

RHODES UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP IN AN
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL IN THE EASTERN CAPE:
“Do alternative forms of leadership (such as servant leadership)
emerge through community building?”**

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Significant changes have taken place in recent years in leadership theory and practice world wide. Theorizations of effective leadership have evolved from being authoritarian and task-centered to a model in which leaders are encouraged to look beyond their self-interest and prioritize the interests of the group.

This study investigates the development of an alternative form of leadership through community building in two male school boarding houses. It attempts to ascertain whether students are able to work collaboratively towards developing an environment conducive to servant leadership.

Structured according to the transformative research paradigm, this action research study was conducted in an independent school, Kingswood College, in Grahamstown, South Africa. The College is a traditional independent co-educational school that prides itself on producing leaders. As the school was in the process of reviewing its leadership system, it became an appropriate site to investigate the development of community and to explore possibilities for the emergence of an alternative form of leadership that would reflect the attributes of servant leadership.

The participants in the study were volunteers from two boarding houses, who agreed to reflect on their perceptions and experiences of the way in which their houses functioned.

My research findings show that through their willingness to engage in moral dialogue, students can transform their boarding houses into closely-knit communities bound together by shared values and beliefs. Closer relationships make for better understanding. As the leaders take on the responsibility of caring for their juniors, a moral obligation begins to manifest itself. Leaders will display the attributes of servant leadership if they are prepared to acknowledge in practice this moral obligation to serve others.

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DEDICATION

This Action Research Study is dedicated to the youth, our future leaders, who pass through our schools in their formative years. May each one have the opportunity to be valued and empowered to lead in their respective communities with the dignity of a true servant leader!

With special thoughts of the boys of Wood and Jagger Houses of Kingswood College, in Grahamstown, South Africa, who were so much a part of this study. I'll be watching your progress with much interest.

ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SGB	School Governing Body
SRC	Student Representative Council
SRS	Simple Random Sample

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION



“Kingswood College provides an education in a family-like environment, developing the self-worth and academic, leadership, spiritual, social, moral, cultural and physical potential of every pupil and staff member”
(Kingswood College Mission Statement, 2007)

1.1 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

When one reflects on the leadership systems imposed on our students over the years it becomes evident that the roles that they have played as leaders have varied from the domineering to the subservient. This is most likely due to very top-down bureaucracies with autocratic leadership styles, which limited the effectiveness of the students as leaders. The old hierarchical model which was dominated by the concept that leaders “bark orders and run around doing everybody else’s work for them” is no longer appropriate and there appears to be a demand for change (De Pree, 1989:xix).

Change is always difficult, especially when one has to contend with the ‘traditional’ or entrenched way in which things get done. Change is necessary, but it takes training and guidance in order to introduce it effectively. Without this guidance, a term of office can become lonely and directionless. People are appointed to leadership roles as they are seen to have the necessary leadership traits or were identified as “born leaders”. But leadership ability also comes from experience and is not necessarily something that one is born with. Inherited and acquired characteristics may enhance an individual’s chance to be a leader, but experience as a leader greatly aids the development of leadership capability.

Nowadays, more students than ever before are showing a desire to be involved in the process of leadership, to utilise their abilities to make a difference in their environments by leading others. Historically the process of the election and appointment of leaders at schools has come under scrutiny from various quarters, due to the changing expectations and demands of leadership.

There has been a significant development in educational circles towards all pupils being given an opportunity to participate equally in the process of leadership, where the leader becomes the custodian of community values. However, in the light of the nature of my research, I would argue that more needs to be done to develop leaders who put others first and are accountable for their followers. There should be a greater focus on the development of leadership throughout the school by improving everyone’s ability to participate in the process of leadership. Max De Pree (1989:25) puts it aptly, “Having a say differs from having a vote”.

Everyone has the right to take part in any form of decision-making, so as to ensure that they understand the outcome. “The participation of pupils in the decision-making process in schools is in keeping with democratic management principles i.e. participation, transparency and recognition” (Nongubo, 2004:15). Bush (1987) (as cited in Nongubo, 2004:15) explains that “the essence of democracy is participation in decision making”. Collaboration in organisations allows people to become more involved in the decision-making process, thus promoting ownership. In a group context, it also promotes accountability among those involved in the process.

The location of my research was Kingswood College, an independent boarding school situated in Grahamstown. I chose this school because its staff members are currently reflecting on their student leadership system and the involvement of the students in community outreach projects. They are looking at alternative ways for their students to become more effective in leading others within the establishment. As it is predominantly a boarding school, with a Christian ethos, the school offers a suitable arena to carry out this action research project of exploring the development of a collaborative community and the possible emergence of servant leadership. The implementation of my action research provided opportunities to observe a paradigm shift in both the thinking and practical application of servant leadership through discussions around community building.

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Leadership among learners has been a contentious issue in South Africa for several decades and, in line with apartheid policies of ‘separate development’, the phenomenon has starkly different histories in historically white and historically black schools. Kallaway (1986 and 2002) and Hartshorne (1992) argue that schools were utilized as extensions of political institutions. At a young age pupils were taught to obey and not to question authority in an attempt to make them subservient (Kallaway, 1984).

Kingswood College is steeped in military tradition, with students having served in the Kingswood College Cadet Corps during the Anglo-Boer War. The Cadet Corps (Fig. 1) manned defensive trenches outside Grahamstown in anticipation of Boer attacks.

The College also had members of its staff and headmasters serving as ranked officers, for example, Colonel Gane (headmaster) and Captain C.O. Rich (member of staff). With Grahamstown being a frontier town and then military base during the Anglo-Boer War, a traditional ‘top-down’ military leadership system emerged on the Kingswood campus, teaching the boys self-discipline (Kirkby & Kirkby, 1994).



Figure 1: Officers and NCOs of Kingswood Cadet Corps 1900
(Kirkby & Kirkby, 1994:27)

This autocratic, ‘command and control’ method of leadership was dominant in the College until the changes of 1994 coinciding with the advent of democracy in South Africa.

Former model C schools saw themselves as institutions with a responsibility to develop leaders for the future. They adopted the “Prefect System,” which had its origins in England in the 1300s. Within this system, schools selected and appointed an elite group of learners who were seen as “born leaders” (Bernard, as cited in Horner, 1997:270). These “bachelors”, “prepostors’ or ”prefects’ were endowed with delegated powers and given authority over their fellow students, managing the daily routine of the schools (Forde, 2004:10). The system relied on the autocratic leadership styles of “command and control” (Wheatley, 2005:64).

The prominence of issues of power and politics in ‘black’ schools may be the reason why the system of prefectship was not readily accepted by ‘black’ students (Thompson, 2002, as cited in Nongubo, 2004). It was seen as having “a measure of prestige attached to [the selected prefect]” but offering very little in the way of true representation. The highly politicised black student population wanted to have a voice with a mandate to represent their community. In their struggle for freedom, young, predominantly male blacks emerged as powerful, assertive and militant leaders who became the “foot-soldiers of the revolution” (Kallaway, 2002:226). They were radical and involved in a low-intensity war, fighting against the burden of the apartheid government’s policies and the employment of its “agents” in township schools (Fig. 2).



This famous photograph was taken by a black photographer, Sam Nzima, at the height of the Soweto revolt. It shows a young boy, Hector Peterson (sometimes spelled '*Pieter*son'), being carried to hospital by Mbuyisa Makhubo, with his sister Antoinette Peterson running alongside. Hector Peterson died of his wounds.

Figure 2: Soweto Riots
(Wikipedia, 2007).

Growing recognition of the young “comrades” as leaders in the struggle for freedom challenged the social and domestic dominance of the older male in the communities. This was contrary to the forms of respect and obedience expected in male-dominated African communities. Value systems in the black communities were being eroded as the youth scorned their elders for being apathetic and passive in the face of the implementation of apartheid (Kallaway, 2002:226). They challenged authority, overthrew school hierarchies, created situations of anarchy and displayed no respect for their elders. Xaba (cited in Kallaway, 2002:231) points out that in the 1970s and 1980s black schools had become war zones and violence had been normalised. To counteract this anarchy, the state attempted to introduce an alternative form of representation for the students in the form of Student Representative Councils (SRCs).

The development of these Student Representative Councils in the late 1970s gave the learners a voice with which they could challenge unjust practices within their schools. Sithole (as cited in Nongubo, 2004:11) argues:

Through the SRCs the learners not only challenged the education departments and withstood the repressive apparatuses and strategies of the former apartheid state, but they also questioned the prerogatives of principals and parents to take decisions without consulting them and challenged their traditional views on schooling.

However, the SRCs were also ultimately rejected as being puppets of the authorities, clearing the way for the current system, the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996, article 11[1]) states that: “Every public school enrolling learners in the eighth grade and higher must establish a Representative Council of Learners (RCL).” (South Africa. Department of Education [DoE], 1996:10).

According to Kok (1997:1), the purpose of the Schools Act was to defend the rights of students by affording them greater opportunities for participation in and responsibility for the governance of their schools. Their interests and needs would now be represented and addressed on the School Governing Body (SGB) by learners who were selected by the RCL to serve as their representatives on the SGB. According to Mathebula (2001), the Department of Education (DoE) issued RCL guides to promote its policy of establishing democratic governance in South African schools. The purpose of these guides was to complement the Act’s declaration and commitment to democracy and participation. In his review of the long-established prefect system, Kok (1997) points out that it did not comply with the guidelines laid down for the RCL councils by the DoE. He further points out that students’ interests and needs in their schools were not catered for by the prefect system, whereas the RCL was designed to do this.

These guides appear to be helpful and descriptive of how the RCL should participate in the governance of schools, but according to Mathebula’s (2001) research there have been problems with regard to the implementation of the RCLs in schools. Nongubo (2002) exposes deep-rooted assumptions and fixed ideas which tell a different story. The guides are not clear as to the roles, functions and responsibilities of the RCLs.

The amount of authority or responsibility of the RCL is not clearly defined. It appears that the guides have a “narrow conception of participatory democracy” (Mathebula, 2001) which contradicts the Schools Act, and that the authors of the guides were preoccupied with restoring stability in South African schools, rather than developing the educative potential of participation. Mathebula and Nongubo both maintain that the guides position the students as opponents of the political and social order who are associated with violence and destruction and not to be trusted. The whole aim of the RCL guides was to promote orderliness, a sense of community and to establish conditions conducive to improved education; however, “the guides are generally shallow in their recognition of learner rights and are not a true reflection of what it means to educate through participation” (Nongubo, 2002:33).

Despite these concerns, leadership in schools is undergoing a shift in orientation and students have shown a desire to be more involved in the process of leadership so as to make a difference in their schools. Soul (cited in Nongubo, 2002:338) suggests that education for democratic participation should aim “to develop a broader sense of community and indeed the world at large”. If this is the case, then “we need to alter our thinking processes, [with] new areas of responsibility assigned, leadership roles defined and accountability enforced” (Sergiovanni, 2000:1).

1.3 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 RESEARCH GOAL

It is against this background that this study aims to investigate leadership among students as they develop a community in the context of an independent co-educational boarding school in Grahamstown. It seeks to explore alternatives, including that of ‘servant leadership’, to what has for decades been the preferred, authoritarian leadership approach, typified by the prefect system.

1.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Overarching question: Does servant leadership emerge in community building?
2. Specific questions:
 - a. Are students able to interact and work together in a meaningful way?
 - b. Are they able to build a caring, empathetic and dynamic community?
 - c. Do leaders arise who manifest the qualities of servant leadership?

1.4 THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The research project accords with what Mertens (2005:23) calls the “transformative” orientation in that it:

stresses the influence of the social, political, economic, ethnic, gender and disability values in the construction of reality. In addition, it emphasizes that that which seems real may instead be reified structures that are taken to be real because of historical situations.

In this study I attempt critically to analyse the influence of existing traditional structures in the exercise of leadership necessary to run the boarding establishment. My approach is interactive in so far as it is based on a relationship between the knower and the would-be knower (i.e. the researcher and the participants) (Mertens, 2005:25). Harding (1993) (cited in Mertens, 2005:25) usefully recommends a methodology that involves consulting those who are marginalized, as this helps to reveal more about the unexamined assumptions that influence the way of life of a given community.

1.5 THE POTENTIAL VALUE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research study is to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning the development of students as leaders and the nature of student communities. The principles of leadership and management, which are rooted in the organisational context, could provide a framework from which schools can work in order to develop future leaders. The implementation phase of the project sought to examine how the participants were able to collaborate with each other and whether servant leadership emerged through community building.

The object of the study is to investigate the possibility of boarding establishments becoming places of caring, where individuals can develop as learners work towards creating a community. Boarding houses have the potential to develop a greater sense of identity, belonging and involvement, which result in a closely knit web of meaningful relationship with moral overtones (Sergiovanni, 2000:2). Not only would the members share a common focus but they would be more likely to develop a sense of moral obligation towards each other in their behaviour. Strong, collaborative relationships between the members of the community had the potential to develop as members of the group became empowered, and this was likely to be characterised by high levels of compassion, respect and support.

1.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In chapter 2 I offer an overview of the available literature that I consulted in acquiring an understanding of the study's parameters. As Kumar (1996:26) states:

[a literature review] helps you understand the subject area better and thus helps you to conceptualise your research problem clearly and precisely. It also helps you to understand the relationship between your research problem and the body of knowledge in the area.

In chapter 3 I outline the research methodology, focusing on the paradigm, approach and research techniques that were used to collect the necessary data.

In chapter 4 I present, analyse, and organise the data into themes, in light of the relevant literature. It is the analysis of these themes that generates the research findings.

In chapter 5 I discuss these research findings.

In chapter 6 I conclude the research study by presenting a summary of my findings. I also report on the limitations of the study and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW



“Motivation is a fire from within. If someone else tries to light that fire under you, chances are it will burn very briefly”.
(Stephen Covey)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Mindscales influence what we see, what we believe, what issues we consider important, and ultimately what we do. (Sergiovanni, 1996:158)

This chapter presents an overview of how our mindscales relating to leadership have changed over the last few decades. South Africans suffered from social injustices before transformation occurred in 1994, but since the country's first democratic election in 1994 everyone has had an equal opportunity to participate in a new democracy. This new freedom has resulted in changes occurring in the work place, where the emphasis is now more on inclusion and participation. Leadership theories have evolved from being authoritarian to a place where leaders are encouraged to look beyond the own self-interest and share power with their followers. Organisations have begun to accord more value to their people, developing relationships and encouraging greater participation. This change in mindscape reveals an apparent convergence of organisational theory and personal leadership theory to a position where they meet – at 'community'.

The heart of this chapter concerns the development of 'community', a social formation characterized by a high level of caring, courteousness and cooperative learning. With our society having been torn apart by a history of social injustice, the challenge is going to be to restore the idea of 'community' in South African society, most especially in schools.

As student participation has become a reality in the governance of our schools, the role that educational institutions can play in preparing students for leadership becomes important. Schools can afford students the opportunity to learn and experience democracy in a socially just community. This research attempts to shed light on how our students could be challenged to question their style of leadership and investigate the options that servant leadership offers. This research also attempts to reflect on the difficulties of this challenge.

2.2 STUDENT LEADERSHIP MODELS

Before discussing literature that has informed this study it is necessary to refer to related research in the field of youth or student leadership. While I could not track down any research similar to this project there is certainly a great deal of activity in the field of leadership development and training of student leaders. Indeed, an internet search threw up over a million hits! In terms of the purpose and nature of this study I have not found literature focusing on leadership development helpful and I need to explain why this is so. I base this brief discussion on a recently completed doctoral study (Joubert, 2007) and on two models that currently hold sway in this field, the Quality Student Leadership model (Goldman & Newman, 1998) and the Stage model (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998).

Joubert's (2007) study is an example of the kind of research that seems to typify the field. Joubert (2007: ii) set out to "devise strategies ... that could be used by schools and individuals to enhance youth leadership development" (2007, ii). Joubert drew on other leadership development models to devise an adapted model which he tested in selected schools in the Southern Cape region. Based on positive results he concludes by recommending the model for general application.

Van Linden & Fertman's (1998: 19) Stage model identifies three key stages in adolescents' leadership development: awareness, interaction and mastery. In the first stage adolescents become aware of their leadership potential and need to be taught leadership styles and skills. The second stage is characterised by growth in leadership capacity through broadening social interaction. In this stage too there is a need for on-going teaching and training. The final stage is about 'doing': the adolescent learner tackles projects and demonstrates leadership. The purpose of the model is to identify the kind of support and learning the young leader needs at each stage.

The Quality Student Leadership model (Goldman & Newman, 1998) places the learner at the centre. The model argues that learner empowerment through involvement is the key to leadership development (Goldman & Newman, 1998: 2). The authors advocate a programme through which all stakeholders – learners, teachers

and parents – become active partners in school governance and management. They argue that increased involvement on the part of learners leads to an increased sense of responsibility (Goldman & Newman, 1998: 6). They posit ten principles of quality student leadership:

- L Learning
- E Empathy
- A Attitude
- D Dedication
- E Energy
- R Respect
- S Service
- H Honesty
- I Ingenuity
- P Passion

(Goldman & Newman, 1998: 7).

These three models of leadership ‘development’ research will suffice as examples of the kind of literature I did not find useful for this study. There are three reasons for this. The first is that they are fairly simplistic in how they present the complex phenomenon of leadership. In a sense they have to be, since they are models that can be applied in various contexts, and of course easily replicated. The author’s intentions were chiefly didactic, and this leads to the second reason, namely that the models are presented fairly unproblematically and uncritically. As such it is difficult to take them seriously as research outcomes. Finally, they appear to be ‘context-blind’, in the sense that the authors’ implicit suggestion is that the models are universally applicable. In fairness to Joubert (2007), he does in fact ‘adapt’ American models for South African conditions, but then simply produces a new ‘model’ as a research product.

By contrast, in action research the researcher’s approach is more genuinely one of enquiry, and the research more context-bound. Action research needs to respond continuously to what actually happens in the research site. This significant difference opens up a different space for theory, a space that cannot be filled by models. What

emerges from action research can ultimately not be thought of as a model, but rather a particular solution arrived at in a particular setting in response to a particular problem.

Nevertheless, the models referred to above have value, particularly when one explores their theoretical underpinning. Put more simply, the models become more interesting when one asks what particular view of leadership they are informed by.

The Stage model makes explicit reference to theory. At the heart of this model is the notion that young leaders would be inclined to view leadership as ‘transactional’ (i.e. mostly task-oriented and instrumental) and that they need to be exposed to ways of seeing leadership as ‘transformational’ (more person-oriented and value-based) (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998: 75). By implication and inference it is possible to discern strands of thinking that broadly correspond with contemporary leadership theories, such as participative/shared leadership and servant leadership.

Finally, though these models have limited value for research, their proliferation draw attention to the crucial role of schools in providing opportunities for leadership development, an issue I discuss before turning to the theoretical framework of this study.

2.3 THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

According to Bass and Stogdill (1990:3) the study of leadership has been one of man’s oldest preoccupations. With the many changes occurring in recent decades in world cultures, such as the emancipation of women, more women in the work place, and the dismantling of world-wide oppression resulting in a greater racial diversity, the focus of leadership has undergone some significant changes (Laub, 1999). The traditional “command and control” method of leadership has been questioned, prompting a re-evaluation of its effectiveness in a modern society. According to Stephen and Pace (2002) this has occurred because of a long standing view that leaders have failed to recognize that their followers may be suffering as a result of their actions: “The old gung-ho has gone...corporate loyalty no longer exists, faith in the hierarchy and bureaucracy is dead, the distressed employee is replacing the company man” (Stephen & Pace, 2002:2).

Shields (2004:109,110) recognizes educational leadership as being “complex and challenging”, but points out that it is also facing a crisis in that its “status quo tends to marginalize a large number of students and their families, preventing them from being heard or even acknowledged”. According to Shields (2004, referencing Shields & Oberg, 2002; Alexander, Entwistle, & Olsen, 2001; Bishop & Glynn, 1999), ethnicity, socioeconomic status and minority group status have all played a role in marginalising students within schools, resulting in these students not realizing their potential and underperforming in many spheres of education (as cited in Shields, 2004:111). Some researchers (Maxcy, 1994; van Alfen, 1993) (cited in Shields, 2004:110) express anxiety about the lack of leadership being offered in schools and the failure to empower the people who work in them.

Educational leaders can become transformative, dealing with and establishing social justice within schools (Shields, 2004). Bogotch (2000:2) defines educational leadership as being a “deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power”. Shields (2004) also suggests that leaders engage in moral dialogue that will facilitate the development of stronger relationships within the institution. Based on this dialogue and the development of relationships, leaders could provide opportunities for students to learn and develop democratically in socially just communities (Shields, 2004).

According to Herrnstein and Murray (1994) and Gould (1996) (as cited in Shields, 2004:112), the status quo of educational institutions is historical, genetically fixed and hierarchically structured. It comprises of our “assumptions, attitudes and language that are deeply embedded in the educational traditions, institutions, practices, and beliefs of our time” (Shields, 2004:112). Bourdieu (1980) (cited in Shields, 2004:112), refers to this as our “habitus”, which he defines as:

A system of circular relations that unite [*sic*] structures and practices; objective structures tend to produce structured dispositions that produce structured actions which, in turn, tend to reproduce objective structure.

According to Swartz (1997) (cited in Shields, 2004:112), our attitudes and beliefs are “extremely resistant to change” because they have been developed over time. Shields

believes that it is important to first recognize how “our habitus restricts equity and social justice” in our educational institutions, and then to “find ways to overcome these constraints” (Shields, 2004:113). Bourdieu (1980) believes that “with considerable effort, innovative practices may help us create new and more equitable educational structures” (cited in Shields, 2004:113). The approach needs to be a collective one, focusing on the development of moral and ethical values in an organisation, within a social context. According to Astin and Astin (2000) (as cited in Shields, 2004:113):

The value of [educational] leadership should be to enhance equity, social justice, and the quality of life; to expand access and opportunity; to encourage respect for difference and diversity; to strengthen democracy, civic life, and civic responsibility; and to promote cultural enrichment, creative expression, intellectual honesty, the advancement of knowledge, and personal freedom coupled with responsibility.

In order to keep abreast of these changes within modern society, education needs to reflect on the traditional bureaucratic stance that it holds, as education is one of the basic corner stones (Fig. 3) on which students are prepared for citizenship (Fullan, 2003). Shields (2004) suggests that these changes go well beyond institutional and organizational arrangements, while Hallinger (1992:40) points out that with such changes comes the expectation that schools become “the units responsible for the initiation of change, not just the implementation of change conceived by others”.

Sergiovanni (2001:1) maintains that the challenge of leadership in any organisation is its ability to keep the learning curves of the people ahead of the change curves of society. One method of addressing this is to ensure that schools become more involved in the process of leadership, recognising the paradigm through which they view leadership so as to be able to shift it (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997).

As leadership acts as one of the supporting pillars for the development of the future “nation changers” of a country (Fig. 3), educational institutions become increasingly important in keeping up with the changes that take place within society (Denton, 2006). They can provide the necessary platform for students to experience a more “collegial, cooperative, transformative and service approach” within their schools (Murphy & Seashore-Louis, 1999:xxii; Crippen, 2006). Students could be encouraged

to become more reflective in their thinking processes, developing their moral reasoning and become self-sufficient decision makers (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2005:156).

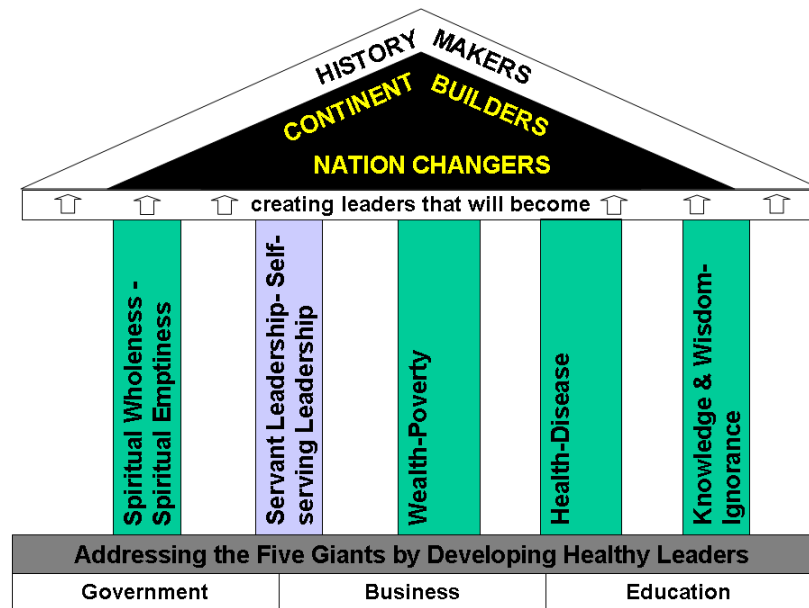


Figure 3: The Five Pillars of Developing Healthy Leaders

(Mario Denton, 2006)

Institutions could encourage students to alter their thinking processes, develop new areas of responsibility, define leadership roles and become more accountable for the students under their leadership (Sergiovanni, 2001). In order that a paradigm shift take place where leaders are encouraged to place “service to others above self-interest and self-promotion” (Laub, 1999:1), cooperation will be needed within an institution so as to enable its leaders honestly to reflect on their approach in developing future leaders.

The development of these leaders will determine the climate of a nation and the success of its people, leading them into the future and making the difference between success and failure (Denton, 2006; Bass & Stogdill, 1990:6, 8). To fully explore this, it is necessary to gain an understanding of how leadership is presented in the relevant literature.

2.4 INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP

The term leadership has different connotations for different people, yet with a common thread emerging from the different understandings (Kotter, 1999). They reflect an image of a person with great skill, courage and other attributes that breed success and innovation. However, the general understanding of leadership has undergone some modification over time. Although the main structures of leadership have remained the same, Bennis and Nanus (1985) contend that some modifications have occurred in the understanding of what leadership is, who can practise it and what impact it has on followers. Murphy and Seashore-Louis (1999: xxii) concur that important shifts have been made in the “roles, relationships and responsibilities” that define leadership.

Both leaders and followers have the ability and the power to turn bureaucratic organisations around, bringing “harmony and direction out of chaos” in the work place (Stephen & Pace, 2003:11). Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) point out that “when people feel good, they work at their best”. The Hawthorn Experiment that was conducted in the 1920s revealed that workers responded to personal attention and respect (Laub, 1999). Mental efficiency, the ability to understand information and decision making improve, which in turn assists people to become more optimistic about their ability to achieve, enhancing creativity and predisposing the person to become more helpful (Laub, 1999). Leaders are becoming more aware of their followers and this “attunement lets the leader sense the shared values and priorities that can guide the group” (Laub, 1990:49). As people are freed to think and act for themselves, they become a lot more innovative in solving problems, which results in their achieving satisfaction in their roles in the workplace (Stephen & Pace, 2003). The leaders “free themselves to be supportive, helpful, and sustaining” (Stephen & Pace, 2003:23). Educational institutions could utilise these trends to develop a climate of cooperation amongst the students, making the school campus more friendly and efficient.

Student leaders could be encouraged to become more cooperative with their followers, traditional patterns of relationships could be altered, and the students could become more engaged in the decision-making process of the school. Leadership could

also create a culture of responsibility when the students are given roles because of their competence and not because of a formal position (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2003; Murphy & Seashore-Louis, 1999). As the school empowers more of its students to participate in the leadership process they become more “connected” with each other, resulting in their “buying into” the process and focusing on the end result (Wheatley, 2005). There will be a need for individuals who are prepared to make the necessary changes and adaptations within their school environments.

Great leaders have been influential in transforming countries and the world in many different ways. The great World War II leader, Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, described good leaders as people who have the “capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose, and they have the character which inspires confidence” (Saunders, 1994:27). Fleet Admiral Nimitz (Saunders, 1994:27) had a similar view, that leadership is “that quality that inspires sufficient confidence in subordinates as to be willing to accept [the leader’s] views and carry out his commands”.

Leadership is the activity of influencing people to regard their every endeavour as contributing to the group’s objectives (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). Leadership is all about influence, which is the ability of the leader to persuade others to follow his or her lead; in short, if one has no influence, one will struggle to lead people (Maxwell, 1998:11). Great leaders – such as Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Ghandi, or Princess Diana, to mention a few from recent times – have all had the ability to influence people. An influence, as Maxwell (1998) points out, is what makes things happen.

Sergiovanni (1996:87) views leadership as the process of getting a group of people to take action that serves the leader’s or a shared purpose. Leadership is not just a method of controlling other people, but may involve setting an example, persuasion or the demonstration of shared values. Since groups have norms and values that represent their way of life, leaders need to understand that influence is a give-and-take situation that requires them to belong to the group and respect its norms and values. Overstreet (as cited in Maxwell 1998:19) makes the crucial point that, “The very essence of all power to influence lies in getting the other person to participate.” The success of any organisation depends upon its leader’s ability to engage and include his or her followers through established relationships.

Most definitions of leadership describe a combination of a procedure, an interaction and a personality. Cawood and Gibbon (1983:3) suggest that the word “lead” denotes interpersonal relationships between those who go ahead and those who follow. A leader then is one who not only leads but who is also followed. Maxwell (1998:50) points out that:

You are only a leader if you have followers, and that always requires the development of relationships – the deeper the relationship, the deeper and stronger the potential for leadership.

The development of relationships in a community is a key to the success of any organisation. According to Stephen and Pace (2002) leadership exists to create a collective effort to achieve sustained superior performance, but leaders themselves cannot create this effort. Conditions need to be created by the leader that will enable the people to achieve. Ultimately the leader will foster a climate for growth and a culture that will enhance the ability and the willingness of the people they lead to want to succeed (Andrews, 2005).

As educational institutions work towards developing leaders, it is necessary to clear up possible misconceptions between the understanding of the terms “leader” and “manager”.

2.5 LEADERSHIP and MANAGEMENT

To distinguish between leadership and management is not easy. Although plentiful, most definitions remain vague and ambiguous, even problematising the very idea of a definition. Van der Mescht (1996:19) concurs: “They are, I think, essentially different activities, and yet sufficiently similar to each other to defy attempts to capture the essence of each in a glib definition. Neither can, I think, be defined.”

The terms are often used interchangeably and thought to mean the same thing. Dimmock (1999) (as cited in Bush, 2003:7) points out that this difficulty is also experienced at school level. He explains:

School leaders [experience] tensions between competing elements of leadership, management and administration. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower duties (administration).

Numerous authors like Quarendon, 1997; Senior, 1997; Adair, 1998 and Kotter, 1999 agree on the need to distinguish between leadership and management, yet agree also that leadership is part of the function of management.

Basically, in a management position, one will be expected to focus predominantly on the formal aspects of the organisation, maintaining the system (Senior, 1997). The manager is expected to preserve the status quo by ensuring that there is control, that policies (rules and regulations) are adhered to and that the system is organised (Zaleznik, 1992; van der Mescht, 1996). The manager's role is to supervise and control the organisation in its production efforts.

On the other hand, in leadership, the leader tends to focus on the informal aspects of the organisation, often challenging the status quo. Thus leaders grasp the opportunity to utilise their initiative and creativity to grow the organisation and its people. They are able to develop relationships with their followers, influencing and encouraging them to aspire to achieve goals that have been set. The difference that emerges between the leader and the manager is highlighted in the attitudes that they display towards the goal, work and relationships with people and themselves (Zaleznik, 1992).

Bennis and Nanus (1985:21) provide a more insightful understanding of these activities when they state:

To manage means to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct. Leading is influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion. The distinction is crucial. Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things.

Bush (2003:8) concurs, and stresses the importance of both leadership and management in an organisation by quoting Cuban (1988):

By leadership, I mean influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals ... Leadership...takes...much ingenuity and skill. (Bush, 2003: xx)

Cuban also states that:

Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. (Bush, 2003: xx)

Although there is a difference in meaning between these terms, it is difficult to see how the skills associated with one could be applied without the skills associated with the other (Schmuck, 1986; Adair, 1988; Van der Mescht, 1996). Daft (1999) contends that it is possible for one person to be both a leader and a manager, yet the skills could differ in so many ways. Schmuck (1986:11) encourages “administrators to combine both leadership and management skills into their repertoires”. Cuban (1988) supports this view, saying that he values both managing and leading equally, attaching no special value to either of them as different settings and times call for varied responses (as cited in Bush, 2003:8). Leadership skills, such as “energy, enthusiasm and commitment” could complement management skills such as “efficiency, the concern with detail and co-ordination” within the organisation. According to Fidler (1997:26), organisations would ideally want leadership and management to operate simultaneously as they have an “intimate connection and a great deal of overlap, particularly in respect of motivating people and giving a sense of purpose to the organisation”.

If schools can provide a platform for students to develop their leadership abilities, then it is important that these institutions understand both the differences that exist and the possibilities for coexistence between leadership and management (Schmuck, 1986; Adair, 1988; Van der Mescht, 1996). Often students are selected to leadership positions (prefects), but their terms of office are centred on management issues and

their leadership skills are seldom effectively utilised. They become so intent on supervising and controlling the students that they often fail to develop relationships with their subordinates, which hinders their ability to influence their followers in a positive way.

Bush (2003) encourages schools and colleges to give equal importance to both leadership and management if they are to function effectively and realize their objectives.

2.6 EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership and management principles are rooted in the organisational context, mainly in commerce and industry, providing a framework from which schools can work in order to develop future leaders (Bush, 2003). Bush also points out that these concepts were developed outside of education and then applied to the school context. The application of industrial models to educational settings has had mixed results (Bush, 2003:9, 13). Baldrige (1978) (as cited in Bush, 2003:15), suggests that careful evaluation and adaptation of these models is required before applying them to educational organisations. He says:

Traditional management theories cannot be applied to educational institutions without carefully considering whether they will work well in that unique academic setting...We therefore must be extremely careful about attempts to manage or improve...education with 'modern management' techniques borrowed from business.

Bush (2003:13) argues that there “are general principles of management which can be applied to all organisational settings”. Furthermore, quoting Handy (1984), he points out that “schools have much in common with other organizations that bring people together for a purpose”.

Leadership theory has evolved from championing an authoritarian, “born-a-leader” and task-centred model to preferring one in which leaders are encouraged to look beyond their self-interest for the good of the group. Whereas previously, leadership was centered on hierarchy, command and control, it has now moved towards

becoming more integrated with the work force, through team building, leadership development, shared decision making, and striving for collegiality. Relationships have developed into a more important dimension of the group as there is a greater sense of belonging, being cared for and collegiality. Leaders are motivating their followers by satisfying their high-order needs, thereby elevating their interest in the team.

2.6.1 THE TRAIT THEORY

Earlier trends in research attempted to capture the essence of leadership by concentrating mainly on the assessment of the internal qualities that leaders possess. This was the “great man” or “trait” theory of leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). This theory was based on the assumption that specific physical, social and personal characteristics were inherent in leaders. The reasoning was that if traits could be identified that differentiated leaders from followers, good leaders could be identified and put into formal positions. Senior (as cited in Andrews, 2005:9) points out that these traits include emotional intelligence, charisma, dominance and conservatism.

Goleman (1998) states that the most effective leaders are similar in one crucial way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence, coupled with self-regulatory, motivational, empathetic, self-awareness capabilities and exceptional social skills. Student leadership demands a high level of emotional intelligence as student leaders continually deal with moral and community issues. The possession of a strong ethical code is vital in any form of leadership (Stephen & Pace, 2002). Bernard explains that the internal qualities (traits) that the individual is assumed to have possessed at birth make him or her a leader, implying that leaders are born and not made (as cited in Horner, 1997:270).

However, Conger and Kanungo (1998) point out that a number of studies that have been carried out were unable to identify a set of traits that were common to all leaders. According to Dorfman (1994), the theory was too simplistic, so instead of viewing leaders with a set of personality traits in isolation from their context, writers began to view leadership as a set of behaviours within the context of the group (cited in Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

2.6.2 THE BEHAVIOURAL THEORY

A second trend emerged where researchers Halpin and Winer (1957), and Hemphill and Coons (1957) (as cited in Horner, 1997:270) revealed that leaders displayed certain behaviours, rather than personal characteristics, that made them successful in their organisations. The Ohio and Michigan University models (Horner, 1997:271) identified two primary, independent factors that categorise leadership as either being considerate or being able to initiate structure. Blake, Shepard and Mouton (1964) developed a two-factor model of leadership behaviour that was similar to that found at Ohio State and Michigan. The two factors were called the “concern for people” and the “concern for output”; later, another variable was added, called “flexibility” (Horner, 1997:271). According to these studies, the behaviour that leaders displayed fell into two principal categories, people orientation or task orientation. In the first case, leaders who were people orientated revealed their social-emotional side. According to Andriessen and Drenth 1984 (cited in Horner, 1997:271), the leader’s actions towards the followers were exemplified by “mutual trust, development of good relations, sensitivity to the feelings of the group members, and openness to suggestions”. Secondly, the ability to initiate structure within a group revealed a task-orientated expertise. Here the leader endeavored to define and structure various tasks and roles that the followers ought to adopt in order to achieve the goals of the group. This two-dimensional approach began to influence the practice of management and became popular in a number of training programmes (Blake & Mouton, 1964 as cited in Horner, 1997:271).

Behavioural models are based on a leader-to-follower hierarchy and are dependent on what leaders do. It was assumed that these models would evolve as leaders became more aware of the people that worked for them, developing relationships with the work force. Semler (2003) believes that relationships in any organisation should be an extension of social life-styles, mirroring what society imagines. The ideal expectation is of the workplace becoming an extension of the family. According to Semler (cited in Andrews, 2005:11) people want their occupations to assure them of a sense of belonging, of being cared for and being affiliated with their colleagues. He

further believes that the image of the family should be an image of loyalty, mutual support and shared culture.

Further research (Fiedler, 1967) reveals that these leadership roles are reliant on conditions that exist in the work place. Conditions could arise which nullified the need for leadership, for instance when extremely experienced subordinates or an unambiguous task are involved.

2.6.3 THE SITUATIONAL and CONTINGENCY THEORIES

A third trend argues that certain leadership styles are more effective in certain situations than others. These theories are based on the perception that the situation that groups find themselves in dictates the best leadership style to be practised (Fiedler, 1967; Horner, 1997). The acceptance that different situations require different kinds of leadership has resulted in the emergence of a more realistic view of leadership.

Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership (as cited in Horner, 1997:271) focuses on two variables that define the leader's successfulness, leadership style and situation. He contends that leaders either changed their situation to suit their leadership or handed over the leadership to someone better suited to that particular situation. This concept was defined as a combination of leader-member relations, task orientation, and positional power.

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) developed a situational model which was based on the flexibility of the leader to adapt to various situations. They surmised that an employee needed to go through all four leadership quadrants of telling, selling, supporting and then delegating during their time in the organisation.

In developing their Path-Goal theory, House and Mitchell (1974) (as cited in Horner, 1997:271) identified the importance of followers in leadership. They contend that leadership is an interaction between the goals of the followers and the leader. Their model also suggests that the leader is responsible for encouraging his or her followers

to develop behaviours that would enable them to reach their desired goals or outcomes.

Vroom and Yetton (1973) (as cited in Horner, 1997:271; Andrews, 2005:11) developed a Leader-Participation model, in terms of which leaders' decisions are determined by the task composition. It describes the procedures that leaders should follow given certain situations with regard to the level of followers in the decision making process.

These models go a long way to further the development of leadership theory. They recognise the requirements of leadership in a particular situation and the needs of the followers, suggesting that leaders either adjust their styles or step back and allow a substitute who has more experience in that situation to take the lead. These theories are essentially concerned with the central tension between task and person. Thus a two-dimensional view of leadership dominated thinking for decades, until transformational leadership broke this dichotomous view.

2.6.4 TRANSACTIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL THEORIES

Over the past fifteen years new theories have emerged reflected in the development of transactional and transformational leadership. Burns (1978) (as cited in Horner, 1997:274), the founder of transformational leadership, created the term transactional leadership to illustrate how it differed from his theory, transformational leadership. This was an attempt to show how his theory was a deliberate break with everything that had come before. Burns states that transactional leadership stems from a more established view of workers and organisations. It is based on bureaucratic authority, focusing on the completion of a task relying on rewards and punishments (Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003:350).

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, originated with the works of James McGregor Burns (1978) and was extended by the work of Bernard Bass (1985) and further defined by Bass and Avolio (1994). Transformational leadership differs from

transactional leadership in that it focuses more on the attempt to motivate followers by satisfying their high-order needs and engaging the followers in the practice of work, encouraging progress and development. Strong relationships are built while supporting and encouraging the individual's development.

As Bass and Stogdill (1990:21) contend:

Transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employers, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group.

According to Bass (1985) (as cited in Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003:350) transformational leaders alter the personal values of their followers so that they support the vision and goals of the organisation, encouraging an environment where relationships can be developed and establishing a climate of trust in which visions can be shared. It is an attempt to encourage the follower to develop a commitment to the organisation's objectives and then to empower him or her to achieve these objectives.

Bass and Avolio (1993:3) believe that "transformational leaders do more with their colleagues and followers than set up single exchanges or agreements. They behave in superior ways to achieve superior results". They also contend that the most efficient form of leadership is the combination of both transformational and transactional leadership.

2.7 SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The great leader is seen as a servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness (Greenleaf, 1977:21).

The most current leadership theories focus on leadership as a process in which leaders are seen as members of a community and not just as individuals in charge of followers (Drath & Palus as cited in Horner, 1997:277). Sarkus (1996) (as cited in Koshal, 2005:2) noted that much of the present literature on leadership, supporting serving and

valuing others, has been foreshadowed by the work of Greenleaf (1977) on servant leadership. Schwartz (as cited in Laub, 1999:4) views servant leadership, “not as a style of leadership, but as a philosophy and approach to leadership...a way of life and thinking”.

The principle of servant leadership, based on the philosophy of Greenleaf, which encourages leaders to value people more than in traditional leadership and to be of service to them. This principle echoes the biblical viewpoint that:

Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be a slave to all. (Holy Bible. New International Version, 1978:54).

It is a practical philosophy which supports people who choose to serve first, and then lead, as a way of expanding service to individuals and institutions. Servant leaders may or may not hold formal leadership positions but the process encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment.

Robert Greenleaf (1977:7), the pioneer of servant leadership, describes servant leadership as:

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priorities are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit or, at least, not be further deprived? (Greenleaf, 1970).

Greenleaf’s opinion is that leadership should focus primarily on meeting the needs of others. The premise of this form of leadership is that the leader seeks to humbly serve, without expectation to be served by those who follow, and through one’s service one is recognized as a leader.

Koshal (2005:2) adds that his [Greenleaf's] model establishes service as the gift that attracts followers who in turn pass this along. According to Stone, Russell and Patterson (as cited in Patterson, 2004:2) servant leadership's core focus is service and that this service is a choice over self-interest. Farling (1999) (as cited in Koshal, 2005:2) believes that service is and should be a principal function of leadership not based on one's own interests, but rather on the interests and welfare of the followers. Leaders are encouraged to become more people-centered and the introduction of this philosophy has the potential to persuade these leaders to become more caring towards others.

Although there is a lack of empirical support for servant leadership, Russell and Stone (2002) (as cited in Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2003) established a practical model for servant leadership and identified functional and accompanying attributes that are displayed below (Table 1).

Table 1: Servant leadership attributes
(Stone, Russell and Patterson 2003:353)

<u>Functional attributes</u>	<u>Accompanying attributes</u>
Vision	Communication
Honesty and Integrity	Credibility
Trust	Competence
Service	Stewardship
Modeling	Visibility
Pioneering	Influence
	Persuasion
Appreciation of others	Listening
	Encouragement
Empowerment	Teaching
	Delegation

Although stewardship is central to servant leadership, servant leaders also place importance on appreciating and valuing people, listening, mentoring or teaching, and empowering their followers. These leaders are influential, gaining their influence in a

nontraditional manner which is derived from servanthood (Stone, Russell & Patterson: 354).

In the process of developing a practical model for servant leadership, Patterson (2004:3) viewed servant leadership as a virtuous theory. She explains that a virtue is a qualitative characteristic (exemplifying human excellence), that is part of one's character, something within the person that is internal, almost spiritual. Virtue (moral goodness) comes from the word *arête* which means excellence. Kennedy (1995) (cited in Patterson:3) suggests that Aristotelian virtue may be defined as being made up of three fundamentals: good habits; the middle ground between the extremes of too much and too little; and a habit that is a firm and settled disposition towards choosing good. Kennedy (1995) contends that this virtue theory addresses the idea of doing the right thing with a focus on moral character. Virtue seeks to do the right thing in a particular situation, not righting wrong. Arjon (2000) (cited in Patterson, 2004:3) says that this theory is of value because it focuses on the common good, rather than maximizing profit.

The virtue theory contends that leadership is concerned with the dynamic inter-connective relationships of the members [of a community] and Patterson (2004:3) points out that servant leadership covers these seven virtuous attributes. They are: agape love; humility; altruism; vision; trust empowerment; and service.

This recent focus on Greenleaf's philosophy (1970) of servant leadership has steered leadership closer to community. The leader focuses on serving others and is committed to the values of the community. It is a people-centered orientation and followers are encouraged to collaborate as a team, developing trust, foresight and insight. As leaders serve their followers, a dynamic inter-connective relationship develops between them. Serving others is important but so too is serving the values and ideas that help to shape the community.

2.8 THE COMMUNITY APPROACH

2.8.1 LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

With the growth and development of global competition, organisations have had to restructure their thinking and approach to leadership (Jamali, Khoury & Sahyoun, 2006). Organisations had to re-examine their old traditional bureaucratic paradigms and begin to align themselves with greater competition and viability, beginning to “downscale and develop flatter hierarchies which ultimately affected employee commitment, resulting in entrenchments and disloyalty arising” (Conger & Kanungo, 1998:5). The traditional bureaucratic approach was no longer suitable in this new competitive global environment and organisations needed to change to adapt to the new paradigm (Jamali et al., 2006).

Senge (1990:3) defines the learning organisation as one:

Where people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, and where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

According to Jamali et al. (2006), organisations have become more aware of the limitations of the traditional bureaucratic orientation characterized by their strict hierarchy, discipline, authority, rules and fear of responsibility. Individual initiative and participation was often hindered. Senge (1990:5) points out that the focus of organisations has shifted from a traditional authoritarian organisation which manages, organizes and controls, to a learning organisation which is more focused on vision and values.

People were now viewed as valuable commodities, empowered to think for themselves and encouraged to make decisions in the work place. Jamali et al. (2006:347) remark that organisations soon recognised that they had to use a range of methods, including empowerment, teamwork, trust, communication, commitment and flexibility to develop the ability of their employees and to benefit from them. The

work force was now encouraged to utilize their innovativeness and their creativity to solve problems, which resulted in them feeling appreciated and developing a willingness in its people to learn, adapt and change within the organisation (Jamali et al., 2006).

According to Jamali et al. (2006), the post bureaucratic orientation has begun to capitalize on the value of people; their value is recognized, nurtured and skillfully managed.

2.8.2 THE SHIFT OF SCHOOLS

Sergiovanni (1996:41) points out that “literature in educational administration...is heavily influenced by the belief that schools are formal organisations”, so they are “seen as hierarchical bureaucracies” (Sergiovanni, 1992c:46). Educational institutions adopted the organisational idea of leading, as it worked well in certain aspects of how schools functioned (Sergiovanni, 1992b).

Schools implemented rules and regulations, monitored and supervised its personnel (including students), in order to maintain control (Sergiovanni, 1992b). Bush (2003:180) points out that the individuals who hold defined positions are assumed to be strongly influenced by these official positions, maintaining a strong ‘top-down’ approach. With this approach, Sergiovanni, 1992c.:41) argues that leadership in schools became very “control driven” and “direct”, in a predominantly hierarchical system, where each level was responsible for controlling the level immediately below. The focus has been exclusively on viewing leadership as something forceful, direct, and interpersonal.

Bush (2003:57) argues that the focus of the hierarchical bureaucracies is on the organisation as an entity, ignoring and underestimating the contribution that individuals make. Greenleaf (1973) feels that the individual variables (individual qualities and experience) are underestimated, producing an inaccurate portrayal of schools (as cited in Bush, 2003:58). Samier (2002:40) concurs stating that “technical rationality cripples the personality of the bureaucrat, reducing him [sic] to a cog in a machine” (as cited in Bush, 2003:58). Owens and Shakeshaft (1992) point out that

there is a reduction in the confidence of hierarchical organisations and that a 'paradigm shift' is taking place to an approach that is more inclusive and people orientated (Bush, 2003:60).

South Africa has witnessed a powerful commitment to democracy. According to Bush (2003) education has not been left unaffected and refers to the establishment of governing bodies, including the representation of both teachers and students. The South African government has linked governance to wider democratic objectives:

Just like the country has a government, the school that your child and other children in the community attend needs a 'government' to serve the school and the school community. (South Africa. DoE, 1997:2).

Bush (2003) acknowledges that leadership approaches that are inclusive of the people of an organisation are the antidote to the rigid hierarchical structures that exist.

However, boarding establishments still adopt a rigid hierarchical structure. They have some unique characteristics in that the students come from different cultural backgrounds and live together for long periods of time. The establishments have adopted a 'vertical' hierarchy which represents "a means of control for leaders" over the other members of the house, reinforcing the authority of the leaders (Bush, 2003:37). Bush (2003) points out that a traditional hierarchical arrangement of prescribed roles, expectations and responsibilities exists, in order to maintain discipline and order. This structure is assumed "to influence the behaviour of the individuals holding particular roles in the organization" (Bush, 2003:52). According to Hoyle (1986:5), the role structure and routine that has been established over many years, remains relatively stable, as "different incumbents of the roles come and go". Hall (1994) describes this structure as being "a pyramid...dominating educational institutions for 30 years" (as cited in Bush, 2003:40).

There are moves afoot in some schools to move these establishments towards a more community orientated system where people are valued more and are afforded the opportunity to participate more freely (Crippen, 2006; Sergiovanni, 1994). Sergiovanni (1992c:49) believes that schools should be recognized as "special places where people care" and believes that organisational principles should not be applied

to schools. He argues that they are more like “families and small communities” (Sergiovanni, 1992c:49). Sergiovanni (1992.:41), however, also points out that schools would change if they began to adopt a “community” approach where they are not defined by “instrumental purposes, rationally conceived work systems, evaluation schemes designed to monitor compliance, or skillfully contrived positive interpersonal climates but rather by their ‘centers’”. These ‘centers’ are “repositories of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed cement for uniting people in a common cause”, guiding behaviour and giving meaning to school community life (Sergiovanni (1992:41).

As one reflects on the evolution of these theories a trend emerges that reveals that organisational theory and personal leadership theory have converged to a position where they meet at community. This is seen in the value that organisations have begun to place on people, the development of relationships and greater participation by the followers.

2.8.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY IN SCHOOLS

Sergiovanni (1996:48) refers to community as “a collection of individuals who are bonded together by a natural will and who are bound together by a set of shared values and ideas”). The word community has a variety of meanings, but its root comes from the Latin words *communis* (common) and *communitas* (fellowship), providing the themes for defining the community (Sergiovanni, 2001). Carey and Frohmen explain (*ibid.*)

A true community, one that lives up to its name, is one in which members share something in common, something important enough to give rise to fellowship or friendship and to sustain it. There may be many kinds of communities with varying ends or goals. But each must form around characteristics, experiences, practices, and beliefs that are important enough to bind the members to one another, such that they are willing to sacrifice for one another as “fellows” or sharers of a common fate. (1998:1, 2)

'Community' is characterized by a high level of caring, courteousness and cooperative learning. The motives for establishing a community is so that members can appreciate each other, find association with each other to be mutually beneficial, and feel morally obligated to accept and be responsible for each other. Through the process of developing or building a community, a collection of "I's" becomes a collective "we" (*ibid.*). The members become a closely interwoven web of meaningful relationships, which Wheatley (2004) refers to as an "interconnectedness", giving the community its own unique character. Sergiovanni (1996) points out that these communities exemplify civic virtue, the willingness of individuals to sacrifice their self-interest on behalf of the common good of others. This quality is the motivation for communities to unite for a common purpose, contributing to the community being more effective.

2.8.4 THE "GLUE" THAT HOLDS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

According to Sergiovanni (1992; 1996), for any organisation to function effectively as a community, values, sentiments and beliefs are required. These are the "glue" that unites its members together in a common purpose and are safely stored at the heart of the community. Covey (Spears, 2004: xv) points out that if the members are able to "interact freely and synergistically" they would develop a value system that would inform and guide their decision making maintaining the same value system for the future. This would be represented in four (4) areas; our bodies (physical); our hearts (social); our minds (mental) and our spirit (spiritual). The group has the responsibility of overseeing these values and providing the norms that will channel the behaviour of the group and give meaning to its way of life (Sergiovanni, 1992b).

According to Olson and Zanna (as cited in French & Bell, 2000:211) these values are:

General standards or principles that are considered intrinsically desirable ends, such as loyalty, helpfulness, fairness, predictability, reliability, honesty, responsibility, integrity, competence, consistence and openness.

Bonds of camaraderie will emerge when students are tied to shared ideas, values, beliefs, and frameworks providing a moral climate, and empowering the members of

the community to maximize their potential and skills (Sergiovanni, 2001:66). Conger and Kanungo (as cited in Stephen & Pace, 2002) explain that this empowerment is the process of allowing [group members] to set their own goals, make decisions, and to solve problems that arise within their areas of responsibility and authority. This camaraderie has two dimensions, namely, the sense of being united in common purpose in a group and moral commitment (caring for and nurturing) of one's contemporaries.

According to Crippen (2006) boarding establishments could become "safe places" of caring where individuals could develop a sense of community. The potential exists to develop a greater sense of identity, belonging, and involvement that results in a closely knit web of meaningful relationships with moral overtones within the establishment (Sergiovanni, 2000).

Strong, collaborative relationships between the members of the community have the potential to develop, as the members become involved in the development of the community to which they are attached (Bloch, 2005). These relationships are characterized by high levels of compassion, respect and support (Spears, 2004; Bloch, 2005).

2.8.5 THE ROLE OF SERVANT LEADERS IN A COMMUNITY

Hawkes (2005) argues that there is a lack of moral courage in our society and our youth should be able to imagine that they can change things for the better. Leadership is not only about power and influence but incorporates accountability and responsibility. Hawkes (2005:3) states that:

The development of leadership skills in students should be affirming experiences that can help the youth cope with the growing epidemic of depression and general lack of resilience.

There are those students who show concern only for themselves and who have little regard for others, they having inflated feelings of self-importance and entitlement.

Callaghan (cited in Hawkes, 2005:10) states that “this type of student cannot resist exploiting others to their own advantage”. Seligman (1995) states that, “If a quarter to half of people’s main personality traits are inherited from parents, then it also suggests that between half to three-quarters of these traits are not inherited from parents” (as cited in Hawkes, 2000:5). Therefore the school has a large role to play in preparing our youth for leadership. Schools need student leaders who will be prepared to model empathy, compassion, justice, service and kindness to those that they lead.

Laub (1999:83) points out that servant leadership could provide a holistic leadership approach in schools, that:

places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader. Servant leadership promotes the valuing and development of people, the building of community, the practice of authenticity, the providing of leadership for the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual.

Greenleaf (1977:13) states that it “begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve”, the first step is to develop a group of students who, under the influence of the boarding establishment, are able to make changes.

The benefit of introducing servant-leadership into boarding communities is that the institution moves away from having self-serving leaders to leaders who are prepared to value and develop others, which calls for the building of community, sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual (Greenleaf, 1970; Hawkes, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1996; Laub, 1999). The members of the boarding establishment could experience a greater “interconnectedness” (Wheatley, 2005), where they learn to depend on each other, sharing power and becoming more involved in the decision making process of the establishment. A greater interdependency develops as the members are empowered by the servant leader to make worthwhile contributions to the running and functioning of the establishment.

According to Greenleaf (1977), the leader must aim to serve and meet the needs of those followers in his care. Pollard (1996) states that, “My role is...to serve the organization by coaching and facilitating, not by controlling and commanding” (as

cited in Laub, 1999). Melrose (as cited in Koshal, 2005:3) maintains that “people work and live best in a community”. This way, leaders are likely to become more accountable to the people that they lead and develop a good moral attitude.

Servant leadership is viewed in the context of promoting, valuing and developing others which calls for the building of community, all learning to share the burden of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1979; Spears, 1998; Paterson, 2003). Sergiovanni (1992:125) points out that this form of leadership is easier to implement if the leader understands that serving others is important, but also understands that it is just as important to serve the values and ideas that help the institution function as a collaborative community.

2.9 THE AFRICAN INFLUENCE ON A COMMUNITY

The idea of community is not a recent one, but as old as Africa itself (Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996; Mbigi, 2005). Kingswood College is becoming part a global environment with a diverse population, as students come from many different parts of Africa and bring their cultures onto the campus. These cultures could have a positive effect on the school with regard to developing a community.

The reason for this is that the idea of community is the corner stone in African thought, and the key to community is the family (Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996:71). Mbigi (2005) concurs, stating that the African philosophy of *ubuntu* is based on communal fellowship and originates in the context of the family. The term *ubuntu* is a Zulu concept that means ‘personhood’. *Ubuntu* is all about how you relate to and treat other people, and it is an important quality in the character of a person (Mbigi, 2005).

Mbigi (2005) points out that *Ubuntu* infuses all areas of the African way of life, in particular the way in which personal relationships are managed. One discovers who one is through the relationships that one has with other people in the community. According to Mbigi (2005), the path of one’s life and purpose is discovered through these relationships. Desmond Tutu (Mbigi, 2005: 69) sums it up best:

Africans have a thing called UBUNTU; it is about the essence of being human, it is part of the gift that Africa is going to give to the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being willing to go that extra mile for the sake of another; that my humanity is caught up and bound in yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms, and therefore you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own in community, in belonging.

The individual needs the support of others, because in terms of African culture, no one can be self-sufficient, and the welfare of the individual is inseparable from the welfare of the entire community (Mbigi 2005; Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996). According to Bell (2002), “Africans do not think of themselves as discrete individuals but rather understand themselves as part of a community” (as cited in Koshal, 2005: 4). Mbiti (1969:10) concurs: “The individual owes his existence to other people. He is simple part of the whole. Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual.”

The *ubuntu* values of human dignity, respect, interdependence, compassion, solidarity, and taking care of others in the community are central to the functioning of the community. According to Gakuru (1998), service is recognized in the African idea of interdependence, in the call for individuals to depend on one other (as cited in Koshal, 2005:4). A study carried out by Nelson (2003) (as cited in Koshal, 2005), which investigated Patterson’s (2003) servant leadership theory among black South African business leaders, found that service was the primary function of leadership. Koshal (2005:5) points out that a “strong and ancient service and mutual assistance [ethic] has always been brought to life in African societies through network and associations”. Based on the needs, interests and welfare of the employees, the ethic illustrates the communal support, group significance, and cooperation that exist within the community.

The participants in this study expressed strong feelings about sacrificing for the sake of others. Koshal (2005:14) points out that “The idea of sacrificing for others is guided by the principle of collective good rather than individual gain”. According to Mibigi (1995: 14), prevalent African values put emphasis on “the person not living for themselves but rather living for others”. Involving others in the decision-making process plays an important role in the African community. Group decisions

extrapolate a crucial pattern of traditional African leadership, which inexorably puts the community interest ahead of the leader's own (Ayittey 1992).

Service plays an important and vital role in sustaining the community. Members of the community believe that service is a fundamental goal in their lives. They hold the view that leadership is "all about providing a service, simply out to serve and be selfless" (Koshal, 2005:14), which compliments the philosophy of Greenleaf (1970).

2.10 CONCLUSION

As diverse as South Africa undoubtedly is, a need does exist to develop a broader sense of local and national community, and indeed of the world at large (Soul as cited in Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998:42). Social environments are typically fragmented today, and community is in urgent need of restoration. The literature canvassed above reveals that there has been a significant move on the part of organizational theory and leadership theory towards community. The traditional hierarchical way of leading has changed to one in which people are more highly valued, and empowered to get involved in the decision-making processes in their organizations. The black population of our country has partially lost its sense of community due to Westernization and the lingering consequences of the long struggle for freedom. Both black and white populations have moved over time from a rural, family-orientated existence to an urbanized, technology-dominated, monadic existence. As a result, says Block (2005:55), "We have lost our sense of community and connectedness". Moral standards have deteriorated and few values survive in the workplace, let alone at home. We have become isolated as individuals in our pursuit of the Western dream of affluent independence.

According to Soobrayen (1990:33), education should be seen as a powerful tool with the potential to have an impact on the socio-economic reality of our country. Schools should therefore begin to focus on enabling students to alter their way of thinking about leadership, and encourage them to begin to re-build community within their schools. Soul (as cited in Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998:15) claims that the primary purpose of education is to "show individuals how they can function together in a

society”. The process of developing community in schools will entail a change in the concept of leadership. The adoption of the notion of servant leadership will mean that followers will be valued and treated with more respect.

Schools need to take their rightful place as cornerstones in the preparation of students for citizenship in our country. The objective is to develop leaders who will be able to “serve others above their self-interest and self-promotion” (Laub, 1991:1), leaders with sound morals who can be respected and trusted by the citizens of South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



“Most people struggle with life balance simply because they haven’t paid the price to decide what is really important to them”
(Stephen Covey)

This research study aimed at eliciting information, through interaction, about the perceptions of the participants on the role of leadership in their establishment, as well as involving them in the construction of a community within the college. The study is specifically qualitative in nature, focusing on the collection of data from a purposively selected sample (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The goal was to develop a holistic understanding of the participants' point of view and their willingness to change their ways of thinking (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). According to Kvale (1996), qualitative research is sensitive to what the participants experience, which involves an empathic dialogue with them aimed at contributing to their emancipation and empowerment.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is characterized by what Guba and Lincoln (1994:4) describe as “the critical approach”. Mertens (2005:9) labels it “the transformative paradigm” because she believes that the phrase best describes and accurately reflects the overall intent of the paradigm, to effect change. This paradigm “stresses the influence of the social, political, economic, ethnic, gender, and disability values in the construction of reality” (Mertens, 2005:23). In addition, it emphasises that “that which seems real may instead be reified structures that are taken to be real because of historical situations”. It critically examines reality and proposes changes to the structures that have oppressed the powerless. Fine (cited in Mertens: 30) states that this type of research “seeks to unearth, disrupt, and transform existing ideological and/or institutional arrangements”.

My assumption of this paradigm is evident in that I attempt to uncover the influence of the existing traditional structure and the exercise of leadership on the running of the boarding establishment. My approach was interactive in nature and my data collection was dependent upon the relationship between myself and all the participants within the boarding establishments. Mertens (2005: 25) describes this as a relationship between the “knower and the would-be knower”. It aims to empower those who are powerless to get involved in the decision-making process of the establishment. Harding (cited in Mertens:25) recommends that a methodology be used that involves the thoughts and ideas of those who are marginalised by the group, as these would reveal more about any unexamined assumptions that influence the way of life in the establishment.

The study takes the form of action research as it is an “intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention” (Cohen & Manion, 1994:186). The action research process becomes the main driving force in “creating a positive social change” (Schmuck (1997: 32). Schmuck also points out that this process encourages individual independence as it gives everyone an opportunity to search for and select appropriate results. In this study, the process was used to develop a community in which all the participants could begin to feel valued and included, and thus become more productive, resulting in an increased sense of social well-being.

I hoped that through the process of participation and collaboration the participants would be provided with a platform to voice their feelings and opinions, without feeling threatened, and that synergy would begin to develop. Schmuck (1997: 34) claims that the product of research participants’ collective thoughts and problem solving is far greater than that of an individual working alone. I wanted the participants to critically examine the way in which they led or were being led in their boarding house, and to determine how they would build a community. Through the process of getting everyone involved, “the individual’s potential is released” (Follett, cited in Schmuck, 1997:20) and he or she is enabled to contribute more to community improvement. The participants, as a collective group with “diverse voices” (Mertens, 2005:26), were encouraged to reflect and enquire about the social situations that existed within their boarding houses in order “to improve the practices that take place” (Kemmis and Mc Taggart, 1988:5).

Macintyre (2001:1) explains that action research is:

an investigation, where, as a result of rigorous self-appraisal of current practice, the researcher focuses on a ‘problem’ (or topic or an issue which needs to be explained), and on the basis of information (about the up-to-date state of the art, about the people who will be involved and about the context), plans, implements, then evaluates an action then draws conclusions on the basis of the findings.

In this investigation, the participants were involved in the planning, conduct, analysis, interpretation, and use of research in their establishments, because transformative

research that is derived from participatory action research is viewed as being essential to the success of the study (Mertens, 2005:26). Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:5) explain that this research action takes the form of a spiral and believe that: “The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members”.

3.2.1 ACTION PLAN:

Part of the process was to get the participants to reflect on the current situation in their boarding houses. According to Grundy (1986) this is that moment when the participants “examine and construct, then evaluate and reconstruct their concerns” (as cited in Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988:8). It includes the discussions with the participants about a shared problem or a concern that they had identified.

The following process was utilized to gather the data:

- Introduce the alternative model of leadership (Appendix G) first to the house-persons and senior students, and then to the houses.
- Assist with the implementation of the model; advise and provide support.
- Conduct focus group interviews to probe responses to the new model and discuss implications for the present leadership system. Observe how the participants work together to identify problem areas, solution(s) and develop a plan of action which the participants will implement;
- Conduct individual interviews (unstructured, with open-ended questions) to probe responses more deeply;
- After two weeks conduct a second round of focus groups to reflect on the plan of action, identify any problems that have arisen, make the necessary adjustments and then re-implement the plan of action;

3.2.2 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The study was carried out in a private Eastern Cape boarding school, where two houses of male students volunteered their services. Each house accommodates about 40 pupils who display a range of age groups, diverse cultures and languages groups. These demographics are presented in chapter 4.

The 73 participants were volunteers who were interested in reflecting on the way current leadership processes functioned. They displayed a willingness to participate in the action research and they all agreed to work with me for a period of 6 months (the first and second terms of 2007). Their reflections added both their understanding and that of the researcher, of what was expected of a leader in the establishment and how they envisioned the establishment should function.

The college has a very diverse population which I thought could enrich the data collected. The participants were observed within their environments and the selected groups were interviewed individually. In the focus groups problems were identified and discussed, an action plan constructed, implemented and reflected on in order to implement any necessary changes to the plan.

3.3 DATA GENERATION METHODS

In order to understand how the participants organize themselves I decided to use a qualitative, “multi-method approach”. Denzin (as cited in Berg, 2004:5) suggests that researchers use “multiple methods of observation”, because each research method that is employed discloses different facets of empirical reality. Cohen and Manion (1994:23) support this approach as they maintain that it is:

an attempt to map, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both qualitative data.

This method allowed me to share in the understandings and perceptions of the participants and to explore how they structured and gave meaning to their daily lives within the boarding establishment. It also increased the depth of understanding that this research investigation could produce (Berg, 2004:6).

This research action aimed not only to accumulate data but also to discover answers to questions that were being posed. I therefore chose to utilize the methods of observation, on-site, individual interviews, and focus group interviews.

3.3.1 OBSERVATION

Kumar (1996:105) states that observation is a method that can be utilized to collect crucial data by a researcher. It is a “quick and unobtrusive way of recording aspects of behaviour” (Macintyre, 2000:62). With the housemaster’s permission, I made an appointment with the head of house (prefect) and arranged a visit at least once a week. Since I was interested in learning about the interaction of the participants in their boarding house, this method provided me with an ideal opportunity to observe their interactions on-site. I used the following observation schedule to focus my data gathering (Appendix I). A three-directional scale (Table 3) was used to establish insight into how the individual(s) participated and interacted within the group (Kumar, 1996:108).

Table 2: A three-directional rating scale
(Adapted from Kumar, 1996:158)

Observation of the nature of interaction in a group												
	Positive			Neutral			Negative			Group:		
	←					→					Date:	
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	Members:
Involvement	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Rapport	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Self-confidence	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Aggressiveness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Inhibited	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Friendliness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Superiority	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	

Although the use of action research required me to be active during the focus group sessions, I remained a passive observer and employed the “non-participant observation method” (Kumar, 1996:106). Through this process I was able to watch and listen as a number of activities were performed in and around the boarding houses. These recordings were in narrative form, as I made brief notes while observing the participants. The advantage of this method is that “it provides a deeper insight into the interaction” of the participants Kumar (1996:107).

3.3.2 INTERVIEWS

According to Paton (as cited in Arksey & Knight, 1999:32) the purpose of the interview is to:

Find out what is in and on a person’s mind...to access the perspective of the person being interviewed...to find out from them things that we cannot directly observe.

Cannell and Kahn (as cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994:271) state that the interview:

Is a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focus him on the content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation.

According to Kvale (1997), it is an exchange of views between two people on a topic of common concern and is a powerful method to capture the experiences and the understanding of the participant's way of life.

To capture this information, I selected a sample population of 12 participants (6 from each house) for these interviews, using a random sample design. It is likely that the relatively small sample size could compromise the qualitative data gathered. In order to prevent any bias from occurring, the Simple Random Sample (SRS) process was employed. All the participants had an "equal and independent chance of selection in the sample" (Kvale, 1997:158) and were willing to participate in the process. The sample was selected by following a procedure advocated by Kvale (1997).

Table 3: The procedure for selecting a simple random sample
(Adapted from Kvale)

Step 1	Identify by a number all elements or sampling units in the population.
Step 2	Decide on the sample size (n).
Step 3	Select (n) using either the fishbowl draw, the table of random numbers or a computer program.

Each student (participant) was given a number from 1 to 79. I decided that the sample number would be 12, due to time, financial and human resource constraints. A table of random numbers was used to select a sample of 12 boys, who became the participants in my inquiry.

As I am currently a housemaster on the campus, I faced a quandary with the interview process concerning ethical issues, such as bias and reliability. Although this method of data collecting is advantageous in gaining more qualitative information, I felt that my position might influence the responses of the participants, ultimately compromising the data collected (Macintyre, 2000). Kvale (1996:109) aptly points out:

The personal interaction in the interview affects the interviewee, and the knowledge produced by the interview affects our understanding of the human situation.

As the outcome of the interview depended on the knowledge, sensitivity, and empathy of the interviewer, I chose to employ a competent and experience facilitator who would interview the 12 interviewees, in a relaxed and confident manner, concentrating on the interaction that takes place (Macintyre, 2000).

I was able to gather information directly from the use of this form of oral communication which sought to describe the central themes that emerged. I used an unstructured interview format with open-ended questions (Appendix K) as I thought this would create an unthreatening situation for the participants (Kumar, 1996; Kvale, 1996). I focused on the experience of the participants and the expectations that they had of their leaders and their ideas of how the community should be established and function. It gave the participants flexibility and freedom to express themselves individually without feeling threatened.

3.3.3 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The boarding houses (about 40 participants in each house) were divided into 2 smaller groups of 7 members, each. I used the SRS (referred to in section 3.4.2) to select the 7 members for each focus group. Berg (2004:123) suggests that focus groups not be bigger than seven members as the small groups encourage the participants to speak freely about their situations. Rubin and Rubin (1995:140) concur:

In focus groups, the goal is to let people spark off one another, suggesting dimensions and nuances of the original problem that any one individual might not have thought of. Sometimes a totally different understanding of a problem emerges from the group discussion.

The meetings were held every second week, giving the groups time to put the plan they had created after each focus group into action. In these interviews, the interactions between the participants stimulated in depth discussions, generating ideas, issues, topics and even solutions to the establishment of a community. This proved to be an ideal method of collecting data as it allowed me to learn more about the life structures, the interactions among the participants and how they made decisions. Stewart and Shamdasani (1991) (as cited in Berg, 2004:124) describe this dynamism as “synergistic group effect”. It allows participants to collectively draw from each other as well as brainstorm ideas around the issues being discussed.

Berg (2004:124) recommends that because “it is frequently inexperienced researchers who use focus group interviews and who may themselves serve as moderators”, the researcher should prepare a schedule (guide) which eliminates the *‘fear of the unknown’* for all participants. The schedule in (Appendix J) provided an outline for each focus group, taking into consideration the age, language and culture of each participant.

One of the difficult tasks that emerged from the focus group meetings was that of containing the more dominating participants while encouraging the more passive members of the group to participate. According to Berg (2004.) one of the most successful ways of doing this is by developing an understanding with all the participants as this encourages the quieter ones to get involved. Through a process of ‘gate-keeping’, each individual was given an opportunity to make a contribution to the discussion that took place.

3.3.4 OTHER DOCUMENTS

Merriam (2001:112) refers to documents as “a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand”. During the research process as part of the mentor’s responsibility, a report (Appendix L) was written by each of the

seniors commenting on the progress of their junior which was submitted at the end of the term to the parents. The collection of these reports provided an avenue that allowed me to gain a richer understanding of the relationship that existed or that was being developed between the senior and his junior. To create a 'cross-check balance', the juniors of each mentor were also required to submit reports (Appendix M) about their mentors. The advantage of this method is that the reports "did not intrude upon or alter the setting in ways that the investigator might during observations, interviews or even focus group meetings "(Merriam, 2002:13).

3.4 TRIANGULATION

In order to obtain a clear picture while observing social and symbolic reality (Berg, 2004:5), an "across-method triangulation" was utilized to measure the ability of the students to develop a community (Denzin, 1970 as cited in Arksey & Knight, 1999:23). This method measures the same trend but from different angles. Arksey and Knight (1999:21) state that "the basic idea of triangulation is that data are obtained from a single wide range of different and multiple sources, using a variety of methods, investigators, or theories". Fielding and Fielding (as cited in Berg, 2004) suggest that the essential characteristic of triangulation is not only the combination of various kinds of data but an effort to communicate them so as to counteract the threats to their validity. Arksey and Knight (1999:21), quoting both Denzin (1970) and Jick (1983) state that, "triangulation is not an end in itself...In effect, triangulation serves two main purposes: *confirmation* and *completeness*".

The data that I collected from the unstructured cyclic interviews and focus group interviews were complemented by the series of observations that I carried out during the action research, within the house.

3.5 KEY ISSUES IN TRANSFORMATIVE RESEARCH

When conducting a research study one has to be aware of a number of issues that could be crucial to its success. These issues are considered to be as significant as the paradigm itself.

3.5.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Collins Dictionary (1979:502) defines ethical as being “in accordance with principles of conduct that are considered correct, especially those of a given profession or group”. As the research was of an interactive nature between the researchers and the participants, I had to consider certain ethical issues that arose which could have affected the overall outcome of the study. As Schwandt (1997:4) clarifies:

The ethics of qualitative inquiry...are concerned with the ethical principles and obligations governing conduct in the field and writing up accounts of fieldwork.

In order to minimize and reduce stress that could be experienced by the participants, I needed to consider ways and means of ensuring that the whole process of data collection would be ethically sound. Scott and Usher (1996:69) point out that:

Gathering information bestows certain obligations on the gatherer and yet they are motivated by conflicting impulses. Their account needs to be credible: that is, it must reflect, refer to, or in some sense illustrate what is happening or has happened, and yet fieldwork is social activity, which demands a level of trust between the researcher and the researched.

All the participants needed to be provided with a clear idea of what the research study entailed, who was involved and the way in which the data would be collected (Macintyre, 2000). The participants needed to be conscious of any risks that they could have been exposed to due to the processing and dissemination of the data (Andrew, 2005).

It is deemed to be unethical if information is collected without the knowledge of the participant, their informed willingness, and expressed consent (Kumar, 1996:192). The participants were informed about the nature and expectations of the research that was going to be carried out in their houses. Kumar (1996:192) states that informed consent:

implies that subjects are made adequately aware of the type of information you want from them, why the information is being sought, what purpose it will be put to, how they are expected to participate in the study, and how it will directly or indirectly affect them.

This consent was voluntary and no pressure was placed on the participants to get involved in the process. Schinke and Gilchrest (cited in Kumar, 1996:192) write:

All in-formed consent procedures must meet three criteria: participants must be competent to give consent; sufficient information must be provided to allow for a reasoned decision; and consent must be voluntary and uncoerced.

According to Schinke and Gilchrist (cited in Kumar, 1996:193), competency “is concerned with the legal and mental capacities of participants to give permission”. All participants were asked to complete and return consent forms (Appendix D) which laid out the aims and expectation of the research study. A number of minors participated in the process, so consent had to be obtained from the participant’s parents (Appendix C). Since this study was being conducted on the school campus it was necessary to inform the headmaster of the aims and expectations of the research, and obtain a letter of consent (Appendix A).

It was important to address confidentiality with all the participants in order for them to “act and reply ‘as honestly as possible’ so that a true picture of event could be obtained” without them feeling threatened or being intimidated. At the beginning of each interview the issue of confidentiality and anonymity was addressed to ensure that the participants understood that their names would be changed so that no-one would identify where the data came from (Macintyre, 2000:47).

My intentions were to be as ethically responsible as humanly possible. Out of inquisitiveness, Babbia (cited in Berg, 1998:31) points out that “all of us consider ourselves to be ethical, not perfect perhaps, but more ethical than most of humanity”.

3.5.2 OBJECTIVITY

The nature of the research study made it a challenge to remain as objective as possible. The action research required that I be an ‘insider’ when conducting the focus group sessions, whilst remaining simultaneously an ‘outsider’. According to Macintyre (2000:44), it is difficult to gather objective evidence if the researcher knows his/her subjects well. Being a housemaster I knew the participants very well, understanding their characteristic discursive tones and idiosyncrasies. I therefore made use of a co-facilitator, a qualified social worker with experience in group interviews. It was important for me to take each step and draw appropriate conclusions without allowing my own vested interests to cloud my judgment (Kumar, 1996). Scott (2000:16) argues that the term ‘objectivity’ “may be used to indicate that a description of the world about which a claim of validity is made is accurate...the word itself has become a synonym for ‘truth’”. Throughout the research I strove to achieve such objectivity.

Sadler (as cited in Eisner & Peshkin, 1990:33) cautions prospective researchers about being influenced:

Qualitative researchers are likely to be unduly influenced by positive instances, and not so sensitive to the significance of negative instances, they are likely to be unduly influenced or ‘anchored’ by experiences undergone early in research and so on.

There was a continuous need to reflect on what the research had revealed and that I had maintained an ‘open mind’ during the study. I endeavored to be as open and critical as possible during this journey.

3.5.3 RELIABILITY

Kumar (1996:4) refers to 'reliability' as the "quality of the measurement procedure". "If the research tool is consistent and stable, thus, predictable and accurate, it is then said to be reliable" (Kumar, 1996:140). Hammersley (cited in Silverman, 2000:175) argues that:

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or the same observer on different occasions.

Wilkinson (2000:38) concurs, claiming that it "refers to matters such as the consistency of a measure...the likelihood of the same results being obtained if the procedures were repeated". If the test was given to the same people under the same conditions and the same results were realized, then the instrument would be considered to be reliable (Birley & Moreland, 1998; Macintyre, 2000; Kumar, 1996).

In order to establish some form of reliability in my research study, I ensured that I first piloted the questions that I intended to use during the individual interviews. The aim was to see if the questions that were posed meant the same to the interviewees as they did to me, the researcher. It also allowed me to determine the type of answers that would be gathered. Having determined the questions that needed to be asked, it gave me the added advantage of staying on track when carrying out the interview and avoid being side-tracked.

The physical location of the interview room could also affect the responses of the interviewees (Kumar, 1996). In order to reduce this effect I chose a neutral venue where the participants would feel comfortable, and where any repeat interview would produce the same answers. Kumar (1996) refers to this as "the nature of the interaction". My presence could have affected the reliability of the answers and ultimately the data that was collected hence the use of a facilitator who ran the interview without me being present. The facilitator was well informed about the research study and was also involved in the initial pilot process of the questions.

3.5.4 VALIDITY

According to Smith (1991) (cited in Kumar, 1996:137), “validity is defined as the degree to which the researcher has measured what he has set out to measure”. Wilkinson (2000:38) concurs, saying that “validity relates broadly to the extent to which the measure achieves its aim, i.e. the extent to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure, or tests what it is intended to test”. To establish the validity of a study one has to justify each question in relation to the objective of the study (Kumar, 1996:138). Brinberg and McGrath (1985) say that “validity is not a commodity that can be bought...Rather, validity as integrity, character, and quality, to be assessed relative to purposes and circumstances” (as cited in Maxwell, 1992:13).

Birley and Moreland (1998:42) argue that:

Ensuring validity can be achieved in a number of ways, one of which to carry out an initial investigation (a pilot study) using any intended data collecting instrument to check the authenticity and relevance of data produced.

Using triangulation was another means whereby the validity of the study could be put to the test (Schwandt, 2000). Fielding and Fielding (1986) suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each” (as cited in Berg, 2004:5).

3.5.5 GENERALISABILITY

It was hoped that from the results realized in this research study inferences could be made regarding the other boarding houses on campus. Maxwell (1992:15) states that “generalizability refers to the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times, or settings than those directly studied”. Becker (1990) (cited in Maxwell, 1992:15) argues that:

Generalization in qualitative research usually takes place through the development of a theory that not only makes sense of the particular persons or situations studied, but also shows how the same process, in different situations, can lead to different results.

Yin (1984) (as cited in Maxwell, 1992:15) also points out that:

Generalizability is normally based on the assumption that this theory may be useful in making sense of similar persons or situations, rather than on an explicit sampling process and the drawing of conclusions about a specified population through statistical inference.

By using two houses on campus (about 76 boys involved), it was hoped that it would be possible to spread and share the findings with the other houses on campus, as well as to similar schools with boarding establishments (Macintyre, 2000). According to Macintyre (2000), generalization could be a serious likelihood if the details of the context, the volunteers and the planning of the study, were shared. The readers could then extract parts of the report which were similar to their own situation.

In chapter four 4, I analyze and discuss the data extracting themes that have risen from the data that has been collected.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS



“If you don’t succeed the first time, try and try again until you do succeed”

(Anonymous)

4.1 PREFACE

Before reporting on the data in this chapter, it is necessary to give some background to the development and implementation of the model (Appendix G) which restructured the operation of the participating houses.

Against the background of shifts in thinking about leadership in schools I felt that it was necessary to create a model that would be suitable for the boarding houses. It needed to be more inclusive, encouraging greater responsibility and accountability. As the school was in the process of investigating alternative methods of student leadership, I decided to consult the students within the boarding houses about how they believed their houses could function more effectively. The idea was to look at ways of including more people in the process of leadership. The model was designed to incorporate all the members of house.

As a mentorship system had previously been proposed by the seniors, ways of extending this system were discussed in detail. The former mentoring system only included the Grade 12's who 'adopted' a junior for the year. The first year of college life is a difficult and often a frustrating experience for the new Grade 8 pupils, as they attempt to find their feet in their new environment. The value of adding extra responsibilities, in term of doing tasks for seniors, was questioned. In raising this issue some of the seniors agreed that we should look into introducing a further year of mentorship.

Some senior students were concerned about extending the mentorship system for an extra year as they felt that it would affect their privileges as a senior. It was pointed out to them that the additional level would give the future seniors the opportunity of building on the same relationship over two years. The advantages of being able to nurture a junior for two years was accepted and it was decided to include the Grade 11's, giving them the responsibility of looking after the Grade 8's for a year. It was expected that the Grade 11's would develop a strong relationship with their junior ensuring they settled into the boarding house and into the general life of the college. The advantage of having this level was that it gave the Grade 11 student an opportunity to be responsible and accountable for a junior before taking on the

responsibility of leading the house in his final year. This extended period of time gave both parties two years to develop a relationship, in which the senior could become more supportive and helpful to his junior, strengthening their relationship with respect and trust. It was agreed that the juniors would also benefit from this tutelage. As Greenleaf (1977:7) states:

Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?

A second area of responsibility was created where the Grade 12's took on the responsibility of a 'Pod'. This term was derived from the collective noun for a group/family of whales. The use of the word 'Pod' was to create an idea of a family away from home. The Grade 12 became responsible for a range of boys in the house (a Grade 8, a Grade 9, a Grade 10 and a Grade 11). This formed a family within the house. The senior in charge of each 'Pod' would deal with the behavior, discipline and well-being of each member of the group.

A Functional Group level was also created which was made up of all the students of a particular Grade. This was done so that the students could get involved in discussions without feeling intimidated by the presence of their seniors. However, a Grade 12 student needed to take on the responsibility of heading each of these groups. This was agreed to in order to maintain control during meetings. Discussions at each Grade meeting were taken back to either the housemaster or the head of house, depending on the nature of the issue under discussion.

The students felt that the model, with all the tiers, gave all the members of the house an opportunity to either be responsible or learn to become responsible for others. One of the greatest advantages identified was the development and establishment of relationships. Most of the students were encouraged by the idea of involving more of the members in the functioning of the house with the implementation of the model.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four, I present the data collected and discuss my findings. This data is organized and arranged into themes that have materialized through the interaction of the participants from the two boarding houses. The data was predominantly drawn from the focus groups, weaving a triangulation with data collected from both individual interviews and observations that took place during the data collection process. In order to complete this triangulation of the data, relevant documentation and literature were also utilized. I have used the phases of the action research cycle (Fig. 2) as a format for the presentation of the analysis and discussion of my data.

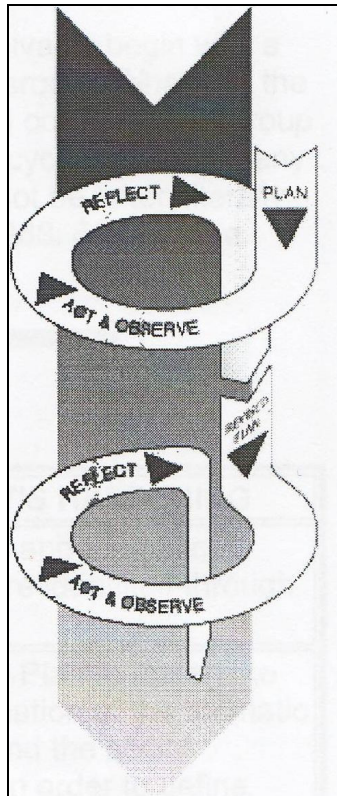


Figure 4: Cyclic Action Research Process
(Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988:5)

4.3 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The college has a very diverse, 'global' population which I thought could enrich the data.

The 73 students that participated in this study came from two boarding houses and had volunteered to participate in this action research. They were all males. Of the participants, 6 (8.2%) were younger than 14 years old, 12 (16.4%) were of the age 14 years, 11 (15.1%) were of the age 15 years, 25 (43.2%) were of the age 16 years, 15 (20.5%) were of the age 17 years, and 4 (5.5%) were 18 years and older. This is best illustrated in table 4 and figure 5 below.

Age Groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<14	6	8.2	8.2	8.2
14	12	16.4	16.4	24.7
15	11	15.1	15.1	39.7
16	25	34.2	34.2	74.0
17	15	20.5	20.5	94.5
18+	4	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	73	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Ages of Participants

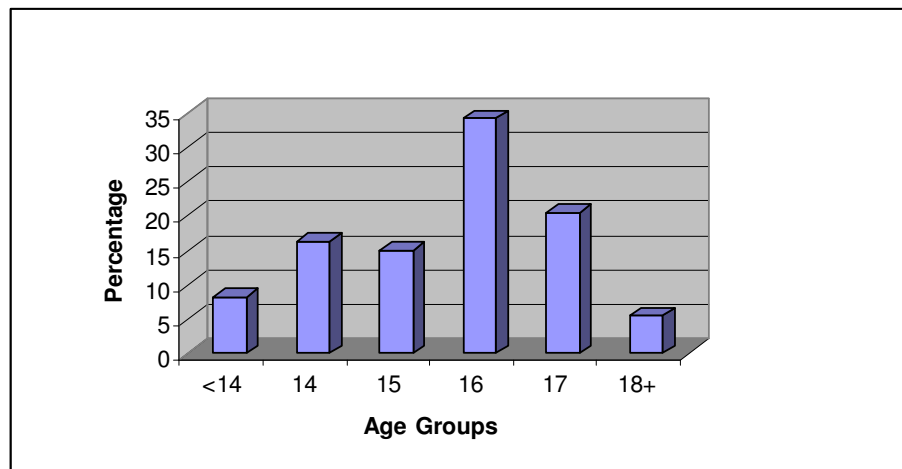


Figure 5: Ages of Participants

In the first instance, it is interesting to note that 44 (60%) of the participants were between the ages of 16 years and 18 years. These are the seniors of the house and make up the leadership structure. This in itself reminds us of the influence and ultimately the effect that they will have of their houses.

Secondly, the diversity of the houses plays a significant role. “There is a powerful cultural, social and political ingredient” that comes from all the students that come from a range of countries in Africa which is best illustrated in table 5 and figure 6 (Lessem & Nussbaum (1996:155).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	South Africa	49	67.1	67.1	67.1
	Botswana	5	6.8	6.8	74.0
	Zambia	5	6.8	6.8	80.8
	Namibia	5	6.8	6.8	87.7
	Zimbabwe	4	5.5	5.5	93.2
	Tanzania	1	1.4	1.4	94.5
	Other	4	5.5	5.5	100.0
	Total	73	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Cultural Groups

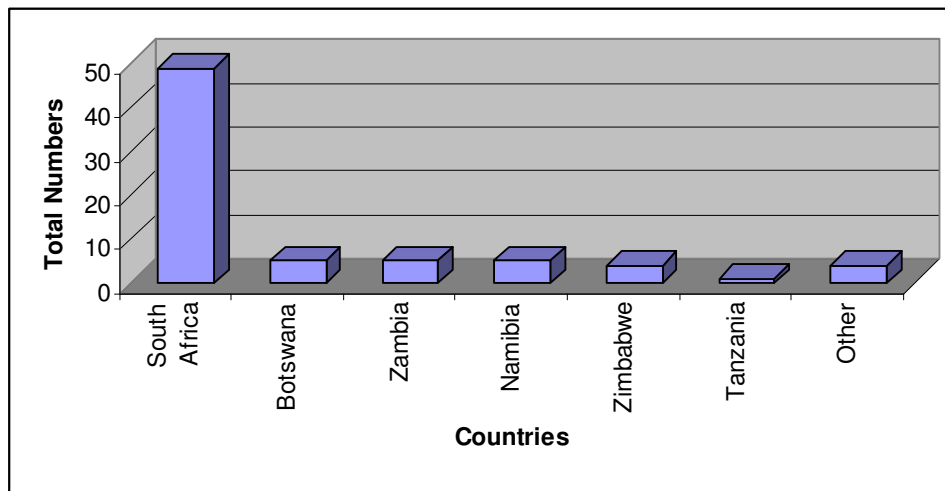


Figure 6: Cultural Groups

The language groupings also create diversity in the houses, as illustrated in figure 7. Of the participants, 49 (67.1%) had English as their home language, 12 (16.5%) had an African home language, 6 (8.2%) had Afrikaans as their home language, and 6 (8.2%) from other European languages.

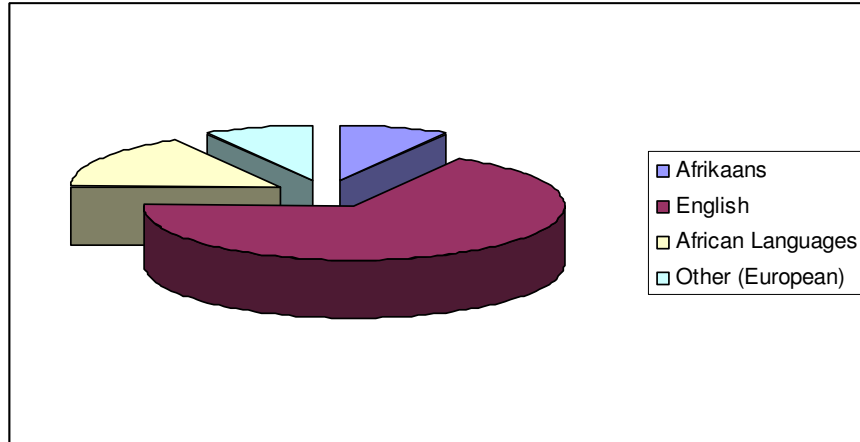


Figure 7: Home Language

.Lessem and Nussbaum (1996:155) acknowledge that these models are based on “language, body language, cultural style and personality”. They encourage the development of “consensus-seeking”. In action research, as the participants investigate the functioning of their house, mindscapes will be affected possibly resulting in conflict. It is acceptable that the participants exercise their right to express themselves but will need to use their skills to “develop conflict resolution in order to contain any conflict, minimizing the racial, ethnic factors that could aggravate and take over” at the start of the study (Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996:155). However the students saw the value of having so much diversity in the house as “making the group strong”.

4.4 PHASE ONE: REFLECTION OF CURRENT PRACTICES

4.4.1 “FUNCTIONAL BLINDNESS?”

Most ailing organizations have developed a functional blindness to their own defects. They are not suffering because they cannot resolve their problems, but because they cannot see their problems (Gardner cited in Covey, 2002:19)

In earlier observations that I carried out in the boarding houses of the college, specifically Wood House and Jagger House, I was aware of a traditional system of leadership operating. This traditional system seems to have been designed to be an authoritative, selective and privileged body, excluding the majority of students from the decision making process within the college and the boarding houses. Although the college has recently made attempts to address these imbalances the students still perceive the leadership process as being a ‘top-down’ hierarchical system, purely operating on a ‘command and control’ basis. In an individual interview, one of the interviewees conveyed his understanding of this kind of system as being:

INTERVIEWEE 3: What they [seniors] say, you do!

In further informal discussions with the boys they generally expressed satisfaction with the way in which the houses were currently functioning. In order that the participants ‘see’ more deeply, I would argue that on reflection the leaders and the members of each house could come to understand that they have become “functionally blind” (Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996:19) to some of the faults that did in fact exist within their establishment. This “functional blindness” is well demonstrated by the response of a Focus Group (FG) member, which generally reflected the group’s attitude as well. He commented:

FGA 1: This is the system that we have always used. I don’t see any real problems.

The boys struggled to identify any problems that were currently being experienced, possibly because they had become so accustomed or entrenched in the system.

This dilemma is best illustrated by the story about the frog in a pot of water on a stove. If the frog is first placed into boiling water it will immediately jump out, but if the frog first finds itself in a pot of cold water and the temperature of the water is increased slowly over a period of time, the frog does not realize that the water is getting warmer. It will remain there, quite contented. It is only a matter of time before the water reaches boiling point, and the frog unfortunately, to its detriment has still not reacted and boils with it (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2002:126)

A comment by one of the focus group participants, best exemplifies this when he said:

FGA 6: You grow up having experienced things in the house from Grade 8, so when you get to Grade 12 you reflect on what happened over the years and do the same thing. It feels that it is the right way of doing things.

Each member of the house may experience a maximum of 5 years within the system and one could easily get used to the way in which it functioned, with all the traditions that come with being attached to that house. It is true that if one does not honestly reflect on the process within the house you could develop a belief that there is nothing wrong with what is presently being done and change would not be possible.

In the early phases of the action research, the participants needed to be challenged to reflect and examine the “mindscapes” (Sergiovanni, 1996; Preedy, Glatter & Wise, 2003) that they had been developed. Some of the mindscapes of the participants appeared to more developed than others, due to the amount of time that they had spent living in the boarding house. In reflecting on these mindscapes, there was a possibility of some change occurring. But how keen were the participants to reflect on the current system, knowing that there was a possibility of change?

4.4.2 EMBRACING CHANGE

During the first focus group meetings that were conducted, it was explained to each of the participants that by being part of this research process, they could be making significant adjustments to the way in which they thought and acted. However, if they were only prepared to make small, minor, incremental changes and improvements to the way in which their establishment functioned then, as Covey (2002) suggests, we would only need to concentrate on the basic practices and behavior or attitudes in the house. This is unlikely to have any impact on their houses and may result in no change taking place.

But in order to make any significant changes to the way in which their houses functioned and how they developed as leaders, needed to examine existing paradigms. The Greek word for paradigm is *paradeigma*, meaning, a frame of reference or lens through which one is able to view your world (Covey, 2002:19). In the focus group meetings the participants agreed to examine and study their boarding establishments through a different set of lenses in order to make some significant changes. In an activity that was carried out in the focus group meeting where the participants created a “spider’s web” by passing a ball of string from person to person, an interesting discussion ensued which indicated the group’s understanding of the challenges of change.

FGB 7: I see it [change] like this net, remains the same for a long period of time, like 10 years, then it will not get stronger. It will get weaker so you need change to make it stronger. So by introducing new people with different ideas will result in the web getting stronger. The old have to let go in order to bring in the new.

Another participant concurred:

FGB 6: By introducing new people, new ideas into the process, it will result in the structure getting stronger.

But he was challenged by a more senior member of the focus group who said:

FGB 3: Yes, but you don’t have to throw the baby out with the bath water.

INTERVIEWER: But do you have to let go of the old to bring in the new?

FGB 3: Yes, ...I agree, but you can always say that the old is the base [foundation] and without it you would not be able to function. So maybe, the new builds onto the old to establish a stronger structure.

To many of these boys tradition is very important within their houses and would not easily be discarded for the sake of change.

The participant were asked how they intended to make any changes to the existing practices within in their boarding house as these could have an impact on the house as a whole. In the discussions that ensued, the participants agreed that there was a way of embracing change, but they would have to work through the process, looking at including everyone and empowering the juniors (Fig. 8).

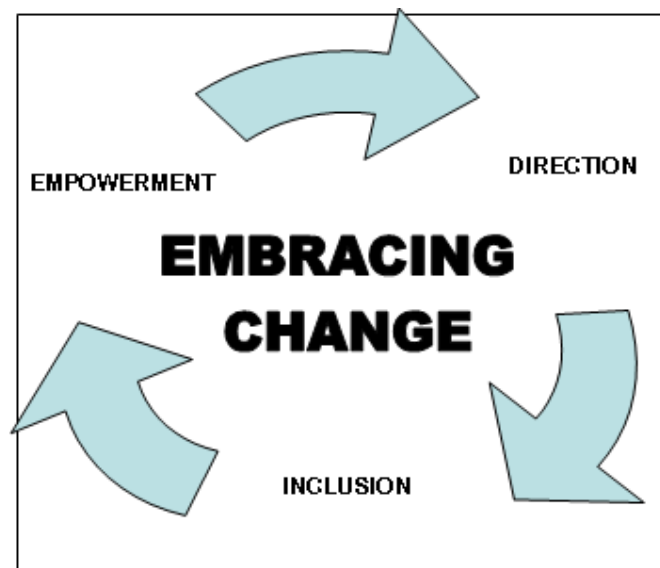


Figure 8: Embracing Change

4.4.2.1 DIRECTION

To address the need for direction, the focus groups discussed what they wanted to accomplish for their boarding house, during this period of research. The participants felt that they needed a specific “end point” that they could aim at, but also understood that as this was a long process, they would most likely not reach it. A FG member stated that:

FGA 3: It is difficult to achieve a goal if you don't know where your end point is.

He was supported by another member of the group who stated:

FGA 8: I need to aim at something.

The focus group members felt that having direction in a group required someone to drive it. It became evident that the participants identified the need for a "leader" to assist in giving direction to the group, as interviewee 6 explained:

INTERVIEWEE 6: Everything has to have a leader...if there is no leader, then no-one is going to know where to go. You need your leader to lead you on the basic road.

Interviewee 7 concurred:

INTERVIEWEE 7: You have to have leaders, otherwise it can be chaotic. Leaders are important as they show people the right direction, they lead the way.

For the participants, "control" and "order" was needed to prevent any "chaos" from developing during change.

The participants were conscious of the extent to which any imminent change(s) could affect the house. The focus groups work showed a keenness to work out ways in which they could include everyone, at different stages of the research process. Using the model (Appendix G), which was introduced and implemented in the house earlier in the year, the participants agreed that they wanted the members of their houses to establish more of a community that was developed through collaboration. They also wanted to unpack and understand the whole concept of community and servant leadership and know how they could implement this approach in leading others in the future.

4.4.2.1 INCLUSION

Embracing any change within the house would have been almost unattainable if these leaders within the boarding house were not prepared to question the underlying leadership culture that existed and be prepared to work together in the process. This is well demonstrated in an informal conversation that took place after the first group (group B) meeting when the Head of House stated:

FGB 1: I will not be able to make any changes in the way in which the house functions, unless I have the support of everyone and everyone in the house is included in the decision making process.

This is supported by another FG member's (group A) statement when he said:

FGA 1: Change...will be difficult to implement within the boarding establishment, if we don't understand where we are going and if we are not all involved in what is happening.

The importance of involving everyone in the process of change was recognized by the focus group. It was noted in a further discussion:

FGA 5: Every single person will be affected by what happens.

The diversity of the group was also recognized by the participants as being important to their development. The group members believed that by including everyone from all backgrounds, the decision making progress within the house could only improve. The focus group members felt that they would be able to draw on the expertise and the many different ideas that have been influenced and developed by their cultures. One FG member pointed out that this could make the group very strong in the process:

FGB 7: I think, like...everyone is so diverse and it is something that makes a group so strong because of all the different ideas. It makes a group so strong...our diverse backgrounds, cultures and characters.

The feeling of the focus group members was that by including everyone in the decision making process it could eliminate any ill feelings that could arise from the rest of the members of the house, who were not involved in the focus group discussions. As change was going to affect everyone in the house, the focus group members started to think and address ways in which the members of their houses could all be included and empowered in the decision making process.

4.4.2.3 EMPOWERMENT

In my observations (**OBS 1:18, 23/05/07**) I noted that everyone in the group or the house were encouraged to make an input into the way forward in the house. They were given the opportunity to express themselves, share their ideas and opinions, whilst the seniors took the time to listen to them and together made decisions.

During one house meeting (**OBS 2:23/05/07**) the empowerment of the juniors was sorely lacking, I believed, however, that this would change as the boys learned to trust each other more as the process unfolded and the seniors learned not to feel so threatened by their juniors.

During the observations (**OBS 3 + 4: 12,20/06/07**) it became more apparent that the members of the houses were being given opportunities to make responses at different stages of the process, either in the group setting (“Pods”, “functional” groups or in house meetings) or as an individual (with “mentor”). They became more confident when they received support from each other and began to share their ideas. These opportunities acted as platforms from which they could make their contributions without feeling intimidated.

The boys were able to participate in the decision making process, making them feel so much more part of the house. Some of the responses, during the interviews, highlight this:

INTERVIEWEE 2: I felt more part of the house...Its fun being part of the process.

The focus groups had been able to create a more acceptable atmosphere within the house, establishing a platform from which the participants could contribute. This was demonstrated by the response of a participant during his interview:

INTERVIEWEE 3: It is a much more friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Interviewee 6 concurred:

INTERVIEWEE 6: I felt extremely comfortable...got given a chance to talk...we listened to each other...It was a friendly environment.

Another interviewee identified a change in the way the participants were being treated in the decision making process. He stated:

INTERVIEWEE 2: I'd say yes. Respect has been a lot better.

By giving the members an opportunity to make a contribution in the house, the juniors felt that they were being valued and could express themselves. However, some of the FG members voiced a few concerns about this new found confidence of the juniors and the change that was taking place.

4.4.3 CONCERNS

As the focus groups examined the concept of change, it became apparent that the seniors in the house felt apprehensive that any change in the status quo would "upset the apple cart".

The parameters of the traditional hierarchical leadership style and operation of the house were well established. My earlier observations (OBS 1, 2, 3+4) of the houses were that almost everyone had readily accepted the current system that was in operation, as being the norm. They had become accustomed to the top down hierarchy that existed in the boarding house. The members of the boarding establishment have

learned never to question this authority and they just continue to muddle along day after day.

The mere thought of changing all of this generated a lot of uncertainty with the participants at the beginning of the first focus group, especially when they believed that things were working well, which was well illustrated in the following discussion:

FGA 1: Why change something that is currently working well and we are happy with it?

Another group member concurred when expressed his concern:

FGA 2: It is a scary thought. Most of us have been here since Grade 8 and we have always done it in a particular way. We have responded to “command and control” all our lives and to change, well ...no-one knows what it is going to be like.

However, there were some other concerns that were voiced in the focus group discussions. The general feeling of the focus group members was that the “juniors” (Grade 8, 9 and 10) would take advantage of any of these changes and start to be disrespectful towards their “seniors” (Grade 11 and 12). As one stated:

FGA 3: Juniors may respond differently, as they see the advantages of being on the same level as their seniors and may not respond to discipline and be disrespectful.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think the juniors will become disrespectful to the seniors, in the new process.

FGA 3: Maybe they think that because they are on the same level as the seniors of the house, that they are entitled to the same privileges. They think that they don't have to show respect to the senior.

This uneasiness was evident in one of my early observations (**OBS 2: 23/05/07**) undertaken in one of the houses. The house had come together for a meeting, to discuss the development of values for the house. It became evident that one of the

seniors was threatened by the input that the juniors were making. Some of the responses of this senior to the junior's suggestions were abrasive.

SNR 1: Agh, what do you know. You are talking rubbish. It doesn't work that way. Sit down and stop talking rubbish.

This junior was verbally beaten down when making a very pertinent point. This caused him to feel inferior in the discussion and resulted in him choosing to withdraw. Some of the seniors appeared to have more reservations than the juniors about any possible changes that could be made to the functioning of the boarding house.

4.5 PHASE TWO: IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

In order for the focus groups to "see their problems" (Covey, 2002:19), part of the action research cycle, the time of reflection, was important and useful. This gave the participants a time to reflect on and discuss how their houses had been run in the past and how they were being run at present. If they reflected honestly they would be able to identify and isolate problems that could be addressed during the research. In the ensuing discussions, they started to recognize that, although the leadership system was still functioning well, there were some functional defects that needed to be changed to strengthen their establishment.

4.5.1 PROBLEM OF LEADERSHIP STYLES WITHIN THE HOUSE

The members of the focus group started to recognize that they had been practicing traditional, commanding leadership styles which the hierarchical cultures of the college and house had encouraged. This is best illustrated by one of the respondent's comments to the questionnaire that was carried out to examine leadership within the boarding house. Here he commented on the so-called structure that existed in his house.

RESP 1: The matrics are the leg, the Grade 11's are the sock, the Grade 10's the shoe, the Grade 9's are the bubblegum stuck to the shoe and the Grade 8's (me) are the [dirt] stuck to the bubblegum.

Another comment made in a later focus group meeting explained how this hierarchical structure was enforced in the houses.

FGA 5: When I first arrived in Grade 8, it was a case of “you are seen but not heard”. You learn to do what you are told and don't even think of questioning it. We were woken up, one morning at 2 a.m. and told that “you are the lowest of lowest” and don't dare say anything to anyone. You need to know your place in this house.

It appeared that the members of each house got to know the parameters of the current leadership style being implemented and they (juniors) had to adjust quickly, out of fear, to this top down hierarchy that existed in the boarding house.

As the discussions continued it became more apparent that the experiences that many of these participants had had, affected them. When they were asked: “How did you feel when you first came into your current house?” some of the following responses illustrated a feeling of abuse:

FGA 1: When I first arrived, the matrics looked 10 times bigger than what they are now.

FGA 5: It was very strict. We did have some bad times. It was really bad.

FGB 3: I remember that when I came into the house as a Grade 8, how I always had a feeling that A W, when he gave an instruction one never questioned him. The one night R B queried an instruction; we were all called into the common room and got lashed. It made no sense as it was just an attempt to get clarity on what was needed to be done.

FGB 2: I remember when we were in Grade 8 how we were beaten. The senior [matric] would shout “skunk” from upstairs and we were given literally five seconds to get to where he was. If we didn't make it we would all be hit.

FGB 3: I also recall how I got hit with a hockey stick because I didn't make my "skunkmaster's" bed in the morning, so he hit me with his hockey stick.

Interestingly the boys had not considered the need to change anything until they were required to reflect and consider possible improvements to how they interacted with others.

INTERVIEWER: How did you feel about being treated like that?

FGB 2: I didn't enjoy it.

FGA 2: Yes, we experienced bullying but we didn't like it but had to put up with it.

In order for a change to take place in a situation like this, there has to be a disturbance, an experience and then a reaction. The reaction of most of the participants, especially the Grade 12's was revealing. They were not keen for their juniors go through the same unpleasant experience. A FG member explained:

FGA 5: As we had bad experiences, I didn't feel that this is what we want to do to the juniors but rather that we didn't want them to experience what we experienced.

Not only do the experiences of others transform people but so do the examples that others have left behind, which results in followers aspiring to be like them. This was very evident in the one focus group meeting when the head of house of the previous year was used as an example. The discussion unfolded in the following way that made the participants reflect on the need for change.

FGA 4: How do you explain B M?

FGA 6: He was good leader.

FGA 4: Yes, but he grew up like everyone else and look how he turned out to be.

FGA 6: I think he practiced servant leadership or what I know of servant leadership. He actually listened to you and other matrics. This is what made him such a good leader. He showed that he cared.

FGA 4: He never treated anyone badly.

FGA 9: B M had it bad when he was a junior, but he started the attitude that he wanted to make it better. He had the attitude: “I had it bad, but I want you to have it better”.

FGA 2: I learned so much from him as a leader.

FGA 3: He was consistent in his approach, firm but fair.

FGA 7: He respected others and he understood where they were coming from and what they had experienced and was willing to make a stand and change.

The example of this leader resulted in the participants of the focus group, who were the senior members of the house, expressing a desire to change the way in which they interacted with others in the house. They recognized that in order to lead successfully leaders need to understand the people that they work with.

4.5.2 PROBLEM OF RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE HOUSE

The participants identified that they did not really know the rest of the house, which points to a lack of understanding and poor relationships. To address the uneasiness of moving out of comfort zones and any insecurities that they had, the participants felt it was important for the group to recognize and understand how the other members of the boarding house felt about the process of change itself (Goleman et al., 2002:253).

Some of the focus group participants, one being the head of house, acknowledged this by saying that he did not really know the boys in his house and that he needed to

develop deeper understandings, in order to interact with them more effectively. He stated that:

FGA 4: I want to understand the people in my house and know how they function and think.

In another focus group, a member concurred when he said:

FGB 2: I want to listen and learn from others, get to know what their views are and to understand other approaches.

The use of the words “understand”, “know”, “listen” and “learn” indicated a desire of the senior boys to build closer connections with the other members of the house. It was pleasing to observe, from the focus group meetings, that the desire was emerging for discussion and co-operation with the whole house.

As the reflection had had a marked effect on many of the focus group participants, it presented an ideal opportunity for them to explore ways of making these changes by first developing an understanding of community.

4.6 PHASE THREE: DEVELOPING A PLAN

4.6.1 DEVELOPING THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY

During the second focus group meeting, the discussion was centered round the understanding of the meaning of the term “community”. The group focused their attention on what they thought would be an ideal community. The FG members recognized that their needs within their house, their relationships with others, activities that had taken place, the motivation of everyone and the experience that they had had in a group, were important factors that they needed to consider when identifying characteristics of a community. From the responses, a number of common themes emerged (Table 7). This demonstrated that the FG members had a good sense of what a community should be and what characteristics were required for a place to

be called a community. From this table it was clear that what the FG members understood a commitment to each other, strong connections between the members of the establishment, a focus on goals and values and a strong moral ethic were prerequisites for a community.

Table 6: Ideas of a Community

IDEAS OF A COMMUNITY	
RESPONSES	THEMES
a home away from home group of people all living together a family	COLLECTION OF PEOPLE
working together take an interest in each other being there for each other “Big brother” approach helping each other out bonding of people interaction of people acting together shared responsibilities supporting each other able to turn to someone being able to support others rally around a difficult time dependent on each other regular, free communication work towards similar goals	RELATIONSHIPS
no conflict but rather solve problems learning from each other spirit/vibe trust/atmosphere of trust have unity respect for each other respect for individual differences	VALUES

4.6.2 COLLECTION OF PEOPLE

In any situation, where people get together, a strong feeling of wanting to belong to the group is prominent. This belonging satisfies one of the basic needs of mankind, as depicted in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In the FG meetings the members expressed this need as important to them.

INTERVIEWER: What is a community?

A FG member identified it as being a home, which was reflected in his response:

FGB 5: It should be our home away from home. It would be difficult for 40 people having nothing to do with each other, all living together under the same roof. They should all be working together.

For boys in a boarding establishment this becomes their "home away from home" for at least nine months of the year. They are separated from their parents for the five years of their senior schooling. Here they are all exposed to 40 boys of different ethnic backgrounds and who are all expected to interact with each other. It became apparent, in these focus group discussions, that the FG members identified a community as being comprised of a collection of individuals ("group of people", "all living together"), from all different backgrounds, who all have established some bond through a shared goal or purpose. This idea was strongly supported by the responses of the participants when asked what they thought a "community" was, during their interviews:

INTERVIEWEE 2: A big group of people.

Another interviewee supported this idea by adding:

INTERVIEWEE 7: A community works like a family.

It was interesting to note how the participants linked the value of “family” to the idea of community, within the boarding establishment. This was possibly due to the fact that they still saw the family support structure in existence in the houses and that through the relationships that developed they were able to receive the necessary support that they would have at home. With the members of the boarding establishment living together for such long periods of time, it became an ideal location for the participants to establish a community.

4.6.3 EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS

Part of creating a community was the ability of the members to develop strong relationships by working and interacting with each other. These connections were important to the participants as this was what would keep them together. This was recognized by the focus group in their discussions as they used words like: “interest in each other”, being there for each other” and “helping each other”. The use of these words indicated a desire for greater intimacy with the other members of the house. My observations revealed that many of the seniors had never experienced this kind of caring attention from their seniors and having reflected on their treatment, were excited at the prospect of making a positive difference in the juniors’ lives.

INTERVIEWER: What is it that you are looking for in a community?

FGB 5: People taking an interest in each other, being there for each other, helping each other out.

FGB 1: I would say the interaction of people, trying to help each other and being able to stay in one place with each other, not having a conflict situation.

FGB 2: It is a group of people who are working towards similar goals and not having major conflicts, as the people are able to sort them out. They bond together.

An interviewee reiterates the idea of relationships when he says:

Interviewee 6: It is a group of people who work together. They should know each other and how other people are around them and be able to help each other.

The phrases used during the focus group meetings, such as: "...all working together", "...in each other", "...interaction", "...together" and "we", illustrates the willingness of the participants to accept the importance of inclusion in the boarding establishment. There was also a stronger desire to create conditions that allowed the participants to create a sense of "we" from the "I" of each individual (Sergiovanni, 1996). The plural "we" is far stronger than the singular "I", which results in a greater show of strength within a group who were keen to establish a community. If all the boys in the boarding house had these same intentions then they would be able to create and establish this community.

With such a diverse group of boys co-existing the development of relationships becomes vital to avoid conflict in the house and for co-operation. A FG member recognized the importance of the bonding of all these boys in order to make them into a community. The ability of these boys to deal with these differences would demand a greater understanding and tolerance of each other's cultures. He responded by saying:

FGB 3: We are all from different places, different ethnic groups, even in this room we have people of different languages, countries and different skin colour. But, basically, it is the bonding of these people and interaction of them that makes it a community.

In my observations (**OBS 3/4: 12, 20/06/07**) of the houses, I did notice that boys seemed to live strictly according to an unwritten code within the house.

4.6.4 INTRODUCING THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHED VALUES

Values to the boys were important and each member of the house was expected to live by them. When they were asked what their values were it soon became apparent that there was no set of structured values that existed. The juniors learned what these values were through trial and error.

During the focus group discussions, it became more evident that the importance of values was recognized by the FG members. As one of the FG members related:

FGB 7: Without values in our house we could not function effectively and neither would we be able to live together.

When asked what he thought kept groups of people together, an interviewee not only recognized the importance of having values but also the willingness of people to be part of the community. He pointed out:

INTERVIEWEE 3: A willingness to work together and being brought together. Making a decision to be part of it as well as encouraging others to be part of it.

People are positively influenced by the way in which they are treated in a group. If they feel that they are important to the group and see themselves as having a vital role to play, then they have a desire to belong to that particular group.

Another FG member raised a salient point when he referred to a discussion that he had with his group when discussing the importance of values in the house. He stated that:

FGA 3: It is what holds us together.

This point was reiterated in another focus group meeting, when a member shared a comment that one of the juniors had made during a house meeting:

FGB 4: It's the glue that holds us together, even in trying times.

An interviewee identified specific values that he believes would hold a community together as he responded:

INTERVIEWEE 7: Love, respect and trustworthy and then all the people should stay together. If one [value] goes missing then people start not understanding each other and things don't go so well.

For this member of the house, values became important as they acted as the adhesive that kept the group of individuals together and prevented any misunderstanding arising within the group, called a community. He identified that if one was missing, it would have an impact on the way in which the house functioned and this was well supported by a FG member who stated:

FGB 2: If one [value] is non-existent then it automatically places a lot of pressure on the boys in the house. This can result in the structure becoming weaker.

Another interviewee summed it up well:

INTERVIEWEE: If respect is not shown it has a chain reaction in the house and people are less willing to help and then the system doesn't work.

This was supported by the response of a senior member of the focus group when relating a story of his travels in London, recently:

FGB 3: When I was in London during the holidays, I boarded the tube with my mum and found that it was terribly full. At the next stop an elderly person got onto the train but had nowhere to sit so took her place in the aisle. I immediately got up and offered her my seat. She was totally taken aback and so were the rest of the passengers on the train. It made me feel good. The next day as I was riding on one of the London buses, it seemed to follow me, an elderly person also boarded but had nowhere to stand. I did what I have learned and stood up and offered him my seat. He was very thankful but my mum showed that she was very proud of me. It made me feel so good. I'll do it again.

The use of his words: "it made me feel good", "I'll do it again" and "she was very proud of me" showed what effect recognition had and how it empowers one to want to get out there and do it again.

It was encouraging in my observation of the focus group meetings to see how the members rallied around excitedly, engaging in discussions around the establishment of values for their houses. They felt that it was important for everyone to know what

they were and what they meant. So this became part of the next phase of the process for the focus group, one of implementing the plan.

4.7 PHASE FOUR: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

This was a most exciting and rewarding phase in this action research in the houses. It taught me a lot about the drive of teenagers and their willingness to get involved when they are empowered to make a contribution to a process. I was impressed with the way in which the seniors were prepared to work together and make changes to the way in which they had dealt with their peers and the juniors of the house, in order to establish a more “effective home away from home”. The energy with which they tackled the task of communicating the idea of community to the house was most encouraging as was watching the style of leadership shifting.

4.7.1 COMMUNICATING THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY

Communication plays an important role in all walks of life. The ability to communicate ideas to others could result in a process either succeeding or failing. During the focus group meetings, the members were involved in the cyclic process of action learning (experiential learning). After having reflected on past and present practices, identifying any problems and agreeing on a plan of action, it was time for the members to implement their ideas or plans within their houses. The first step was to use whatever method was available to them to convey the idea of community to the rest of the house.

4.7.2 METHODS USED

During the focus group meetings the members were encouraged to put some thought into how they would go about the implementation phase of the action research. They had two choices:

1. They could enforce their ideas on the house. This would be possible as most of the participants held senior positions in the house;

or;

2. They could take their ideas back to the whole house for further discussion.

The general consensus in both focus groups was that it would be more effective if they were to take their ideas back to the members of their houses for further discussion. They realized that the transparent communication of their ideas was essential. This decision was best portrayed through the following discussion:

FGA 4: Let's take it back to the whole house and discuss with them what our ideas are.

FGA 6: It's a good idea to inform the whole house. Just have a general discussion to start off with.

FGA 4: Ok. Well, then let's start by aiming to do it every week now, but will be difficult to maintain because every matric will be studying.

INTERVIEWER: How would you overcome this problem?

FGA 6: Make the second prep, which is 45 minutes, a time for our POD meetings. The Grade 11's can then take the lead if we [matrics] aren't there.

Although problems arose, it was quite evident that the members of the FG were keen to make this process work. Although the FGs differed on the use of method to communicate their idea of community to the other members of the house, they recognized the value of breaking down the whole house into small more manageable groups.

One of the FG members concurred when he stated:

FGA 4: A POD is more manageable as it is smaller.

This is supported when another member reiterated:

FGA 2: If the group is big like the class or house, half the people won't listen because they are not at all involved but in the Pods, they will all be involved. More interaction, more involved.

Another pertinent point was made by a FG member, when he pointed out that:

FGB 6: People tend to lose focus in the house meetings as they are bigger.

The encouraging factor here was that the FG members realized that controlling a big group posed too many problems and that they would not get the best results as only a few members of their houses were likely to participate.

Instead of approaching the whole house, the FGs either chose to use their Pods or their functional groups. Both these systems have their strengths and weaknesses. The second focus group encountered some difficulties which were demonstrated in a discussion about how they attempted to collect information from their groups.

FGB 6: I took the Grade 9's but they were completely different to the Grade 8's. I really battled with them as they find it difficult to work with each other.

FGB 5: Yes. I was involved with the Grade 11's. I was quite disappointed. Most people were not co-operating. It took quite a while, with difficulty, to get the guys to respond. They did eventually, but it was not what I had expected.

FGB 7: The Grade 11's are the biggest group in the house, so to get everyone together is difficult.

FGB 4: Especially these guys, as they are very individualistic and quite confident and because they don't want to participate, they will not join in. They are also vying for position, for next year.

INTERVIEWER: Difficult to keep them focused?

FGB 7: Yes. I also had a group of Grade 11's and that is why I chose to use the individual approach with them.

It was also very interesting to see how FGB 6 adapted to the situation with his group of Grade 9's when he utilized the icebreaker method that he had learned from the second focus group meeting. Here he explained during the fifth focus group meeting:

FGB 6: My group was fine. We had good control of the group this time. We also used an ice breaker to get them settled. They then all got involved in the discussion and made some valuable suggestions about a vision.

Towards the end of the fifth focus group meeting, a member of FGB commented that the use of the POD rather than the functional group, was possibly the better way of getting these boys to participate during this research process. He noted:

FGB 2: I think that it would have been a lot better if our groups were split into different ages instead of into Grades (referring to the PODS instead of the Function Group). We should have used our dorms (In the FGB's house, the POD system is used extensively).

This observation was well supported by another member of the same FG, when he added:

FGB 5: It works better having different ages in a group. Many of the houses struggle to understand how we are able to work with different ages and not as age groups. The idea of seniors helping their juniors out, in the dorm, is great. It works well.

In my observations (**OBS 5/6: 3, 11/07/07**), I noticed that some relationships had begun to develop within the house. These relationships that the participants had developed were strengthened by the communication of the idea of community to the house.

4.7.3 DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONSHIPS

Treat a person as he is and he will remain who he is, but if you treat him as he could be then he will become who he should be. (Anonymous)

The key to the development of a community is the ability of the people to develop relationships. These are in actual fact friendships that are being created. These participants are “in partnership” with each other as they worked towards establishing a community. As the participants worked together, they appeared to be a lot more focused as a group because of the intense interaction with each other and their achievement of certain goals.

This idea of relationships moulding a community together is well supported by the understanding of an interviewee when he was asked to draw a picture that best illustrated community within his house and where he fitted in. The use of the tree illustrates (Figure 9) a community with the various responsibilities of the parts. The roots are the Grade 12's who anchor the tree and work hard at feeding the rest of the tree, for further growth. The Grade 12's draw from their wisdom and experience when leading the rest of the house. The Grade 11's act as the tree trunk, supporting both the Grade 12's and the rest of the house in their endeavors to function as a house. They are the helping hands of the Grade 12's directing the food to the branches, and the Grade 10's support the Grade 8's and 9's. The Grade 9's being the leaves, which through photosynthesis develop chlorophyll (food) for the rest of the tree, observe and absorb the values of their seniors. They all work towards producing new growth and fruit, the Grade 8's. The quality of the fruit reflects the type and quality of the tree. Good food (values) produces good fruit (responsible people). As Matthew 7:20 (Holy Bible, 1978) alludes to:

Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

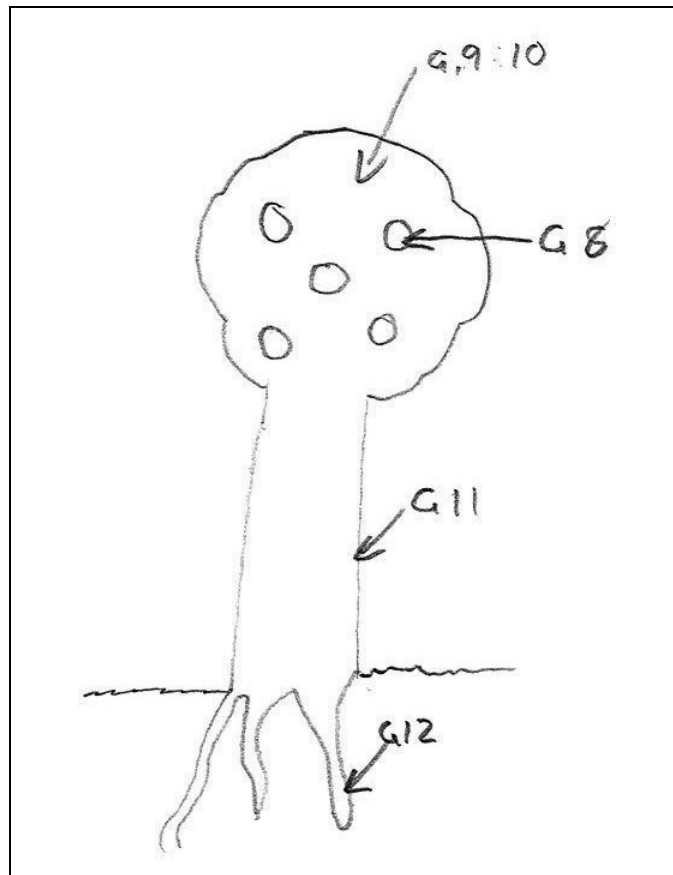


Figure 9: A Community and its relationships
(Interviewee 3)

In my observations (**OBS 7/8: 24, 25/07/07**) I became more aware that important values were being displayed through the relationships that the members of the house were engaged in. Sergiovanni (1996:167) states:

Purposing and shared values...provide the glue that bonds people together in a loosely connected world.

It seemed to “bind” the seniors and their juniors even closer together as they together took responsibility for solving problems that existed within the house.

In a discussion about the effect of developing relationships within the house, a FG member commented:

FGB 5: Working together allowed us to develop a sense of belonging...helped us develop a positive attitude towards the goals of establishing values for our house.

In the process of developing these shared values for their houses, I also noticed, during the focus group meetings, a greater understanding of each other and the ability of the seniors to interact with and respect the opinion of the juniors in their groups. An interviewee explains this interaction in a diagram (Figure 10) that he drew to illustrate a community.

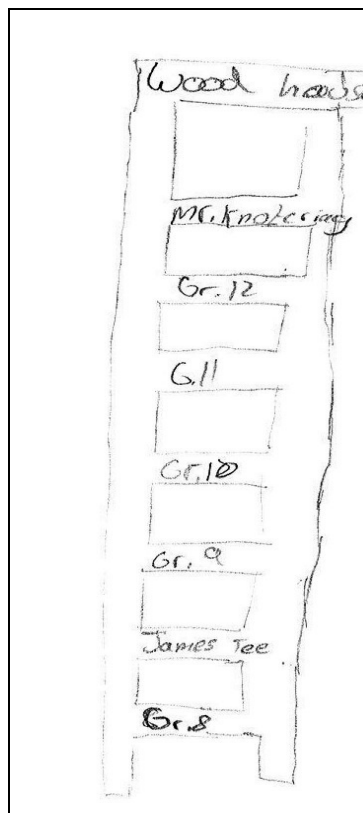


Figure 10: A Community of respect
(Interviewee 5)

Interviewee 5 utilized the diagram of a ladder to depict the structure of a community. What was interesting about this diagram is the way in which he has linked the rungs of the ladder to the vertical supports. Structure in the community is important to him as the lower Grades are at the bottom of the ladder. He has made sure that there are no lines separating the rungs from the supports and that no Grade has been placed in a box, illustrating the need for continuity within the system. Lines could have possibly indicated a division between the different levels (Grades) and levels of fear. Each Grade could have been cut off from the other but here each level has access to the levels above. However, the lack of these lines demonstrates the importance of interaction and communication throughout this community, resulting in the development of relationships. He was keen for everyone to work together. Another interesting observation was that this interviewee saw himself as a leader within the house, but as a junior in his Grade 8 class.

This idea was supported by the statement of a FG member:

FGB3: Nothing can work if you don't believe in one another.

In the discussion of the development of these values, phrases were used which best demonstrate the way in which the members of the house were drawn together to form a tightly bonded group. The phrases that were used were: "looking after each other", "know their [each other's] situations", "know one another", "standing as one", to mention a few. The participants recognized that the development of some shared values were the building blocks needed to develop other values and attitudes, as well as developing community. As was pointed out by a FG member:

FGB 4: It is an important part or step in the process of developing a sense of community within our house.

FGB 7 concurred:

FGB 7: Values carry a big role in binding a community together.

As these participants interacted with each other it became more evident that through the practice of values, relationships were developed, “binding” the boys together. This was illustrated in the following discussion in a FG meeting about showing respect for others.

FGB 3: J D [a new boy in Grade 8] pointed out to me how I had changed his attitude towards a senior. It was when he first arrived at Kingswood that he struggled to keep his cube tidy. It was always a mess as he didn’t have anyone to clean up after him any more. Anyway, I came into his messy cube and sat on his bed and took the time to speak to him because he was feeling so homesick. He [J D] said that he learned to respect me because not only did I show him respect but I took an interest in him as a person and showed him how to make his bed, fold his clothes. So, I think through showing affection and understanding towards the junior, it changed his attitude as well. In the past we would only shout at the person and then punish him for being so untidy.

The development of some of these relationships encouraged the surfacing of shared values. As the participants engaged with each other in an active and responsible manner, more consideration and empathy became evident. This is best illustrated by the words used by the participants in both the focus groups and interviews, “showed us a lot more respect”, “understood my problems”, “good house spirit”, “able to trust him more”, “teach them so that they can grow”. From the discussions in the focus group meetings and their house meetings, the following values were identified that they believed were the “glue” that held their houses together (Table 8).

Table 7: Shared Values

COMMON SHARED VALUES	
Respect	Responsibility
Spirit	Love / Caring
Trust	Pride
Honesty	Loyalty
Fellowship	Tolerance
Unity	Growth of others
Awareness	Understanding

People expect to be treated with more respect and this is reflected by the students in schools today. A greater mutual respect is now required. As the participants learned to understand and interact with each other, a greater sense of respect for each other was achieved.

4.8 PHASE FIVE: RENEWED REFLECTION (THE NEW PRACTICES)

Once the focus groups had all come a full circle in the action research process of building a community, the time came for the participants to prepare for the start of a new cycle by reflecting on the practices that were now in operation in the houses. The focus groups were asked to consider what changes had developed or emerged from the investigation that had taken place in the houses.

4.8.1 A NEW ENVIRONMENT

What emerged from this reflection was that the two houses had been able to develop an environment in which all the members of the house felt a sense of belonging. This environment was defined as being “caring”, “helpful”, “understanding”, and “empathetic”, in the responses of the participants. The juniors had been empowered by their seniors to get involved in the decision making process in a meaningful manner. This was a platform from which they were able to develop and grow as individuals, learning to live by the values that had been established by the members of the house.

In a vision statement that one of the focus groups created during the focus groups meeting, the intent of the group to establish a homely environment that included everyone was illustrated.

We aim to create a homely environment that prepares everyone for the future and bringing the best out in everyone through participation. (Still under review in the house)

The creation of an accommodating environment had cleared the way for the members of each house to become more aware of each other and their individual needs.

4.8.2 A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

When the focus groups reflected on the whole process, I marveled at what they had been able to achieve in such a short period of time. It seemed that this process that they had started was set to continue. In response to the question, “What have you, as individuals, achieved during this action research? Have you met your expectations?” The responses were varied but quite informative.

Some focus group members felt that they had not really reached their expectations, with the use of phrases such as, “No, not in the depth I had expected”, “I have seen very little change”. It was important to point out to the participants that change takes a while as it is a process. They had to accept that they had been dealing with ideas and issues at a different level to the rest of the house and to expect major changes would be wrong. It was the beginning of a never ending cyclic process that they were now all involved in and that change would take place.

However, once the reflection of focus groups as a whole had commenced, the FG members developed a completely different perception. This was illustrated in a discussion where the head of house started by sharing:

FGA 4: I learned to know the whole house so much deeper than I expected. More so the Grade 11’ as they appeared to be a little more behind than I expected, but this process has shown me that they are more mature than I had thought, having dealt with them in their groups. I’m so used to seeing them fooling and joking around in the house, that didn’t expect such deep responses from them.

FGA 8: What I have experienced has been getting the whole house to voice their feelings, getting them all to participate, from Grade 8 to Grade 12. I would have liked more people to be part of the focus group sessions that we had.

FGA 5: I have come away having learned a lot about people and how to handle certain situations better and to talk to people about house issues.

FGA 6: The expectations that I had of my POD group were quite low as I did not know them that well. So when using the POD groups to discuss ideas I was amazed at the level of maturity that they showed. They made sense. They were actually serious about what they had said. It was an unexpected response.

FGA 9: I have got to know and understand others better as I started hearing them speak about my house and express themselves in a way that I never knew. I never knew that we had so much pride in our house. I got to understand people at a different level, at their level of involvement.

The participants displayed the ability to build special bonds with their peers and the juniors of the house. They got to understand and interact with one another at levels that demonstrated great maturity for students of a school. Through the use of the focus groups, Pods, functional groups and as a house, the participants created sound working principles that were portrayed in the values that they had come to agree on.

4.8.3 DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES

The development of special relationships, has demonstrated the change of attitude of the seniors towards their juniors. This is best illustrated in a diagram (Figure 11) that one of the more senior interviewees drew relating his understanding of the community. What becomes evident in this diagram was that he valued respect in his community.

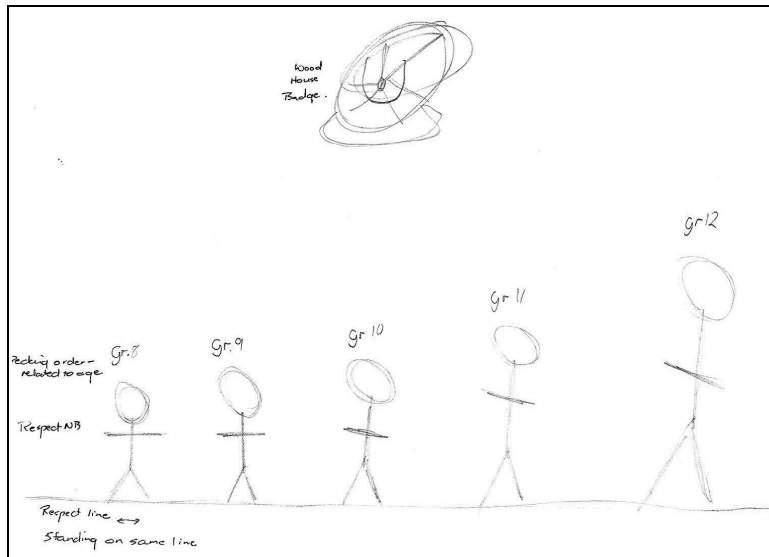


Figure 11: Levels of Respect
(Interviewee 6)

He has drawn a horizontal line and he has placed all the Grades on it. This indicates his willingness to accept that all people are equal within the house and should be given an equal opportunity to participate. Yet, he still believes in a pecking order which is related to age/Grades, as he adds size to the respective Grade, indicating seniority. This was important to him and was a concern to some seniors at the beginning of the action research. An interesting observation of this drawing was that the whole community was focused on the house's badge above them, which they all share and understand.

His idea of "pecking order" is supported by the response of FG member who stated:

FGA 3: There has been a shift towards more of a mutual respect within the house...I do believe that there needs to be a balance and that the juniors must know where they stand...a pecking order is okay.

A greater respect had been established and the seniors have become far more responsible and accountable for their juniors. The seniors have placed greater value on the individual by getting to know and understand them better. This was evident in the response that was made during this final reflective stage of the action research, reflecting on their dealings with their juniors:

FGB 2: I have shown an interest in my juniors, trying to make them feel as members of the house. Although they go through tough times, I have tried to encourage them to come and speak to me. I just recall what I went through and I don't want them to experience it as well.

FGB 5: I have helped my junior when he has had problems. I have tried to sort them out, especially with his academic problems. I helped him out with his French and Maths. For instance, he had problems with the basic conjugations of basic verbs in French, so I sat down with him and showed him how to study. I tried to give him the basics he needed, just practical, sensible help to solve the problems that he had.

The senior members of the house have taken on big responsibilities by looking after a junior for a two year period (Figure 12). This was part of the model (Appendix G) that was recently implemented in the two houses. Their primary focus has been meeting the needs of their juniors. The ability of the seniors to take the initiative and deal effectively with situations that adults normally have to deal with is amazing. Through these relationships the juniors have also had the opportunity to grow as individuals within the house.



Figure 12: A mentor assisting his junior with his homework

This was best demonstrated through the following discussion:

INTERVIEWER: How has your relationship with your junior been?

FGB 4: At the beginning of the year my junior's grandfather had passed away. He was very close to him and I've been through that before when my dad died, and all he needed then was some comforting as he was a long way from his parents. I think he needed confidence in himself to get through everything and we have worked well together. I just tried to take his mind off it by getting him to do things.

INTERVIEWER: What effect has your interaction had on him?

FGB 4: Yes, definitely. There has been growth in him, especially with his peers. His self confidence has also improved and he is able to come and chat to me at any time.

The way in which the juniors have been included and the way in which the seniors have gone about establishing sound relationships with their juniors has resulted in a personal growth of both parties. Some of the juniors have responded positively to their seniors and this was conveyed in a response from an interviewee, who is currently in Grade 8. He stated:

INTERVIEWEE 4: I would be happy to get my mentor[senior] coffee or something, not because I have to, but because I'm proud to do it and I'm choosing to do it.

Another interviewee (Grade 8) responded to the above statement in a supportive manner:

INTERVIEWEE 5: He is the mentor [senior] I'd choose, if I could have chosen one. He has been so kind and helpful to me all along the way and he set me a really good example.

An environment has been created where both the senior and junior feel comfortable and there is a sense of respect for each other. It is not that there are no problems that exist in this new approach but as the members of the house continue to apply the cyclic process to their house many of these problems will be eliminated. Although it

was only the beginning of a long process, I was encouraged by the progress that had been made and by the approach that every one had taken.

4.9 CONCLUSION

“There is nothing new under the sun”
(Ecclesiastes 1:9. New International Version, 1978)

Through this action research process the participants have worked hard to effect positive changes within their houses. What has been enlightening was the positive approach that they all took in the investigation. As a school with over 100 years of tradition, change was always going to be difficult but if the participants were prepared to take ownership of the process then they were going to be successful. They approached each meeting with enthusiasm, showing much determination to develop a meaningful community.

The participants developed a sound work ethic and using different methods of communication, they worked collaboratively, participating in ongoing dialogue with everyone in their houses. As each participant was given an opportunity to share and listen to the opinion and ideas of others, they were empowered. This resulted in a strong feeling of bonding taking place. The interaction between the members of the house improved and they began to feel more valued.

When the groups reflected on some of their past experiences they were challenged to make bold changes to the way in which their houses were being run. The dialogue that ensued resulted in a caring and respectful atmosphere being established. Self confidence was also developed. A sense of equality had been achieved, irrespective of position, and a mutual and meaningful respect had been realized.

In the process of building a community in their houses, the focus group members were beginning to display attributes of servant leadership. After each focus group meeting, they began to collaborate more freely with other members of the house, empowering them to participate in the decision making process. Their fear of serving others diminished as they started to develop stronger relationships with their juniors.



Figure 13: Winners of the College Inter-House Shield

Through many of these significant changes that have slowly taken place the houses have become sanctuaries for their members. The feeling of belonging has given them the security to develop into responsible students of a community.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS



“Treat a person as he is and he will remain who he is, but if you treat him as he could be then he will become who he should be”.

(Anonymous)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4, I presented findings and extracted meaning from the accumulated data in order to best capture the exclusive, ‘day-to-day’ life experiences of each of the participants’ regarding the development of community and the practice of leadership within their boarding houses. The presentation of my data aimed at getting the evidence to ‘speak’ for itself and to weave a story for the reader. Holsti (1968) (as cited in Berg, 2004: 267) states that content analysis is “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages”. I endeavored to analyse the data into “separate parts or elements” (Kvale, 1996:184). Once the ‘characteristics of the messages’ were identified, the data was separated into meaningful themes as they related to each other, providing explanations of what occurred during the research process.

In this chapter, I interpret and discuss my analysed data in order to provide an in depth understanding of the participants’ unique experiences relating to changing their ‘mindscapes’, the practice of leadership, the development of community and more particularly, the emergence of servant leadership within their boarding houses. In order for the reader to obtain a better understanding of the discussion, I briefly restate the research questions and the line of argument of chapter two which forms the foundation of my research. I then ‘discuss the meanings or the themes that have emerged after ‘reducing’ and crystallising all the collected data’ (Jean Louis, 2005:63). I have classified the meanings into the following themes: changing “mindscapes”; leadership; the development of community and the emergence of servant leadership.

5.1.1 REVIEW

In order to investigate the development of an alternative form of leadership through community building in the boarding houses of Kingswood College, I proposed the following research questions:

- A. Overarching question: Do alternative forms of leadership (such as servant leadership) emerge through community building?

- B. Specific Questions:
 - a. Are learners able to interact and work together in a meaningful way?
 - b. Are they able to build a caring, empathetic and dynamic community?
 - c. Do participants respond to servant leadership as an alternative leadership style to “command and control”?

Recent literature recognises that leadership has undergone significant changes which have forced organizations to review and alter their approaches to leadership (Shields, 2004; Laub, 1999; Stephen & Pace, 2002). According to both Sergiovanni (1996:158) and Covey (2002:19), these “mindscapes” influence how we see things and what we accept. Hallinger (1992:40) believes that within the parameters of change, schools have become “the units responsible for the initiation of change”. Theorists, such as Shields & Oberg, 2002; Alexander, Entwistle & Olsen, 2001; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; and Maxcy, 1994, claim that students have been marginalized by social injustices (as cited in Shields, 2004). This has prevented some of them from reaching their potential because of either a lack of opportunities to lead, a lack of school leadership policies and/or poor attitudes towards leadership, that have entrenched ‘command and control’ hierarchical structures.

Bogotch (2000:2) and Shields (2004:110) both encourage school leaders to engage in a “moral use of power” which would facilitate the development of stronger relationships within the institution. For Shields (2004:110.), these relationships provide the environment for students to learn and develop in socially just communities. Sergiovanni (2001:77) on the other hand points out that relationships are what unites a school into a community where members are able to develop unifying values and beliefs. It is against this background that I aimed to examine the prospects of the participants developing a community within the boarding establishments, as discussed in chapter 2.

In conjunction with investigating the development of a community in the boarding houses, I also explored the philosophy of servant leadership with the view to the participants possibly adopting it as an alternative style of leading.

5.2 CHANGING “MINDSCAPES”

“Evolve or perish!”

(Jamali, Khoury & Sahyoun, 2006:337)

This famous evolutionary principle of Charles Darwin becomes more applicable in the light of the change that is taking place in the world of leadership and management. Organisations have very little choice but to “adapt to the relentless pace of change or face the risk of extinction” (Jamali et al., 2006:337). The same can be said about educational institutions as they strive towards developing leaders for the future (chapter 2, pp: 17-19). Future students need to be prepared for the changes that are and have taken place, relating to leadership theory and in the leadership within organisations, in order to take their rightful places in society with confidence and competence.

5.2.1 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Kingswood College was founded in 1894, based on the Wesleyan tradition of



Christian principles. The founders of the College believed that “in the School’s progress, one of the chief and most important factors has been the relationship of the School with the Church” (Kirkby & Kirkby, 1994:5). Kingswood College’s education was “planned and developed and that had its basis in an atmosphere of religion”. This close association, between the College and the Church is clearly displayed in the heraldry of the badge (the shield

signifies triumph over evil; the wyvern stands for the power of evil; the five scallops signify the baptism into Christian service), the Chapel, the College hymn and the

College prayer, all “expressing the essence of Kingswood’s Wesleyan spirit” (Kirkby & Kirkby, 1994:6). The College is also steeped in military tradition due to the fact that some of the headmasters held the ranks of Colonel and Captain, and had an active Cadet Corps (chapter 1, p. 5). According to Kirkby & Kirkby (1994), the Cadet Corps played a significant role in the training and the development of discipline in the students over the years. It was a means by which most of the students were led. The same principles were also enacted when the seniors took over as leaders at a later stage in their lives at Kingswood College.



Figure 14: Kingswood College Chapel, the centre of College life.

However in 2005 the College began to review its vision and mission as it had become too ‘bulky’ and tended to be ‘exclusive’ in its focus. Subsequently, a newer version was developed that had a more ‘holistic’ flavour to it, where it was far more ‘inclusive’. The College Council also requested that the headmaster review the student leadership approach as many students were not afforded the opportunity to participate in the leadership process of the College.

Reflecting on the Christian principles on which the College is founded, the thought of excluding the students from leadership opportunities is contrary to the Christian principles for which it stands. This is best illustrated in the parable of the talents told by Christ in Matthew 25:14-28 (Holy Bible, 1978:33), where one servant was given many talents and the other servant only received one. The same may be said of a

student who has the talent of leading but because he/she is not seen as being generally talented, is overlooked and is not afforded the same opportunities of growing through leadership responsibilities.

The College has always prided itself as a “family school” and aims to provide a “family-like environment” in which every student has the opportunity to “develop their self-worth” and their “leadership potential” (according to their mission statement, Appendix F).

5.2.2 STUDENT CHANGE

Against the background of change, with the support of the College, the research study invited the students to revisit the way in which their boarding houses functioned (chapter 4, pp: 81-82). In the process of reflection the students revealed that they had been exposed to a traditional organisational system of ‘top-down’ leadership for a number of years (4 years) and change was of great concern to some of them (chapter 1, p. 5). They had become accustomed to a “command and control” form of leadership and they indicated that it did not bother them that this approach to leadership was outdated, since it had always worked for them (chapter 2, pp: 15; 38-40). As one respondent commented, “Why make changes to something when it is working?” (Chapter 4, pp: 91-92).

The mindscapes that these students had developed was based on what they had been exposed to and on what they had learned in the boarding houses. According to Covey (2002:19) these “mindscapes” or mindsets affect the way in which we view things, what we believe in, what we consider to be important to us and eventually influence what we do and what we accept. Deal and Kennedy (as cited in Preedy et al., 2003:96) describe it as being, “the way we do things around here”. The students acknowledged that the way in which their establishments functioned “just felt right” to them. Some of the participants showed contentment and struggled to see any flaws in the leadership process (chapter 4, p. 82).

The data analysis reveals that some students appeared to have developed a resistance to change (chapter 4, p. 83). Gardner (cited in Covey, 2002:19) describes this as

“functional blindness”. The students’ “mindscapes” were so well-established that implementing any change towards their approach to leadership evoked different responses (chapter 4, p. 92). Sergiovanni (1996:157) explains that:

A lot depends on our mindscapes. Different mindscapes will produce different answers, even contradictory answers, to the same question”.

Although most students considered change, they valued the importance of the old, traditional ideas of how boarding establishments functioned. These traditional ideas have been developed and protected by the students for over a century within the College. My findings show that the participants had difficulty with “having to let go” of these ideas that were so much part of their lives, as they worked towards a transformation within their houses (chapter 4, pp: 82, 83, 92). However, I believe that if any changes are to be made they need to be scrutinized in the light of the College’s tradition and beliefs, ensuring that they complemented the College’s mission statement.

For the students, working towards change required a “specific end point” that they could focus on (chapter 4, p. 86). Because change is a process, they were made aware of the likelihood of them not reaching this “specific end point” in the course of this research study. Stephen and Pace (2002:196) state that, “most things fail to happen because there is no plan to make them happen”. They also point out that it is important that one is “clear about what you really want to do about making changes”, if you intend to succeed.

As noted in the data (chapter 4, pp. 84-85), the students expressed a desire to understand the whole concept of community and servant leadership. They wanted to know how they could implement this approach in leading others in the future.

5.3 LEADERSHIP

With a proud tradition, each boarding house has embraced a traditional hierarchical orientation towards leadership (Chapter 4, pp. 81, 94-95). Jamali et al. (2006) say that these types of organisations are characterized by their strict hierarchy, discipline,

authority, rules and fear of responsibility, which could impede personal growth (chapter 2, p. 15). Jamali et al. (2006:337) point out that “this traditional disciplinary, command and control philosophy is no longer suitable” in organisations and alternative orientations need to be sought.

Although this traditional orientation was ingrained into the lives of the students and the leadership system was still functioning well, the students identified some functional defects that needed to be changed in order to strengthen their establishments (chapter 4, pp. 94-95). The need to improve on the interaction between the seniors and the juniors was identified. Some of the senior students admitted to the fact that they “did not know their juniors very well” and recognized the importance of understanding them in order to lead them successfully (chapter 4, pp. 96-97). The students displayed an interest in investigating, finding and implementing alternative methods of leadership in their boarding houses that would be more inclusive (chapter 4, pp. 91, 97).

As any changes in the boarding establishment would ultimately affect everyone, the research participants agreed that it was necessary to include everyone in the process. Stephen and Pace (2002:115) encourage leaders to involve their followers as this would “energize them into accomplishing set goals”. This enabled (empowered) the students to work towards something that they had developed, improving morale within the boarding house (chapter 2, p. 17). Wheatley (2005) supports the idea of collaboration and interaction in groups as it gets the participants to “buy into the process” of change and to accept what they have created as theirs (chapter 2, pp. 21, 47). Stephen and Pace (2002:201) use the old adage, “It is easier to do anything if someone else is doing it with you” to make the point that “change occurs more effectively when group support is given”. The senior members of the focus group also believed that the inclusion of all members of the house allowed them to draw on other cultures’ expertise and ideas (chapter 4, pp. 87-88).

The students acknowledged that not only would the members the house be making an input, they would also be empowered to set their own objectives, make decisions that they were not previously able to make, and to solve problems within their spheres of responsibilities and authority (chapter 4, p. 90). Margulies and Kleiner (as cited in

Jamali et al., 2006:339) state that “the process of empowerment, based on the participation and delegation...encourages consensus decision-making, understood controls, trust, egalitarianism, and a holistic concern for people”. I believe that as a leader encourages these principles to develop, so too do the chances of personal growth through opportunities to lead, be responsible and accountable within to the group.

5.4 DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY

As I have shown in chapter 4 the intent of the participants was to establish a community within their boarding houses. Recent literature (Sergiovanni, 2001:77; Leithwood cited in Begley, 1999:36; Cahill, 1994:254) reveals that more studies are encouraging the thought that “schools should no longer be considered as organizations but rather as communities” (as cited in Jean Louis, 2005:84). This “spirit of community” entails developing “close relationships” between the students who are bound together by the shared values that they create (Jean Louis, 2005:84). To accomplish this the students acknowledged that there was a need to break from “the traditional hierarchical and inward focus” of leadership (Jamali et al., 2006:338) and through inclusion, use everyone to achieve the new goals that the members of the boarding houses had decided upon. This collective approach by the leaders resulted in a sharing of ideas that helped the leaders drive the process of community building. This interaction encourages a better understanding of each other within the group resulting in a stronger bond developing between the members of the house (chapter 4, p. 89). This last point reinforces Sergiovanni’s (1996:55) suggestion that schools must be “carefully restructured through the ideas and connections of its members, not by the physical appearance of the establishment”.

5.4.1 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

It became very clear in chapter 4 that the boarding houses were used to the traditional hierarchical structure and that the approach to leadership was strictly ‘top-down’. The authority of the leader/senior was never questioned and the juniors were expected to do what they were told. The juniors quickly learned that “you are seen but never

heard” and that they were “the lowest of the low” (chapter 4, p. 94). It appeared that the seniors were not very responsible or accountable for the juniors of the house as a ‘fagging’ system that had an unwritten code existed as part of the tradition of each house. Each senior was allocated a junior on his arrival at the College who then served as the senior’s ‘slave’ for the year. This last point reinforces what Jamali et al., (2006) say about these hierarchical systems “impeding personal growth” (chapter 2, p.).

This system has recently been abolished by the College and part of the research study was to explore the implementation of a new organisational structure in the two participating houses. I believe that the mentorship and Pod systems have given the students, both seniors and juniors, an opportunity to develop ‘self-worth’ and dignity (chapter 4, pp. 90, 97). Although the organisational structure has changed, chapter 4 reveals that the senior students still require that a hierarchy exist in the houses (chapter 4, p. 120), as they believe that a ‘pecking order’ is necessary.

5.4.2 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Hill and Jones (2001:1) define organisational culture as being:

the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by the people and groups in an organization and control the way that they interact with each other and with the stakeholders outside the organization.

In developing a community within the boarding houses it was important to ensure that the values and norms, tied in with the mission statement and core values of the College (Appendix F) these are underpinned through emblems, symbols and celebration traditions giving the College its own individuality.

5.4.2.1 THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of developing a community in the boarding houses was to unite the members by working towards a common goal. According to Sergiovanni (1996 : 48):

Communities are collections of individuals who are bonded together by a natural will and who are bound together by a set of shared values and ideas.

The research study reveals that although the students understood the meaning of community as being a “collection of people”, they also identified it as a “family” (chapter 4, p. 100). Kingswood has a ‘global’ student population made up of a collection of individuals from different backgrounds, provinces and countries. In her study, Jean Louis (2005:93) points out that achieving a community may be a difficult task, when different ethnicities, religions and social backgrounds are involved. In this context, the students in the houses viewed these differences as an advantage (chapter 4, pp. 89, 102). The students believed that they could utilize the wealth of ideas that would come from the members of their houses to establish a bond. In chapter 2, I referred to Carey and Frohmen (1998) who state that the bond will be formed around “characteristics, experiences, practices and beliefs that are important enough to bind the members to one another, such that they are willing to sacrifice for one another” (as cited in Sergiovanni, 2001) (chapter 2, pp. 42-43).

It was in this setting that the students believed that they would be able to develop a commitment to each other, with strong connections, each focused on the vision and values of the establishment, and exercising a strong moral ethic (chapter 4, pp. 101-102). Deal and Peterson (1999:15-21) refer to this commitment as being “the deep ties among people and with values and traditions that give meaning to everyday life”. For many of these students the boarding establishment is their “home away from home“, this, combined with the establishment’s small numbers, meant that the ability to create “sustained relationships” (Sergiovanni, 1996:55) should be so much easier.

5.4.2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Lewis (as cited in Sergiovanni, 1996:97) states that “...friendships are created on sure foundation of partnership and shared accomplishment”. Shields (2004:114) emphasizes that it is important to recognize that “these relationships make up the basic fiber of human life” and they should not be ignored. Adler (1947) recognized

relationships as being the “building blocks of the human personality” (as cited in Shields, 2004:114). In order to realize any form of relationships in the boarding houses, conditions needed to be created within the house that would encourage better interaction between the seniors and the juniors (chapter 4, p. 101), bearing in mind that the interaction was predominantly top-down in nature.

Bonding was identified as an important ingredient needed to develop a community (chapter 4, p. 101). Sergiovanni (1996:47) suggests “creating a sense of ‘we’ from the ‘I’ of each individual”. With the introduction of the mentoring and Pod systems within the establishment, the seniors were encouraged to take responsibility for their juniors. This collaboration and interaction resulted in the seniors becoming more aware of the needs of their juniors as they were able to develop good relationships with each other (chapter 4, p. 115). Through the channel of communication and the exchanging of ideas, the participants became more “aware of the differing realities and worldviews of each other” (Shields, 2004:116).

Margaret Wheatley (2005) (chapter 2, p. 43) maintains that the members of an establishment could experience a greater “interconnectedness” as they learn to become more dependent on one another, sharing power and becoming more involved in the decision making process. Interdependency began to develop and the members became more empowered to make worthwhile contributions to the running of the establishment (chapter 4, pp. 103-104).

According to De Pree (1989:16,17), leaders need to be encouraged to create an environment in which everyone is given the opportunity to receive and share their ideas, be innovative, be spontaneous, enjoy dignity, joy, healing and inclusion, at nobody’s expense.

5.4.2.3 DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY VALUES

In establishing a community in the boarding houses it became essential that the students develop values that would play a role in securing the way that in which they interacted with one another. To accomplish this, all the members of the house needed to be involved in the decision making process as this would encourage the students to

adopt these values as their own. Wheatley (2005) refers to this as buying into the process as the students believe that what they have created is their value system and they must be given the opportunity to take ownership of it (chapter 2, p. 44). Covey (chapter 2, p. 44) points out that if the members are encouraged to participate freely in the process of determining the values for their organisation, they would develop a value system that would inform and guide their decision making process in the future. Greenfield (as cited in Cahill, 1994:258) points out that the leaders play a significant role in fostering the values of an organisation. He recommends that they provide:

The 'glue' which unites a number of disparate individuals as a group...the leader transcends all other factors involved in organizations by metamorphosing group will, thoughts and intentions into his/her own, thus becoming the entrepreneur for the values to be observed by individuals in the organization.

It is believed that these values will provide the necessary guidelines to channel the behaviour of the group and give meaning to the establishment's way of life (Sergiovanni, 1992b).

Sergiovanni (1996:48) states that these individuals are "bonded together by natural will and are bound together to a set of shared values and ideas". Although these students have no choice in the boarding houses in which they are initially placed, this "natural will" develops over the five years that they are all together, through their shared experiences.

As I have discussed in chapter 2, values within the boarding houses play a role in helping the members attach meaning to the house and to the activities that they are engaged in, especially when their contributions are recognized by their peers and by adults (Nongubo, 2004:17) (chapter 4, p. 104). These values are the substance that unifies and binds their establishment together. I agree with Nongubo (2004) who says that these values trigger other attributes which encourage individuals to maximize their potential and skills as people (chapter 4, p.105).

The study reveals that through the interaction of the students, and with the development of relationships, shared values started to surface (chapter 4, p. 112). The

students develop responsibilities and become accountable for those in their care. Some of these values that were being displayed are what Olson and Zanna (as cited in French & Bell, 2000) (chapter 2, p. 44) refer to as:

Loyalty, helpfulness, fairness, predictability, reliability, honesty, responsibility, integrity, competence, consistency and openness”.

The development of these values gave the students an awareness of being united by a common purpose, encouraging the seniors to be responsible for the caring and nurturing of their juniors. This was observed by the students as “binding the boys together” (chapter 4, pp. 103-104) and had the potential of developing a greater sense of identity, with strong moral overtones (Sergiovanni (2000:2) (chapter 2, p. 45).

The seniors began to develop a healthier respect for their juniors as they took the time to get to know them, developing a sense of caring which according to Sergiovanni (1994), shapes a vital part of shared community

5.5 EMERGENCE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Although most of these participants did not have formal leadership positions in the house or school at the time of the research study, they displayed a willingness to want to “serve” (Greenleaf, 1970). In attempting to create a “home away from home”, the students worked hard at making the necessary changes to the way in which they had previously dealt with their peers and the juniors. Chapter 4 reveals that some of these seniors had been treated badly (3 to 4 years earlier) by their seniors and they were not prepared to have their juniors experience the same treatment (chapter 4, p. 95).

The philosophy of Greenleaf (1970) states that, “one needs to serve first” and in the process of “serving”, leaders learn to become responsible and accountable for the caring of those in their care. I believe that this attitude encouraged the seniors to “become moral agents” within their boarding houses (Jean Louis, 2005:68). Sergiovanni (as cited in Fullan, 2000:280) points out that serving others as a leader is not about the leader gaining “power over people but power to serve”. He goes on to state that:

Servant leadership is more easily provided if the leader understands that serving others is important but that the most important thing is to serve the values and ideas that help shape the school as covenantal community (280)

The mentoring and Pod systems encouraged the seniors to become responsible and accountable, learning to develop healthy interpersonal relationships with their juniors (chapter 4, p. 122). Laub (1999:83) states that these relationships can be achieved as the leader “places the good of those led over his self-interest”. The seniors became a lot more supportive and helpful of their juniors, strengthening their relationships with respect and trust (chapter 4, pp. 122-123). Maxwell (1998:50) (chapter 2, p. 23) states that, “You are only a leader if you have followers”. In this respect, I believe that once you take on the responsibility of caring for others, relationships develop and leadership emerges.

As the seniors began to include the rest of the house in the decision making process an environment developed where the members of the house felt valued. Now that the seniors were starting to provide a leadership, in what Laub (1999:83) refers to as “the good of those led and the sharing of power and status for the common good of each individual”, a stronger sense of belonging started to emerge within the houses. Through the Pod system, the seniors empowered the juniors to get more involved in the decision making process of the house in a meaningful way. A platform had been established from which all the members of the house could develop and grow as individuals (chapter 4, pp: 112,114). They were encouraged to participate in the functioning of their community, complementing the College’s mission statement, thus developing the self-worth, moral and leadership potential of the students of Kingswood College.

In the process of building a community in their houses, the seniors were beginning to display attributes of servant leadership, such as “caring”, “helpfulness”, “understanding” and “empathy”, encouraging the juniors to develop their ‘self-worth’ as individuals of their respective houses at Kingswood College (chapter 4, pp. 114-115; 121-123). Crippen (2006) alludes to the fact that some of the students would be

drawn into this environment of service, probably transferring some of these skills into their daily lives. This satisfies the test of servant leadership:

Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Greenleaf, 1970:7)

5.6 CONCLUSION

In chapter five I have discussed the themes which emerged from the data including insights into the participants' unique experiences. During the process they have dealt with changing "mindscapes", the development of community, the practice of leadership and more particularly, the emergence of servant leadership within their boarding houses.

In chapter 6, I conclude the thesis by stressing the main features of my findings and critically assess my work. I will also highlight some of the limitations that were experienced and finally make some recommendations for further research in the similar field of interest.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION



“We aim to create a homely environment that prepares everyone for the future and brings the best out in everyone through participation.”

(Wood House Vision Statement)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In presenting a summary of my findings in this chapter, I emphasise the main arguments and the strengths of the study. I also evaluate its limitations and make recommendations for further research to be undertaken in the field of leadership in schools.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I conducted my action research study in a school that has a long history and is steeped in tradition. I chose to work in Kingswood College, a Methodist church school where many of the students coexist in boarding houses for most of the year. The College has been in existence since 1894, and every facet of its way of life is imbued with tradition. It is governed by the College Headmaster, the College Council and the Old Boys' Association.

In the following section, I summarise my findings under three headings, namely, the changing mindscape of the individual; the development of community (relationships and values), and the emergence of servant leadership.

6.2.1 THE DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH CHANGING MINDSCAPES

Students in the boarding houses of Kingswood College were caught up both in the culture of the College and in the unique cultures of their houses. The cultures of the houses were based on the traditions that had been created, fostered and preserved by senior boys since the inception of the College. Often new leaders follow the example of their predecessors to the letter, cementing the way in which routines and rituals are conducted.

Many such routines and rituals survive from the days of students' parents and grandparents, and have a great influence on the way in which seniors carry out their

duties and interact with their juniors. This accords with the observations of Sergiovanni (2001:100), Deal & Peterson (1999:85) and Jean Louis (2005:88), who believe that the way in which an individual carries out his or her role as a leader may be most influenced by the organisation's unique culture and traditions.

It was evident that the students had never imagined their houses operating in any other way, until they were questioned about the merits of the traditional 'top-down', 'command and control' approach. Once engaged in "moral dialogue", however, the seniors started to reflect on styles of leadership and on the social injustices that they had experienced as juniors (Shields, 2004:110). This time of reflection gave them an opportunity to think about the effects of their actions, and to understand why they did what they did. The fact that the seniors expressed a willingness to challenge and change the status quo in their houses made it easier to look for ways to address the inequalities that existed. Jean Louis' study (2005:90) of Loreto Convent School reveals that "in periods of educational or political transitions, the leaders carry out the necessary structural changes, but they do so according to...values". Similarly, my findings showed that engaging the senior students first made it a lot easier to achieve change within the houses, because those ultimately responsible for initiating and carrying out the structural changes had 'bought into' the idea.

6.2.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY

Developing a community in the boarding houses aimed to unite a group of students who lived together and ensure that their interaction was guided by shared values and norms. Empowering the students to develop a community in their houses encouraged them to develop a better understanding of one another, resulting in stronger bonds and a more just social environment being established.

The study reveals that when the students were empowered in the decision-making process of community building they were able to create an atmosphere within their houses that encouraged closer relationships. As suggested by theorists such as Bogotch (2000), Sergiovanni (2001) and Shields (2004), my findings show that these communities could be united when the leaders were prepared to exercise "moral power" to facilitate the development of stronger relationships.

The findings of the study also reveal that when a more responsible approach towards the juniors was taken by the seniors, better mutual understanding and a moral bond started to develop. As these relationships developed, the juniors gained in confidence. They appeared to be more secure in their environment and more confident around the seniors. Adler (1947) points out that these relationships must be recognized as being one of the main building blocks of the human personality (as cited in Shields, 2004:116).

The collective development of values within the house provided guidelines for students' behaviour and gave meaning to their way of life in the boarding house (Sergiovanni, 1992b). The seniors played a significant role in cultivating these values by leading by example through their interaction with the other members of the house. Because they evinced a more caring and supportive demeanour towards the juniors, the juniors felt a lot more secure in the happier environments that had been created. In this way, students afforded themselves the opportunity to develop their 'self-worth', thus fulfilling the College's mission statement.

6.2.3 THE EMERGENCE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The ethos of Kingswood College provides an environment in which students can develop an awareness of their responsibility to the greater community of Grahamstown, and help to provide services to alleviate some of the suffering of those less fortunate. In its attempt to have a 'transforming influence in society' (part of the Vision Statement), the College has developed various outreach programmes exposing students to a different world beyond the security of the College campus boundaries. It is here that students have learned to practise the values that the College has endeavored to instill in them. Thus while it was not being practised in the boarding houses, the idea of servant leadership was not a new one because some of the students were already using this style of leadership in community service projects.

This alternative form of leadership has since emerged in the boarding houses. It has begun to transform the students through their collective involvement in developing

communities. I have referred to 'students' without qualification, because my findings reveal that all the students who participated in the research study experienced a change in their lives. As the seniors have become more responsible and accountable for their juniors, the way they view their position of seniority has changed. In her study of leaders in Loreto Convent School, Jean Louis (2005:93) states that people "aspire to attain an ideal moral order which leads to using their power in order to serve others". I believe that the findings of the study corroborate this: as the students demonstrated a willingness to attend to their moral responsibilities, they started to address the social injustices that existed in the houses, promoting equality and the service of others. The position of the leader is no longer mandated by 'power' but rather by 'service'. The seniors have become motivated by a "leadership that is based on caring, warmth, sympathy, fairness and firmness" (Jean Louis, 2005:3). These students have a sense of social obligation not only to those in their care but also to humanity as a whole.

6.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Having witnessed social injustices in educational institutions in the past and having a passion for the development of leadership in students, I identified the need to carry out an action research study in a school. The research attempted to discover whether students were willing to adjust their mindscapes, build a community, and in so doing make a difference to the way in which their houses were being led.

My findings have shown that Kingswood College provides its students with a structured but flexible social environment. The culture of the school, with all its traditions, rituals and routines, appears to have given its students a distinct advantage in developing leadership skills. It was significant, however, that the students were still exhibiting the traditional hierarchical "command and control" style of leadership which is obsolescent in many organizations today.

Whether or not the school has actively provided opportunities for the students to engage with the significant transformation that has occurred in the field of leadership in the world today, what was important to the study was the attitude and the willingness of the students to participate in an activity which required a change in

mindscape. The result of their collaboration was the development of a tightly-knit community built on shared values. From this emerged a new leadership style, that of servant leadership.

The following points summarise the potential value of my study:

- It has shed light on how the mindscapes of people can be altered through the employment of moral discourse. Thus, I believe I have demonstrated the importance of engaging with all those who might be affected by the transformation, not only of their environment but also of the individuals themselves.
- My study reveals that through a collective approach to the development of relationships, a group of individuals can be united and can learn to cooperate in a meaningful way.
- The study has also demonstrated that when students are engaged and empowered in a process, they are able to develop a community of shared values and beliefs, transforming a group of individuals into a socially just community.
- The study has shown that when students take on the responsibility for others and achieve an ideal moral order, they begin to use their position of power to serve others. This has enabled the senior students to display the attributes of servant leadership.
- Finally, as far as I am aware, there has been no previous research done in a South African educational context relating to the development of community and the emergence of servant leadership. I trust that this study opens the doors for further research on community building in schools and the development of servant leadership as an alternative form of leadership. The student subjects of this study constitute an example of how students are able to transform their approaches to leadership and to address the social injustices in their immediate environments.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

There is an immense need for follow-up research in the field of community development and student leadership, as this will prepare the way for developing leaders who are better prepared to work effectively with people. It will also establish a research base for the eradication of social injustice in South African schools and beyond.

In the following subsections I make recommendations for further research in this field:

6.4.1 PRACTICE

- As the process of change continues in the two houses, a decision will need to be made as to whether community building and servant leadership should be accepted and implemented as school policy.
- It will be important to address the perceptions of the school's community (council members, staff, pupils, old boys and parents) concerning the effectiveness of servant leadership in the College, in order for it to be accepted as an alternative form of leadership.
- Workshops could be organised in the school, especially in the boarding houses, to inform and promote community development and servant leadership. These could be aimed at the Grade 11s before they take on the responsibility of leading their peers, clarifying what is meant by community building and what is meant to be a servant leader.
- Organisational workshops could be run in which the whole school community (council, old boys, staff, administration, finances, maintenance and catering) could be drawn together in order to institutionalize community building and servant leadership. This would provide an opportunity to get the whole

campus to work together in a collective and collaborative manner in order to become a socially just community.

6.4.2 RESEARCH

- A comparative study of male and female students should be carried out to investigate their relative openness to changing mindscapes, their ability to build communities, and their willingness to accept an alternative form of leadership.
- There is a need for an action research study in previously disadvantaged schools, to explore the possibility of developing communities with the view to developing shared moral values and the emergence of servant leadership.
- This study could be repeated on a much larger scale and include schools from different cultures and backgrounds. This would allow for a broader understanding of the impact of community building and servant leadership on students in South Africa.
- A longitudinal study could be carried out to track the impact and influence that servant leadership has on the participants over a period of time.

6.5 REFLECTIONS ON ACTION RESEARCH

The utilisation of action research in my study was useful in the sense that during the research process the participants were drawn together, engaging with each other in decision-making. The research process encouraged the participants to critically evaluate their environments, on the one hand, but on the other hand, also to be innovative in making changes to the way their houses functioned.

A distinct advantage of using an action research approach was the opportunity to access the unique day-to-day experiences of the participants through the interviews. As Kaufman (as cited in Smulyan, 2000:43) explains:

By viewing social change through the lens of individual experience, we are able to move away from infinite generalizations and abstractions and into the realm of individual constructions of meaning. Through the examination of...individuals' lives, we gain access both to multi-faceted meanings of the self-within-the-culture and to a richer, more detailed portrait of the culture which contributes to and is constituted by those meanings.

The question of sustainability is also important in action research. It may be relatively easy to show change over a short period of time, such as the few months that this intervention lasted. But although it is clear that the students have experienced change they will need to embrace some interventions that could encourage sustainability of the action research model. As Doppelt (2003:3) proffers, "The ultimate success of a change initiative occurs when sustainability-based thinking, perspectives, and behaviours are embedded in everyday operating procedures, policies, and culture".

These interventions include:

- Since this initiative has been implemented and transformation has begun, it is important for each house to continue challenging the mindset of its older members and directing that of the new students, thus encouraging a "deep-rooted cultural transformation" (Doppelt, 2003:3).
- Each year the composition of the house changes with the introduction of new boys and new leadership, bringing in fresh ideas, styles and perspectives. It is therefore important that the leaders recognize that "new people can see problems that the old guard couldn't" (Doppelt, 2003:4) and empower these students through involvement.
- Each house should be encouraged to develop new goals for the year. This will result in the reevaluation and redirection of strategy, ensuring that new outcomes are experienced within the house. Based on the vision of the house, the students could develop a strategy for the year which will guide them in a way that could help them achieve their goals.

- The information necessary for achieving these goals needs to be well communicated to all the members of the house as this could determine whether the strategy is successfully implemented or not. Doppelt (2003) encourages leaders to learn to give feedback to their followers as this will result in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding, improving buy-in.
- Finally, Doppelt (2003:6) points out that “organizations that lead the way towards sustainability tend to view all the people that are affected by their operations...as important parts of the interdependent system”. The students of the house need to accept that they are vital participants and must be encouraged to continually exchange ideas and suggestions, as the “wheel of change” continues to turn.

6.6 LIMITATIONS

As the nature of the process was cyclic I believe that, while I was able to work with a small group of students for six weeks, this was not a long enough period to witness the completion of the transformation process. Nevertheless, my main aim was to establish a platform from which the students could build a community. They could use the research cycle to reflect on and make further changes to the structure of their houses and the way that they were being led. However, the size of this study was an obvious limitation. The fact that the research was only carried out in two male boarding houses of the school meant that it lacked the input of the female students on campus, and this restricts its generalisability.

In running the focus group meetings one of the dilemmas that I was faced with was of an ethical nature, due to the dual role I played as a housemaster on the campus and as the researcher in the focus group. Although I was involved in the group meetings as an “insider” I also had to remain sufficiently passive or detached to be an “outsider” and thus not jeopardize the validity of the data collected. One way of dealing with this

problem was to have a co-facilitator assist me with the running of each meeting. I also invited my supervisor to attend one of the meetings.

Another limitation of the study concerned its capacity to present a picture that could be true for other schools in Grahamstown or beyond. Since it was conducted in an independent co-educational school, this meant the de facto exclusion of independent single sex schools, state schools (previous model C schools) and previously disadvantaged schools. It would be interesting, perhaps necessary, to conduct a similar study in other schools and compare the results.

A further possible limitation of this study would concern the extent to which my findings might be accepted as valid, reliable, trustworthy and objective, as opposed to being simply a reflection of my pre-existing beliefs. I have attempted to remain critical throughout the study and present only findings emerging from the study itself. It became a reality that “clearly, analyzing data obtained from multiple sources is a far more complex exercise than simply adding all the various sets of data together” (Arksey & Knight, as cited in Nongubo, 2004:120) . I drew on a survey, interviews (individual and focus groups), observations and documents, in order to present a credible depiction of the action that took place in the houses. Van der Mescht (2002) points out that, “gathering more and different sets of perceptions from more and different respondents will result in more and different representations; i.e. the picture will become more complete, but not [therefore] more valid”.

6.7. CONCLUSION

The development of community in the two Kingswood boys’ boarding houses required a willingness on the part of the participants to engage in ‘moral dialogue’, to reflect on old habits rooted in history and their day-to-day way of life. Through the development of relationships these students demonstrated that groups of individuals can become united, sharing values which bind them together. The attributes of servant leadership began to emerge as the seniors began to view their positions of seniority in

a different light, developing a sense of social obligation and using their power to serve those in their care.

Education is a powerful tool which has the potential to impact on the lives of many. It will be in the schools that our country's future leaders will develop. The aim must be to prepare them to be socially just and willing to serve their followers with dignity.

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"Nobody can prevent you from choosing to be exceptional"
(Mark Sanborn)

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APPENDICES



“There comes a special moment in everyone’s life, a moment for which that person was born. That special opportunity, when he seizes it, will fulfill his mission—a mission for which he is uniquely qualified. In that moment, he finds greatness. It is his finest hour”.

(Winston Churchill)

APPENDIX A: LETTER OF REQUESTING PERMISSION FROM COLLEGE

The Headmaster
Kingswood College
Burton Street
GRAHAMSTOWN
6140

Dear Mr. Arguile

RESEARCH: ACTION RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

I am registered as a full, part-time student at Rhodes University. I am currently studying for a Master's Degree in Education, focusing in the field of Leadership and Management in Education. My student advisor is Prof. Hennie van der Mescht.

The aim of my research is to investigate the development of servant leadership, as an alternative form of leadership, through community team building. In this investigation I would like to:

- i) ascertain whether students are able to work and interact together in a meaningful way;
- ii) determine whether they will be able to build a caring, empathetic and dynamic community;
- iii) determine whether the participants respond positively to servant leadership as an alternative leadership process to “command and control”.

As your school is currently reviewing its student leadership process, I was hoping that you would allow me to use your school as my research site for implementing an action research. Should you agree to my request, the students in selected boarding establishments, who are willing to participate, will be required to complete a questionnaire to determine their perception of leadership in their community. Additional data will be collected from selected participants through a series of observations, interviews and focus groups. As these interviews and focus groups will be audio-tape recorded, their permission will be sought and their anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured. All transcripts will be proof read by the participants to ensure that the details are accurate as reported.

I believe that the data that is collected could lead to a more effective leadership process being established in your school.

I hereby make a request to undertake research in selected boarding establishments in your school. Please feel free to contact my supervisor at 046-6038383 or email H.vanderMescht@ru.ac.za if you require more information.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Ian Knott-Craig

**APPENDIX B: LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THE
COLLEGE HEADMASTER**

KINGSWOOD COLLEGE



Senior School: 046-603 6600
Fax: Senior School: 046-622 3084
Junior School: 046-603 6650
Fax: Junior School: 046-622 8069
International Telephone: +27-46-603 6600

Kingswood College
P O Grahamstown
6140
South Africa
e-mail: kingswood@kc.ecape.school.za

2 March 2007

Mr I Knott-Craig
Wood House
Kingswood College
Grahamstown

Dear Ian

Permission to Conduct Research at Kingswood College

I hereby grant permission for you to conduct research at Kingswood College as per your request. As indicated by you, you have already communicated with the parents of the pupils in Wood and Jagger Houses who will be involved in your investigation into matters relating to pupil leadership.

I wish you well as you tackle this interesting project.

Yours sincerely

Dave Arguile
COLLEGE HEAD



APPENDIX C: LETTER TO PARENTS REQUESTING CONSENT

Dear Parent

RESEARCH: RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP.

I am registered as a full time student at Rhodes University. I am currently studying for a Master's Degree in Education, focusing in the field of Management and Leadership in Education. My supervisor is Prof. Hennie van der Mescht.

In order to qualify for this degree I am required to complete a thesis on a topic relating to education. I have chosen to focus on the development of servant leadership as an alternative form to "command and control". My research will be to investigate the perceptions of leadership and attitudes of the learners towards servant leadership when developing their community, through team building.

In the process, I will attempt to answer the following questions:

- Do alternative forms of leadership (such as servant leadership) emerge through community team building?
- Are learners able to work and interact together in a meaningful way?
- Will the learners be able to build a caring, empathetic and dynamic community?
- Do participants respond positively to servant leadership as an alternative leadership process to "command and control"?

If your child participates in this research study, they will be required to:

- a. complete and return a questionnaire;
- b. participate in an interview and a focus group with me, that will be convenient to them;
- c. allow the interviews and focus groups to be audio-tape recorded for later transcription and use in my research thesis.

As these interviews and focus groups will be audio-tape recorded, their anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout.

I believe that the data that is collected could lead to a more effective leadership process being established in the college.

If you are happy that your child participates in this study, will you please complete and return the consent form.

Yours sincerely

Ian Knott-Craig

APPENDIX D: LETTERS TO STUDENT REQUESTING CONSENT

Dear Participant

**RESEARCH: RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVANT
LEADERSHIP.**

I am registered as a student at Rhodes University. I am currently studying for a Master's Degree in Education, focusing in the field of Leadership and Management in Education. In order to qualify for this degree I am required to complete a thesis on a topic relating to Education. I have chosen to focus on the development of servant leadership as an alternative form to "command and control". My research will be centered on investigating your perceptions of leadership and your attitudes towards servant leadership when developing your community, through team building.

In the process, I will attempt to answer the following questions:

Do alternative forms of leadership (such as servant leadership) emerge through community team building?

Are learners able to work and interact together in a meaningful way?

Will the learners be able to build a caring, empathetic and dynamic community?

Do participants respond positively to servant leadership as an alternative leadership process to "command and control"?

If you are at all interested in participating in this research study you will be required to:

complete and return a questionnaire;

participate in an interview and a focus group with me, at a time that will be convenient to you;

allow the interviews and focus groups to be audio-tape recorded for later transcription and use in my research thesis.

As these interviews and focus groups will be audio-tape recorded, your permission will first be sought and your anonymity and confidentiality maintained throughout.

Please complete and return the consent form to me.

Yours sincerely

Ian Knott-Craig

APPENDIX E: PARENTAL/STUDENT CONSENT FORMS

Consent Form

I, _____, hereby agree to participate in the action research with Ian Knott-Craig. I understand that he will be investigating and enquiring about my perceptions and attitudes about servant leadership as an alternative leadership style and whether the participants are able to collaborate, when building a community.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

**APPENDIX F: KINGSWOOD COLLEGE VISION, MISSION AND
VALUE STATEMENTS**

KINGSWOOD COLLEGE

*is an Independent, Methodist, co-educational
boarding school*

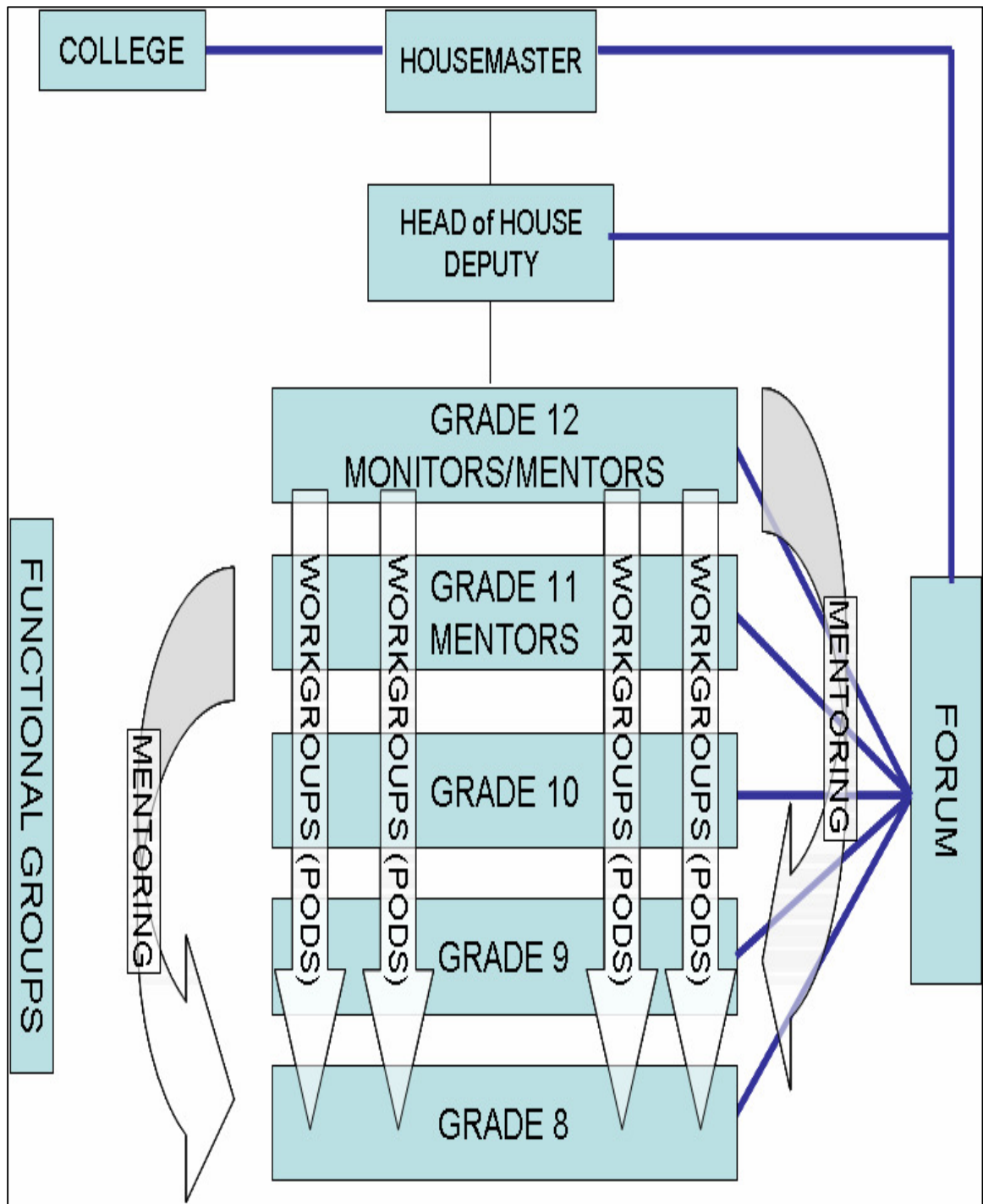
VISION

*“To be recognised locally, nationally and
internationally as an excellent Methodist school and
as a transforming influence in society”*



MISSION

*“Kingswood College provides an education in a
family-like environment, developing the self-worth
and academic, leadership, spiritual, social, moral,
cultural and physical potential of every pupil and staff
member.”*

APPENDIX G: LEADERSHIP MODEL



APPENDIX H: STRUCTURE OF Pods IN HOUSES

 Jagger: Leadership Structure 2007 <i>(with academic advisors and mentors)</i> 				
A F (Head of House)				
K S (Deputy Head of House)				
Pod/Academic Advisor	Pod 1 (Mr B/Mr R)	Pod 2 (Mr H/Mr R)	Pod 3 (Mr O/Mr J)	Pod 4 (Mr S)
Grade 12 (Mentor/Leader)	KS TK	A F	H O R A	D B D L
Grade 11 (Mentor)	D D L V J M J B	B B S C M G S P	K N K N M H T D	A P O P D B A C
Grade 10	J S D L	B L K M D K	M T M H	J W M T
Grade 9	R M (TK) B R (KS) W B	N N (DJ) M M (AF) R N	O C (HO) J L C J	S L (DB) G A (PA)
Grade 8	A C (JM) M T (RA)	R B (SC) J P (BB)	R C (KN) J R (MH) S L (PA)	G W (DB) S E (DJ)
FORUM	?	?	?	?

APPENDIX I: OBSERVATION SCHEDULES

(OBS #1, 18/05/07)

RESAERCH STUDY
SERVANT LEADERSHIP
OBSERVATION

(POD Grps)

HOUSE: Jaeger Date: 18/05/07

Notes: Head of house discussed + informed house of the purpose of the meeting: - "That which holds the house together" - looking values/norms. HOH hands over to POD leaders. Students are working in 3 PODS. Senior takes charge and explains to group what the Focus Grp has done. Points out that they have identified a number of values that they think holds the house together. Explains what a value is + what + how it works. - based on discussion in FG meeting. Points out that they want the house to streamline these values so that it/they will belong to the house. (Buy in principle). Students show great interest in determining their values. Openly discuss the values put forward. Leader allows open discussion + often gets the juniors to view their opinions. 1 junior tends to be very quiet - just wants to listen. Leader gives everyone an opportunity to have a say. Students are keen + are able to put forward sensible suggestions. A lot of encouragement takes place. Students are excited. There appears to be a willingness to get involved. Juniors are tentative but are included in the discussion.

Observation of the nature of interaction in a group													
	Positive			Neutral			Negative			Group: PODS 1,2+3.			
	←						→						Date: 18/05/07
Involvement	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	Members: Grp 1. Grp 2. Grp 3.	
Rapport	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Self-confidence	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Aggressiveness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Inhibited	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Friendliness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Superiority	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		

(FOCUS GROUPS AND OBSERVATION)
 RESEARCH STUDY
 SERVANT LEADERSHIP
 OBSERVATION

HOUSE: _____ Date: _____

Notes:

Observation of the nature of interaction in a group												
	Positive			Neutral			Negative			Group:		
												Date:
Involvement	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	Members:
Rapport	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Self-confidence	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Aggressiveness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Inhibited	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Friendliness	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Superiority	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	

RESEARCH STUDY
SERVANT LEADERSHIP
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

HOUSE: _____ Date: _____

Group Member's Name: _____

FOCUS GROUP	POD GROUP	FUNCTIONAL GROUP
-------------	-----------	------------------

INTERACTION WITHIN THE GROUP				
Positive Approach	Often	Occasionally	Seldom	Comments
Co-operates				
Initiates good ideas				
Listens to others				
Supportive				
Confident				
Aware of others				
Involved				
Rapport with others				
Motivated				
Negative Approach				
Inhibited				
Aggressive				
Superior				
Self-centered				

Notes:

APPENDIX J: FOCUS GROUP MEETING OUTLINE

SESSION 1 – SUNDAY 10TH JUNE, 4.30 P.M.

WOOD HOUSE, KINGSWOOD COLLEGE.

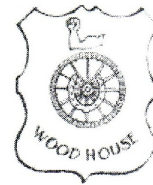
AGENDA:

1. WELCOME
2. INTRODUCTIONS
3. REVIEW OF THE AGENDA:
 - A. THE PURPOSE AND GOALS
 - B. THE MEANS OF RECORDING
 - C. FORMAT OF THE INTERVIEW
 - D. ADDRESS TERMS OF CONFIDENTIALITY
4. FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW:
 - A. ICE BREAKER
 - B. QUESTION 1- IS YOUR HOUSE A COMMUNITY?
(REFLECTION)
 - C. QUESTION 2- WHAT HOLDS A COMMUNITY TOGETHER?
 - D. QUESTION 3- HOW DO YOU ESTABLISH THIS COMMUNITY? (PLANNING)
 - E. HOW ARE YOU GOING TO IMPLEMENT THIS PLAN IN YOUR HOUSE? (IMPLEMENTATION)
5. PREPERATION FOR NEXT FOCUS GROUP: (SUNDAY 17TH JUNE, 4.30 P.M.)
 - A. ESTABLISHMENT OF HOUSE VALUES
 - B. READ ARTICLE ON LEADERSHIP

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you describe a community?
2. What is the difference between a community and a team?
3. What makes a group of people into a community? (values)
4. Why do you think people want to be part of a community?
5. Does a community have leaders?
6. In a community, do you think all members would have an opportunity to lead?
7. If communities need leaders and you were a member of a community, what would you expect from the leaders?
8. Would you say KC is a community?
9. Who is part of the KC community? Are there smaller communities within the bigger community?
10. What do you understand by the term Servant Leadership?
11. Do you think Servant Leadership can work in a community – eg. KC? Why?
12. What would be the biggest problem with changing styles of leadership at KC?
13. Is there anything that you would like to add?
14. What do you think about change taking place in your house?
15. How could you use servant leadership in your position in the house?
16. How have you been involved in the house? (Decision making)
17. How have you felt during the process?
18. Would you please draw a diagram of how you see yourself fitting into your own communities?

APPENDIX L: MENTOR'S REPORT ON JUNIOR



H S (My) and J T 's friendship:

The end to another action packed, fun filled term has just rushed up onto us. Just the other day we were all getting hugely excited for the rugby session to commence at school. Well, that has all come and gone, and through all of this I been fortunate enough to grow in one special friendship that wouldn't normally have been made without the great mentoring system that we have installed in the best house of the college. J and I have become a close unit that no one can separate. We've grown with each other this term and we've spent some great and scarcely few bad times together which has made us great buddies as a result.

This term J has really been the most disciplined boy in the whole of wood house. He was the boy who, unlike many before him, was on privilege five (The highest privilege possible to him) for three weeks in a row until the moved him up onto privilege six! (The matrics privilege by the way). And this didn't only happen once, so as my junior I am extremely proud of him and his behaviour this term.

Sporting wise, J has been a big part of the u14a's front row this year and I can really see some huge potential for J in the years to come in rugby, if he puts his mind to it and wants to do well. Luckily, I haven't noticed that his asthma has been bothering him at all, unless he just keeps it to himself and keeps working as the soldier he is. He has a positive attitude and tries his best which was clearly seen in the inter house rugby this year. I think he enjoyed his sport this year and i wish him the best next year.

Academically, I haven't noticed any problems for J. I think his maths marks are back on track and are where they should be. I helped J for e few Geography tests of his this term and that's it. I haven't heard any complaints from him and maybe this is also because he has a fighting spirit in him and he hates the thought of asking his mentor for academic help. I trust his exams went well and this reflects on his report.

At the beginning of this year we struggled a little, J and I, to bond well together as normal friends do. Now we bond as well as peanut and syrup. Our friendship has definitely grown this year and that's what it's all about. J is an extremely caring person and helpful too. Instead of asking J favours I am rinding myself telling him not to do such things for me. He is a great help and a pleasure to have around. For his birthday we organised some ice cream and cones and everyone enjoyed the night of J birthday, ice cream in hand and I trust he enjoyed it too.

We have definitely got the most special friendship between all the grade 11's and their juniors. The road we walking along has been flat and there have been very few short hills for us to climb. For me it has been downhill all the way, easy sailing. As his mentor I am proud of his term as a whole and I wish the best for his holidays, well done Bud.

APPENDIX M: JUNIOR'S REPORT ON MENTOR

J. ... T. - Mentor report 08/08/07

Mentor: H S.

The mentor system for me has been great cause he will always try to help me with my stuff and if I need a favour he will try his best. If I had to choose my mentor I think I would have stayed with him he lent me money because my card is broken and not every body will do that. He gave me something for free because he did not want it.

I think he is the best because we went to town and I don't have any money but he still paid for my food and drink. I think our relationship is going well we spend time together but not so much but when we do it is great fun.

He told me one day that I will go with him on his farm and I love farms my uncle gave me one then he sold it but I would not mind to spend more time with.

He is a great guy and his brother is also nice but I have ~~not~~ seen that he does not spend a lot of with his Junior. But he is really great good personally and a lot of fun.

JL

APPENDIX N: STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

QUESTIONNAIRE THE PERSPECTIVE OF STUDENTS ON LEADERSHIP IN AN INDEPENDENT BOARDING SCHOOL IN THE EASTERN CAPE

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

This study aims to investigate leadership among students, as they develop a community, in the context of an independent co-educational boarding school in Grahamstown. In general, boarding establishments are still entrenched in a bureaucratic organization orientation characterised by rules and regulations, prescribed roles, expectations and responsibilities. However, in response to developments in organisation and leadership theory, these establishments are beginning to question the traditional systems of leadership and are attempting to move towards a more community-orientated system where people are valued more highly and are afforded the opportunity to participate more freely. This study essentially seeks to explore alternatives to what has for decades been considered to be the preferred and perhaps only leadership approach, typified by the now questionable 'prefect' system that has held sway for so long.

AIM OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

- To determine the perceptions of the learners about leadership;
- To identify how the learners interact with their leaders;
- To determine how the learners make decisions;
- To determine the kinds of relationships that emerge;
- To identify existing responsibilities.

GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS:

- Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire.
- Please make sure that you read the instructions carefully and you are encouraged to ask any questions if you do not understand.

- All questions must be answered in this 5 page questionnaire.
- In order that any benefit be gained from this questionnaire, it is imperative that you answer each question carefully, openly and fully.
- Your responses will be used for research purposes and your identity will remain confidential.
- Remember that questions do require different responses, so it becomes important that you understand how to answer each question. In some questions you are required to fill in your response in the space provided or by using a cross (X) e.g.

Question 1. Are you presently enrolled at a school?

YES	1
NO	2

- In some cases you are also required to write a few words to justify your choice of answer.

In advance, I would like to thank you for your willingness to participate in this research study and for the honest answers that are reflected in the questionnaire.

MR ID KNOTT-CRAIG
(RESEARCHER)
FEBRUARY 2007

RESPONDENT: _____

SECTION B: GENERAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF STUDENTS

B1 INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDENTS IN THE BOARDING HOUSE

Please make a cross (X) in the appropriate space to indicate your choice.

B1.1 Gender:

MALE	1
FEMALE	2

B1.2 Your current age is:

<14 YEARS	1
14 YEARS	2
15 YEARS	3
16 YEARS	4
17 YEARS	5
18+ YEARS	6

B1.3 The country of your residence:

SOUTH AFRICA	1
BOTSWANA	2
ZAMBIA	3
NAMIBIA	4
ZIMBABWE	5
LESOTHO	6
TANZANIA	7
OTHER	8

If "OTHER", please stipulate:

--

B1.4 Your present academic grade:

GRADE 8	1
GRADE 9	2
GRADE 10	3
GRADE 11	4
GRADE12	5

B1.5 Current accommodation status is:

BOARDER ON CAMPUS	1
BOARDER IN PRIVATE HOME	2
DAY SCHOLAR	3

B1.6 Number of years at Kingswood College:

<1 YEAR	1
1 YEAR	2
2 YEARS	3
3 YEARS	4
4 YEARS	5
5+ YEARS	6

B1.7 Number of years in the boarding house on campus:

<1YEAR	1
1 YEAR	2
2 YEARS	3
3 YEARS	4
4 YEARS	5
5+YEARS	6
NONE	7

If "NONE", explain why:

B1.8 What is your home language?

AFRIKAANS	1	SWAHILI	6
ENGLISH	2	SETSWANA	7
XHOSA	3	GERMAN	8
ZULU	4	OTHER	9
SESOTHO	5		

If "OTHER", specify:

--

B1.9 The current leadership position that you hold is:

HEAD OF HOUSE	1
DEPUTY HEAD OF HOUSE	2
GRADE 12	3
GRADE 11	4
OTHER COLLEGE LEADERSHIP POSITION	5
NONE	6

If "OTHER" or "NONE", please stipulate:

--