the transition to manhood. Several commentators would contend that the secularisation of transition has resulted in harmful "pseudo rites" (Grof, 1996, p. 10).

When rites of passage disappear from conscious presentation, they nonetheless appear in unconscious and semi-conscious guises. They surface as mis-guided and misinformed attempts to change one's own life. (Meade, 1996, p. 29)

This may be manifest in a variety of ways. Salisbury and Jackson (1996) refer to violent behaviour and sexual prowess as means whereby boys seek to turn themselves into men. Lashlie (2005), describing her experience working in New Zealand prisons, concludes that many men end up in prison as a result of misguided attempts to prove their manhood. Others have described adolescents' attraction to cults (Hunter, 1998) and to gang culture (Grof, 1996; Hill, 1999; Sanyika, 1996; Tacey, 1997) as rite-of-passage substitutes, as individuals seek a longed-for sense of belonging. Tacey (1997) points out that while in the old rituals the ordeals of passage were closely monitored by village elders, often no such effective monitoring is available to contemporary youth with resulting high levels of destructive outcomes. Socially more acceptable, but potentially just as destructive as a substitute rite of passage, is the contemporary man's search for validation through commitment (often excessive and obsessive) to career success (Tacey, 1997).

The young males interviewed for both Project One and Project Two referred to a mark of manhood as moving beyond stupid or anti-social behaviour.

There's a lot of thirty year olds out there who are still kids at heart, still boys. (Martin)

When asked to explain the "thirty year old boys", he talked in terms of seeing irresponsibility and selfishness in the way they related.

I see 50 year old boys out there all the time. So it's [being a man] definitely not an age thing...You definitely know when you're dealing with a man and when you're dealing with a boy. (Steve)

Steve developed his view of "fifty year old boys".

They've lied to themselves, I think...You know, they've never been challenged, say on their attitude. (Steve)

Several of the boys interviewed in Project Two, all aged fourteen, in talking about what they saw as characteristics of men, referred to the idea that men don't do stupid things—or at least know when to stop. One of the boys talked very positively about the relationship he had with his step-father, but viewed his real dad as immature.

He's real immature for his age—I think I'm more of a man than he is sometimes.

3. Boys and educational achievement

In recent years, much has been written to draw attention to the apparent academic under-achievement of boys in schools, as compared to that of girls (e.g. Burns & Bracey, 2001; Education

“Several of the boys referred to the idea that men don't do stupid things—or at least know when to stop”

¹ Names have been changed.

Review Office, 1999; Rutledge, 2000). While for some, the relative lack of achievement is incontrovertible, this is not universally accepted. Writers have challenged the deficit views of achievement, placing the discussion within a broader perception of male economic advantage and social privilege (Gilbert & Gilbert, 2001) and educational policy (Francis, 2006).

This article is not the place to enter into the polemic around achievement. The debate, as illustrated by the references above, is often not simply about the well-being of boys and girls—it is political and part of a broader societal tension around gender. This observation, however, should provoke a consideration of the impact of the debate on the territory through which boys are journeying. If the conclusion is that the territory is being made harder rather than easier, then maybe it is time for a fresh look at the questions from a perspective that focuses primarily on the welfare of young people, rather than on academic or political point-scoring.

4. Boys and spirituality

The final area for consideration in terms of territory is that of spirituality and faith. David Hay (1998, cited in Wright, 2000) asserts that “children’s spirituality is rooted in a universal human awareness; that it is ‘really there’ and not just a culturally constructed illusion” (p. 41), a view echoed by a number of other writers (Bao, Whitbeck, Hoyt & Conger, 1999; Markstrom, 1999; Smith, Faris, Denton & Regnerus, 2003). Donahue and Benson (1995) state, “Opinion poll data indicate religiousness is widespread among adolescents” (p. 2). Markstrom (1999) links this importance of religion to adolescents with general developmental characteristics in adolescence—the development of abstract thinking, the ability to reflect, and the awareness of the existential questions, ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Why am I here?’ Engebretson’s (2006) Australian study of teenage boys and their spirituality reported that participants describe a spirituality that challenges dominant constructs of what it means to be a man, and has a greater focus on relational values and personal integrity.

Contrasting with internal experience is Heinz Streib’s (1999) work on external expressions of religious belief. He argues that the religious landscape has changed and that “the obligation to a certain tradition no longer seems to be the model for religious socialisation” (p. 265). His study suggests that increasingly adolescents are looking for transcendent spiritual experience in non-traditional ways and this has led to his coining the term “off-road religion” (p. 255).

Cook (2000) explored the impact of church involvement on the attitudes and behaviour of thirty-two non-Caucasian teenagers involved in inner-city Protestant churches in the United States. She found significant positive outcomes for those teenagers compared to non-involved teens. Specifically, she noted the contribution of church as being: the provision of mentors, the development of the ability to self-regulate, the fostering of identity development, the provision of a supportive community and the benefit of a relationship with a powerful, loving Other. Although “the youths eagerly attested to the importance of church in their lives” (p. 728), she also found that the church-involved group were more likely to have biological parents at home, less likely to have a family member on welfare, and more likely to have a job. She comments that the contribution of these other factors to well-being may also be significant.

In Project One, each participant was asked where they saw the church fitting in supporting boys growing to manhood, both in potential and in actuality. The responses were consistent. Although there was a feeling that the church could have a role, and needed to have a role, in reality it was generally perceived to be either not very effective, or totally irrelevant. These responses were not just from the sons, but from the fathers and grandfathers as well.

I think that the church service on Sunday is probably often the most inefficient way of reaching young people, because it is often geared to older people. (Martin’s father)

At the moment—where I see it? Totally irrelevant. Maybe that’s an indication of where I’m at but I find it irrelevant because it’s irrelevant for me and I don’t think if it’s irrelevant for me it can be relevant for my boys and it’s not. I can only sort of speak to that in terms of the experience I’ve had and as I’ve observed it. (Eddy’s father)

In his discussion of the prevalence of interest in spirituality among young people, Tacey (2003) challenges traditional religion to rethink its stance. Churches are faced with the challenge of adapting to significant social change while retaining their underlying ethos. The key words used by the sons interviewed in Project One related to the need of churches to consider the extent to which they are *relational*, *relevant* and *real*.

Opportunities and challenges for educators

Having considered some of the aspects of the territory which boys need to navigate, the role that schools and teachers might play in that journey, can be examined. Connell (2000), in referring to the contribution of schools to gender identity

“Although there was a feeling that the church could have a role, it was generally perceived to be either not very effective, or totally irrelevant”

formation, separates the school as ‘agent’ from the school as ‘setting’. The school is both an active, albeit sometimes unconscious, agent in supporting (or undermining) the journey. It is also a setting in which other interactions—peer group activities, for example—take place, unbeknown to staff.

Comments on school as setting will be drawn from Project One. Subsequently, attention will be given to three specific areas of agentic contribution—school ethos, curriculum and relationship.

1. School as setting

Of the six sons interviewed for Project One, three had attended a Christian or church-based high school. Dan’s primary education was at a Christian school, but he had attended a State secondary school. The other two young men (Steve and Theo) had been at State schools. There were no major differences in the experiences of these six between the state schools and the Christian/religious foundation schools in relation to transitions to manhood. As the sons reflected on what or who had supported their journey to manhood, school and schoolteachers did not feature significantly in an explicit way. Theo described how school had given him opportunities to develop responsibility.

My final seventh form year I was involved in everything. I was the lead role in the school production and I was involved in the counselling department working with younger students and I was a prefect and I had various responsibilities so that was great and I guess all that helped shape me.

Steve’s father thought that some of Steve’s teachers had contributed positively, but Steve himself did not mention them. While it would be hard to believe that school had not had a significant shaping effect on their transition to manhood, the influence seems to have been ‘hidden’ rather than overt.

2. School ethos

The new New Zealand Curriculum Document (Ministry of Education, 2007) clearly roots the specifics of subject content in school ethos and values.

Every decision relating to curriculum and every interaction that takes place in a school reflects the values of the individuals involved and the collective values of the institution. (p. 10)

The values listed by the Curriculum Document include equity, community and participation, integrity, and respect.

Previous mention was made of the literature regarding suspension and exclusions. In this context, Berkeley (1999), Cullingford (1999), Lloyd (2000), and Munn and Lloyd (2005) have commented on the importance of school ethos—that schools can be ‘including’ or ‘excluding’ in their general tone—and that this is often reflected in their suspension and formal exclusion figures. Berkeley (1999) believes that school ethos is more significant than government policy in determining exclusion rates, and discusses different ways of conceptualising students—as scholar, as community/family, or as socially deficient.

Extending the picture further, Munn and Lloyd (2005), and Knipe, Reynolds and Milner (2007) have linked exclusion from school with issues of wider social exclusion and isolation. Knipe et al. (2007) discuss an apparent link between exclusion from school and the wider social issues of underachievement, limited employment opportunities and involvement in criminal activity.

It is too easy to pathologise adolescent boys who are experiencing difficulties, either academically or socially. A systemic view needs to be taken in which the young person and their family along with their teachers and the school as institution form an integral whole. Schools do not have the luxury of washing their hands of responsibility for difficult situations. There is a need to move away from apportioning blame to a more constructive look at the bigger picture.

Every school needs to pay attention to its culture. Ethos is a two-way flow. The ethos of any institution is created by the individuals within it, particularly those in leadership and positions of responsibility. Reciprocal flow occurs as individuals within the institution absorb the values and attitudes, sometimes unwittingly, and embody the ethos, thus perpetuating a way of being. Ethos may be deeply embedded and resistant to change, but is not immutable if a group of people has the will to identify and recreate the way they want it to be. In relation to gender, school staff need to be asking what messages are being sent in the way people relate and in the images presented, about how to think and live out ‘being a man’.

3. Curriculum

It is interesting to note that, in recent years, schools appear to have been paying more attention to issues of gender identity within the broader school framework and within curriculum. Lashlie’s (2005) report on her work with twenty-five New Zealand boys’ schools is a good example. Given that the curricular choices that boys make are often driven,

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A systemic view needs to be taken in which the young person and their family along with their teachers and the school as institution form an integral whole
”

albeit subconsciously, by their notions of what ‘manly’ subjects might be (Foster, Kimmel & Skelton, 2001), this attention is entirely appropriate. Other writers (e.g. Salisbury & Jackson, 1996) have provided practical strategies and exercises for use in schools, aimed at provoking young males to explore their ideas of gender. Alongside this increased awareness has been the intentional introduction of programs and courses that are not part of the examined curriculum, but which are directed towards broader life skills, and particularly gender issues. One example is *The rite journey* program, which was the program being implemented in Project Two (Smith, 2011). *The rite journey* is a year long program designed by Australians Andrew Lines and Graham Gallasch for use in Year 10 (Australian Year 9). The year’s activities blend content on manhood and relationships, with ceremony and personal challenge.

While there were clearly some challenges in running the program—largely associated with it being a first time implementation—feedback from both the staff involved and the students was positive.

They’ve talked about stuff they wouldn’t otherwise have talked about at their age. We’ve shown them parts of what it means to be a man and how to deal with things in a manly way. (Teacher)

There seem to be some positive comments out in the community—mums are really keen on it—probably more than dads. (Teacher)

It’s been a good class—it doesn’t feel like a class where you have to sit and learn, but we have learned. (Student)

It helped me with what I want to be—provoked me to think in my own time—things have gone on in class that I have followed up—it’s been a nice break. (Student)

Alongside the content, both staff and students valued the ritual elements of the program. For example, early in the year each boy wrote on a stone something that he wanted to leave behind, the group then walked to the sea shore and threw the stone into the sea.

The beach—we wrote something on a stone—we’re getting rid of it. It made you think what could you do better. Before it, it seemed a bit of a waste of time but after, you could see the reason behind it. It worked for me. (Student)

The program serves to illustrate the opportunities for creative presentation of significant content. Wright (2000), while not addressing the issue of gender specifically, talks about the need to balance

communication of traditional values with the development and encouragement of critical thinking skills. Given the diversity of views on masculinity, opportunities for discussion and exploration without prescription or judgment are important.

4. Relationship

From years of asking the question of groups of students, it seems that high school teachers are remembered more often for the way they related to people as individuals, rather than for their curriculum knowledge or pedagogical skill. This element of relationship and modelling was apparent in Project Two. Even in the first two weeks of teaching the program, the teachers experienced a different way of being in the classroom.

The relationship thing, student/teacher, is a unique thing—quite different from normal teaching that I’ve found. And the fact that we have them 6–7 hours during the week—you create a pretty good relationship with the boys, which is something I haven’t experienced in normal teaching. (Teacher)

It’s the whole emotional side of things. I’m always giving a piece of myself to them and it’s mentally draining. (Teacher)

I was talking about Dad yesterday in the second half of the period. The period ended and there was [another] class following and I was still thinking about the old man at the end of that period. Really, no teaching went on in that second period. I gave them something to do but I was thinking about what I said. I thought “should I have let them in that far?” It’s a really personal thing. (Teacher)

At the end of the program, teachers were asked to comment again on relationships and modelling.

I think the biggest thing for me is seeing the students as human beings, not just kids in front of you to teach. You learn about their home life, the tragedies they’ve had, the happinesses they’ve had—they’ll freely tell you that—sometimes it’s emotionally hard to deal with—there’s a huge trust thing which is not there when you teach a normal class. (Teacher)

You are accountable for role-modelling what you are talking about. (Teacher)

You can’t talk one thing and know in your own life you’re the complete opposite. (Teacher)

A number of boys also noticed the different environment.

Mr X is always open about everything, he’s not afraid to tell us things. It’s helpful, encouraged us to share. Teachers are always big scary monsters

“Given the diversity of views on masculinity, opportunities for discussion and exploration without prescription or judgment are important”

that you don't like, but we've got quite a few cool teachers. 'Cool'? Cool means down to earth, doesn't pick on people. (Student)

We can communicate a lot more now, a lot of the boys have learned to grow up, the class has come together a bit. (Student)

The message here seems to be a reminder that teachers are not passive communicators of information. Rather, the power of relationship and the impact of modelling are significant, at least as signposts, and potentially as real-life guides for boys on their journey to manhood.

Conclusion

This article has endeavoured to review the territory through which boys are journeying on their way to manhood, and to consider the opportunities for educators in the provision of support and guidance on that journey. In conclusion, the importance of listening and carefully responding to the thoughts and experiences of the young men with whom teachers work, needs to be emphasised. Students probably have more questions than they will admit to, and fewer answers than they would like their teachers to think. It is not only a responsibility, but also within the capability of each person involved in the educational endeavour, to offer as a gift, the willingness to provide maps that are relevant to *their* journey (which might look different to maps previously used); the availability to act as a guide for part of the route; and the unswerving belief that, despite the hard work and heartache that might be involved, each young man can make it to the destination. **TEACH**

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“Students probably have more questions than they will admit to, and fewer answers than they would like their teachers to think”



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The potential to promote social cohesion, self-efficacy and metacognitive activity

A case study of cross-age peer-tutoring

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Abstract

Cross-age peer-tutoring involves the partnering of students from different educational levels in a tutor-tutee relationship. This case study involves an Australian Christian school that ran a cross-age peer-tutoring program (known as the 'Buddy' Program'). Data was gathered from a mixed-method approach employing observations, questionnaires, interviews and a focus group. The study found that in this particular case: the great majority of students enjoyed the program; student tutors perceived their role as that of 'helper' or 'teacher'; there was evidence that the program contributed to enhanced confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy among tutors and tutees; teachers, parents and participants perceived that students benefited socially and academically from the program; and the program contributed to an enhancement of metacognitive understanding among the student tutors. Finally, the study suggests that the potential benefits of a cross-age peer-tutoring program are maximised when teachers carefully plan the program and prepare both tutors and tutees for the activities of each session.

Introduction

Peer-tutoring is a process by which a student works one-on-one with another student to instruct, guide and monitor their performance during the development of some aspect of knowledge, skill or product (Goodlad & Hirst, 1989). Cross-age peer-tutoring involves tutors who, because of age and experience exhibit more advanced knowledge and skills than do their tutees (Gordon, 2005; Mallon, 2000). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

education in the English-speaking world generally focused on literacy and numeracy and classes were often large and multi-grade. The majority of teachers were poorly trained or untrained and many schools resorted to the use of older and more knowledgeable students as tutors for younger students (Doenau, 1985; Gerber & Kauffman, 1981; Goodlad & Hirst, 1989; Mallon, 2000). By the twentieth century, governments regulated education and classes were generally organised into age-cohorts. Professionally trained teachers took responsibility for teaching their own classes and cross-age peer-tutoring was largely regarded as a practice of the past.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, the ideas of Russian theorist, Lev Vygotsky were rediscovered and popularised by the American educator, Jerome Bruner who initiated the translation of Vygotsky's work into English (Pea, 2004; Wertsch, 1985). As a result, there was, in the 1970's and 1980's, a resurgence of interest in a new kind of cross-age peer-tutoring—peer-tutoring programs in which teachers mapped out precise activities, prepared both tutors and tutees and organised and monitored the interactions between tutors and tutees (Ehly & Larson, 1980; Gordon, 2005; Mallon, 2000). This interest has extended to the New South Wales Board of Studies which notes peer tutoring as a recommended initiative (NSW Board of Studies, 2000; 2007; 2011) and sponsors a TAFE-written 'Peer Tutor Program Manual' to prepare tutors for assisting other students in reading and literacy (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2006).

Effort is needed to structure cross-age peer-teaching programs, to prepare students for these programs and to monitor and maintain them. The question can be asked: Is this effort repaid in terms of the benefits? This paper addresses this

Cross-age peer-tutoring involves tutors who exhibit more advanced knowledge and skills than do their tutees

question in relation to a case study of a cross-age peer-tutoring program run in a semi-rural Christian primary school.

Theoretical background

Zones of Proximal Development and scaffolding

Vygotsky (1997) defined the cognitive region lying just beyond a young child's structures of current competence as the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). A task set within the ZPD almost lies within the child's level of competence, but includes some elements that are beyond the child's current ability. While such a task calls for effort and offers the promise of learning, the child's solo attempts to successfully complete it are at risk of failure. However, specific one-on-one assistance provided by a more knowledgeable 'other' at the critical point of difficulty may increase the likelihood of success and create circumstances in which learning will take place. Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) coined the term 'scaffolding' to describe this kind of one-on-one tutoring (this is the first usage of the term 'scaffolding' in educational literature).

If the social context is taken into account, it [problem solving or skill acquisition] is usually treated as an instance of modelling and imitation. But the intervention of a tutor may involve much more than this. More often than not, it involves a kind of "scaffolding" process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts. (p.90)

Over the past three decades, the term 'scaffolding' has been linked to Vygotskian views of learning (Corrie, 1995; Pea, 2004). The point is, where scaffolding is successful and where tutees internalise the elements of knowledge, strategy or skills, the tutees' zones of competence expand into, and extend the boundaries of their initial Zones of Potential Development.

Self-efficacy

It could be argued that a cross-age peer-tutoring program requires both tutors and tutees to function within their respective Zones of Potential Development. The activities set for the tutees by the teachers require them to consider situations that involve new or different elements of difficulty. While tutees can rely upon their older partners for guidance (scaffolding) the program requires the tutors to venture into new territory—to explore the role of guide, prompter and instructor in their interaction with the tutees. However, increasing experience in the tutoring role is capable of building a 'been there, done that' kind of confidence—a knowledge that the

young tutors have guided and aided their partners in accomplishing prior tasks, and an inner assurance that they can do so again. That inner confidence that an individual has the capacity to successfully accomplish a particular task is known as 'self-efficacy' (Bandura, 1997). While self-efficacy is generally context specific, continued successful involvement in a particular activity will begin to develop a general confidence that can transfer to other areas.

Metacognition

It could be argued that engagement in cross-age peer-tutoring could cause the tutor to think more deeply about the cognitive aspects of the assigned tasks. That is, the act of scaffolding tutees could cause tutors to become quite deliberate and selective in the way they feed information to, model skills before and pace aspects of their interaction with their tutees. The management of cognitive resources in this way goes beyond the mere performance of cognitive functions and enters the realm of metacognition (Biggs & More, 1995). Metacognition involves the reflective, purposeful and strategic use of information and/or skills to accomplish a particular task (Pintrich, 2002; Sternberg, Kaufman & Grigortenko, 2008).

Cross-age peer-tutoring as described in educational literature

As part of a meta-analysis of all factors contributing to student learning, Hattie (2009) reviewed the results of 767 quantitative studies involving peer-tutoring that included more than two and a half thousand participants. He employed Cohen's 'coefficient d' ('effect size') to determine interventions that produced positive and significant changes in student learning. He argued that values of 'Cohen's d' that exceed 0.4 resulted in discernable (he used the term 'visible') changes in skills and abilities of the tutees that indicated that learning had occurred. While Hattie found peer-tutoring to be generally effective in promoting student learning ($d = 0.52$), he found that cross-age peer-tutoring was even more effective ($d = 0.79$). The question that Hattie's work did not answer was, 'Specifically, what are the benefits to be gained by cross-age peer-tutoring?'

Friedland and Truesdall (2004) found that well-organised peer-tutoring programs permitted student tutors to provide academic assistance to their tutees in a socially pleasant and safe environment. When the peer-tutoring programs were well organised, participants appeared relaxed and comfortable with tutors filling the role of 'friend-figures' rather than 'teacher-figures'. The cooperative nature of peer-tutoring programs was found to flow on to other class

“*Well-organised peer-tutoring programs permitted student tutors to provide academic assistance to their tutees in a socially pleasant and safe environment*”

activities (Friedland & Truesdall, 2004) and even to extend into playground activities (Ehly & Larson, 1980; Hagan & Moeller, 1971). Dennison (2000) observed instances in which younger partners in the cross-age peer-tutoring programs sought assistance from their older partners in situations unrelated to the program. She interpreted this as suggesting that the program promoted confidence among the younger partners and a sense of citizenship within the older partners. Springthall, Hall and Gerler (1992) found that the older partners were proud of their roles as tutors and generally took their responsibilities seriously. There was agreement among researchers that cross-age peer-tutoring programs were potentially able to enhance the self-esteem of both tutors and tutees (Dennison, 2000; Friedland & Truesdall, 2004; Springthall, Hall & Gerler, 1992).

It is only a small step from increasing confidence, self-worth and independence to the development of self-efficacy—the inner assurance that one has the knowledge, skill and experience to execute a particular course of action (Bandura, 1997). The use of cross-age peer-tutoring programs focused upon reading have been found to promote self-efficacy in both tutors and tutees (Friedland & Truesdall, 2006; Kreuger & Braun, 1999). The levels of reading confidence of tutees involved in the programs were found to increase and tutees were also found to be more likely to persist with reading activities because they believed that they were successful. Tutors were found to enjoy their tutoring roles, to believe that they were successful tutors and to look forward to further involvement in the tutoring program.

One element that appeared to be omitted from discussions of the benefits accruing from cross-age peer-tutoring was the topic of metacognitive behaviour.

The study

The setting and objectives of the peer-tutoring program

A Christian school in a semi-rural setting ran a cross-age peer-tutoring program called the 'Buddy Program'. This program employed year six students as tutors in weekly, 30-minute, one-to-one sessions

with kindergarten students. At the onset of each new program, the Buddies were carefully matched to each other and the ongoing relationships between Buddies were monitored. The program was structured with activities explained to the Buddies at the beginning of each session. However, sessions were not structured so tightly as to preclude pleasant social interaction between buddy partners.

The teacher in charge of year six students has been designated as 'Teacher Six' and the kindergarten teacher as 'Teacher K'. The two teachers believed that the Buddy Program had the potential to foster pleasant social relationships between students from the upper and the lower ends of primary schooling and to enhance a cooperative environment of citizenship among the student-participants. In particular, the teachers wanted the older students to feel that they had an important part to play in helping kindergarten students acclimatise to the school setting and they wanted the kindergarten students to feel a sense of comfort and belonging. In order to facilitate this aim, the teachers ensured that the program was structured in such a way as to permit time for a degree of social interaction.

Research questions

The following questions were asked of this research:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the activities within the Buddy Program?
2. Do students enjoy working with their 'Buddy' in the Buddy Program?
3. What do year six students perceive as their role in the Buddy Program?
4. Does the Buddy Program contribute to the development of self-efficacy among the students involved?
5. Does the program contribute to metacognitive awareness among the year six students?

Participants

The Buddy Program at the school involved three year six classes (81 students) and three kindergarten classes (67 students). The study focused on one year six class comprising 27 students and one kindergarten class involving 22 students (see Table 1). In the two classes under study, five of the kindergarten students were each teamed with two year six tutors.

Method

The research employed a mixed-method approach involving the collection of data through:

1. observation of student interaction during their tutoring session;

“The teachers wanted the older students to feel that they had an important part to play in helping kindergarten students acclimatise to the school setting”

Table 1: Students involved in the study, by class and sex

Class	Male	Female	Total
Kindergarten	9	13	22
Year six	10	17	27

2. interviews with students and teachers;
3. a focus group with year six students; and
4. questionnaires to parents or care-givers and year six students.

Field notes were used to record observations of student interaction during tutoring sessions. Notes were made detailing the structure and content of the sessions. Field notes were also used to create a record of semi-structured interviews with five year six students (three male), four kindergarten students (two male) and the focus group with year six students.

The student questionnaire was completed by 24 of the 27 year six students and 16 questionnaires to parents or care-givers were completed and returned to the researcher.

Results

Students' perceptions of activities

Figure 1 provides a representation of year six students' response to questions in the questionnaire about the kind of activities in which they and their Buddies were jointly involved during the Buddy sessions. The three activities that dominated their recall of such activities included teacher-directed assignments, literacy involvements and free time for talking and playing. Other activities such as, art and craft, Mathematics and sport and games were recalled by fewer students.

Teacher directed activities included, worksheets and specific projects that actually involved, among other things, art and craft. However, when asked what activity they enjoyed most, 16 of the 23 students identified art and craft as the preferred subject area to work on with their kindergarten Buddy.

In response to specific questions about reading activities, a total of 15 year six students reported instances of having their kindergarten Buddy read simple words and phrases to them ('often' or 'sometimes') and all reported that they had their Buddy identify words and letters at some time during the sessions. During interviews, some year six students reported helping their kindergarten Buddy identify letters and sound-out words. Just over one half of the year six students (12) reported instances in which they read to their Buddy ('often' or 'sometimes').

These perceptions are in keeping with the teachers' aims of making the Buddy Program meaningful by providing structure and asking the year six students to mentor their Buddies and scaffold their efforts while allowing some free time for talking and playing.

Students' enjoyment of the peer-tutoring program

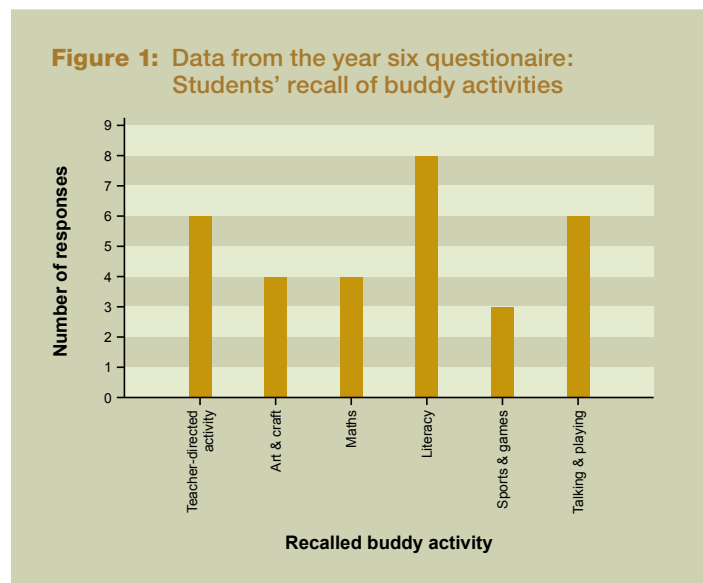
Observations made by the first author, interviews and responses to the year six and parent questionnaires were in accord that both kindergarten and year six students showed an enjoyment of the program and increased feelings of happiness as a result of it. At the outset of each session, Buddy partners were seen to search each other out and greet each other warmly, often with hugs. Interactions during the work period were observed to be pleasant with occasional bursts of laughter interspersing enthusiasm for the on-going project.

It was clear to the first author that the majority of kindergarten partners were comfortable in their relationship with their older tutors. During interviews, the kindergarten students stated that the time spent with their older Buddy was "fun" and that they enjoyed the interaction because their Buddy "helped" them and "played games" with them. When asked what they enjoyed most with their Buddy, they described hands-on and physical activities.

The year six students had observed the Buddy Program in action while in their junior years and, within the questionnaire, they described their anticipation toward involvement in the following ways. "Oh wow! This is going to be so much fun!" and "I was excited." Of the 23 year six students who completed the questionnaire, 19 students used words such as "happy", "good" and "great" to describe their feelings about themselves after the Buddy sessions. One year six student wrote that the program made him "feel great! It actually leaves me with a warm fuzzy feeling as I go back to

“*At the outset of each session, Buddy partners were seen to search each other out and greet each other warmly, often with hugs*”

Figure 1: Data from the year six questionnaire: Students' recall of buddy activities



class.” When asked how they would feel if the Buddy Program were to be stopped, one year six student said, “I would feel like they were stabbing me with a knife.” Another said, “I would feel very confused because why would they stop people helping little kids.” Yet another said, “I would feel sad because I love to spend time with my Buddy.”

In response to the parental questionnaire, six parents of kindergarten students reported that their child had made comments to the effect that, interacting with their Buddy was “fun”, “nice”, “good and fun” and that the child and the Buddy were “good friends” and “did fun things” together. One parent of a kindergarten child reported that her child “loves their [the year six student’s] help”. Six parents of year six students reported that their children often spoke about their younger buddies.

These results suggest that almost all of the year six and kindergarten students found the Buddy Program enjoyable and meaningful.

Year six students’ perceptions of their role in the Buddy Program

Most year six students perceived their role as that of ‘a teacher’ or ‘a helper’ with the assigned activities (see Figure 2). In reality, both roles essentially involved scaffolding the kindergarten students’ efforts with these activities. In interview, one year six student revealed an understanding of the scaffolding role when she said, “It is a fun thing...working with a Buddy and helping them create a thing that is purely their idea.” This perspective was consistent with observations of student interactions in which the year six students were seen to provide assistance or even co-labour with the kindergarten students

on assigned projects. Only two year six students reported that they felt they had not taught their Buddies anything.

Five responses to the questionnaire indicated that the year six students saw their task as that of a role model. During interviews, year six students saw their role as “teaching right and wrong” and teaching “kindness” and “manners”. Rather than teaching, they were modelling kindness and manners before their Buddies. One year six student stated that, “because I’m knowing that if I teach him what’s right while he’s small then he’ll be good when he grows up.”

As a result of the freedom allowed by their teachers, four year six students indicated that a part of their role was to be a friend and provide enjoyment for their kindergarten Buddies.

Evidence of self-efficacy among the buddies

The Buddy Program allowed for repeated interactions that had the potential to foster an inner confidence within the participants. The researcher observed students approach sessions with a manner that can be described as confident excitement. During an interview, one year six student stated that her Buddy was “cheerful” and “excited to see me”. Another said she enjoyed helping her Buddy and that after each session she “felt like I’ve made a great achievement”. Kindergarten students were observed to respond positively to the help provided and the year six students exhibited enthusiasm in being able to help their Buddies. Results from the questionnaire indicated that they were confident in being able to help their Buddies with their ‘work’. Specifically, they indicated confidence in helping with craft activities, reading and mathematics. Only two students indicated any reservation about their ability to provide help.

In responses to the questionnaire, parents of year six students described their perceptions of the benefits of the program to their children. The Buddy Program: increased their children’s “self-confidence and self-esteem”; developed “leadership skills”; gave the children “feelings of importance” stemming from a sense of being a “role model” and “mentor”; developed feelings of “self-worth”; and gave a sense of “belonging” and “empowerment”.

Evidence of growth in confidence and assertiveness was not limited to the year six students. The researcher noted that during interactive sessions, kindergarten Buddies took the lead role in almost a quarter of the activities observed. Further, parents of kindergarten students noted: that their child “feels good when their Buddy comes to spend time with them”; that it made their

“The Buddy Program allowed for repeated interactions that had the potential to foster an inner confidence within the participants”

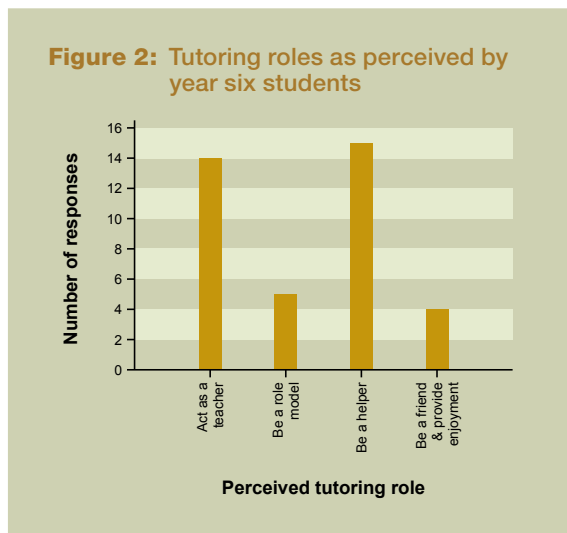


Table 2: Findings in relation to the research questions

Research questions	Findings
Question 1: Students' perceptions of the program	The students saw the program as blending substantive activity with pleasant social interaction.
Question 2: Students' enjoyment of the program	A large majority of kindergarten and year six students found the program to be satisfying and enjoyable.
Question 3: Year six students' perception of their role	Year-six students saw their role as that of a teacher and helper who modeled behaviour and skills to their buddies.
Question 4: Development of self-efficacy	Evidence of increased confidence, assurance to perform and sense of empowerment in both tutors and tutees.
Question 5: Metacognitive awareness	Evidence of a growing awareness of the year six students' knowledge and of deliberate management of that knowledge.

kindergarten child “feel important” to have a year six student spend time with them; that the period with their older Buddy gave them a greater sense of “confidence” and that the interaction “makes them feel special”. In addition, Teacher K stated that she observed increased levels of confidence amongst her students, especially their confidence in approaching older students. She also mentioned that the interactions developed their cooperation skills.

This sense of confidence and assurance to perform and the feeling of empowerment and self-worth are all a part of development toward self-efficacy.

Metacognitive skills

Two thirds of the year six students surveyed indicated that the process of helping their Buddy made them more aware of the things that they knew and could do. This inner awareness hinted at a dawning of metacognitive activity. As a result, the first author returned to the year six students and convened a focus group to further explore this issue. All of the year six students in the focus group agreed that having to explain something to their Buddy made them pause and consider their own knowledge and skills. One student said that he thought about how his Buddy might understand an idea before he explained it to him. Another student said that working with his Buddy “helps you to remember what you know.” A year six girl said that helping her Buddy with reading and spelling “reminded me of letter sounds which has helped me with my spelling”. In relation to number properties and helping her tutee count in groups, one student said, “I had to think about strategies for counting in two’s and three’s.” A second, student said she planned the “use of dice” in teaching her Buddy “about counting”. A

male year six student said that explaining a picture graph to his Buddy was not enough. In order to help him understand he had to “show” his Buddy “how a picture graph worked” (model the construction of a picture graph to him). Three more of the five students agreed that “showing” (modelling) was better than explaining. Finally, after reflecting on the interaction with her kindergarten Buddy, one student stated that the tutoring process made her “understand the importance of being kind [and] patient”.

Discussion

The teachers designed the Buddy Program to facilitate the inclusion of kindergarten students into the school. The change from the home environment to the culture of primary school can be quite abrupt for some kindergarten students. The teachers hoped to use the program to create pleasant and useful social links between the older students and the new arrivals. In so doing, they wished to provide the senior students with a sense of place and purpose while at the same time, acclimatising the kindergarten students. The results indicate that the teachers have achieved this and more (see a summary of findings against research questions in Table 2).

The students were well aware of the social-citizenship aspects of the program. In the eyes of the students, the Buddy Program blended meaningful academic activities with time provided for enjoyable, social interaction. The kindergarten students not only enjoyed their association with their older Buddies, but also appeared to bond with them. A number of year six students indicated that they saw their role as modelling appropriate values, relationships and behaviour. The enjoyment factor combined with the responsibility of tutoring meant that the year six

“*The process of helping their Buddy made them more aware of the things that they knew and could do*”

students found a sense of fulfilment in the program that was likely to have been linked to the substantive nature of the activities involved (Mathematics, reading and art and craft). Many year six students perceived their role as ‘helper’ and ‘teacher’ and observations made by the researcher, combined with descriptions provided in interviews, indicated that tutors variously scaffolded tutee activities or modelled skills and behaviour to their tutees. Success in the interaction had a spin-off effect for both year six and kindergarten students. Evidence suggested that a sense of self-efficacy grew in both groups. Year six students generally felt they were successful in their tutoring roles and kindergarten students were seen to grow in confidence to the point where a number of them took the lead in some activities. These findings are consistent with literature.

The most significant finding related to the onset of metacognitive thought among the year six students. While the literature is generally quiet in relation to the tutoring role and its effect on metacognition, the findings suggest that, in this instance, the role of tutor has caused some year six students to consider how they can best convey an idea or skill to their Buddy. This implies that the role of tutor can induce some students to manage their cognitive resources in order to achieve an optimal outcome. While this finding is tentative, it certainly advocates further direct research.

Implicit in these findings is the suggestion that this program worked because students knew what was expected of them. The program was structured, students were prepared for their roles and for the activities and teachers monitored events. Without this effort, the outcomes of the program could have been very different.

Conclusion

This paper acknowledged that constructing and maintaining an effective cross-age peer-tutoring program requires effort on the part of teachers and asked if the benefits of such a program were worth the effort. The findings of this case study clearly answer in the affirmative. **TEACH**

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“**The role of tutor can induce some students to manage their cognitive resources in order to achieve an optimal outcome**”



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The language of optimism

Karen Collum

Children's author; former teacher, Ballarat, Vic

Words are powerful. In the classroom, words are continually exchanged in the exploration of ideas, the sharing of understandings and the development of relationships. Words also give insight into whether a student is optimistic or pessimistic when faced with challenges, either big and small. Since optimists experience greater success in life, are happier and healthier, suffer less depression and may even live longer, the promotion of optimism within a school setting is a worthwhile exercise (Seligman, 1991). In order for this to occur, teachers would benefit from becoming fluent in the language of optimism.

“*Optimism is not whistling a happy tune in the face of dire circumstances or the repetition of meaningless, hollow words*”

Optimism is not whistling a happy tune in the face of dire circumstances or the repetition of meaningless, hollow words. According to American psychologist, Dr Martin Seligman, “The basis of optimism does not lie in positive phrases or images of victory, but in the way you think about causes” (Seligman, 1996, p. 52). When faced with events, either good and bad, we all have a habit of thinking that explains why these things are happening to us. Seligman calls this habit of thinking ‘explanatory style’. Some people seem to be born optimists, brushing off disappointment and moving on to the next challenge with a smile. Others fall on the pessimistic side of the spectrum, convinced that bad things always happen to them and that they are destined to only ever experience disappointment. The good news is that optimism is not simply a function of genetics. According to Seligman (1991), “Pessimism is escapable. Pessimists can in fact learn to be optimists...by learning a new set of cognitive skills” (p. 5).

Explanatory style

Teachers can have a direct influence on the development of optimism by carefully listening to students' language, identifying pessimistic statements and reframing students' experiences in a more optimistic way. To do this, an understanding of Seligman's (1991) explanatory style is helpful. There are three dimensions of explanatory style: permanence, pervasiveness and personalisation.

Statements of permanence often include words related to time, such as *always*, *never*, *forever*, and give an indication as to whether

a student thinks a situation is temporary or permanent. For example, if a child is struggling with a new concept they may say,

“I'm *never* going to be able to understand this.”

This is a pessimistic statement, as the child believes the situation to be permanent. An optimistic child may be struggling with the same concept but instead say,

“I'm having trouble with this *today*.”

This child believes the difficult situation to be only temporary; tomorrow may bring the understanding they lack today.

Pervasiveness relates to the magnitude of the impact that an event has on an individual's life. Words such as *everything*, *nothing*, *everyone*, *no-one* are often used in statements relating to pervasiveness. For example, a child may have had a fight with one of their friends. A pessimistic child may say,

“*Nobody* likes me.”

On the other hand, an optimistic child will say,

“*Renee* doesn't like me.”

For the pessimistic child, the loss of a friendship is all-encompassing; for the optimistic child, the loss is still felt and grieved but is limited in impact to that one person or context.

Personalisation relates to whether blame for an event lies with the self or with others. *Me*, *my*, *them* and *he/she* are commonly found in statements relating to this dimension. For example, a child's sporting team may lose the grand final. A pessimistic child may say,

“We lost because *I* didn't intercept the ball in the last quarter.”

An optimistic child might say,

“We lost because the *other team* were better on the day.”

It is important to note at this point that optimistic thinking does not involve the shifting of blame. There are indeed times when an individual is at fault and should take full responsibility for themselves, however pessimists often take responsibility for things that are not their fault.

Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

Students should be encouraged to apportion blame appropriately and to recognise that in some situations, there is in fact, no one to blame.

Reframing

With an understanding of explanatory style and knowledge of the key words for each of the three dimensions, teachers have the opportunity to reframe students' pessimistic statements into more optimistic ones. The following examples of reframing (with keywords in italics) illustrate how the language of optimism can be a powerful, positive influence within the classroom and beyond.

Example 1:

A student has a mishap in the Science lab.

Student: That experiment was a complete disaster. I *never* do *anything* right.

Teacher: Chemistry was a bit tough today, huh?

The student has made a pessimistic statement involving both permanence (*never*) and pervasiveness (*anything*). The teacher's response reduces the pervasiveness from a global 'anything' to a specific 'Chemistry' and the permanence from 'never' to 'today'. The teacher is not negating

the fact that the experiment was a disaster but is helping the student limit the impact of the negative experience.

Example 2:

A student is in tears because she wanted to play one game but her friends decided on another.

Student: *No-one* ever wants to play my game.

Teacher: Rachel and Madeline want to play something different today, do they?

The student's statement is pessimistic and contains pervasive (*no-one*) and permanent (*ever*) elements. The teacher's reframing provides a specific and temporary version of events which is a far more optimistic way of thinking about the situation.

Example 3:

A student does well in an English test after working extra hard.

Student: It was just a *fluke*. I guess I was having a *lucky* day.

Teacher: Sounds to me like all your hard work paid off.

The situation is a positive one, however this pessimistic student attributes a 'fluke' and a 'lucky day' for his success rather than his own hard work. This example falls into the personalisation dimension. Through the teacher's reframing, the student is encouraged to be more optimistic and take responsibility for their success.

Conclusion

The power of optimism cannot be underestimated and the long-term benefits for students and teachers alike are significant. Although it would be ideal for every student and teacher to experience a formal optimistic thinking skills program, there is much to be gained from informal approaches such as teacher-led reframing. Fluency in the language of optimism is one way teachers can have a profound, positive impact on the lives of their students, both now and long into the future. **TEACH**

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Teachers have the opportunity to reframe students' pessimistic statements into more optimistic ones
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[Photograph:
Dene Hawken]

Engaging with community

How schools are helping their students become informed, responsible and compassionate citizens

Beverly Christian

Lecturer, School of Education, Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW

with **Scott Camps, Lynden Chester, Philip Lillehagen, Shannon Quick and Cheryl Walsh**

In Tasmania, high school students sit with senior citizens and individually tutor them in computer skills. At a school in Victoria, Year 9 students studying hospitality serve a meal to community guests and provide dinner entertainment. In a small rural New South Wales primary school, the children are busy in their HOPE gardens, harvesting vegetables for charity groups who take food packages to families in need. Each of these scenarios represents a deliberate attempt to connect students with their community through service.

“As the 21st Century continues to bring changes to the structure of society, educators are continually challenged in their role of preparing students to take their place in society”

As the 21st Century continues to bring changes to the structure of society, educators are continually challenged in their role of preparing students to take their place in society. In order to achieve this, some schools are exploring the possibilities and benefits of engaging their students with the local community, arguing that citizenship develops within the context of society. Before the industrial revolution, most children had ample opportunities to engage with their community, as their home was their school, and their community their playground. They learnt to live and work within the context of their local community. While the post industrial model of schooling, which groups children according to age, has its advantages, there are also drawbacks to segregating them from wider society for large portions of time. With a call to raise the standard of education, and renewed emphasis on testing, educators are once again calling attention to the real purpose of education.

Is your job to teach children to pass exams? Or is it to teach children to think, and from there, grow as morally sound and decent people who are educated to know right from wrong and use their education accordingly? (Gilbert, 2011, p. 126)

Noddings, in her book, *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*, makes a salient point.

Teachers not only have to create caring relations in which they are the carers, but that they also have the responsibility to help their students develop a capacity to care. (2005, p. 18)

She posits four components of learning to care: modelling, dialogue, practice and confirmation. Noddings suggests building a culture of care that is complemented by ‘hands-on’ caring, where students experience themselves as the carers rather than caring from a distance (i.e. through fundraising and donations). She argues that this process of learning to care has positive outcomes for both the community and the students involved.

Goleman (2011, p. 44), sharing insights from a neuroscience perspective, identifies three motivating forces in an individual’s life. These are:

- the need for a “socially beneficial power, where you take pleasure in influencing people for the better or common good”;
- the need to affiliate, especially when working with others for a shared purpose; and
- the need for achievement, “reaching toward a meaningful goal”.

Involvement of students in community projects goes a long way towards satisfying these identified needs.

Exploring the topic from a social perspective, commentator Hugh Mackay (2010) has composed a list of ten desires that drive individuals. Included in this list are the desires to connect, to be useful and to belong. When schools offer opportunities for students to work towards meaningful goals in a context beyond the school environment, they are providing authentic experiences that help them connect, build a sense of community belonging, and gain the satisfaction of making a useful contribution to society.

Added to these sound reasons for community involvement is the biblical injunction to care for others (James 1:27, Micah 6:8, Mark 12:31, James 2:14–17, 1 John 4:19–21) which, for Christian schools, gives a clear mandate for many forms of community service and engagement. Jesus gave the ultimate example of

community engagement through His acts of selfless love on earth, culminating in His death on the cross. Furthermore, 1 John 4:7 tells us that God is love, and when God dwells in us, the manifestation of His love is through acts of service to others.

Schools that are intentional in bringing community and school together are enjoying the rewards this liaison brings. Service learning is gaining strength in all sectors of education. Community projects bring benefits to both the recipients and the students and staff. School programs may benefit the community in a variety of ways. One benefit may be the sharing of skills or resources. Secondly, programs that involve social interaction are a bonus, especially for individuals who may lead somewhat isolated lives. Thirdly, students may be involved in projects that help meet the physical or emotional needs of individuals in the wider community.

Community projects also have several key advantages for students. The first benefit is in the area of building self-esteem. Goleman (2011) maintains that healthy self-esteem is built primarily through a sense of accomplishment. Involvement in community projects contributes to that sense of accomplishment; of achieving something lasting and worthwhile that extends beyond the boundaries of self-accomplishment.

A second benefit of school/community involvement is that it provides opportunities for students to put their values into action. Values that are experienced are internalised. The process of building citizenship skills in students ties in very closely with the values of responsibility, justice, care and compassion. As part of the process of becoming 'good' citizens, students need to experience community and participate in care activities, accepting this as part of their responsibility to others.

Thirdly, by connecting students to the wider community, schools are helping them to become informed as they learn about the needs of other sectors in the community; responsible as they discover the interconnectedness of society and compassionate as they take action to make a difference in someone's life.

What follows in this article is a snapshot of schools that are taking the biblical directive of service seriously and finding ways to make it a reality for their students. Some schools are involved directly in acts of service, others are providing a positive role model of community to students and some are using the skills and abilities of the students to make a much-appreciated contribution to a targeted sector of society. All are using the school curriculum to extend their students and provide opportunities for citizenship building.

HOPE Garden

The acronym HOPE stands for Helping Other People Eat. Shannon Quick, principal of the Manning Adventist School fosters a sense of community belonging in his school through a gardening project. Using a no dig organic sandwich gardening method, Quick and his students grow fresh vegetables year round in raised garden beds and then donate them to charity groups who use them for food parcels. Students are involved in each step of the project, from bed preparation, choosing vegetables, planting and garden maintenance to researching organisations that may be able to use the produce, harvesting, packaging and handing over the produce. It is really important, maintains Quick, that the students are involved in the actual handing over process, as well as planting and tending the vegetables as this helps develop a sense of community identity. In this program, the emphasis is on giving the best of their produce to others. Giving is not new, says Quick, but often we give from our overflow. HOPE Garden focuses on giving what we would desire for ourselves. It also offers hope in two ways; physical hope and hope for eternity through sharing and fellowship.

Computers for Seniors

When Cheryl Walsh responded to a request for people to help senior citizens with learning computer skills, she was unprepared for the success of the program. As a result of a community survey, Year seven and eight students from Northwest Christian School in Penguin, Tasmania interacted with seniors in their community, teaching them basic computer skills. A volunteer ICT technician supervised each session and provided technical backup. The tutoring program was a great hit with the over 65s, who responded positively to their youthful tutors and surprised themselves with their new skills. In

“*Students need to experience community and participate in care activities, accepting this as part of their responsibility to others*”



HOPE Garden produce

[Photograph: Shannon Quick]

Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

“**Friendships were formed as the generations shared and perceptions each had of the other were significantly altered**”

turn, the students were able to meet a need in their community, resulting in a sense of accomplishment and increased self-confidence when dealing with the older generation. Friendships were formed as the generations shared and perceptions each had of the other were significantly altered.

Eating with Friends

At Lilydale Adventist Academy, the Year 10 Home Economics class have been busy cooking and serving meals for community members. On a fortnightly basis, the students plan, prepare and serve the meal to meet the requirements of the curriculum but they add an extra touch by providing dinner entertainment as well. In addition to hospitality, this program builds skills in organisation, event planning, public speaking, decoration and performance. It also provides the students with opportunities to work together towards meaningful goals. Lynden Chester, deputy principal, makes the point that there are many people in the local community who have limited social contact because of age, disability or mobility issues. The Eating with Friends program does more than provide a meal; it offers an opportunity for young and old to chat and form friendships and develops a sense of community belonging.

1 Eating with Friends

[Photograph: Lynden Chester]

2 Community Service Camp

[Photograph: Scott Camps]

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2

Chooseday Night

Port Macquarie Adventist School principal Phillip Lillehagen and his team recognise the pressures that young families face and have come up with a unique idea to encourage families to spend time together and build a sense of community. Called Chooseday Night, the school community offers a family night out at the school each Tuesday evening. Families enjoy a low cost meal and the school chaplain runs family friendly activities. Open to any community families, school families often invite friends to this relaxed, low cost

family night out. This program helps students and their families to build a sense of community where sharing and support for one another are natural outcomes. Although students are not directly involved in serving the community, they are observing the connectedness of families in a positive way. This modelling of community provides one of the important components of learning to care referred to by Noddings (2005).

Year 9 Community Service Camp

Heritage College in Victoria has recently run a Community Service Camp in which they took Year 9 students to a country town for a week. Students were engaged in two different kinds of activities. They visited local primary schools where they used puppetry, music, drama, crafts and games to present life skill programs on topics such as bullying. This type of activity gives the students a shared purpose, helps develop strong communication skills and reinforces the positive message of the programs to the Year 9 students as well as their primary school audiences. The second component of the program was a backyard blitz program where three families received a yard makeover courtesy of the Year 9 students and their teachers. This enabled the students to connect with community in a useful activity and also to practice giving care to others. The satisfaction of achievement was augmented by the thanks and tears of the recipients.

Conclusion

Each of the schools in this article is enthusiastic about their community-focused project. By thinking creatively, staff are modelling care and service as they connect students with their local community. Each student is also encouraged in their service by a sense of satisfaction and by appreciation from community members.

Whatever the size or nature of your school, why not explore ways to help students develop a sense of community responsibility. Whatever the project, large or small, the act of connecting students with their community in positive ways pays dividends now and into the future as students take their place in society as informed, responsible and compassionate citizens. **TEACH**

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Homework

Rachel Bentley

Mother, homemaker and former teacher at Macquarie College, Wallsend, NSW

As a new primary teacher fresh out of College, I quickly warmed to my new role and each day brought fresh levels of enjoyment. Teaching, for me, was an engaging experience, an engagement with children and, perhaps just as vital, an engagement with parents. And this engagement, with no exceptions that I can recall, was positive for all of us.

Although I have been away from full-time classroom teaching for several years, when I walk into a classroom for an occasional relief day or meet up with my former pupils and their parents, those warm, happy days come flooding back and it feels almost as if I had never left. However, I did leave, putting formal teaching aside to take up full-time parenting. Call it homework, if you will.

I am grateful that my teaching came before my parenting because it helped to prepare me for motherhood. In particular, teaching taught me that children are wonderfully different, and that there is no one way to engage them. Indeed, they enjoy variety in that engagement, as long as it is within a constant context of support and acceptance. I also learned that individual children can behave and respond differently at different times, even when the circumstances appear to be unchanged. As a teacher, I developed a keen sensitivity to this 'changeableness' of children and tried, as best I could, to remain unchanged so that the child did not also have to contend with a capricious or inconstant teacher. This equanimity has transferred to my parenting, with just the occasional mild lapse for none of us is perfect!

Another important lesson that teaching taught me is that children have parents. Hang on, you might say, this is as obvious as day. Well yes, but what is not so obvious is that many of those parents, especially parents of young children who are experiencing school for the first time, also go through a period of acute anxiety. And, like their children, they need to be reassured that all is well. Again, there is no one way to do this. However, getting to know the parents and making yourself available to them is an important first step. Almost invariably that first step leads to a closer collaboration between parents and teacher, not least because the parents soon realise that you, the teacher, have the best interests of their children at

heart. When teachers gain the confidence of parents, and vice versa, there is a subtle understanding by both that each has a legitimate role in the education of children. It is in this climate of mutual trust that the educational needs of the children are best served.

Our eldest child started school this year. I feel blessed and fortunate to have been able to stay at home these past years and raise our three children full time; it has been time treasured. It has also been a time of reflection on my former life, my time as a teacher, because I have always planned to return to that life.

What I have concluded from my reflection on these past years, my 'homework years', is that the roles of teacher and mother have much in common. I am reminded that "the child's first teacher is the mother"¹, but I am also conscious that there comes a time when mothers must, as it were, pass the teaching baton to others.

However, this handing over of children to other teachers is not the end of a mother's educational homework; that homework simply moves into a new phase in which the educational horizon of the child is expanded and becomes centred more on the school than the home. I see that I must also allow my own horizon to extend so that it embraces the school. After all, my daughter will soon be a part of that school family and she will appreciate that her mother is not a stranger there.

And I won't be a stranger because homework and classwork, you see, complement each other. **TEACH**

Endnotes

¹ White, E. (1903). *Education*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, p.275.



“It is in this climate of mutual trust that the educational needs of the children are best served”

[Photograph:
Nicole Meintjes]

BOOK REVIEW

The trouble with Paris: Following Jesus in a world of plastic promises

Mark Sayers (2008). Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson.

Brendan Pratt

Discipleship coordinator; director of children's ministry and stewardship, Greater Sydney Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Epping, NSW

Throughout the developed Western world, a corrosive epidemic is eating away at the faith lives of Christians. It assails us in our darkest moments: it comes to us at three o'clock in the morning when we can't sleep. It confronts us at every corner, three to ten thousand times a day. It whispers to our hearts that we've got it wrong, that our faith should not be in Jesus Christ of Nazareth but in something else. (Sayers, 2008)

Among an increasing number of resources that address the implications of a consumeristic worldview, in the reviewer's opinion, this book is still the most practical in dealing with how consumerism impacts faith. Mark Sayers, a pastor in Melbourne, not only looks at consumerism with cultural awareness, biblical insight and humour but moves beyond an analysis of the problem to develop a road map for escaping the trap of hyperreality. The writing style is clear and entertaining while making some difficult to define concepts easily understandable. Sayers synthesises complex material into an easy to read, even if at times, oversimplified, outline of the implications of hyperconsumerism.

Structure: The book is divided into three parts that follow a logical sequence. Part 1 establishes the problem of hyperreality and how it influences Western culture. Of particular interest to teachers is the discussion on how young people are socialised into hyperconsumerism. The section on consumerism as religion is particularly insightful. Part 2 looks at how hyperreality ruins faith and how consumerism shapes pictures of God. Part 3 outlines what it means to say "good-bye to a plastic Jesus" and instead live well in God's reality.

Content: Sayers shows how the combination of a hyperconsumer culture, mass media, and rampant individualism has created a world of hyperreality. The message behind hyperreality is that if people are to have lives of worth, happiness

and wellbeing, they need to move their lives into the hyperreal world.

After establishing how hyperconsumerism has infiltrated culture, Sayers outlines how consumerism is now the primary operating system that most people look to for a fulfilling life. If religion is to be defined as the worldview and beliefs that determine identity, actions and hope, then Sayers claims, hyperconsumerism is the biggest church in town.

Malls and movie theatres resemble churches. Celebrities resemble saints. Shopping becomes a sacrament, and gossip magazines, scripture.

Sayers claims that consumerism sabotages faith and has shaped a Post-Christian Trinity with a distant god, self as God and consumerism as folk religion. After explaining what it means to live in God's reality with a healthy picture of God, Sayers invites the reader to join the "reality revolution".

This resource is made even more useable by its accompanying group guide and DVD curriculum, targeted to older teens and young adults, including activities and application questions.

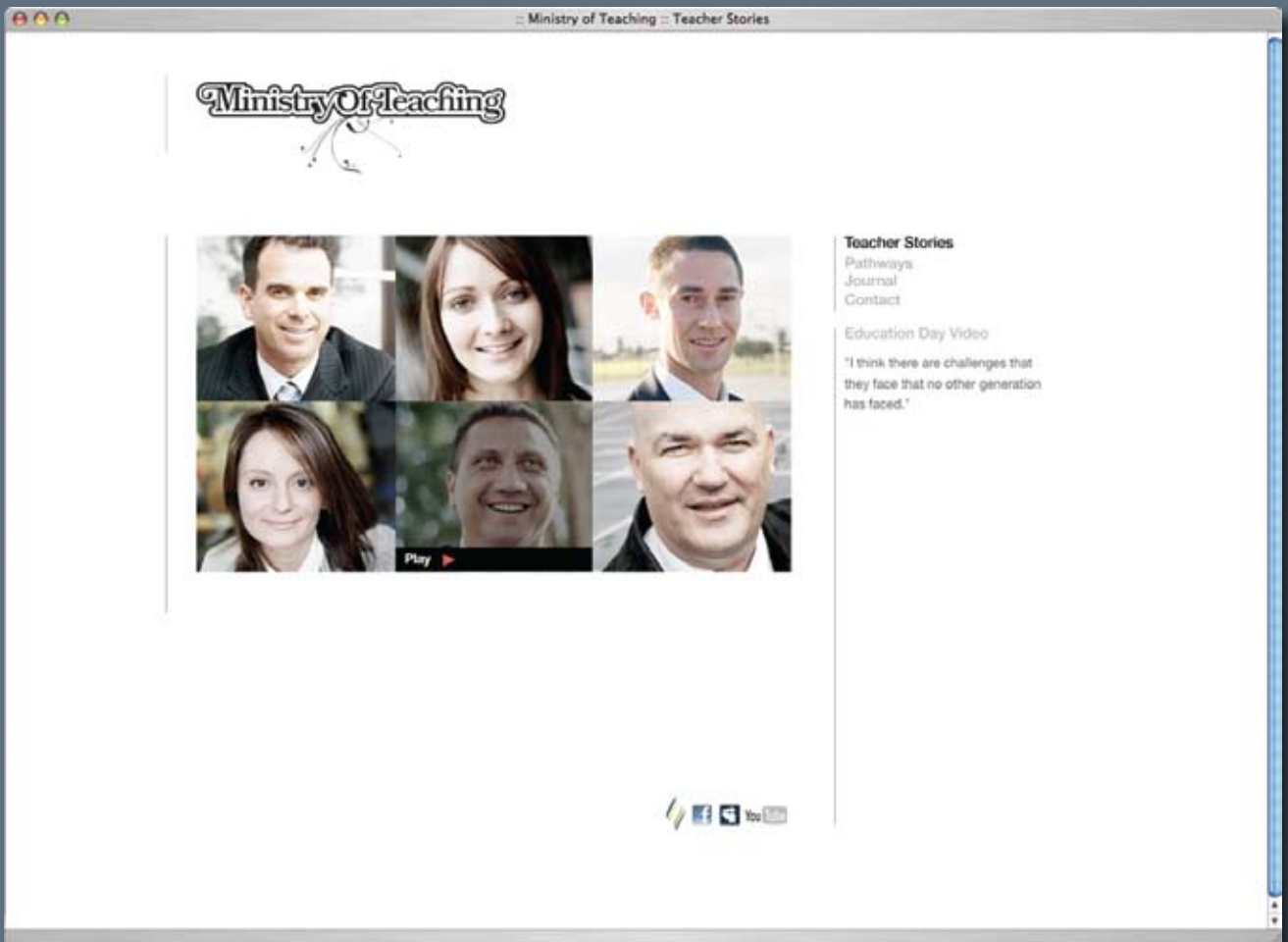
Comparison: While Sayers addresses issues of worship in thought provoking ways, he does not include the value of Sabbath in addressing consumerism. Jethani, in *The divine commodity* (Zondervan, 2010), does a more thorough job of investigating the implications of consumerism for developing a picture of God and includes a section on the Sabbath and consumerism. Bernard, Penner and Bartlett, in *Consuming youth: Leading teens through consumer culture* (Zondervan 2010), do more in addressing the dangers of consumerism; however, have a much smaller scope. Hamilton and Denniss, in *Affluenza: When too much is never enough* (Allen and Unwin, 2005), provide a more comprehensive sociological overview of consumerism's impact on culture in Australia; however, have not written with a biblical worldview in mind. Sayers' book provides the most comprehensive yet easy to read overall introduction from a Christian perspective.

The trouble with Paris provides a great starting point for addressing the problems of a consumeristic worldview in a Christian context. It represents valuable reading, in terms of personal faith development, for every Christian in a western context; however, is particularly valuable for educators and pastors. It deals with the realities of the world students are living in and the potential impact of the thousands of messages students receive everyday on their faith development. It is easy to read, insightful and thought provoking. **TEACH**

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